

ACTING

Active Learning in Large Classes: Enhancing the Learning Space with Blended Learning.

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Poster

ABSTRACT

Keywords – Active learning, Blended learning, scaffolding the learning process, differentiation, incentives

Background

"Active teaching and learning" is under pressure on the Faculty of Engineering, due to an increase in the enrollment of students and in the size of the classes. Both personally and interpersonally, things are very different in large classes. Students and teachers are not as visible as before, and for students it is much more difficult to get room for expressing themselves about professional matters. The purpose of the project is to investigate into the possibility for enabling active learning in large classes by enhancing the learning space with Blended Learning. The idea is to hand the possibility of being active in the learning space back to the students on existing courses on the first study year by adding net-based learning.

Explanation

Net-based learning has advantages concerning communication when compared to traditional teaching. (Illeris, 2007) notes that "It has been found that the fact that communication is written and delayed, involves some significant learning benefits. On one hand, through the personal contributions individual participants actually become more "visible" as persons for both the teachers and the other participants" and on the other hand "that social and interpersonal skills to a high degree are developed through written communication".

Set-up

During the spring 2016, I started to experiment with how to enable the students to become active learners in large classes by utilizing blended learning. In autumn 2016, I conducted a larger pilot, in which I have enhanced the learning space in an existing 1st semester course with about 130 students by introducing online dialogue as part of the module preparation. The intention was to get further experiences with blended learning, involvement of students, scaffolding the learning process, using the e-learning environment and motivational issues.

In 2017, I will further investigate into the possibility for enabling active learning in large classes by enhancing the learning space with Blended Learning. The objectives are to get knowledge about and to develop techniques for how to scaffold the learning process, to enable the students to communicate, connect and collaborate online, to differentiate online activities, to develop incentives for active participation, and to enable effective study habits and to involve the students in the planning.

Expected outcomes

So far, the pilot implementations show several possible enhancements of the learning concerning student preparation, learning outcome, and engagement in the subject area. The data from the pilot will be analyzed by SDU Universitetspædagogik, and so will the data from the development project.

REFERENCES

Illeris, Knud (2007). *Læring*. Roskilde universitetsforlag. 2. udgave.