

LEARNING WITHOUT TEACHING, Use of ICT-based Models in Teacher Training

* Svein Ove Lysne

** Jostein Tvedte

Over the last eight years, we have through both European and national projects, evolved models for integration of external and on-campus courses. From only having on-campus courses with «traditional» teaching, we have gradually published our courses on Internet, and offered them as Open and Distance Learning (ODL) courses. This evaluation has brought focus on how to teach, both on Internet and in the classroom. Important questions are: What is different between meeting the student in the classroom and on Internet? How do teachers and students interact with each other in the classroom, and how is this interaction different on Internet? How do we make the best and most effective interaction between students and teachers?

FROM TEACHING TO GUIDING

It is obvious that interaction with external students will differ from interaction with on-campus students. While on-campus students are able to use a more direct interaction with the teacher and fellow students, the interaction with external students are mostly based on the use of electronic tools.

To evolve our models of teaching, we have asked: When external courses do not have any teaching in the traditional sense of the word, but are based on guiding of the students, how can teaching in the classroom on internal courses be an important and fundamental factor? The answer seems to be that we do not have to make the teaching in the classroom the only difference between external- and internal courses. We use the classroom to stimulate internal students to work with the material in the same way as external students.

Based on our experiences we find that interaction with external students is very accurate in the sense that the students ask/interact according to the content of the course or related to assignments. The students are well prepared for the guiding and interaction with the teacher. This context related guiding is more effective than traditional teaching, where the content is very often new to the students. By cutting the traditional teaching in the classroom, and using the time for guiding, we force the students to work with the content before they meet in the classroom. They have to identify problems, form questions, not just be passive listeners to a lecture of new material. We force on-campus students to work much more like external students. Very often lectures are organised as a delivery of new information, and a stimulus to work with the material **after** the lecture.

* Stord/Haugesund College, Dept. of Education Studies & Science, N-5409 Stord, Norway.
Phone: +47 53 49 13 77 email: sveinove.lysne@hsh.no

** Stord/Haugesund College, Dept. of Education Studies & Science, N-5409 Stord, Norway.
Phone: +47 53 49 13 78 email: jostein.tvedte@hsh.no

In our model we shift this focus, and force the students to work with the material **before** the teaching and guiding in the classroom or on Internet. The students' roles as listeners are changed to roles as workers who are able to prepare and influence on their own learning. We find the face to face interaction very important. The reduction of teaching in the classroom is done to make time available for guiding, individually or in groups, not to reduce time spent on communication between student and teacher. The fundamental in our new model is that the students to a much greater extent decide the content of the interaction between teacher and student.

LEARNING WITHOUT TEACHING

Learning is no direct consequence of teaching. Based on this assumption, we have focused on what the students need help to understand, not on the delivery of a number of predefined lectures. To use the time efficiently we do not want the students to spend their time listening to information, which they just as well can read or work with by themselves, or that they do not find to be a problem to understand. Input from the teacher should be given after the students have reflected on the content.

The organisation of our courses is based on an complete integration of external and on-campus students, and in our model we have developed identical courses for these two categories of students. The physical location of the students should not influence the organisation of the courses.

Important factors in our model are:

- There is no «traditional» teaching in the classroom, but the students can «order» lectures from the teacher according to their own wishes. The burden of deciding the main points of the lectures is handed over to the students. In this way they influence the teaching. This opportunity to get individualised teaching or guiding can be made through Internet for both external and on-campus students, and in the classroom for internal students. This is a new way of defining teaching, where knowledge or information is not given to the students, but obtained from the teacher, - teaching on demand.
- The classroom is redefined as an area for interaction. While the external students only use the Internet to interact with the teacher, the on-campus students also use the classroom.
- All questions or «ordering» of lectures, are to be published in an open conferencing system, where all students that are interested can participate. The result of the lectures shall also be published on Internet, in order to give all the students the same opportunity to participate in both ordering lectures, and getting information from them. In this model the students are able to decide where to participate, and identify what is necessary and interesting for their own learning. We make a more time efficient system for the students. They judge by themselves what they want or need.
- The teacher's role will be to prepare most of the content of the course. This is done by making references to books, URLs, multimedia sequences and other recourses. In our courses the teachers also have to develop much of the course material by themselves. In

this way the teachers make the content available, and the students select what themes to work with individually, in cooperation with other students or the teacher, in the classroom or on Internet. We also see that the teachers need to have knowledge in related areas, because the students often like to have information on themes that are related to the content of the course. The teachers must at relatively short notice be able to give (short) lectures on wanted themes. The lectures may not always be very long and well prepared over a long time, but shorter and more directly based on student related problems and assignments.

- It is also important that the teachers give assignments to the students to stimulate the work. This can be both big defined assignments, or small inspirations to more individually based creative work.

To make a complete integration of external and on-campus students, and to force the students to participate in the course, we have used an e-learning platform. This platform allows teachers and students to publish their material, and interact with each other. We have used the tool ClassFronter (<http://fronter.com>), a tool with both public and private rooms. ClassFronter contains tools for cooperation, in addition to traditional tools like news, e-mail and chat. The integration of all tools and recourses is here important to make a complete learning environment.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Our courses still have a relative strictly defined curriculum. The interaction and participation of the students are according to this curriculum. To make the students even more important actors in the courses, we plan to let them define and develop more of the content in the courses. We shall not present to the students **what to learn**, but rather **what to solve**. This can be done by giving big assignments, where the students within defined limits can decide how to work with the content. Through identical courses we can get many different points of view to work with the material. The teacher's role is to be a resource that students can use according to individually defined work.

SUMMARY

Our main goal is to base learning on the students' own work, not lecturing. We find the students' participation in the study to be fundamental to the learning, both according to defining the content of the lectures and guiding related to the students own work and assignments. The individual needs for guiding is the most important argument for not using traditional predefined lectures.