



Aalto University
School of Electrical
Engineering

PED-131.9000 Teaching assistant as a learning instructor

Day 2

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Today's schedule

- 9:00–9:30** Getting started, summary of observations + group work
- 9:30–10:30** Group work: Different student profiles
- 10:30–11:20** Wrapping up the group work (acting out the profiles), summary of approaches to learning and studying
- 11:20–11:45** Learning services: assistants' administrative duties (Riikka Leikola)
- 11:45–12:00** Learning assignments and feedback

Breaks included in the programme

Different student profiles

Read through the four student profiles and note down their most important aspects. Think about the learning approaches (from your reading assignment) as well.

For the profile assigned to your group, think about the following:

- Have you met students who might be similar in any way?
Don't take the types too literally and don't go into details
- How might they act and succeed in your course(s)?
- How can you support their learning or help them solve exercise problems?
- How can you support their motivation?

Prepare to act out a situation depicting the student profiles (one member is the student and another is the assistant)



Tim

Tim noticed in the morning that he should do his course assignments. Feeling somehow anxious and restless, he decided to do his laundry first, and, while waiting for the washing in the machine to be done, he checked if there was anything interesting in Netflix. After four hours, he felt even more anxious, but nonetheless he picked up the course material. The first assignment was difficult, and he tried to look for an example similar to the assignment in the materials. He did not really understand the idea of the assignment, and wondered why he had to study such demotivating material.

The next day he went to the exercises (laskarit) and noticed that he didn't really understand what the assistant was talking about. For a moment he thought that it would be a great idea to ask if the assistant could explain the main idea more clearly. Then he noticed that everyone else was taking notes. He was glad that he didn't ask anything so that the others didn't notice how stupid he was.

Lisa

Lisa woke up early in the morning because she had a very busy day ahead. She was worried about her math assignments. She had allocated two hours for the assignments and knew that it was too little for such complicated assignments, but she also had to prepare for two oncoming exams, attend an important board meeting of her guild, take her dog to the vet, and write some summer job applications. She ended up spending one hour with the math assignments, having tried in vain to look for something helpful in the course materials to do the assignments as quickly as possible. She felt bad about herself because she really would like to do well in her studies. Math is important in her field, and she knows that. She blamed herself for bad time management.

The next day she went to the exercises (laskarit) and asked for some help. She didn't understand what the assistant said because she couldn't remember what some of the key concepts meant. "Too much information," she thought but didn't say anything.

Anna

Anna found math assignments very interesting. She had attended all the lectures and even read some extra material she found on the Internet while she looking for material on a related topic. She had a good routine for doing calculations, but one of the assignments was particularly difficult. She had some ideas on how to solve this difficult assignment, but she didn't know how to proceed.

Anna went to the exercises (laskarit) and took a seat in the back row. She had always been shy and was a bit worried about whether the course assistant was paying attention on her. She didn't really know other students in the classroom because she preferred to study on her own. She was hoping that someone else would ask the same questions she had in mind.

Ted

Ted had always been interested in natural sciences and thought that the assignments on the course were quite easy. He spent some time calculating the assignments but skipped the last one because he thought it was a kind of stupid. “Why should I know this type of detail anyway? And there are so many other interesting things to do...”

The next day Ted came to the exercises (laskarit) and noticed that the course assistant was one minute late. Ted talked with some friends or browsed Facebook most of the time. The assistant asked Ted to write one solution on the blackboard, and Ted asked if it really was necessary because the assignment was so simple. When explaining some details of the last assignment, Ted interrupted the assistant and asked if they really understood what they were talking about.

Learning assignments

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

1. Reading assignment: DL 7.4.2017

Go to MyCourses→Day 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

2. Teaching observation. DL 7.4.2017

- 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→Day 1 for this. Submit your observations and reflections to the submission box in MyCourses→Day 2.

Learning assignments

3. Group work: reflect on the teaching session and the reading assignment. DL 7.4.2017

- Arrange a meeting with your small group (do it now).
- In the meeting, plan your teaching observation and discuss the article.
- Submit your notes and reflections in MyCourses (Day 2):
 - *What did you discuss?*
 - *What did you observe?*
 - *What did you think about the article?*