Preface

The motivation to publish this book on "*Changing Cultures in Higher Education – Moving Ahead to Future Leaning*" has its origins in numerous discussions, during the last few years, that we have held with colleagues from all over the world. They took place in international research projects and conferences related to learning technologies, as well as in university meetings and in policy events, and they were triggered by the fundamental changes visible through integration and adoption of technologies into all areas of universities.

We had the chance to learn the fundamental insight that a lack of coherent strategic models, low interest and engagement of faculty and missing quality considerations for eLearning are all visible symptoms for deeply-rooted causes which paralyze current innovation efforts of universities. As a consequence we are convinced that it is necessary to develop a more holistic view on changing cultures of universities.

If higher education institutions want to keep leading positions in the knowledge economy it will be necessary for university management to perceive innovation and change not as a singular achievement but rather as an emerging and ongoing phenomenon which has to be embraced as part of a culture of change in higher education institutions. We have to engage the higher education community – students, administrators, management and teachers, as well as policy makers – in its entirety, to take into consideration strategic change models rather than isolated ad-hoc attempts and to understand how technology-enhanced innovation attempts impact long-standing cultural values in the science system in higher education.

At the same time it will be necessary to view changes not as a technological revolution but as an ongoing educational innovation and to develop a new understanding how to join efforts towards a more open and emerging innovation model for universities. A new culture of change will have to take into account barriers for educational innovation which are often caused by macro-level influence factors that even committed universities can hardly overcome at institutional level. University leaders have in consequence to take the underlying innovation barriers into account when they try to engage faculty for the use of learning technologies.

The book is addressing the higher education governance community as a whole – university leaders, chief information officers, change and quality assurance managers and faculty developers who are involved in strategic management decisions. Pedagogical advisers and consultants find new insights and practices for the sustainable integration and management of learning technologies in higher education. The volume fosters a sound understanding of the necessity and strategy to change for professors and teachers and provides them with practical recommendations on competence and quality methodologies for their own practices. Furthermore, the discussed concepts are likely to be of strong interest to senior government officials and policy makers working to evoke change, and/ or who are concerned about national economic competitiveness. The book presents a number of cases for e-Learning application, change and innovation from different disciplines to attract its readership from a broad range of disciplines.

Although we believe that the presented work does not need prerequisites, a basic understanding of the field of technology enhanced learning as well as a perceived need of the necessity to change in higher education to meet tomorrow's work and learning challenges will be beneficial for reading. The presented contributions offer well-grounded insights into successful education innovation from two angles: First, they set a clear focus to uncover the underlying factors which slow down e-Learning innovation and addresses them with coherent approaches for strategic change; and second, they present their experiences in the fields of innovation, change and strategic thinking. The contributions deal with technology-triggered innovation challenges that higher education policy-makers as well as decision-makers and academics in universities face alike.

This volume suggests moving ahead to future learning. It is meant to be a handbook for strategic change in higher education for those who work towards innovating education to meet future challenges. We believe that we are standing at the threshold to radical changes of our good old universities. We believe that this change will come rapidly and probably faster than we foresee it. We believe also that visions are always restricted by current experiences. With this book we can only aspire to shed light on some strands of development within the near next future. But the panorama of great thinkers of education which came together here already indicates that transformation will happen and that it will not leave us with the same institutions we know today. The future universities will look radically different. How? We do not know yet – but with this book we can take a look into the future and see where it will lead us.

A volume of this scope is a collaborative exercise. We are thankful to all collaborators contributing their best thinking and visions to this project, and all those who gave advice and motivation to proceed and push the boundaries. Experts from all over the world formed an interactive community to realize this project. It would not have been possible without the immense commitment of all authors who contributed their time and ideas to this book, agreed to take part in reviews and provided input for lively debates. We have also been able to build on a wide network of supporting organizations, whose commitment and willingness to help have constantly carried us forward in the edition of this book. We would like to

express our sincere gratitude to all authors and organizations for their great support. Last, but not least, we would like to thank our wives Virginie and Anne-Marie for supporting us during the long hours we worked in evenings and weekends on this book – without their patience this work would not have been realized.

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