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Teaching portfolio

Pedagogical idea

Lecturing is not only about bringing knowledge to students. It is fundamentally about enabling students to construct knowledge for themselves. Student-centered knowledge creation requires 1) asking good questions, 2) acquiring data and information, and 3) using analytical skills to process data and information. When I lecture, I focus on developing these three core competencies in my students. First, I try to create an engaging and inclusive atmosphere. An engaging and inclusive classroom atmosphere motivates students' desire to understand. I always emphasize that there are no stupid questions. By carefully listening to all questions, I am also able to better understand any sources of confusion. Second, I always try to be open, accessible and responsive to students. Third, I emphasize the intuition behind formal tools, rather than the tools themselves. Fourth, to motivate the relationship between theory and practice, I try to include discussion from contemporary media in my lectures.

The discussion above is as relevant today as it was 15 years ago, when I started lecturing as an assistant professor. However, some things have also changed since then. To deal with change in a systematic way, I believe it is crucial to continuously think deeply about the constitutive elements of the lecture. The quality of a lecture is a function of the audience (i.e., students), lecturer quality, and lecture quality. Maximizing the effectiveness of a lecture means thinking about how I as a lecturer can calibrate these three different parameters.

Students today are different than the students I encountered in my first lectures more than 15 years ago. Today, they expect an extremely organized lecture with clearly highlighted conclusions. It is also my experience that I can send less information today, as compared to previously. Consequently, I tend to focus on fundamental points as opposed to delivering detail after detail. I urge students to go home and study all the details, inform them that I am always available for discussion, and I stress that mastery of details is essential for A-level performance. This strategy works well, and my experience is that it minimizes frustration among students.

As a lecturer, I set the pace, the tone, and the style of the lecture. Moreover, I am responsible for directing the emotions and energy of the students towards the presentation. It is my experience that connecting with the students is one way to accomplish this. I ask questions, I walk around the classroom, I try to establish eye contact, and if I sense that something has not been fully understood, I repeat the argument. Moreover, I let the students know that I am always open for questions.

With respect to improving the quality of the lecture, I try to harness the lecturing potential of many new and exciting technological innovations. For example, I try to provide quantitative evidence in my lectures, even if the content of the lecture is largely theoretical. The open-data revolution has made this very easy. I might also include Twitter feeds in a lecture if important economists discuss something that is relevant for the lecture. Real-time commenting by leading economic thinkers is interesting, as it provides an alternative window to how economists think and argue. It is my experience that students find this quite refreshing.

Finally, I believe that the best way to inspire active learning is to explain carefully to students why the topic being discussed is important. That is, I strive to begin every new topic with lots of motivation. Moreover, I always bring in some moral philosophy in my motivations, as economics is fundamentally a moral science. The claim that a policy is "good" or "better" than some other policy is obviously a normative statement, and it is my experience that students find that discussion stimulating.

Pedagogical competences

Undervisning og vejledning

Analysis of current economic issues

Thomas Barnebeck Andersen
01/09/2015 → 31/01/2016

Applied Economics

Christian Kronborg & Thomas Barnebeck Andersen
01/09/2013 → 31/01/2018

Development Economics

Philipp Ager
01/02/2014 → 30/06/2014

Macroeconomics

Peter Sandholt Jensen
01/09/2015 → 31/01/2018

Macroeconomics and History

Thomas Barnebeck Andersen & Paul Richard Sharp
01/09/2013 → 30/06/2017

Ph.d. Co-Supervisor

Thomas Barnebeck Andersen
15/09/2012 → ...

Ph.d. Supervisor

Thomas Barnebeck Andersen
01/08/2011 → ...

Ph.d. Supervisor

Thomas Barnebeck Andersen
01/09/2011 → ...

Ph.d. Supervisor

Thomas Barnebeck Andersen
01/03/2014 → ...

Videnskabsteori

Thomas Barnebeck Andersen
01/09/2016 → 31/01/2017