

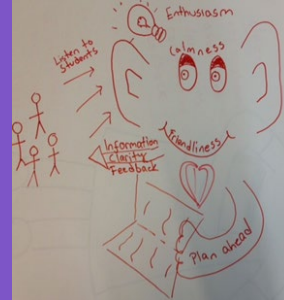
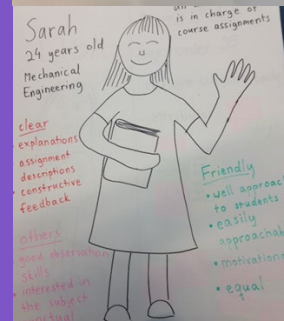
Teaching assistant as a learning facilitator

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Contact Session 2; 29.10.2019



Aalto University
School of Engineering



Feedback from previous session

What was good?

“..I started thinking my own teaching and how to improve it”

“Great interactive lecture (4)!”

“Finding new friend”

“Very informative class...”

“.....nice teachers, interesting topic”

“The ideal assistant tasks works well since it creates discussion from various points of view”

What would you change?

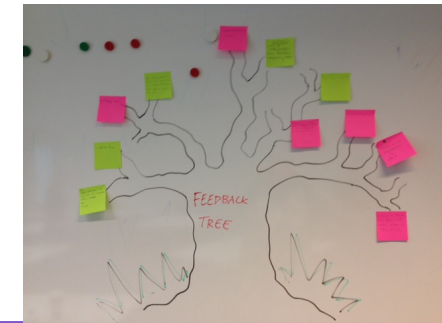
“All was fine”

“no cons”

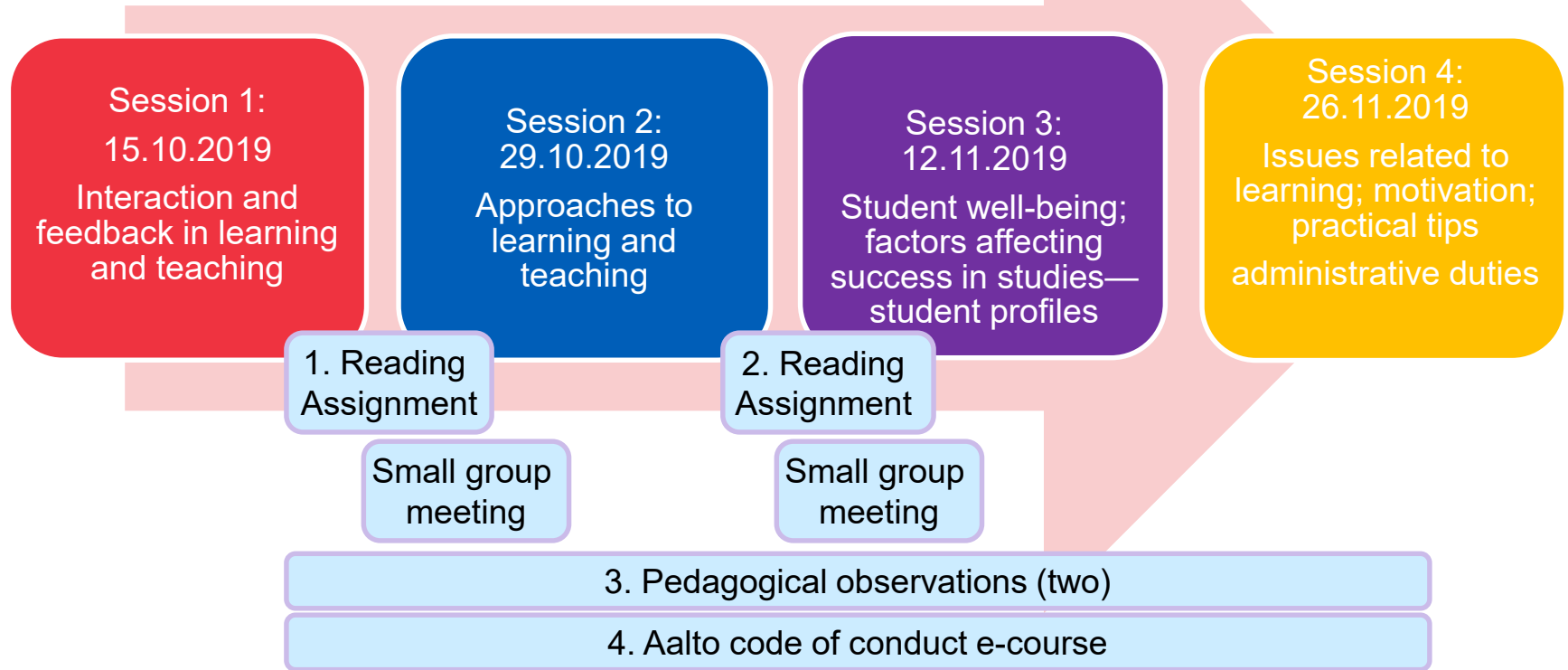
“Pace too slow”

“Ending a three hour session with mostly lecture is rather tiring”

“Break while cafeteria is open”



Course structure



Learning outcomes of this session

After the session you will be able to

- be aware of your own tasks and responsibilities as a teaching assistant
- recognise different approaches to learning
- be aware of the different levels of thinking about teaching

Timetable

13:00–13:10 Getting started

13:10-13:40 Course assistant's role, Tuomas Paloposki

13:40-13:55 Break

13:55-14:55 Approaches to learning and levels of thinking
about teaching: group work

Break before 14.30 (you are able to get coffee)

15:00-15:40 Wrapping up the group work

15:40-16:00 Learning assignments, feedback



Tuomas Paloposki

Break



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Group work: Learning and teaching at the university

Themes for group work

1. Different levels of thinking about teaching
2. Surface and deep approaches to learning
3. Examples of different levels of thinking about teaching

Gallery walk, instructions, part 1 (30 min)

- **Working in a group** of 4-6 people.
- **Discuss your theme:**
 - What do you think about it?
 - Describe your theme – what does it mean?
 - How is your theme realized in university teaching? Give examples.
- **Make a poster** together about the given theme (you can decide in the group about poster's visualisation)
- **Be prepared to present the poster** to a new group – everyone in the group will present the theme.
- Attach the posters on the wall.

Break



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Gallery walk, part 2.

New groups:

A group will go from poster to poster
(10 min/poster). The teacher will signal when time is up.



The poster is presented by a member of the group who has been producing it. Others may comment / add ideas.



→ A wrap-up of the gallery walk.





Wrapping up: Levels of thinking about teaching

LEVEL 1

Blame-the-student

FOCUS	What the STUDENT is?
TEACHER'S ROLE	Expert of the content
TEACHING	Transmitting information Lecturing Assessment Teaching as selective activity: Good and poor students. Teacher-centered
STUDENT'S ROLE	Attend lectures Listen and take notes Read Pass the exam Memorize – surface approach to learning

	LEVEL 1 Blame-the- student	LEVEL 2 Blame-the-teacher
FOCUS	What the STUDENT is?	What the teacher does?
TEACHER'S ROLE	Expert of the content	Expert of the content
TEACHING	<p>Transmitting information, lecturing Teaching as selective activity: Good and poor students.</p>  <p>Teacher-centered</p>	<p>Transmitting information Teaching is carefully planned Various teaching methods More management than facilitating learning</p>  <p>Teacher-centered</p>
STUDENT'S ROLE	<p>Attend lectures Listen and take notes Read Pass the exam Memorize – surface approach to learning</p>	<p>Attend lectures Listen Give answers Pass the exam Give feedback Memorize and understand</p>

	LEVEL 1 Blame-the- student	LEVEL 2 Blame-the-teacher	LEVEL 3
	Teacher-centered		Student-centered
FOCUS	What the STUDENT is?	What the teacher does?	What the student does?
TEACHER'S ROLE	Expert of the content	Expert of the content	Expert of the content Learning facilitator
TEACHING	<p>Transmitting information, lecturing Teaching as selective activity: Good and poor students.</p>  <p>Teacher-centered</p>	<p>Transmitting information Teaching is carefully planned Various teaching methods More management than facilitating learning</p>   <p>Teacher-centered</p>	<p>Support learning Clear learning outcomes Teaching and learning activities</p>  <p>Student-centered</p>
STUDENT'S ROLE	<p>Attend lectures Listen and take notes Read Pass the exam Memorize – surface approach to learning</p>	<p>Attend lectures Listen and give answers Pass the exam Give feedback Memorize and understand</p>	<p>Active approach to study Responsible over own learning Understand – deep approach to learning</p>
	Surface approach		Deep approach

Approaches to learning: background

- Research on learning approaches has been done in universities worldwide since the '70s.
- Approaches to learning were developed when trying to understand and explain *why* students' *learning outcomes* differed so much.
- The approaches were initially considered to be stable and immune to differences. Today they are understood to be *situational*: changeable and influenced by the learning situation (teacher, subject, group, requirements,...).

Approaches to learning

<i>Orientation</i>	Objective	Action	Consequence
<i>Deep</i>	To understand for oneself	Active processing	Actively interested
<i>Surface</i>	To achieve the pass criteria	Simply reproducing content to pass the course	Difficulties in understanding and anxiety
<i>Organised</i>	To obtain good grades	Systematic planning of activities	Aware of performance criteria

What can you do as a TA?

- **Give constructive feedback and be aware of your interaction**
 - ask open, activating questions – stimulate thinking
- **Offer additional information**
 - give examples
 - make analogies
 - repeat the relevant theory; give your understanding of it

Open questions to stimulate thinking (Aarnio & Enqvist 2002)

Can you explain what you have done so far?

What are you aiming for? (intermediate results in the problem)

How do you consider...?

What is it based on...?

What does it mean...? / What is the meaning of...?

How do you understand...?

What is it all about...?

How do you explain...?

How is it in your point of view...?

What are the consequences of...?

What if...?

What is this... connected to?

How do you feel about...?

What do you think you are going to do...?

What kind of actions...?

How to support learning as a TA?

- Know the learning objectives (intended outcomes) of the lesson and the course as a whole*
- Nurture students' need to achieve the outcomes (motivation is a product and a prerequisite)*
- Make students feel free to focus on the task: safe learning environment*
- Allow collaboration and dialogue, e.g. activating questions*
- + use of continuous assessment, different modes of assessment, feedback of learning etc

Learning assignments for the next session (1/3)

1. Reading assignment
2. Teaching observation
3. Group meeting

1. Reading assignment: DL11.11.2019

Go to MyCourses→Contact session 2, and find the link for the book:

Hemminki, M. Leppänen, M. & Valovirta T. 2013: Get inspired! A guide for successful teaching.

Read **Chapter 5, “How do I teach?”**, pp. 39–49.

Read the text so that you can discuss it with your peers in your group and in class.

Learning assignments for the next session (2/3)

2. Teaching observation DL 11.11.2019

- Observe an exercise class. If possible, visit a class of your group members or your course mates.
- Focus on the students and note down at least the following: **What do the students do? How does the teacher motivate them?** Add reflections and insights of your own. You may give constructive feedback to the teacher (ask first); if you do, be specific, be positive.
- Use the feedback form from MyCourses → Contact session 1 for this. Submit your observations and reflections to the submission box in MyCourses → Contact session 2.

Learning assignments for the next session (3/3)

3. Group work: reflect on the observed teaching session and the reading assignment DL 11.11.2019

- Arrange a meeting with your peer group.
- In the meeting, plan your teaching observation and discuss the article.
- Submit your notes and reflections in MyCourses (Contact session 2):
 - What did you discuss?
 - What did you observe?
 - What did you think about the article?

Feedback

<http://presemo.aalto.fi/engca>
