

PICAIS ALUMNI TALKS



23 OCTOBER 2025



12:00 – 14:00 CET



ONLINE (ZOOM)

PUBLIC EVENT*

Join our distinguished PICAIS alumni for a live webinar as they share insights, stories, and inspiration from their past research projects.



Prof. Dr. Hedwig Eisenbarth
**(Victoria University of Wellington,
New Zealand)**

Research project: *AI-based Modelling of
Emotion to Understand (Criminal)
Behavior*



Dr. Nwet-Kay Khine
(Chulalongkorn University, Thailand)

Research project: *The emergence of
digital authoritarianism – Myanmar
between Chinese and Russian influence
– as a laboratory for a new regime type*



Prof. Dr. Sandra Leaton Gray
(UCL Institute of Education, UK)

Research project: *Education Futures:
Visions of Artificial Intelligence,
Biometrics and Digital Surveillance within
Bavarian schools*

***Registration via email (picaiss-office@uni-passau.de) required to receive the Zoom link**



Prof. Dr. Hedwig Eisenbarth (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand)

PICAIS Research Project:
*AI-based Modelling of emotion to understand
(criminal) behavior*

Research period: Jun – Jul 25, Sept – Oct 25

Abstract

Body movement as a reflection of emotional states? Exploring performance and natural interactions with motion capture

When we move in our world and encounter emotional stimuli, both internal or external, our body smoothly adapts to those situations, for a concerted physiological, behavioural and emotional response. Therefore, we think that body movements not only impact the way we feel but also reflect our feelings, that body movements evoke physiological reactions and can be a result of those.

Understanding the way in which perceptions of emotional states and body movements interact can contribute to answering open questions in the field of emotion, such as the specificity of correlates of various emotional states. It can also help to identify potential targets for interventions for individuals struggling with social interactions.

This talk will describe the current struggles of emotion research and provide some insights into how moment-by-moment recorded emotional states, physiological activity and body movements interact within individuals, in a social context between two individuals, and in conjunctions with personality characteristics. We will discuss, how the relationship between internal body activity and externally visible behaviour can be explained by current emotion theories and what potential applications of this research are for development of interactive digital agents and of intervention strategies.



Dr. Nwet-Kay Khine (Chulalongkorn University, Thailand)

PICAIS Research Project:

The emergence of digital authoritarianism – Myanmar between Chinese and Russian influence – as a laboratory for a new regime type

Research period: Nov 22 – Apr 23

Abstract

Academic freedom is particularly vulnerable during times of war. Since the start of the resistance war in Myanmar in 2021, the military has been repressing civil liberty, and state surveillance has become entrenched in every aspect of people's lives. Although the military has often faced defeats on the battleground, there is a strong resilience in ideological control—especially when it happens within the university.

This talk assesses limiting factors of academic freedom in Myanmar by analyzing forms of coercion and consent prevailing in education bureaucracy under the lens of the Gramscian State Theory. Following its crackdown on the Civil Disobedience Movement of lecturers and students in universities, the State Administrative Council is bolstering its ideological influence by utilizing staff trainings and legal modifications as tools for the state's ideological transmission. Universities must conform to the state's ideology and fulfill the legal, procedural, and institutional obligations of the ideological state apparatus.

This talk employs a combination of document analysis, participant observation, and qualitative interviews to identify the constraint factors that hinder academics from exercising their rights in knowledge production, while also exposing them to legal and structural violations of their civil and political rights.

It argues that the Civil Services Personnel Law and associated institutional culture deepen deprivation of academic freedom. It also suggests that new educational institutions evolving out of resistance need not repeat the history of coercion while needing to heal the damages done to the higher education system by the successive military governments that suppress political consciousness on the campus.



**Prof. Dr. Sandra Leaton Gray
(UCL Institute of Education, UK)**

PiCAIS Research Project:

*Education Futures: Visions of Artificial Intelligence,
Biometrics and Digital Surveillance within Bavarian schools*

Research period: Sept 24 – Dec 25

Abstract

**Education Futures: AI, Biometrics, and Digital Surveillance in
Bavarian Schools**

This study examined the conceptualisation of digitalisation within the Bavarian school system, focusing on artificial intelligence, biometrics, and digital surveillance. Building on prior research and linking to an ongoing European Commission foresight study, the project adopted an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on philosophy and sociology to analyse the evolving role of technology in education. Using a futures research methodology, it explored teachers' and students' perceptions of political, economic, social, technological, and institutional changes that shaped schooling.

Scenario-building exercises were used to examine attitudes towards educational technologies, revealing how digitalisation influenced pedagogical practices and social identity formation. The study also analysed power dynamics in technology adoption, considering who drove innovation and who was subject to it. The findings contributed to international debates on digital education, offering insights to inform policy development and governance.

This presentation will outline the key research questions, theoretical foundations, and findings, providing an interdisciplinary analysis of the implications of emerging digital technologies in Bavarian schools.