

## Teaching Portfolio Dr. phil et PhD, Martin Hvidt

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## Teaching Experience

I have taught various types of classes: Normal university students at undergraduate, graduate and Ph.D. levels, have done mid-career-training for students at Open University, taught professionals in private sector companies, ministries, and not least laypersons in various clubs and small societies. In addition, I have taught a course to military officers (Sprogofficere) at the Royal Defence College to prepare them for their tour of duty in the Middle East and Afghanistan and finally I have over three years taught students in Dubai whose native language are not English and are currently teaching students from all over the world within the Scandinavian Area Studies programme at SDU. As such, I have a considerable experience in 'reading' my audience and adjusting my presentation accordingly.

## Portfolio of courses taught at SDU

- Economy and natural resources in the Middle East (40-hour course, Master level, taught at Centre f. Middle East Studies), taught every fall, fall 2016, fall 2017, fall 2018, fall 2019, fall 2020.
- Elective course: The Arab Gulf States: Contemporary Challenges and possible solutions. Master level, taught at Centre f. Middle East Studies, spring 2021
- Metode 5 (39-hours + 13 hours exercises, Bachelor level, taught at the Institute of History), spring 2018
- The history of the Scandinavian welfare state (52-hour course, Bachelor level, Scandinavian Area Studies Programme, taught for the Academic Study board for Danish studies), fall 2018 and fall 2019.
- The Scandinavian Welfare Society (52-hour course, Bachelor level, Scandinavian Area Studies Programme, taught for the Academic Study board for Danish studies), spring 2019, spring 2020.
- Contemporary British Studies (26-hours x 2, Department of History), fall 2019, fall 2021.
- American Studies (26-hours), Center for American Studies, spring 2020, spring 2021
- Development economics (60-hour course, undergraduate and Master level, taught at Department of Economics).
- International Politics and Organization (30-hour course, undergraduate level, taught at Department of Political Science).
- Specialized courses / Senior Seminars (Master level, taught at Center of Middle East Studies) e.g. - 'The modern Egypt' - 'Israel: the rise of a state' - 'The Middle East in a Globalized World'
- Research methodology for Social Sciences (30-hour course, undergraduate level, taught at Department of Journalism).
- Ph.D. courses, I was a part of the permanent staff at the Research School of the 'Dansk Institut for Gynmansiopædagogik,' where I taught research methodology.
- Open University (diplom) courses at SDU over a 20 year period (basically an economic/political approach to area studies of e.g. Iran, Turkey, Israel, the Gulf etc.
- In addition I taught at several Ph.D.-courses e.g. the Scandinavian /Baltic Ph.D.-seminar 'Water in Africa, South Asia and the Middle East: An interdisciplinary course in the history of water use, hydro politics and sustainable water management,' Bergen 13th-17th of August 2001 and the Scandinavian Ph.D.-seminar 'The Third World in the Global Governance System', St. Restrup Herregaard, Nibe, 24th – 27th of February, 2003.

## Portfolio og Courses taught at Zayed University, United Arab Emirates, 2013-2016

- Social and Economic Trends in the Gulf, 60-hours, taught Fall 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Fall 2015
- Introduction to International Relations, 60-hours, taught Fall 2013, Fall 2015
- Research Methodology, 80-hours, taught Fall 2014 (2 sections)
- Politics of Oil, 60-hours, taught Spring 2015, Spring 2016
- Political History of the UAE, 60-hours, taught Spring 2016
- Special Topics: Governance in the GCC countries: Historical, Economic and Political issues, 60-hours, taught Spring 2016
- EMPA Cohorte #8 and #9: Master Programme. Applied Research Methods in Public Policy and Administration, 40-hours, taught Fall 2015, Spring 2016

## Teaching Methods

Most of my teaching is organized into two, three and now also 4 hours sessions facing an audience of 20 to 75 students. My teaching philosophy is to activate the students and as such each session encompasses a good number of questions posed by me, or by the students, which are discussed and answered in the classroom. Furthermore, when appropriate, and especially when I teach classes for three or four consecutive hours, I include small exercises carried out during class (10-15 minute well prepared case work) and increasingly I encourage presentations by the students. All this aims to activate the students and help them reflect and verbalize their understanding of the issue under discussion and to use their knowledge towards analysis, evaluation and synthesis.

The students respond very well to this approach and frequently highlight these features of my teaching in their evaluations. In general, I get a very positive response from my students concerning teaching, so I have no plans of undertaking major changes, but am constantly searching for ways to refine the overall approach. In addition to this, I have coached small classes of 5-10 students and done distance learning, especially supervision of projects and courses over the IT platforms BlackBoard and ItsLearning and BSCW (used at RUC).

## Teaching Materials

When I joined Centre for Contemporary Middle East studies in 1988, there were very few textbooks in any language of contemporary Middle Eastern subjects, and hardly any written in Danish. As such we felt obliged to write a number of textbooks, which in addition to other material could be used in our Open University courses. As such, we wrote a series of smaller books covering either a country or a subject, and contributed a chapter from our respective fields. I have edited two of these publications and contributed to several others.

I have contributed to two textbooks, which have been widely used within upper secondary education (17 to 20 years of age): Carstensen, M, J. Frese, B. S. Hansted, J. Mentz, A. Olsen (red.)(1993): *Verdensanalyse. Materialesamling til tiden efter 1945* (København, Gyldendal)(2. printing 1996), and Hansen, F, H. Askgaard, B. Bødtker og K. Petersen (1992): *International Handel* (Systeme, Herning)

Finally, as an employee at the Centre for Middle East Studies, I have written around 100 smaller articles over the years, many of which have been used for teaching purposes, both at the center in our Open University programs, but also widely in Denmark in e.g. in Upper Secondary Education (High School), see my full CV (in Danish) in PURE.

The quality of the textbooks on the Middle East has improved dramatically over the last 20 years, and so has the quality of students. As such, currently I rely on one major book for my courses, e.g. Cammett et al. (2015) *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press. In addition, I print a course pack with articles covering the issues and topics not included in the textbook, some of these articles are authored by myself.

I set aside time and effort to develop and update my PowerPoint presentation in each round of teaching. I place much emphasis on clear communication and visualization in support of the verbal communication in my lectures. This issue has taken on more prominence following the shift towards English as a teaching language - not least because I now teach students, which do not have English as their first language (e.g. Danish students, Middle Eastern students, students from the former Eastern bloc and recently many Chinese students).

I always provide the students with a full set of my PowerPoints prior to the actual lecture. In this way, the students can prepare for the class and during the class, they can ask questions in reference to the content and not least, they can write notes on the PowerPoints hand-outs. My students are very thankful for this effort.

## Assessments and Exams

I generally administer four types of exams. The written four-hour exam (with all aids), the oral exam (½ hour preparation/ ½ hour examination), the oral exam based on a prepared synopsis (no preparation, 20 min. examination), and finally the written one week 'take-home' exam.

I think these approaches to examination provide a fair indication of acquired knowledge. In the perspective of 'constructive alignment' I might have to reconsider these forms of exams, in the coming years.

## Evaluation

At SDU there has never been a standardized way of evaluating teaching performance, so significant differences exist in the procedures around the evaluation and not least the input data-sheets used for each faculty, institute and also within the domain of each study board. Generally all my student evaluations are very positive.

At Zayed University I taught seven different courses during my time there. My student evaluations (SELE's) remain high in the range of 4.5 - 5.0 (with 5 being the highest score) with a modal score of 4.7 or 4.8. To me it indicates that my teaching style works well among ZU students.

My classroom observations throughout the three years at ZU and the Peer Assessment of Teaching (POTS) are all very positive indeed. I think they reflect that generally I like to teach.

## Supervision

I have supervised large numbers of BA projects and MA thesis, and are currently supervising one Ph.D student.

## Curriculum development

### Curriculum development at SDU

Generally, all the courses that has to do with Center for Contemporary Middle East studies at SDU, I have developed myself, primarily because they did not exist before I started teaching them. In addition, I have developed and later refined the courses 'Development Economics' and 'Research methodology for Social Sciences.'

The courses taught at Zayed University: These I have generally taken over a syllabus, however, I have made significant changes to these courses.

The new courses I have taught at SDU after my return in 2016: *Metode 5*, the two courses on *Scandinavian Area Studies* and the course in *Contemporary British Studies* and *American studies*, the previous teachers have been so kind as to lend me a copy of their syllabus, which have provided inspiration as to the content, the readings etc. of the courses. I have however introduced substantial changes as to the content and readings, in all of them. This is especially evident in the second round of teaching these courses.

In addition, I have over the years taken an active part in developing the various programmes taught by Centre for Contemporary Middle East Studies. Not least during 1995 where I was Head of Studies, and later in 2000-2003 when I acted as Head of Department at the centre.

While most of the developments in relation to the study programmes at the centre are results of a collective process, I take pride in two specific programmes that are wholly developed by me. I wrote the course description (studieordning) for 'Mellemøststudier' an Open University program (started in 1990). With inspiration from Aarhus University, I changed the programme from a normal evening course to weekend seminars and worked out a pedagogical concept for encompassing not only actual class room teaching, but also obligatory cooking classes of Middle Eastern food, film evenings, etc. This program made it to celebrate its 20th anniversary, often with a bi-annual admissions in excess of 120 students.

The second course description is 'Sidefagsuddannelsen i Mellemøststudier' (started in 2001). It was a three-semester programme and the first programme under Centre for Contemporary Middle East Studies that extended teaching at graduate level. Later the programme was developed into a full Master degree. The programme represented some novel features. It operated with larger modules (higher ECTS sizes, namely 10) than was used at the Faculty of Humanities at that time, and the programme was furthermore conceived with modulization in mind, which was something completely new at that time. As such, the programme could be taken in full, or as individual modules. This concept proved very successful. In addition to the 25-30 students that followed the full program, modules like 'Politics in the Middle East,' 'Economics in the Middle East,' 'Middle East history' and 'Modern Islam' attracted a significant number of students from other colleges (Fakulteter) (e.g. political science) and not least from other universities.

### Curriculum development at Zayed University

During the academic year 2015/2016 I served as chair of the Curriculum Committee in the Humanities and Social Science Department, responsible for the International Studies Programme. The committee was charged with the following tasks: 1) Make revisions to the existing major in International Studies (enrollment 250 students at the time) in order to streamline the course offerings and improve progression, 2) Introduction of a new minor in "Middle East and Gulf Studies." As a committee we succeeded in suggesting the revisions of the BA programme in International Studies including the introduction of 4 new courses. We furthermore succeeded in creating and obtaining accreditation of the Minor. 2014-2015: Curriculum Planning Committee. Under charge from the Prime Minister's Office the group established the course; Introduction to Entrepreneurship.

## Formal and informal pedagogical training

In 1996 I completed the obligatory "postgraduate teacher training course" for Assistant Professors (Adjunkt pædagogikum). During the time I served as the Head of Department (2000-2003), we video taped teaching sessions with all faculty and discussed the outcome. This was an effort to improve the younger staff's pedagogical understanding and development. It was a very fruitful exercise.

In 2005 I participated in a two day course on 'Improving teaching capabilities' organized by the Master of Computer Mediated Communication, Roskilde University, (RUC) for their staff.

In 2010: Course for Ph.D. supervisors (Vejleder kursus for Ph.d vejledere), University of Southern Denmark. I took this course in order to improve supervision competencies at both Master and Ph.D.

In 2012: I attended a Research Management Course at Copenhagen Business School, CBS Executive. The course which spanned 12 days of teaching and a substantial amount of homework did improve my skills in relation to management in general and specifically managing research groups.

In 2018: Course for Ph.D supervisors, University of Southern Denmark. A one-day brush-up course, Faculty of Humanities, SDU.

Being Chairman of the IT-board at the faculty of Humanities (2004-2013) I have, furthermore, been directly involved in implementing the E-learn platform called "BlackBoard" at SDU. I represent Faculty of Humanities at the so-called Strategic board of E-learning (E-læringsstrategiudvalget), which is charged with the responsibility of both pedagogical and technical implementation of BlackBoard at SDU. As such, I have acquired substantial experiences and extensive understanding of the practical design and implementation of pedagogical and learning related efforts in an university setting.

## Reflections on my pedagogical approach

I enjoy teaching and feel that I have a straight forward and uncomplicated relationship with students, whether on undergraduate, graduate or post graduate level, or with students outside the university system. I have a reputation for being a good teacher, which is documented in quantitative terms by excellent student evaluations of my courses.

My teaching philosophy is founded on the understanding that learning primarily takes place when students are activated: passively attending lectures does not lead to in-depth understanding or learning. Thus, I attempt to involve my students in one or more ways while lecturing: I pose questions which force the students to reflect and verbalize their understanding of the issue under discussion, include small exercises during class (10-15 minute case work) and encourage presentations by the students.

Lately, that is after my return from Dubai, I have attempted to take the above statement more seriously, in that I have started to involve the students even more in the teaching. In example, in the courses I teach on Scandinavian Area studies, where each session is 4 hours long, I have been experimenting with making smaller 'seminars' that is not just case work as mentioned above, but a longer format where students perform problem solving or problem formulation (can be of 20-30 minutes duration). Students work in groups, discuss and issue from the assigned reading, or from a film clip etc. We also work comparatively, comparing specific issues related to the Scandinavian Welfare state with specific issues in the countries of origin of the students e.g. China, Korea, The Netherlands etc.

I have also sent my students (groups) out to take photos of things they believe to specifically 'Nordic' and subsequent the students have argued in class why they felt it was specifically Nordic. This to evoke a discussion of stereotypes.

## **Forward action**

At Zayed University I was confronted with what in US is called 'Engaged Learning,' where the teachers play a more extensive role in the student's learning, through a succession of assessments during the semester. This allows the teacher to closely monitor the progress of each student as the semester passes. I would like to implement parts of these initiatives in my teaching over the coming years. I feel that many of the international students welcome a chance to test themselves before the exam, so generally they are willing to hand in small papers or do presentations etc. voluntarily, as long as they get a feedback from the teacher afterward.