

PED-131.9000 Teaching assistant as a learning fasilitator

*Contact session 1; 15th October, 2019
Maire Syrjäkari and Emmi Ollila*

Timetable

13:00–13:35 Welcome

13:35–16:00 What makes a good assistant/teacher?

Interaction in learning and teaching

Giving feedback

What do you think about working as an assistant?

Pick a **postcard** which somehow describes your thoughts about working as an assistant

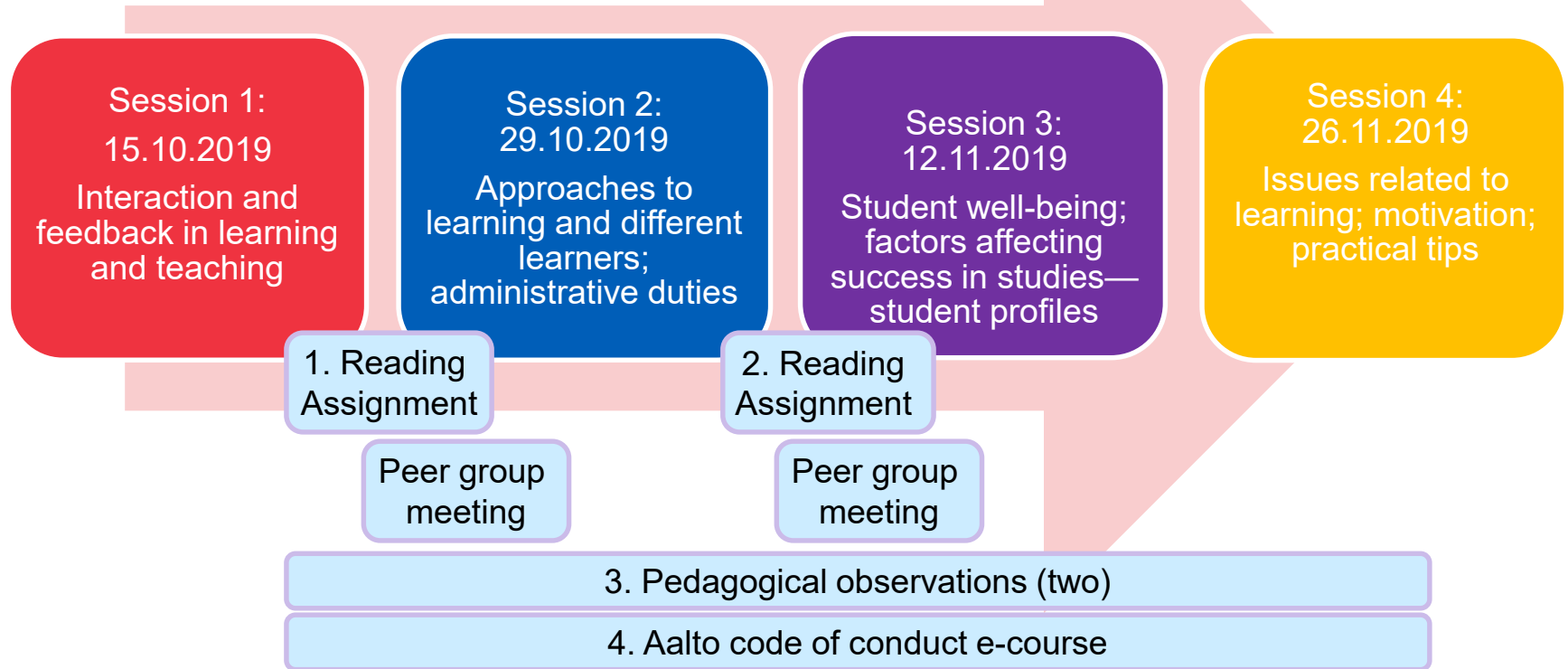


Learning outcomes for this course

After the course you will be able to

- observe the classroom environment from the learning perspective
- identify aspects to support students' learning process
- recognise ways to support students' study motivation
- identify your role as a learning facilitator

Course structure



How to complete the course

- Participating in the teaching sessions
 - Doing the coursework
 - reading assignments (two)
 - teaching observations and giving written feedback (two)
 - reflective write-up of half to one page (two, group work)
 - complete the e-course on the code of conduct at <https://mycourses.aalto.fi/course/view.php?id=19437>
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Participant's workload

A. Teaching sessions 12 h

B. Learning assignments (all together) 15 h

a) Reading assignment x 2 4 h

b) Teaching observation x 2 6 h

c) Reflective write-up x 2 4 h

d) e-course, code of conduct 1 h

C. Working in peer groups (2 meetings) 10 h

D. Reflection & working independently 17 h

Total 54 h
(2 credits)

(one credit is equivalent to a workload of 27 h)

Your expectations (1/3)

Interaction:

- **Interacting with students. How to approach them. Giving feedbacks related to the assignments.**
- **How to guide students interactively**
- **Interaction in teaching especially in larger groups, lecture style teaching/explanations.**

Your expectations (2/3)

Assessment and feedback:

- How to provide equal assessment to different students
- How to provide feedback to students
- How to assess and develop own ways of teaching
- How to guide students in exercises and provide constructive feedback

Your expectations (3/3)

Teaching skills:

- **Developing teaching skills: the aim is to be an inspiring and encouraging teacher**
 - **I would learn how to prepare a lecture properly**
 - **To be better at making people understand the concepts from the course**
 - **Thinking about ways to create a nice and social laboratory demonstration – helping students to bridge the gap between theory and practice.**
 - **Skills related to developing a course**
-

What makes a good course assistant?

What are the elements and capabilities that make "a good course assistant"?

Step 1 (5 min):

- Write down each element or capability on a separate sticky note.
-

Drawing a "prototype" of a good teaching assistant

Step 2 (steps 2 and 3, ~35 min):

- Share your thoughts with your group (~15 min)

Step 3 (~20 min):

- Draw and describe the course assistant that has the attributes and capabilities you have discovered
- You can personalise your prototype: give her/him a name, age, discipline etc.
- Prepare to present your group work (max 5 min/group)



Conceptions of teaching and learning: why is it important to be aware of them?

The teacher's own conception of learning has an impact on their choices of teaching methods

If you want to develop your teaching, it is vital to know what to develop

- Different conceptions may lead to different teaching methods—and different methods may lead to different learning results

International students may be accustomed to different teaching and learning methods, so they expect different kinds of teaching

Interaction: Why and how?

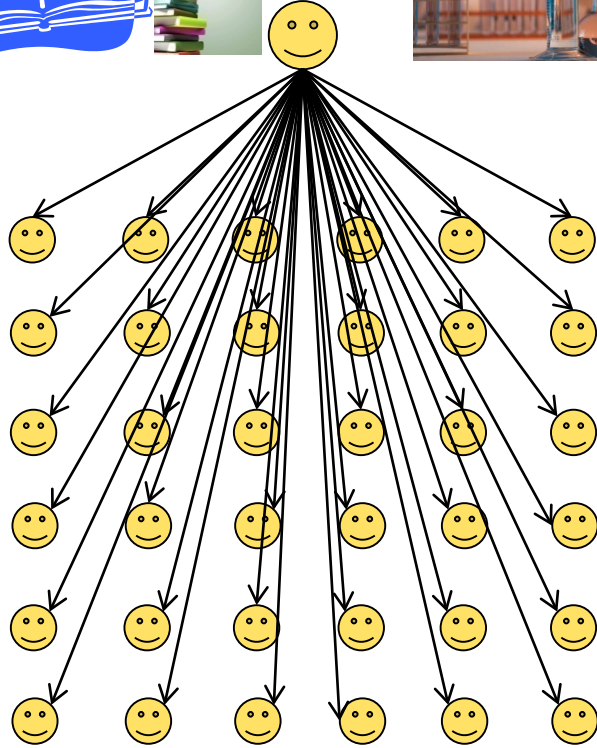
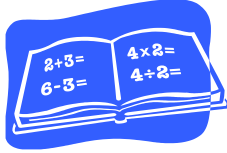
Interaction in teaching: why?

- The fundamental rationale is to improve students' learning
- Here interaction refers to the types of exchanges (communication) that are believed to extend thinking and enhance learning
- According to this view, learners develop understanding
 - *in interactive and social situations*
 - *with the help of and in collaboration with others*

Vygotsky 1972; Bruner 1986; Britton 1970; Wells 1986; Norman 1992; Barnes & Todd 1995; Mercer 1995 (in discourse: Gumperz 1982; Chafe 1982; Tannen 1989; Levinson 2006)

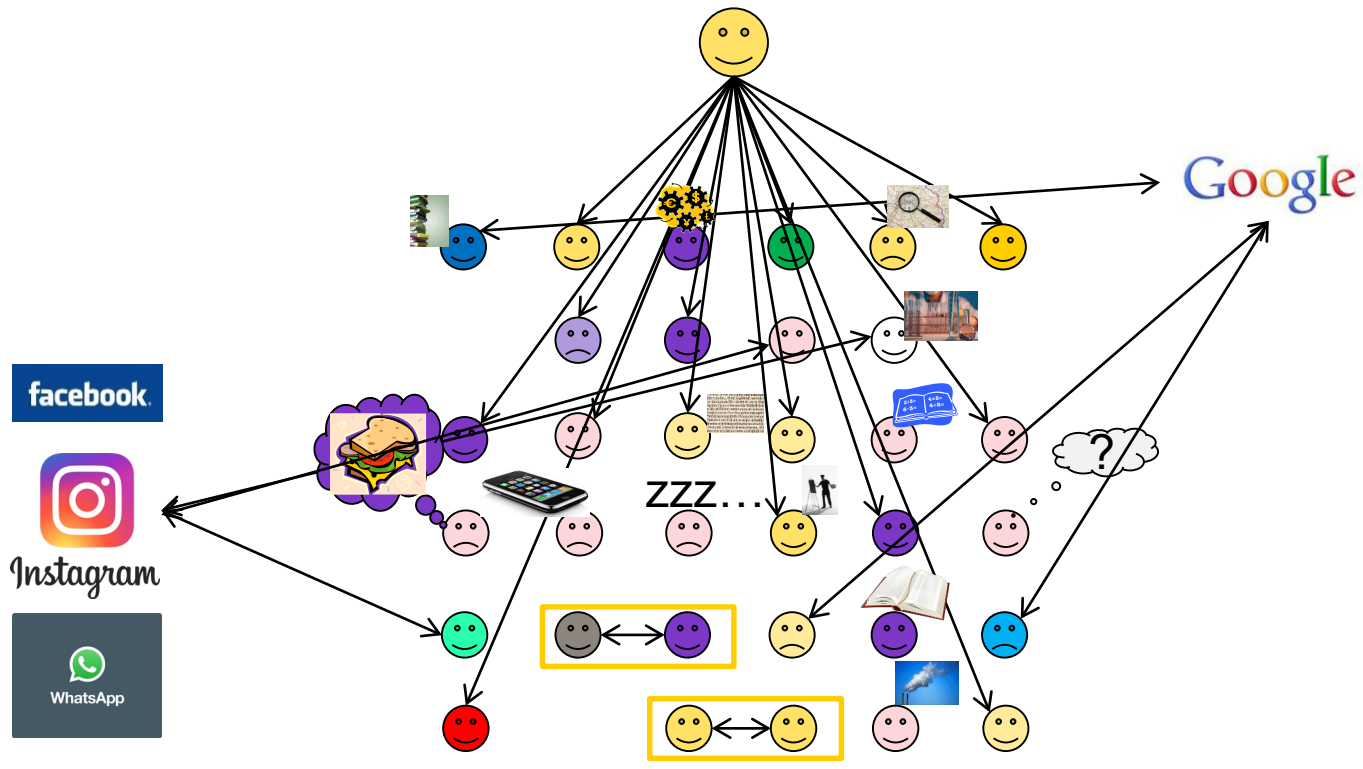
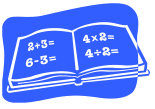


...wenn gewer rauchig auch duntvergie
tet (als im 2. Buch verzeichnet) ward im 2
mit als einem Abt / sonder als einem Wif
affen. Dostert aber war kein Bischoff, sond
Abt ein Dönch, welcher zum erlt mal wude
ist in seinem altes frieg gefürt vmb zepflic
er selbigen zeit solches frieg in die hend get
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inden nit hab insagen hingelagt werden, bifi
ung des Lands zuletzt verzeht haben. Es
n nit so vil Leüt als vnfrer Landesfürst, ric

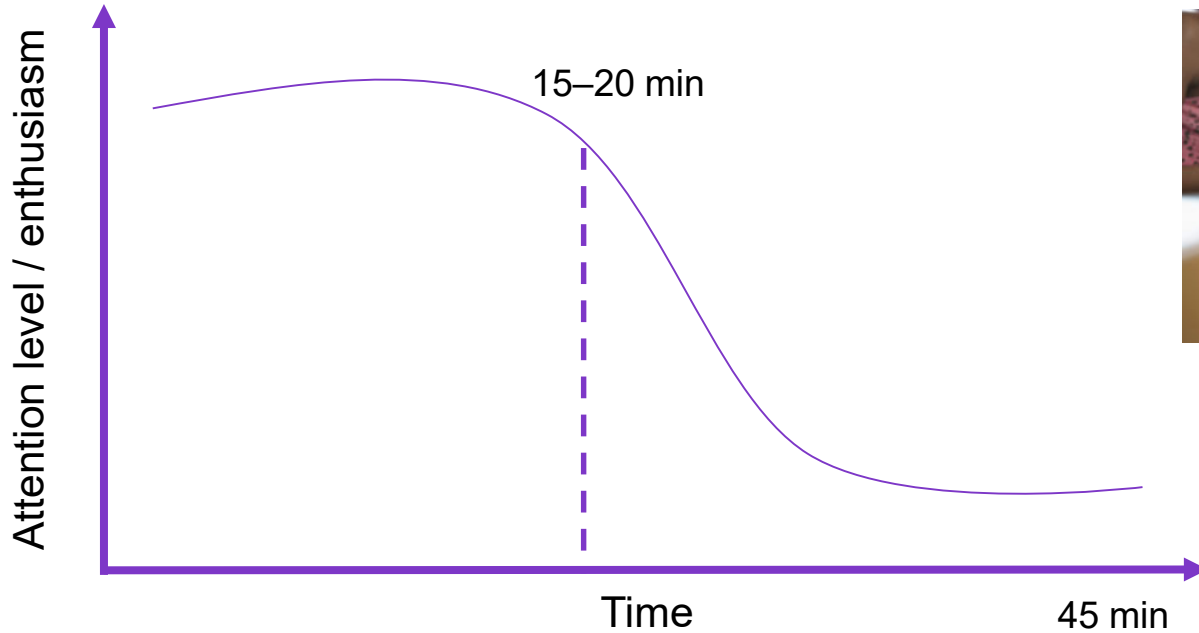




Handwritten German text, possibly a poem or a list of items, including words like 'Menschen von Colonna' and 'Menschen von Colonna'.



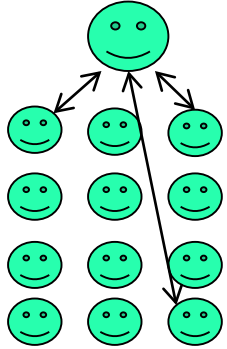
Attention vs. rhythm of teaching



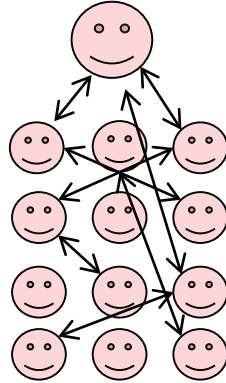
E.g., Johnson, A. & Proctor, R. W. 2004. Attention, theory and practise

Examples of how to arrange interaction

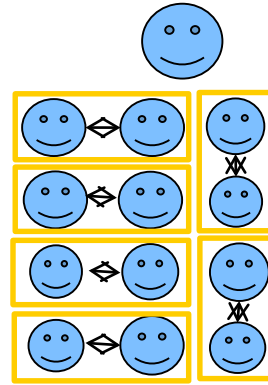
Between teacher and student



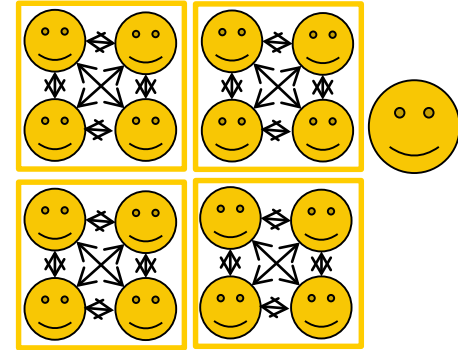
Teacher led group discussion



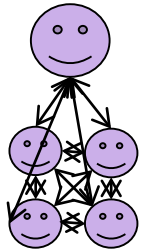
Discussion in pairs



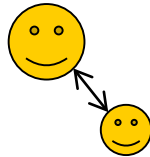
Group discussion; teacher coordinates



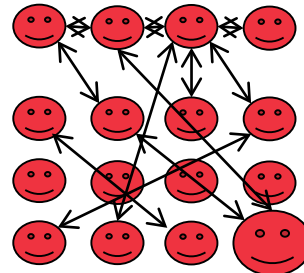
Group instruction



Personal instruction



Group discussion, led by the students



Interaction: to promote learning



Constructive discussion of
difficult issues

Deep processing of
the learned subjects

Fair/equal participation

Positive and safe atmosphere

Remember
the code of
conduct

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...?

Feedback

Your turn: What type of feedback have you received?

Recall a feedback session and analyse it:

- How was the situation?
- Who gave/received the feedback?
- How did you feel about it?
- What was good/not so good in the situation?
- Did you learn something from it?

Think about your own experiences independently and write notes (5 min)

Discuss and share them in groups of two or three (10 min)

Feedback

Constructive	Unconstructive/ destructive
Is about an issue/action	Is about a person
Justifies the views	Contains judgements (good/bad)
Is useful for development	Does not necessarily benefit anyone
Takes into account the recipient's state of development, situation, ability to receive feedback etc.	Does not take the recipient into account, is given only from the evaluator's perspective
States observations	Makes subjective conclusions / interpretations
Two-way process, the recipient has an opportunity of responding	One-way process

✓ Avoid using the word BUT!

Examples (1/2)

Constructive	Unconstructive/destructive
<p>Is about an issue/action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. Up to here everything is fine... now let me see... ah, there's an error here.</i>	<p>Is about the person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. Can't you understand when I tell you...?</i>
<p>Justifies the views</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. Consider this from the point of view of...</i>	<p>Contains judgements (good/bad)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. You don't know what you're talking about.</i>
<p>Is useful for development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. You did this part correctly, and practice this part some more...</i>	<p>Does not necessarily benefit anyone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. How stupid can you be...</i>
<p>Takes into account the recipient's state of development, situation, ability to receive feedback, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Confirm the situation: <i>Can you explain what you have done...? What do you think about this...?</i>	<p>Does not take the recipient into account, is given only from the evaluator's perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Assume you know the situation: <i>This is how it is, nothing you say will change my mind...</i>

Examples (2/2)

Constructive	Unconstructive/destructive
<p>States observations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. This is what I observed... This looks like... I think this is...</i>	<p>Makes subjective conclusions / interpretations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. This is what you did. This went like this because...</i>
<p>Two-way process, the recipient has an opportunity to respond</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. Do you think that you understood what I meant... I hope I understood your question correctly...? Could you elaborate...?</i>	<p>One-way process, no chance to answer or reflect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <i>E.g. This is how it was, and that's it.</i>

Offering feedback

Your message should be in the tone: *I appreciate you and what you have done and whatever else I say should be taken in this context.*

- Be realistic
- Be sensitive to the goals of the recipient: LISTEN
- Be timely!!
- Be descriptive
- Don't be judgemental
- Be positive

Adapted from Boud, D. (1991). Implementing Student Self Assessment. HERDSA Green Guide. No. 5. Second Edition. Sydney: HERDSA. Revised October 1994.

Goals of the learning assignments

1. Reading assignments (two)

- Read the text so that you can discuss it with your peers in your small group

2. Teaching observations (two)

- Observe a class, focusing on a given theme
- Make notes and reflect on the observation
- Give feedback to the teacher/course assistant observed

3. Group meetings (two)

- Reflect on the previous course session
- Discuss and reflect on the reading assignment
- Plan your teaching observation

4. Code of conduct e-course

- General guidelines of acceptable behaviour
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Peer groups during the course

Tekgul Bulut	EEN-E1020 - Heat Transfer 28.10.2019 - 10.12.2019
Liski Markus	ENY-C2001 Termodynamiikka ja lämmönsiirto
Basnet Sunil	MEC-E2009 Marine risks and safety L, 2019
Forsström Petri	GIS-E1040 - Photogrammetry, Laser Scanning and Remote Sensing L, 29.10.2019-16.12.2019
Box Walter	WAT-E1030 and WAT-E2020
Virkki Vili	WAT-E1030 Computational Methods in Water and Environmental Engineering (1) Water and People in a Changing World (2)
Teerihalme Santtu	ENG-A1001 - Tietokoneavusteiset työkalut insinööritieteissä MEC-E1003 - Machine Design Project sl 2019
Adibaskoro Tito	GEO-E1050 - Finite Element Method sl 2019
Omidi Milad	COE-C1001 Statics and dynamics
Tran Quoc-Anh	GEO-E1050 Finite Element Method and Advanced Soil mechanics sl 2019
Hasani Aleni Afshin	Statics and Dynamics
Saukkonen Sara	ENY-C2003 Vesi- ja ympäristötekniikka
Bergholm Pihla	ENY-C2003 Vesi- ja ympäristötekniikka 10.9.2019 - 11.12.2019
Lehikoinen Anni	ENY-C2003 Vesi- ja ympäristötekniikka 10.9.2019 - 11.12.2019
Keltti Ilona	Vesi ja ympäristö

Learning assignments for the next session (1/3)

1. Reading assignment: DL 28.10.2019

MyCourses→Contact session 1, and find the link for the book:

Biggs, J., Tang, C. 2011: *Teaching for Quality Learning at the University*.

Read chapter 2, "Teaching according to how students learn", p. 16–33.

Read the text before the first peer group meeting (before 2nd Contact session) so you can discuss about it with your peers.

Learning assignments for the next session (2/3)

2. Teaching observation: DL 28.10.2019

- Visit an exercise class (or other teaching session), if possible a class of one of your group members.
- Focus on **interaction** in the classroom and write down at least the following: What kind of session it was? How was it created? How a teaching assistant created and supported an interaction? Which aspects you found supported students' learning process? You can add reflections and insights of your own.
- Be specific, positive and give constructive feedback. **Use the feedback form from MyCourses for this.**
- Give your feedback to your peer/the teacher, and submit it in MyCourses (Contact session 1) with the name of the observed peer/teacher removed.

Learning assignments for the next session (3/3)

3. Peer group work for the course: DL 28.10.2019

- Start your group work now: Arrange two meetings with your peer group, one before the next class and the other after (do it now).
 - In peer group meeting:
 - *discuss about the article,*
 - *plan your teaching observation and*
 - *write peer group's reflection and post it (with the names of peer group members) in MyCourses Peer Group work discussion forum (under Contact session 1).*
 - What did you think about the article? What did you discuss? What did you observe?
-

Feedback time:
What was good?



What would you change?



Additional material: Principles of effective feedback (1/3)

1. Feedback is ongoing and integral part of assessment/course

- relevant, timely, fit for purpose, informs the process of learning
- constructively aligned with intended learning outcomes

2. Feedback guidance is explicit

- clarifies assessment criteria, is explicit about the criteria of quality

3. Feed-forward is emphasized more than feedback activities

- feedback is on work in progress

4. Students are engaged in the process

- feedback enables development of self-assessment skills: not too detailed and specific.

5. Content and level of feedback

- focuses on what, how, and why
- suggestions on how to improve
- takes students' level of understanding into account

6. Training in feedback/forward is an integral part of a course

- feedback facilitates relationship building between lectures and students
- peer feedback
- training in how to peer- and self-assess

Additional material: Concrete actions to ensure students receive useful feedback (2/3)

1. Ensure an appropriate range and choice of assessment opportunities throughout a program of study;
 2. Ensure that guidance about assessment is integrated into all teaching sessions
 3. Ensure all resources are available to students via virtual learning environments and other sources from the start of a program to enable students to take responsibility for organizing their own learning
 4. Clarify with students how all elements of assessment fit together and why they are relevant and valuable
 5. Provide explicit guidance to students on the requirements of assessment
 6. Clarify with students the different forms and sources of feedback available including e-learning opportunities
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Evans (2013), p. 79

Additional material: Concrete actions to ensure students receive useful feedback (3/3)

7. Ensure early opportunities for students to undertake assessment and obtain feedback
 8. Clarify the role of the student in the feedback process as an active participant and not as purely receiver of feedback and with sufficient knowledge to engage in feedback
 9. Provide opportunities for students to work with assessment criteria and to work with examples of good work
 10. Give clear and focused feedback on how students can improve their work including signposting the most important areas to address
 11. Ensure support is in place to help students develop self-assessment skills including training in peer feedback possibilities including peer support groups;
 12. Ensure training opportunities for staff to enhance shared understanding of assessment requirements
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