



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Course analysis

– based on course assessment with LEQ

Course name

GRU11 Basics in Higher Education pedagogy - Campus

Course code

GRU11

Start date

03/05/2023



End date

22/11/2023



Course coordinator (name)

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Course analysis completed (date)

27/12/2023



In relation to the university's quality system

Mark the perspectives that permeate the course and motivate your positions in a comment.

- Research connection
- Internationalization
- Gender equality
- Collaboration with society and connection with working life
- Sustainable development
- Student participation and student-centered learning

Comment:

Introducing research on higher education pedagogy, working in an international setting with teaching cultures from all around the globe, paying attention to gender equality, diversity and inclusivity in teaching, offering insights on the power of authentic learning environments and experiential learning, discussing the core values at UMU in teaching, including sustainability and student future competencies for it, and having a main focus on student-centered learning in the basics in pedagogy.

Implemented changes

Describe any changes that have been implemented since the last course offering.

Efforts have been made to set up a basic structure for the GRU courses with a teacher manual describing all the teaching activities, when they happen, in what format, and why for the course leader team of this GRU. The reflective workbook that was tried out first in GRU9 but not used in GRU10 has been improved and structurally given a place in participants' activities. The micro-teaching sessions instead of mini-course in meeting 5 have been further developed since GRU9 and GRU10, and a portfolio-writing day has been added to this meeting with a course leader giving each participant feedback on their progress so far. Course activities have been tweaked and diversified according to insights of the course participants. For instance, a case-analysis format has been added to the pedagogic leadership case exercise, and different kinds of future competencies have been added to the last session's activity on future learning.

Outcome

How well have the course participants succeeded on the course? Are there significant differences compared with previous course offerings? If so, what could be the reason?

From the 28 that started 6 dropped out along the way because life happened, they had PhD events happening or it became too busy with other tasks. The parts that they have finished have been noted.

From the 22 participants that made it to the finish, only one still needs to hand in an extra assignment for missing a full day at the last meeting. The rest have completed the whole course successfully.

We tend to see more course participants who are not there for all 6 meetings, both days, and need replacement assignments to make up for that. In GRU11 this was also happening quite a lot. Most participants did however do the replacement assignments as soon as possible, mostly before the next meeting.

Response rate

What is the response rate on the course survey? Can it be considered high or low? If so, what could be the reason?

It says 59% of 29 respondents, but we only had 22 respondents left, so it's 77%. This is neither high nor low, quite acceptable.

Analysis of the learning environment (statements 1–22)

What is your overall impression of the response to the questionnaire's statements? Can you identify some stronger or weaker aspects of the learning environment? Is there an explanation for these, for example in any written comments? Are there any effects that can be attributed to implemented changes?

Overall we are very pleased with the response.

The pace is a known factor to be evaluated lower than the other items, as participants are expected to work 8 hours per week on the course, but often only get 4 hours from their employer to do it. Thus the homework feels as 'much'. It was appreciated that we communicated about which periods would become intense, but then they did and those weeks were hard. Some mentioned though that if you reserved the time as indicated, it was reasonable and doable.

Organisation is just below 4 as well, and here we know that the assignment texts sometimes had 'left-overs' from the previous online format courses due to the pandemic. This gave confusion at times. To us as course participants the organisation felt wobbly as we were dealing with sickness and new tasks at hand ourselves during the course.

Most of all we were touched by the many participants who wrote to us in e-mails and replies to our portfolio feedback how pleased they had been with the course and what an eye opener it had been. This shows in statements 1-22 as well: The course was seen as meaningful, practical (an improvement! participants indicated they valued practicing teaching in the micro-teaching sessions), offering a safe, motivating, and social community of learning both with fellow participants and supported by the course leaders, and offering a lot to learn in diverse and inspirational formats of learning activity. Participants valued that the course leaders shared their personal experiences and related to them and their position. Words such as great, professional, supportive, engaged, motivational, and open for discussion were mentioned to describe them.

The course was also taking participants out of their comfort zone at times, a few participants did not feel they got something out of the group work and it only 'cost time' and there was so much of it. Some still find Canvas confusing (but far less than in GRU9 and GRU10, and especially the structure of the modules and the crosslinks to important pages were appreciated). Participants would still like to practice more with teaching, and would still like more one-on-one feedback from the course leaders and feedback on how well they were teaching. And some individuals thought the attention paid to constructive alignment was too much and tedious.

Own effort (statement 23)

Do the participants consider that they have studied to the extent they needed to comprehend the content of the course? If not, what could be the reason? How does this relate to the teachers' perspective?

71% agreed, and 18% strongly agreed. Some indicated they studied more, but did not regret it! Others studied less towards the end, as other things started to take priority (applying).

Most important learning (question 24)

In summary – what were the most important things the participants learned during the course? How does this relate to the expected learning outcomes?

We want participants to learn about the theory and diversity of good pedagogy and translate it to their discipline and domain's teaching culture. From the diverse answers of what was most important to learn, some mentioning the science behind teaching, and many stating 'the different methods and techniques', we see that this is working.

We also want them to practice teaching in slightly experimental ways, so they gain new competences and strengthen the competency they already have. One participant nicely put it 'that teaching is an art that can be trained, developed, and improved' with a will and ambition. Another mentioned how surprisingly much learning happened in collaboration. And a third mentioned how the basics of teaching at UmU were constructively learned.

Best aspects of the course (question 25)

In summary – what were the best aspects of the course? How does this relate to the teachers' perspective?

The best aspect was the way the course was taught: diverse, with variety, relaxed, informal, with discussion and reflection alternating, much feedback, with a sense of belonging, a good example of student-centred teaching. The course leaders managed to create a safe, motivating, and pleasant learning environment with their engagement and course set-up.

From our perspective, reading this is fantastic, this is exactly what we are aiming for!

Suggestions for improvement (question 26)

In summary – what improvements do the course participants propose and why? How does this relate to the teachers' perspective?

The reflective workbook could be planned on different times during the meetings, not always at the end of day 2. The overlapping assignments are sometimes confusing and some assignments feel rushed (auscultation between end of august and end of september for example), include online teaching as well even in the campus course, a little less group work is ok, using canvas when sharing work with fellow participants is complex, volume of the teachers in the back of the room, balancing the people who take the course.

Good advice (question 27)

Is there any good advice that is worth passing on to future course participants? Why has this particular advice been chosen?

Good enough will do.

Allocate time for the course in your agenda (it's going to take a lot of time, but it's worth it!)

Be patient.

You will get out of the course what you put into it. Take the opportunity to reflect, don't do things because 'you have to'.

Keep offering time for reflection (in different ways, but with artefacts to help those out who like working with them), and make the feedback that happens in the group work evident.

Keep communicating about the pace and set-up of the course and assignments as you go along.

Other viewpoints (question 28)

Do the participants express any other experiences or views concerning the course that should be documented?

A lot of thank yous for the valuable course, the enthusiastic teachers, and the positive surprise the course gave. One suggests to offer a 3 month course as well, so it's not spread out over two terms.

Prioritized course development

What aspects of the course should primarily be developed? How could these aspects be developed in the short or long term?

Look at the assignments and how to make them feel more airy.

Insert little bits of course leader feedback in seminars here and there.

Make sure all the Canvas assignment texts are 100% correct.

Turn some group work into duo or individual ones.

Revision of syllabus

Does the course syllabus need to be revised due to the planned course development? If so, in what way?

The course syllabus will get a revision in the beginning of 2024 by all GRU teachers. Focus will be on the formulation of the ELOs in a setting in which we do not assess/examine.

Comments on the course analysis

Is there anything else you would like to add?

It was so much fun to see all the micro-teaching sessions this GRU11. There was some true experimentation going on and wonderful, student-centered examples!