SUPPORTING HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION – AN INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH

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Liisa Postareff
PhD, Assistant Professor
Centre for University Teaching and Learning (HYPE)
University of Helsinki
SUPPORTING HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING - PRACTICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

• A carefully designed organisational structure for supporting high quality teaching and learning

• Research on higher education teaching and learning

• Educating the educators - Courses on university pedagogy

• Research-based feedback system ’HelsinkiUniLearn’ for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR SUPPORTING HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING
Viikki Campus (Faculties of Agriculture and Forestry, Biosciences, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine: 3 pedagogical lecturers)

City Centre Campus (Faculties of Arts, Educational Sciences, Law, Social Sciences, Theology, Open University: 7 pedagogical lecturers)

Kumpula Campus (Faculty of Science: 2 pedagogical lecturers)

Meilahti Campus (Faculty of Medicine: 2 pedagogical lecturers)

Rector, vice-rectors

CENTRE FOR UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING (professor, 4 assistant professors, post doc researchers, coordinator, PhD students)

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Teachers’ Academy 70 members

Study psychologists

The Educational Centre for ICT

Academic Affairs Unit
RESEARCH ON HIGHER EDUCATION
TEACHING AND LEARNING
LEARNING ACTIVITIES

STUDENT

academic emotions
well-being
self-efficacy
approaches to learning

STUDENT LEARNING DURING UNIVERSITY STUDIES
Bachelor - Master - Doctor

engagement
sense of belonging
agency
stress - burnout
motivation
study progress

generic skills
knowledge practices
critical thinking

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

academic emotions
well-being
self-efficacy
approaches to learning

approaches to teaching
pedagogical practices
assessment
use of digital technologies

multiple learning environments

DEGREE PROGRAMS

pedagogical awareness

TEACHING

supervision

scholarship of teaching and learning

TECHNOLOGIES

use of digital technologies

TEACHING AND LEARNING

teacher development

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

approaches to learning

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

pedagogical awareness

degree programs

multiple learning environments

TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY STUDIES

TRANSITION TO WORKING LIFE
RESEARCH INFORMS THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

An example:

- Research revealed that students with challenges in organising/controlling their studies are well represented at the Faculty of Theology

→ Implications for curriculum design:

  • More structure to the theology Bachelor and Master programmes
  • More ‘checking points’ and focus on personal study plans
  • Study skills courses (regulation of learning)
  • Helping students to deal with extensive exams
EDUCATING THE EDUCATORS
BASIC STUDIES IN UNIVERSITY PEDAGOGY (25 ECTS)

- Teaching and learning in higher education (5 ECTS)
- Constructive alignment in course design (5 ECTS)
- Assessment of learning practices and quality of teaching (5 ECTS)
- Academic supervising (5 ECTS)
- Development of teaching and practical training (5 ECTS)
ADVANCED STUDIES IN UNIVERSITY PEDAGOGY (35 ECTS)

- Psychology of learning (5 ECTS)
- Internationalisation in higher education (5 ECTS)
- Curriculum design and pedagogical leadership in higher education (5 ECTS)

- Research methods in educational sciences (4 ECTS)
- Research in higher education (6 ECTS)

- Discipline specific pedagogy and teaching practice (5 ECTS)
- Teaching practice in school and adult education (5 ECTS)
PEDAGOGICAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

- 5 - 60 credits
- 60 credits → Formal teacher qualification
- Voluntary participation
- Provided in Finnish (60 cr), English (25 cr) and Swedish (25 cr)
- Contents are mainly based on the research carried out at the centre
- Research on the impact of the courses
THE EFFECT OF PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING

(POSTAREFF, NEVGI & LINDBLOM-YLÄNNE, 2007)
EDUCATING THE EDUCATORS: IMPORTANT LESSONS LEARNED FROM RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

- Long process (short courses are ineffective or even harmful) (Postareff, Nevgi & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2007)
- Conceptual change – delay in changes in teaching practices (Postareff, Nevgi & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2007)
- Importance of research-based education
- Peer support; heterogeneous groups
- Activating methods; active involvement of the educators
HOLISTIC RESEARCH-BASED FEEDBACK SYSTEM
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HelsinkiUniLearn

• Student feedback system (HowULearn; HowUSStudy)
  • Study processes (deep approach, surface approach, organised studying), burnout, working-life skills in relation to other students

• Teacher monitoring and feedback system (HowUTEach)
  • Teaching processes (learning- /content-focused approach to teaching, teacher burnout in relation to other teachers)

• Instrument for quality enhancement of degree programs
• Instrument for the development of teaching and learning environment at UH
• Research instrument
THE CENTRE COMPARED TO OTHER ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

- A research-intensive centre
  - Most of the centres in the world are more service centres than strongly research-informed
  - Many centres do research, but research may not be linked to teaching and learning in the university
  - Rooted in the different faculties
- Courses are long processes
  - Many centres only offer shorter workshops
  - Based on research
- Helsinki Centre is clearly linked to the strategic aims of the University
  - Research focuses on our own University
  - Research informs strategic decisions
DISCUSSION

• What is your ‘take home message’?
• What is important in your own institution’s context when aiming at enhancing the quality of higher education teaching and learning?
REFERENCES

