PROLICENMUS: a Pioneering Model of Music Education over the Internet in Brazil

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Abstract: This text is a brief mapping of the model of the Music Licentiate course, in the distance modality performed by the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) and its Associate Universities, linked to the Pro Licentiate course of MEC (PROLICENMUS) and delivered to society in June of 2007. The project, which has just completed its second teaching semester, uses new Educational technologies, being brought by the internet and having present support centers. For this area, it’s a pioneering purpose in Brazil, which partial results have been confirming the viability of the model. This text also brings theoretical reference for future studies.

Keywords: Classroom of tomorrow, Learning management system, Net communities, Teacher education, Tools for learning.

1. Introduction

Based on the 205th Article of the Brazilian Federal Constitution dated from 1988, where it’s written that education is a right of everyone and an obligation of the State. The 80th Article of the Brazilian Educational Guidelines, LDB 9394/96, encourages the development and dissemination of the distance educational programs, whereas the 1st Article of Decree 5622/2005 mentions the utilization of “means and technologies of communication and information” in this type of education. In 2000, the Ministry of Science and Technology releases the Livro Verde (Green Book), contextualizing the subject and making premises for Brazil in its collaboration in society of information (MCT, 2000), whence it is comprised the national comprehension in favor of the utilization of new educational technologies moderated by the Internet and whence all the Public Notices and Resolutions regarding the theme come, which were published in the following years.
In response to the MEC/FNDE Resolution 34/2005 and based on its experience with the Center of Arts and Physical Education (CAEF) of UFRGS (Brasil, 2004), alongside the Continued Formation National Network (REDE) (Brasil, 2003) the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul proposes the project which would originate an unprecedented model of musical education in Brazil, its Licentiate in Music distance course (Brasil, 2005), in partnership with other six Brazilian universities (UDESC, UFES, UFBA, UFAL, UFMT and UNIR). This pioneering is proved due to historical facts, in its form and by the challenges it takes. It’s a complete graduation course in Music for the qualification of primary education teachers, with no previous knowledge about music, who are already working, moderated by the Internet and reaching out four of the five Country Regions in isolated centers in great urban areas.

The Public Notice of the selection process of PROLICENMUS was in 2007, to which subscribed 1920 interested people, between June 28th and July 3rd of the same year. After finishing the formalities of evaluation and meeting all legal pertinent requirements to this special program of MEC (Pro-Licentiates), 724 people enrolled, of which only 618 attended the Inaugural Class, transmitted through videoconference, on April 22nd, 2008, when it was also celebrated the centenary of the UFRGS’s Arts Institute.

2. Political Pedagogical Project (PPP)

With the goal of distance teaching and with no requirement of previous knowledge, in a traditionally present and selective area of teaching like Music, the main challenge was to balance such diversified demands and pedagogical proposals according to the legal determinations.

2.1 Origin

According to SEED/MEC (Brasil, 2008), Brazil, which is a continental country, will have a big expansion in distance teaching with the usage of electronic technologies in education, because gathers all the conditions to become a success story in this model. A study published in the Brazilian Distance Learning Association website asserts that “it is evident that online distance learning, with its information technologies, communication resources and lower costs, can improve the economic efficiency in distance teaching and learning in our country” (Lisoni&Loyolla, 2009). Based on LBD of 1996 and on public politics for the distance learning using technologies, the Resolution FNDE/CD 34/2005 establishes the Pro-Licentiate Program, which PROLICENMUS is connected to.
In relation to the pedagogical basis and methodological aspects, PROLICENMUS uses the experience gained through music programs of the CAEF, in the context of continued qualification of teachers. These, in turn, are based in the CDG Musical Pedagogical Approach (Wöhl-Coelho, 1999; Rangel, 2005), of Multimodality Approach (Verhaalen, 1987; Nunes, 2005). Brazil faces a new experience, that is the music teaching in an ethical vision. This educational role of Music is identified with a new moment in the historical process which takes its usage to school, after it has been used for the religious catechetical domination, cultural imposition, even political and commercial interests (Bispo, 2008). Such ideas find resonance in the guidelines of the Pro-Licentiate Program, presented by Annex III of the Resolution FNDE/CD nº 34/2005.

2.2 Model Presentation

The PROLICENMUS’s model includes instances of the federal government responsible for the guidelines (Ministry of Education – MEC), for financing (National Fund for Development of Education – FNDE) and for evaluation (INEP – National Institute for Education and Research) of the process as a whole; of the universities that propose and develop the political-pedagogical project, which ends with graduation (i.e., UFRGS); and of the public teaching systems which organize the demands and keep the present support centers (i.e., Cachoeirinha/RS, Canoinhas/SC, Itaípolis/SC, São Bento do Sul/SC, Linhares/ES, Salvador/BA, São Félix/BA, Irecê/BA, Cristópolis/BA, Porto Velho/RO e Ariquemes/RO).

2.2.1 Technologies

The group of computerized systems that give scholar-administrative support to the course includes, beyond the University’s own Graduation System (SISGRAD), still in adaptation stage to its distance courses, the following: PROLICENMUS website http://prolicenmus.ufrgs.br; CAEF website http://caef.ufrgs.br; Informative Bulletin http://caef.ufrgs.br/boletim; Management System http://caef.ufrgs.br/produtos/dotproject; platform with different Teaching Environments (inter-disciplines) https://moodleinstitucional.ufrgs.br/; Educational Object Replacement http://caef.ufrgs.br/roe/; Teachers and Tutors Permanent Qualification Course http://caef.ufrgs.br/produtos/moodle.

The virtual environments of didactical character, of collaborative making and in permanent development, possess pedagogical orientation and visual identity with the PROLICENMUS brand and are structured from templates. So far, the following are already in use: Weekly Study Units, based on the orientation of distance teachers and in the accompaniment of present tutors, who guide the utilization of the others; a software for support to musicalization (http://caef.ufrgs.br/produtos/maav); and two e-books for instrument teaching, in
the perspective of the formation of accompanying instrument players (http://caef.ufrgs.br/produtos/ebooks).

2.2.2 Curriculum Grid
The course lasts four and a half years (nine teaching periods), including the Final Paper (TCC). The course has 2895 total hours (193 credits), distributed as following: graduation by inter-disciplines, where 1440 hours are theoretical and 480 hours are practical; 405 hours in internship, realized at the same school in which the course student works; 210 hours in Complementary Activities; and Individual Progressive Project, with 270 hours that meet the Final Paper. The curriculum grid is organized through Axes, as illustrates Picture 1, comprising Inter-disciplines. During the entire course, the Individual Study Project (PIP) is taken, which is responsible for the Final Paper execution.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Course Organization through axes</th>
<th>Musical structure</th>
<th>Topics on education</th>
<th>General Qualification</th>
<th>Musical execution</th>
<th>Conduction and finalization</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Inter-disciplines with 60 hours (4 credits), distributed in 15 State Units, with 4 hours each.</td>
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<td>Complementary Activities, an average of 3.5 hours a module.</td>
<td>Individual Progressive Project (PIP)</td>
<td>Integrative Seminar Weekly activity, that guide the Individual Study Project finalization.</td>
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270 hours, distributed during the entire course, it consists in a formulated document and it is evaluated in the Integrative Seminars, functioning as a guide to all the actions of each student.

2.2.3 Student Evaluation Model
The evaluation occurs continuously, cumulatively, descriptively and comprehensively. There are three moments that form the process, which are:
1. Current student trajectory, which includes his dedication to the center, paper delivery and his performance at the school where he acts as a teacher, accompanied and registered by the local tutors. This moment corresponds to Level I evaluation.

2. Quality of presentational tests and delivered papers, inspected and corrected by the university tutors, under the orientation of the teacher of the corresponding inter-discipline. This moment corresponds to Level II evaluation.

3. Quality of the final acquired results, appropriately observed the Individual Progressive Project expectations to each specified teaching period, before his performance in the center’s collective actions. This moment corresponds to Level III evaluation, verified and registered in the presence of a teaching group.

3. Considerations regarding the Experience

Using the distance teaching experience in Music and moderated by the internet along with REDE, since 2004, and PROLINCENMUS, since 2005, the UFRGS has a experience, that can be related.

3.1 Dynamics and Functioning

Based on the experience of PROLICENMUS, ending its first teaching year, it’s verified that, in the country, there’s neither mentality nor digital inclusion yet able to meet the demands of a superior course of Music Licentiate totally moderated by the Internet. Because of that, although the student is obliged to go to the center only for evaluations, it’s recommended that he goes there as often as possible. This acquired knowledge implies the center’s valorization of present support centers, including, mainly, the credit due to the tutors’ work. Considering the excess of work the university teachers have, a considerable part of the work goes to the tutors, mixing academic demands to others of administrative and even social affective nature.

Even more than the clearing of doubts about the contents, didactical materials and digital tools, it’s verified that the tutors end up assuming the center’s own general functioning, beyond the responsibility of evasion contention and well-being of the students under their responsibility. The tutor, after all, is a fundamental figure in the success of this distance course. The way it is, his scholar condition is considered inadequate, due to the challenges to him imposed and the maturity and professional discrimination that are necessary to him for the good performance of his functions. Recognizing that, in PROLICENMUS’s case, the support of local public systems is counted on, authorizing all sorts of supports, including financial, beyond those that were agreed on paper.
Another factor directly related to PROLICENMUS’s success has been the good relationship between partner institutions and the seriousness of the work done in the present support centers. Since the creation of Pro-Licentiates, many were the modifications to the original project. The Program started in MEC’s Basic Education Office and, passing by Distance Teaching Office of the same Ministry, it finally settled in the Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education (CAPES), where it was decided the program should be discontinued under the condition of independent program. These migrations caused problems, evidently. However, nowadays, integrated to the other superior distance courses, the project is strengthened also by the support of the Open University of Brazil (UAB)’s team, along CAPES/MEC.

3.2 Curricular Integrative Components

The inter-disciplines have content mobility, as much as in the disseminated information group as in the degree of depth to each one of them. They recombine traditional disciplines of the Musical knowledge area and are lectured with support of Study Units. These, in turn, expose each subject in three distinct levels of depth: the minimal necessary so that the student keeps in the course on its way to graduation, a horizontal broadening of this depth, and an in-depth on this second level of approach.

In each Axis, the inter-disciplines are:

4. General formation: Distance Learning Instrumentation, Access to Information, Internship, Complementary Activities.

The flow of inter-disciplines predicts meeting each student’s different musical knowledge, appropriately organized in six groups of national coverage each. During the Present Integrative Seminars, which occur during one week per semester, at the centers, counting on the presence of a group of teachers, the ending semester’s results are evaluated and individual and collective plans are defended for the subsequent teaching semester. During this period, the Level 3 Evaluations occur, as well as the instrumental execution tests and the defense of the PIP. Eventually, the groups’ constitution may be reformulated according to such results.
Considering the unprecedented pedagogical model and the complexity of the PROLICENMUS’s context, there’s a big chance the student can get confused in the progress of his study. Hence the PIP, the role of which is close to the role of a compass or map, comprised of enrollment certificates and schooling record with the Inter-disciplines already took and to be taken, projects, internship reports and Complementary Activities, as well as other documents of scholar relevance. Each student tracks records of their own choices and results; which allows him to guide himself in his own trajectory, taking in consideration his particular interests in the Curriculum Grid, expecting to improve his learning performance and his professional actuation.

3.3 Course Evaluation

In the first teaching year, three questionnaires were applied: 1) Students profile, 2) Didactical material and its efficiency, and 3) Map of students’ performance. These evaluation questionnaires are still analyzed. The results will reveal aspects that should be improved in the next year. Although the data obtained by the three evaluation questionnaires have been already tabulated, the correspondent analysis has not been finished. Therefore are all conclusions preliminar and the corrective procedures are being carried out only in the scope of the course. However, the results obtained up to now show a target-population of teachers working in primary school (52% in classroom and 42% in artistic and cultural projects) without a specific training and titration in music. Also, 77% of the students have computers at home – but as only 65% have Internet connection, many need to go to the present unit education in order to have access to the Study Units. Despite of this, “lack of time” was the outstanding difficulty named (30%). In the first year, the average rate of approval was of 80,5%.

3.4 Other aspects of interest

The main problems that are found is the lack of habit and study discipline, little autonomy and initiative of the involved. PROLICENMUS’s model predicts to be distant in relation to the graduating institutions; however, preferentially present, in relation to the poles (centers). But the access difficulties of few people and the lack of time of most get the whole process difficult to the students, ending up in evasion. It is still necessary to face the unfaithfulness of those who believe distance course can be taken without effort and dedication. The waste of public money implied by high levels of evasion is pathetic and dangerous, and it is necessary to be faced strictly.
4. Perspectives

Based on the international (WCEFA, 1990) and national (Takahashi, 2000) understanding about the advantages of distance learning moderated by technologies, even identifying that sometimes difficulties and real costs are underestimated, UFRGS keeps on investing in this model, and already joined MEC’s programs as the REDE (MEC, 2003) and Pro-Licentiates (MEC, 2005). At the moment, it plans the expansion of its work in the field of Continued Formation National Network, with confirmed participation in the action known as Demanda PAR 2009, which will benefit 3300 Arts and Physical Education graduated teachers, in the south, central-west, north regions in the country and some part of the northeast region. Also Brazil Open University (UAB) will considered (Mota, 2005). Regarding UAB, an early project was already sent to MEC, in October of 2007, to offer new groups in Music Licentiate, which asserts a 4000 teacher demand, who don’t have musical higher education and are willing to take it in the distance modality, near their closest centers. This subject was already discussed during the UAB’s Course Coordinators Meeting, on December, 16th and 17th of 2008 and, at the moment, the debates are happening in ATUAB – UAB’s workspace.

5. Conclusion

Using the distance teaching experience in Music and moderated by the internet along with REDE, since 2004, and after the end of its second teaching semester and third year since its approval, PROLINCENMUS, UFRGS has considerable experience. However, it still needs more deep studies, subjects to be approached in the context of master degree courses. This text introduces the curricular grid and the transmission model of the PROLICENMUS contents under the pedagogical and not technological perspective. In the same manner, it concentrates on the description and not the analysis of the model. The novelty of this course (Licenciatura em Música) in Brazil and the short time since the effective beginning of classes, on the 22nd of April 2008, demand caution in the public approach to the theme. Aiming to establish some initial guidelines for such researches, this article relates aspects of interest on the subject, using the point of view of someone who lives it in fact and who believes in the possibilities of higher education in Music Licentiate moderated by new educational technologies and internet. Not because it is cheaper nor easier than the presental modality, but because it is possible to reach the furtherer areas in Brazil, where many people wait for the opportunity to continue their studies, without leaving their place, culture and the people they love and they like to be with.
References


