



Influencing academic teaching cultures through evaluation



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1


Influencing academic teaching cultures - touching on a complex issue

The aim of this lecture:
Culture is constructed collectively assign
meaning to things around us

The culture we live in defines us and we
define the culture

It defines what is important, who is important
and how we talk to each other


**How to influence the way we talk about
teaching – through evaluation**



2

Academic teachers

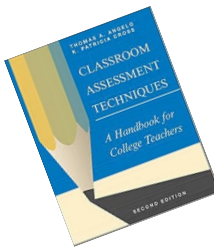
Learn about teaching from students and other academic teachers
(Warfvinge et al. 2018)



3

Teachers surveying students (I)

Ask about what is important: understanding and learning
Much more valuable than opinions



- Minute paper
- Muddiest point
- Background knowledge probe
- Application card
- Misconception check
- ...

Use clickers, mentimeter, or pen
and paper
But be sure to share your
findings with students

Google "classroom assessment techniques" and you will learn many more ways to do this

4

Teachers surveying students (II)

Invite students before, during and after the course

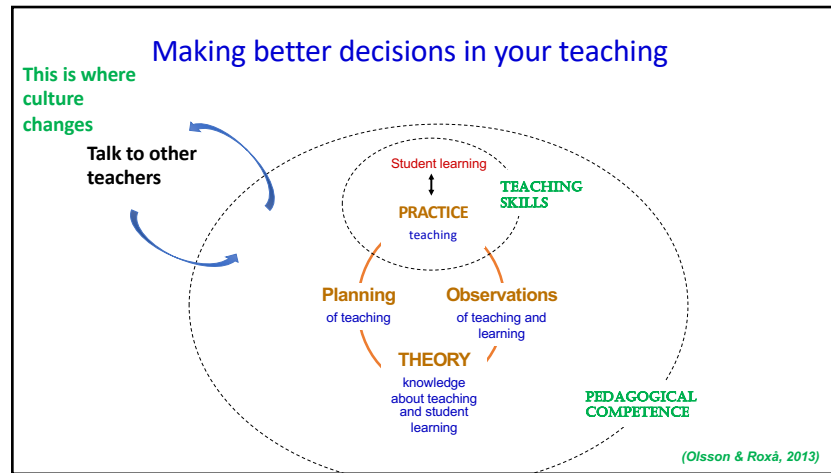
Invite your students

- Ask about their experience
- Ask about what they think about your planning
- Ask about previous knowledge in the area
- Ask about anything that is relevant for their learning

This will give you more engaged students and a lot of new material to consider while making decisions

If you think you cannot trust their answers - then there is a much bigger problem !!

5



6

An example of a report

1300 words – a focus on student learning – a few relevant references

LTHs 8e Pedagogiska Inspirationskonferens, 17 december 2014

Learning for Ill-Structured Problems in Engineering Education

Kristian Sälme and Delphine Bard

Abstract—An important goal of the engineering education is to prepare the students to deal with complex and ill-structured problems. The term ill-structured refers to problems without conclusive or unambiguously defined solutions. This view on problems is related to the concept of constructive alignment and to an educational model called 6 languages for knowledge and learning that describe 6 increasingly complex perspectives, where the shift from the 2nd to the 6th perspective illustrates a shift from promoting well-structured and an instrumental view on learning to emphasizing ill-structured problems and a focus on the process in which the learner constructs knowledge. The model was used as a scaffold for constructing the course syllabus and learning outcomes for the teachers and for the students. The part of the course that could be framed as an ill-structured problem was the assignment. The process of engaging in the assignment was supported by a guide for teaching critical thinking.

Index Terms—Ill-structured problems, perspectives on understanding and learning, constructive alignment, support.

We have about 600 of these texts in a database

II. EDUCATIONAL MODEL
 An educational model that addresses these questions is called 6 languages for knowledge and learning, developed by Erik Jan van Rossum and Rebecca Hamer [4]. It was inspired by Ference Marton and Roger Säljö's phenomenographic research and from adult development theorists such as William Perry, Marcia Baxter Magolda and not least Robert Kegan.
 The model describes six qualitatively different perspectives on what it means to understand something, and what characterizes good teaching: 1. *Increase of knowledge* and 2. *Memorizing*, the least complex and developed perspectives, based on an absolute and concrete view of knowledge; 3. *(Reproductive) Application* specifies an instrumental view of knowledge and formulas as tools to solve well-structured problems; 4. *Learning to think (as an expert)* emphasizes the knowledge of the process for handling ill-structured problems; 5. *Multiple perspective / Relativism* is the ability to construct multiple perspectives on an issue, such as ethics, sustainability or social perspectives; 6. *Growing awareness of self / Identity* describes a shift in focus from knowledge, perspectives or abilities to identity [5]. The 6 perspectives are further

7

Most academic teacher agree upon what good academic learning is

8

10 students – which five would you like to have in your class?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. I try to relate ideas in one subject to those in others, whenever possible. | 6. I tend to choose subjects with a lot of factual content rather than theoretical kinds of subjects. |
| 2. I usually don't have time to think about the implications of what I read. | 7. In trying to understand new ideas, I often try to relate them to real-life situations to which they might apply. |
| 3. I find I tend to remember things best if I concentrate on the order in which the lecturer presented them. | 8. When I'm tackling a new topic, I often ask myself questions about it which the new information should answer. |
| 4. In reading new material I often find that I'm continually reminded of material I already know and see the latter in a new light. | 9. I spend a lot of my free time finding out more about interesting topics which have been discussed in classes. |
| 5. I find it best to accept the statements and ideas of my lecturers and question them only under special circumstances. | 10. Although I generally remember facts and details, I find it difficult to fit them together into an overall picture. |

9

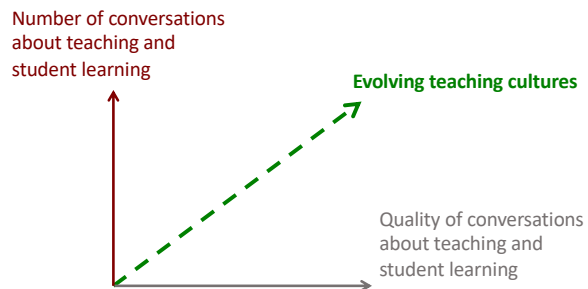
10 students – which five would you like to have in your class?

Green is deep approach to learning – red is surface approach to learning (Ramsden 2005)

- | | |
|---|--|
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10

For leaders: Support more and better conversations



11

Student Evaluation of Teaching

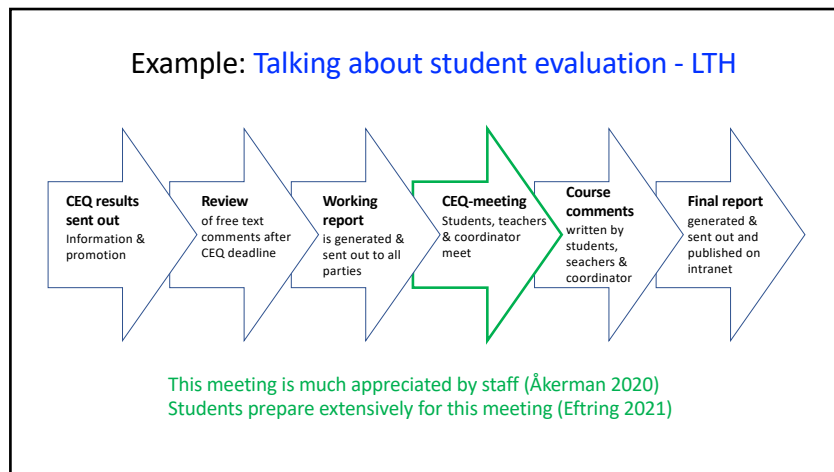
ask meaningful questions – about student experience, not about opinions

Good teaching cluster – Course Experience Questionnaire (Ramsden 2005)

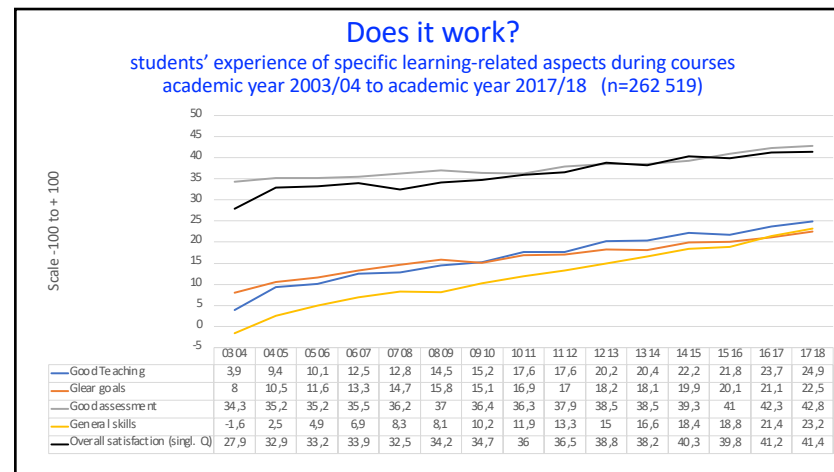
- 1) The teaching has motivated me to do my best
- 2) During the course, I have received many valuable comments on my achievements
- 3) The teachers made a real effort to understand the problems and difficulties one might be having in this course
- 4) The teaching staff normally gave me helpful feedback on the progress of my work
- 5) My lecturers were extremely good at explaining things
- 6) The teachers on the course worked hard to make the subject interesting

We also ask about: Goals and standards; Examination; General skills; and Workload

12



13



14

For deans and rectors

go for quality enhancement

- quality assurance will follow

- I. enhancement never follows automatically from quality assurance
- II. numbers and measurement will not convince doubting academic teachers
- III. beware of discussion in north America and the UK
- IV. cultural development is always contradictory and chaotic

15

Thank you !

References:

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- Borch, I. (2021). *Student evaluation practice. A qualitative study on how student evaluation of teaching, courses and programmes are carried out and used.* (PhD). UiT The Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø Norway.
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- Ramsden, P. (2005). *Learning to Teach in Higher Education* (2nd ed.). London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Warfvinge, P., Roxå, T., & Löfgreen, J. (2018). *What influences teachers to develop their pedagogical practice?* Paper presented at the LTHs 10:e Pedagogiska Inspirationskonferens, Lund (Sweden).
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16



17

Five (contradictory) ways to define quality in Higher Education


(Harvey & Stensaker 2008)

Exceptional	Quality is high if the standards are surpassed
Perfection or consistency	Quality is high if there are zero defects and things are done right the first time
Fitness for purpose	Quality is high when a product or service meets its stated purpose
Value for money	Quality is high when effort, investment, or expenditure pays off
Transformation	Quality is high when students develop (epistemologically, professionally, personally, as citizens,)

18

How to influence an academic culture

towards ongoing development of teaching

The seal of the University of North Carolina, featuring a figure holding a torch and a book, surrounded by the text "THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA" and "1666".

19



20

Were teaching cultures are constructed – and maintained
academia is constituted through interaction



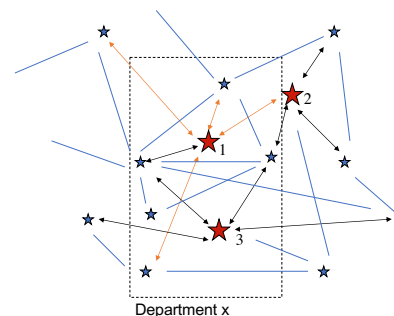
How many individuals do you talk to
about your teaching

We found 4 + (-) 2
(Roxå & Mårtensson 2009; Special issue IJAD, 2021)

21

Significant conversations and significant networks

(Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009)



Backstage conversations on teaching among trusted colleagues

We need reports from these conversations – as we do in research

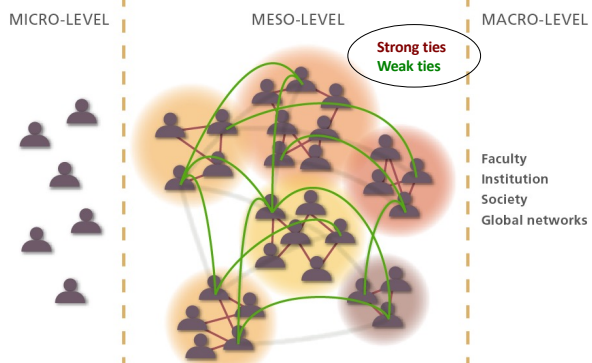
The resulting frontstage conversation will push quality

Better and more conversations drive development

22

How to develop the organisation

(Mårtensson, 2014; Roxå, Mårtensson & Alveteg, 2011)



Weak ties – arenas, artefacts, brokers – SoTL - leadership

23

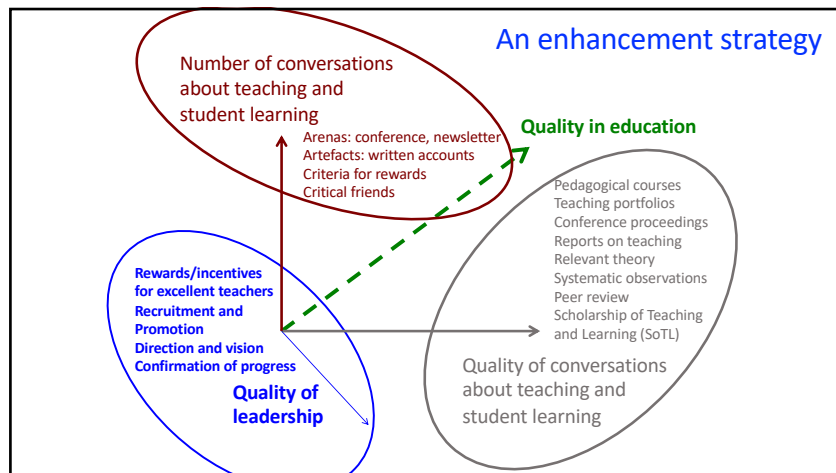
Foster a front stage conversation about teaching

Quality is measured against the conversation within the organisation

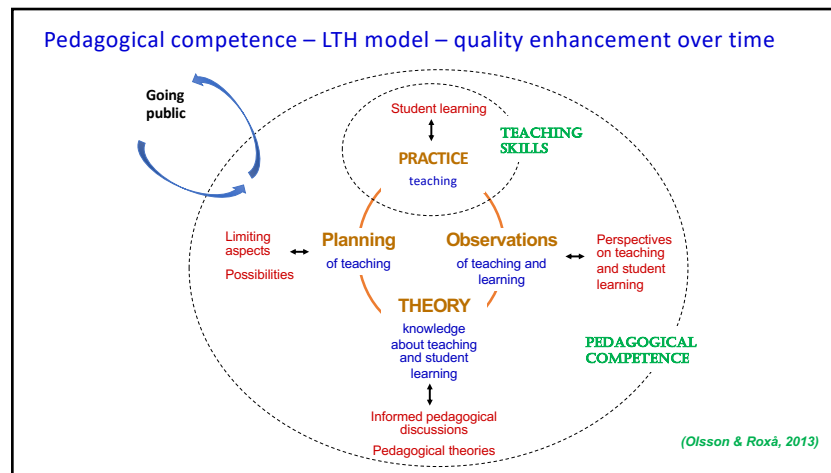
- 1) There are many ways to understand quality
- 2) **Academia is by nature pluralistic**, do not align conceptions of quality
- 3) But – demand **reports from significant backstage conversation** about education and teaching
- 4) Support this transition with professional development, arenas, venues,
- 5) **Expect and reward** engagement in 3) & 4)
- 6) Demand a **focus on what the students do**, learn, perform
– what teachers do is a way to influence students, it's not the core process

“It is allowed to teach in whatever way you want, as long as you have an argument for it – an argument that is supported by evidence, literature, or at least, observations”

24



25



26

Tensions emerging from student evaluation of teaching (SET) policies

(Darwin 2017)

- (1) SET focus on students' expectations **or** should students be challenged
- (2) should teachers innovate **or** should they teach in "normal ways"
- (3) should SET measure quality **or** should they contribute to development
- (4) should the institution guide teachers **or** should the discipline
- (5) should policies lead **or** should professional judgement lead
- (6) Should management decide **or** should a scholarly conversation lead

27

Constructing student evaluations of courses

- Design your student surveys locally
- But learn from others
- Do not follow US and Canada
- Collect material for further analysis
- Focus on development
- Do not ask about opinions

28