

TEACHING PORTFOLIO

Maria SEMKOVSKA

1. Formal educational training

April 2015 Certificate in University and College Teaching from EPIGEUM London, United Kingdom

June 2010 Supervisory Management Course (4 days) from Staff Development Unit, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

March 2009 Research Supervisors Training Course from CAPSL, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

2. Administrative tasks relating to education

2016-2018: Research colloquium organiser for post-graduate education, University of Limerick, Ireland

2014-2016: Chair of the Psychology Department Student Status Committee, University of Limerick, Ireland, which evaluates all student requests for a review of their status (e.g., exemptions, between-programs transfers) from the departmental 5 academic programs in accordance with the Academic Regulations

2014-2015: Academic lead of the departmental application to the Psychological Society Ireland for a five-year re-accreditation of BA Psychology & Sociology and BSc Psychology at the University of Limerick, Ireland

2013-2016: Member of the Education and Health Sciences Faculty Course Directors Board, which remit is the evaluation of new academic programs or changes to existing faculty academic programs regarding recommendations to the University's Academic Council, University of Limerick, Ireland

2013-2016: Course Director of the Bachelor of Science in Psychology (BSc) program at the University of Limerick, Ireland, responsible for the organisation and management of this 4-year academic programme. This role involves leading the management, improvement and promotion of the BSc psychology programme; monitoring, recording and reporting overall student satisfaction and performance across all 4 years of the programme and acting as a common point of contact for students, academic staff and administration. It further requires liaising and reporting to the degree external examiners and the professional accrediting bodies.

3. Experience of study programmes, supervision and examinations

Since 2001, I have taught 41 modules at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, mainly in the domain of clinical psychology (27 modules on diagnosis, intervention, assessment methods, developmental psychopathology), but also cognition and biological psychology. For 18 of these modules, I have ensured 100% of the teaching delivery and for another 6 modules - covered 50-60% of the academic content. In terms of course management, since 2012, I have been module leader (full academic responsibility for the course management) for 23 modules (6 ECTs for 21 of these and 30 ECTs for 2 modules). As of November 2021, I have accumulated 3068 hours of face-to-face, synchronous teaching.

At SDU, since the academic 2019/2020, I am involved in the teaching of:

at masters level:

K01: Clinical psychology (15 ECTs)

K04: Internship/praktikophold (35 ECTs)

K06: Applied psychology (15 ECTs)

at undergraduate level:

B07: Clinical psychology and methods (10 ECTs)

B10: Interdisciplinary Psychology (15 ECTs): e-health interventions content

B05: Biological psychology (15 ECTs, module coordinator)

The most recently taught other modules are: Clinical models of psychological disorders (2012-2019); Methods of clinical diagnosis and intervention (2013-2019); Developmental psychopathology (2013-2016).

In terms of supervision, I have supervised 26 undergraduate theses (18 ECTs); 26 Masters research projects (30 ECTs); and 7 PhD students (three as main supervisor and four as co-supervisor), with one of them current.

I have conducted the written examination all students in the following modules:

Postgraduate: Clinical models of psychological disorders: 2012-2017, 2019

Methods of clinical diagnosis and intervention: 2013-2018

Undergraduate: Psychology: theory and method 2: 2013-2017;

Developmental psychopathology: 2014-2016

Biological basis of human behaviour: 2017

I have evaluated, since 2012, over 60 undergraduate theses and 48 masters theses.

I have examined four PhD vivas (PhD defenses)

4. Methods, materials and tools

The content of about 30% of my teaching is delivered through traditional lectures, a method used mainly for undergraduate classes. My predominant teaching delivery is through problem-based learning (PBL) and blended learning strategies, the specific type of which depends on class sizes and levels. As active learning PBL methods, I use *collaborative problem solving*, debates, case studies, and role-play. I adapt PBL tasks to students' academic level: for undergraduates, I provide written guidance for breaking down the problem.

I view *debates* as an excellent technique to help students learn how to formulate a scientific (or clinical) opinion based on their critical appraisal of existing knowledge. In defending this opinion, they develop the skills to evaluate the logic and evidence for their own and others' points of view. I usually ask students to work individually on *case studies* and in pairs or trios for *role-play*, and then discuss their productions as a class. The *discussion* approach effectively permits to demonstrate divergent views of the same clinical phenomenon, and is my preferred method for promoting critical thinking in general.

5. Educational development and applied research into teaching at university

I encourage my students at all levels, including undergraduate and masters, to publish the results of their research. Several of my students have presented their thesis' results to diverse conferences and I have co-authored with these students 7 associated research papers.

2017: Revision of the undergraduate curriculum of module Biological basis of behaviour to incorporate updated research findings in the domain, replace the examination scheme with a comprehensive evaluation of the achievement of the learning outcomes and integrate problem-based learning in the curriculum.

2012-2013: new curriculum design through the development of a new, Clinical psychology, stream within an existing Masters of Psychological Science programme at the University of Limerick, Ireland. Prior to 2012, psychopathology and clinical psychology MSc Clinical Stream led to enrolment of students in the MSc program to triple. The curriculum development involved all academic content to be delivered, the structure of lecture linked to practical tutorials and all examination formats and materials

6. Reflection on your own teaching practice and future development, including student evaluations

I believe that the ultimate goal of good teaching is students' learning potential actualisation. This necessary implies adapting one's teaching strategies to the academic level of each student group taught. As a lecturer on several levels, I continually adjust these strategies while also constantly aiming at the same teaching goal. To achieve each student potential actualisation, I strive to be a facilitator of learning, promote critical thinking and communicate enthusiasm for learning.

Firstly, to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, I seek to stimulate interest in the domains I am teaching. I believe that the most effective way to facilitate learning is to capture and maintain the attention and interest on the material taught. For this, I consider the audience and the teaching content to be equally important. Postgraduate students are often animated by their career goals. Thus, when teaching a clinical module to a Masters class, I frequently use specific cases from my clinical or research experience to illustrate concepts, therapies or professional challenges. Such examples tell specific stories that capture interest by being directly relevant to the future career aspiration of the student. Conversely, not many first year undergraduates are likely to pursue a career in the domains I am teaching. Therefore, to stimulate interest in a facts-heavy first year module on cognition, I often provide anecdotes, sometimes taken from what happened in class, which illustrate every day phenomena that show the relevance of psychology to our lives.

Secondly, my teaching aims to promote the development of critical thinking skills and encourage students to build an ownership over their learning. I believe that, to adequately integrate new material, it is essential for students to learn how to ask thoughtful questions and critique the scientific literature they are taught. As a researcher, I learned that in science, definite knowledge is almost inexistent. Knowledge is contested and growing, not an accepted fact. I aim to communicate this philosophy by presenting controversial views of relevant topics. This encourages students to work on formulating their own scientific views based on existing knowledge or research. The active learning activities I use are often organised to facilitate the practice of critical thinking (e.g., debates, reflective role-play).

Thirdly, I aim to communicate enthusiasm for learning and inspire students to be the best learners they can be. Each time I learn something from my students, I feedback it to them and aim to show that I learn as much from my interaction with them as they learn from me. I strive to communicate to students that I am easily available and highly motivated to answer questions and that my teaching intends to be student-focused. The anonymous evaluations of my students cited my knowledge, clinical experience and enthusiasm as highlights of the courses taught.