

Experience Report: the curricularization of extension at IFPR

Relato de Experiência: a curricularização da extensão no IFPR



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ABSTRACT

The history of university extension in Brazil is currently being consolidated within a framework of social transformation, knowledge production, and academic engagement. At IFPR, the curricularization of extension was institutionalized in 2018, delineating its objectives based on the inseparability of teaching, research, and extension, and aiming to integrate curricularization with policies related to environmental education, ethnic-racial education, human rights, gender equality, inclusion, and indigenous education. This experiential report shares the stages of a research conducted at IFPR Campus Curitiba on the process of curricularizing extension in undergraduate courses. The research revealed significant challenges faced by teams during the process. Consequently, based on the analysis results, a flow manual on curricularizing extension was proposed to undergraduate course coordinators, aiming to elucidate the entire process by drawing upon current legislation.

Keywords: Federal Institutes. University Extension. Professional and Technological Education.

RESUMO

A história da extensão universitária no Brasil se consolida atualmente numa perspectiva de transformação social, a produção de conhecimento e o fazer acadêmico. No IFPR a curricularização da extensão se institucionalizou em 2018, estipulando os objetivos da curricularização da extensão a partir da indissociabilidade entre ensino pesquisa e extensão e do objetivo em trabalhar a curricularização com as políticas ligadas às diretrizes para a educação ambiental, educação étnico-racial, direitos humanos, igualdade de gênero, inclusão e educação indígena. O presente relato de experiência irá compartilhar etapas de uma pesquisa realizada no IFPR campus Curitiba sobre o processo de curricularização da extensão nos cursos de graduação. A partir da pesquisa, foi possível perceber uma grande dificuldade das equipes com o processo e por isso, a partir dos resultados da análise realizada, foi proposto aos coordenadores dos cursos de graduação um manual de fluxo sobre a curricularização da extensão, a fim de ilustrar todo o processo apoiando-se nas legislações vigentes.

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Palavras-chave: Institutos Federais. Extensão Universitária. Educação Profissional e Tecnológica.

THE CURRICULARIZATION OF EXTENSION AT IFPR

The role of extension activities in Brazilian universities, as well as the ways in which they are implemented, has long been a topic of discussion, particularly considering the different types of higher education institutions: public, private, and community-based private institutions. Likewise, as these debates surrounding the function of extension unfolded, the same issues were addressed in various legal instruments that make up the regulatory framework governing higher education and extension activities. In this dissertation, we will discuss the contextual background, historical development, National Policy for University Extension, the 2014–2024 National Education Plan, and the principles and guidelines of curricularization.

The history of university extension in Brazil reveals that it has taken on different meanings over time, such as the dissemination of knowledge, the provision of services, and community-oriented activities. Beginning in the 1980s, however, extension adopted a more dialogical approach in relation to other segments of society. While remnants of the earlier conceptions still persist, it is this latter perspective that has become increasingly consolidated. Today, social transformation, knowledge production, and academic engagement are the guiding principles of university extension in Brazil (GONÇALVES; QUIMELLI, 2016).

At IFPR, the curricularization of extension was institutionalized in accordance with Resolution No. 07 of December 18, 2018, through Normative Instruction Reitoria/IFPR No. 1, dated July 26, 2021. In this document, curricularization is defined as:

Article 3. For the purposes of this Normative Instruction, the following definitions apply: IV - Curricularization of extension: refers to the inclusion of extension activities within the undergraduate curriculum, inseparable from teaching and research. Such activities should involve diverse disciplines and professional fields, with the aim of fostering both the student's academic development and social transformation. This process may also be referred to as the crediting and/or integration of Extension into the curriculum (IFPR, 2021).

An important point to highlight is that, at IFPR, extension activities have expanded upon the modalities described in Resolution No. 07 of December 18, 2018.

Rather than identifying them as modalities, as stated in the regulation, the institution classifies them as activities and has also included additional “activities” (Publications). The following comparison illustrates this distinction.

Resolution No. 07, of December 18, 2018:

Article 8. Extension activities, according to their characterization within the pedagogical projects of each course, fall into the following modalities: I – programs; II – projects; III – courses and workshops; IV – events; V – service provision. Sole paragraph. The modalities listed in the article above include, in addition to institutional programs, those of a governmental nature that meet municipal, state, district, and national policies (BRAZIL, 2018).

Normative Instruction Reitoria/IFPR No. 1, dated July 26, 2021:

Article 3. For the purposes of this Normative Instruction, the following applies:

I – Extension activities and/or actions: interventions that directly engage external communities beyond IFPR and are linked to the student's educational process, in accordance with the institution's internal regulations. These are defined as: Program, Project, Course, Event, Publications, and Service Provision (IFPR, 2021).

In the same regulation, IFPR establishes clear and precise objectives for the curricularization of extension, centered on two essential points addressed both by this research project and by its very nature. First, it emphasizes the inseparability of teaching, research, and extension. Second, it sets as a goal the integration of curricularization efforts with policies related to the guidelines for environmental education, ethnic-racial education, human rights, gender equality, inclusion, and Indigenous education.

Article 6. Objectives of the Curricularization of Extension:

I – Ensure a minimum percentage of 10% (ten percent) of the total workload of all undergraduate courses is allocated to curricular extension activities, to be implemented within the timeframe established by law.

II – Encourage the development of curricular extension activities within the courses offered.

III – Ensure an impact on students' education and leadership by contributing to their holistic development and fostering them as critical and responsible citizens.

IV – Promote dialogical interaction with the community and with local, regional, national, and/or international contexts through the courses offered by the Federal Network of Professional, Scientific, and Technological Education (RFEPCT), thereby giving them renewed significance.

V – Promote the inseparability of research, teaching, and extension.

VI – Ensure the structural integration of the Curricularization of Extension as a proposal outlined in the Course Pedagogical Project (PPC).

VII – Expand the social and academic impact of courses, reflecting the institution's social commitment to producing and constructing updated and coherent knowledge aimed at equitable and sustainable social development in Brazil.

VIII – Pursue transdisciplinary and interprofessional education and practice, respecting and promoting interculturality.

IX – Guarantee extension activities in an organic, permanent, and coordinated manner, fostering initiatives that reflect the institution's social commitment across various areas, especially communication, culture, human rights and justice, education, environment, health, technology, and production and labor, and in alignment with policies related to environmental education, ethnic-racial education, human rights, gender equality, inclusion, and Indigenous education (IFPR, 2021).

Regarding the inseparability of teaching, research, and extension, which are fundamental pillars ensuring that Education Institutions (IES) have the duty to contribute and bring applied knowledge beyond their walls to Federal Institutes (IFs), it is important to emphasize that “inseparability” refers to something that cannot be separated or divided into parts.

In education, the realization of this principle entails carrying out collective work projects that are grounded in institutional assessment, the planning of institutional actions, and evaluations that consider the interests of the majority of society (ANDES, 2003). Specifically on this point, it is important to address item IX, Article 6 of the Normative Instruction Reitoria/IFPR No. 1, dated July 26, 2021:

IX - Guarantee extension activities in an organic, permanent, and coordinated manner, fostering initiatives that reflect the institution's social commitment across various areas, especially communication, culture, human rights and justice, education, environment, health, technology, and production and labor, and in alignment with policies related to environmental education, ethnic-racial education, human

rights, gender equality, inclusion, and Indigenous education (IFPR, 2021).

In compliance with the Guidelines for Environmental Education, item II, Article 3 of Law No. 9,795 of April 27, 1999, and with Ethnic-Racial Education under Law No. 11,645/08, which amends Law No. 9,394 of December 20, 1996, as modified by Law No. 10,639 of January 9, 2003, establishing the guidelines and bases of national education to include in the official school curriculum the mandatory theme of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture, and also regarding Human Rights, it is important to highlight the National Plan for Human Rights Education (PNEDH). This public policy consolidates a societal project based on the principles of democracy, citizenship, and social justice through an instrument aimed at fostering a culture of human rights, encouraging the practice of solidarity and respect for diversity.

With this in mind, the present experience report will share the stages of research conducted at IFPR Curitiba campus regarding the process of curricularizing extension in undergraduate courses. Based on the research, it was possible to identify significant difficulties faced by the teams in implementing the process. Therefore, following the results of the analysis, a flow manual on the curricularization of extension was proposed to the undergraduate course coordinators, with the aim of illustrating the entire process while referencing the applicable legislation.

The research conducted at IFPR and presented in this report focused on gathering information about the curricularization process from undergraduate course coordinators through interviews. After analyzing the results, it can be concluded that there is a gap in communication between what is proposed by the legislation, the institution itself, and the actors involved. This highlights the importance of providing mechanisms to clarify the process and ensure that extension activities are effectively integrated into higher education courses.

EXPERIENCE REPORT

In order to gather relevant information on the curricularization of extension at IFPR, the initial plan was to conduct research through a Google Forms questionnaire and a document analysis of the courses' Pedagogical Projects (PPCs) and respective meeting minutes. However, the curricularization process at IFPR Curitiba campus was

not yet fully consolidated, making it necessary to modify the approach from Google Forms questionnaires to Google Meet interviews with the course coordinators.

The modification of the research approach proved to be highly productive. This change became a necessary adaptation to obtain more in-depth and contextual information about the development and implementation of the Pedagogical Projects of Courses (PPCs) and the understanding of the extension curricularization process at IFPR Curitiba campus. Some improvements resulting from the change in strategy include:

a) More direct and detailed interaction

The Google Meet interviews allowed for more direct interaction with the coordinators. This enabled real-time clarification of doubts, exploration of specific aspects of the PPCs, and collection of more detailed information regarding the challenges and successes of the curricularization process.

b) Contextualization and understanding

By conducting the interviews, it was possible to explore the stages of the curricularization process while understanding the specific context of IFPR Curitiba campus. This was essential for comprehending the factors that influenced the implementation of curricularization in the courses.

c) Collection of qualitative data

The interviews enabled the collection of valuable qualitative data, capturing not only objective information but also the interpretations, experiences, and opinions of those involved in the curricularization process. This enriched the research with qualitative insights.

Therefore, the modification of the research approach to Google Meet interviews represented a crucial strategy for deepening the understanding of the curricularization process at IFPR Curitiba campus, given that the PPCs and meeting minutes were still under development.

The interview was conducted using the same questions as the original questionnaire. There were 28 questions, designed in accordance with the guidelines described in Resolution No. 7/2018, with only one question of a subjective nature. IFPR

Curitiba offers six undergraduate programs: one Licentiate (Pedagogy), one Bachelor's degree (Accounting), and four Technological courses (Public Management, Massage Therapy, Management Processes, and Secretariat). However, only four coordinators agreed to participate in the interviews.

The interviews were conducted for four undergraduate programs: Public Management, Massage Therapy, Management Processes, and Secretariat.

A critical analysis of the data provided regarding the Massage Therapy course and the implementation of extension curricularization reveals a series of problematic points and areas of concern. The data indicate multiple challenges and areas for improvement in the implementation of curricularization in the Massage Therapy course, including delays, misinterpretations of regulations, lack of clarity, and limitations in the modalities and practices of extension.

The data provided regarding the Management Processes course and its implementation of extension curricularization highlight several notable points. This course demonstrated compliance with the guidelines for implementing extension curricularization, implementing them before other courses and offering a variety of extension modalities and activities. However, some issues regarding the interpretation of regulations, the inclusion of more comprehensive extension practices, and the consideration of challenges faced by students need to be addressed to ensure effective and inclusive implementation of extension policies.

The Public Management course will only implement the curricularization of extension in March 2024, which is not in compliance with Resolution 07/2018. This delay may indicate a lack of prioritization or inadequate planning regarding the integration of extension into the curriculum. The course faces multiple challenges related to the implementation of extension curricularization, including delays in execution, lack of planning and specificity in the modalities and actions of extension, inadequate interpretation of responsibilities and regulations, evaluation inconsistent with regulations, limited understanding of extension practices, restricted discussion in collegiate bodies, and a disconnected perception of extension activities.

The Secretariat course faced similar challenges, including delayed implementation and lack of specificity in the extension modalities offered. Additionally,

misinterpretation of responsibilities and regulations was evident, as well as the exclusion of important extension practices from the proposed projects.

In summary, the analyses highlight a series of common challenges faced by courses at IFPR Curitiba campus in implementing the curricularization of extension, including delays in implementation, inadequate interpretation of regulations, lack of detailed planning, and lack of clarity regarding the proposed extension modalities and activities. These challenges require a proactive and collaborative approach to ensure effective implementation aligned with the institutional objectives.

MANUAL ON THE CURRICULARIZATION OF EXTENSION

Based on the data collected, it became evident that the coordinators of the courses analyzed are aware of the mandatory implementation of curricularization; however, they do not fully understand its concept nor the manner in which extension activities should be implemented.

We then sought to understand, in consultation with the Office of the Vice-Rector for Extension, how the process of implementing the curricularization of Extension occurred at IFPR Curitiba campus. We were informed that Curricular Adjustment Committees (CAGES) were established to discuss the curricularization of extension together with the course collegiate bodies, and that knowledge of the implementation workflow falls under the responsibility of the Office of the Vice-Rector for Teaching (PROENS), in accordance with Article 17 of the Normative Instruction of the Rectorate / IFPR No. 1 of July 26, 2021.

Article 17. The Office of the Vice-Rector for Teaching (PROENS), with the assistance of the Office of the Vice-Rector for Extension, Research, Graduate Studies, and Innovation (PROEPPI), shall provide guidance on the necessary workflows and records for the implementation of Extension Curricularization in the Pedagogical Projects of Courses (PPCs).

Based on the analysis of the research data, we were unable to identify any workflow or document that could guide or demonstrate that extension activities are properly curricularized at IFPR, either quantitatively or qualitatively.

Therefore, we opted to develop an Educational Product in the form of a manual that outlines the stages, as indicated by IFPR legislation, serving as a guiding tool for the implementation of extension activities within IFPR. This was done considering the two key institutional guiding documents: the Extension Guidelines - IFPR Consup Resolution 11/2018, and the Extension Regulation - Normative Instruction of the Rectorate / IFPR No. 1 of July 26, 2021. The product developed falls under the forms of extension curricularization as a manual, entitled "Manual for the Curricularization of Extension at IFPR Curitiba Campus."

The evaluation of the "Manual for the Curricularization of Extension at IFPR Curitiba Campus" within the Technology courses at IFPR Curitiba campus allowed us to determine the manual's effectiveness in guiding coordinators and other stakeholders involved in the implementation of extension curricularization. This included verifying whether the guidelines provided are being correctly understood and applied.

CITATIONS AND REFERENCES

Extension is an instrument for the complete development of human beings and a social practice that seeks to guarantee individuals the right to a complete education for the "reading of the world and for acting as a citizen belonging to a country, integrally and with dignity within its political society" (CIAVATTA, 2005, p. 85).

In an academic perspective, extension work aims to transcend the limits of technical and pragmatic science, the contradiction between theory and practice, disinterested welfare actions, and the naive view of the subject as an object to be manipulated. It positions the educational process as a social practice in which political, social, and human dimensions are present in the formation of individuals, conceived as historical beings (LEITE; HELLMANN, 2023).

According to the data collected in this study, a lack of understanding of the extension curricularization workflow was observed in the higher education courses analyzed at IFPR. Consequently, a manual was provided to clarify the information relevant to this process, in accordance with the institution's internal regulations.

The outcome was positive, as it highlighted the need to provide greater clarity regarding the curricularization process, given that, under the new regulations, it will be

an ongoing activity in higher education courses and must be incorporated into the flow of university activities. Regarding the Federal Institutes, the curricularization of extension in higher education courses allows campuses to offer the local community a complete education that is connected to political, social, and cultural values.

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