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Pedagogical view

I strongly believe that learning is a complex process in which both the teacher and the students learn. The teacher learns as she/he prepares materials for the students, reflects about the topics and formulates the points to facilitate understanding. The teacher also learns when she/he reflects upon what happens in classroom, what interactions took place, what worked and what did not. While in the first case one learns about topics, in the later, one learns about oneself as teacher. The students learn in different ways as well. They learn from reading the required materials, they learn from teacher's explanations, and they learn from interaction with each other.

In my teaching I am trying to open up opportunities for students to learn in these different ways. In order to ensure that students do the required readings, I recommend and encourage them to ask questions in class or via an online discussion board. I am always very open in explaining that questions can demand more clarifications on compulsory readings or can reflect students' own positions vis-a-vis the written material. This approach aims at encouraging students to interact more with the written texts and to contextualise them, or relate them to other readings. In order to facilitate students learning from each other, I encourage brief in-class group discussions. When it comes to the content of the lectures - I have a differentiated approach in function of the level I am teaching. In case of undergraduate students I see the teacher as carrying the main weight in the learning process. However, with Master level students I see the teacher as a facilitator of learning, via pointing out the important points, via indicating how different elements can be combined for analysis and understanding and via managing discussions.

This approach to learning needs support.

First and foremost, closeness to the students. In my teaching experience so far I have come to see that decreasing the teacher student distance has beneficial effects on students' willingness to participate in class activities, to ask questions, and are less reluctant to do what is expected from them.

Second, respect. Some students are self-conscious, and afraid to ask questions that "seem silly". I believe that the teachers need to clarify that questions and answers are essential in the learning and understanding process, and that all students should feel that the classroom is a space where their points of view can be expressed and listened to.

Thirds, clear instructions. Knowing in advance what is expected/required from them helps students a great deal in preparing for class activities.

Fourth, positive atmosphere in class. A smile goes a long way.

The learning theory which inspires my approach is humanism - experiential learning. Humanism as pedagogical approach relies on the idea that learning is viewed as a personal act to fulfil one's potential. The experiential learning approach, as proposed by Kolb in his 1984 Experiential learning book, relies on students learning in a sequence of steps, which move from "concrete experience" to "concrete observation" to "abstract conceptualisation" and to "active experimentation". The learning activities I am relying on involve engaging the students in a direct interaction with the compulsory readings ("concrete experience/observation") followed by reflection - asking questions in class and on discussion board ("abstract conceptualisation") with the aim of building on this reflection to solve future analytical tasks, such as critically analysing concepts ("active experimentation").

Teaching experience

Comparative methods and data

Romana Careja
01/02/2013 → 30/06/2015

Comparative welfare state analysis

Romana Careja
01/02/2014 → 30/06/2014

Concepts, methods and data

Romana Careja
01/09/2013 → 31/01/2016

Conceptualisation and measurement

Romana Careja
01/02/2016 → 30/06/2017

Ethnic and gender discrimination in European Societies

Romana Careja
01/09/2017 → 31/01/2018

Immigration and integration: Policies and attitudes (Specialised policy analysis)

Romana Careja
01/09/2016 → 31/01/2017

Integration of Migrants in West European Societies (Specialised policy analysis)

Romana Careja
01/09/2014 → 31/01/2016

Migration to Western Europe: Policies, attitudes and integration

Romana Careja
01/09/2014 → 31/01/2015

Research Design

Romana Careja
01/02/2016 → 30/06/2017

Sociology

Romana Careja
03/02/2017 → 01/07/2018

Welfare society in international perspective

Romana Careja
01/02/2015 → 30/06/2016

Pedagogical competences**Lecturer Training Program**

I have followed the SDU Lecturer Training Program, which I have graduated in 2014.

English Language Qualification

In 2015 SDU Human Resources has assessed my English and has appreciated that I fulfill the criteria for a C1 level.