

ENG 1506

1. Gi en vurdering av:

- Pensum (innhold, omfang)
- Undervisning (undervisningsformer, timeantall, spredning over semesteret, obligatoriske aktiviteter, kvalifiseringsoppgaver).

14 weeks of 2 hour lectures, with 6 single hour group meetings: We were inconvenienced because the auditorium was already taken during the 3rd week and so the students had an unusually early reading week. The studieveileder and I had wanted to schedule the reading week for the week in which LEP students were to be in PRAXIS.

Obligatory 5 page essay as a qualifier.

Groups were used primarily for teaching students how to write an essay. Some complained because that left little time for actual discussion of themes. Others appreciated learning how to write an academic essay.

I gave the group teachers a couple of teaching tools to teach students how to study our field and what is expected in an exam answer (both for term IDs and essays).

- Ressurser og infrastruktur (undervisningsrom, audiovisuelle hjelpemidler, bibliotekressurser m.m.).

We were forced to use the large auditorium in GS hus because of the remodeling in SB hus. This was a problem for me because smoke is sucked in through the rotating door and the ventilation system along the outside wall of the building and come directly down to the front of the auditorium. I have asthma. Because of the smoke, I had to sit through lectures or cough uncontrollably. There is also no HC parking at the back of the building.

- Eksamen (eksamensordning, vurderingsform).

The exam was similar to the exams we have given for decades in this course. 4 hour School exam. Part A (40%) as Term Identifications. Part B (60%) was an essay. Both parts included choices.

2. Gir læringsutbytteformuleringene i emnebeskrivelsen en god beskrivelse av hva studentene skal kunne etter avlagt eksamen?

Yes -- IF they put in the time and effort. We had many students asking "What is the bare minimum I have to do in order to scrape pass?" That does not bode well for their results.

3. Fungerer emnebeskrivelsen tilfredsstillende? Sjekk følgende:

- Statistikk over karakterer, frafall og klager.

We began with 287 students enrolled. One added, to bring the total to 288.

Vedtatt 11. februar 2010

33 of these students never attended a single group meeting. (We are not allowed to require attendance at the lecture, so we cannot assess that.) That brings the total down to 255.

3 students plagiarized significantly on their qualifying essays, even with repeated feedback and opportunities for revision. They were reported via the exam advisor.

44 students were unable to write the 5 page qualifying essay at a minimally acceptable level. They were offered two and often three opportunities for revision and feedback. Some took advantage of that but could not do well enough to suggest they had any chance of passing an exam. Some turned in 1 or 2 pages only of notes. We considered attendance in each case as well. Most who failed, did not attend the minimum number of group sessions either. They chose therefore to fail the qualifier.

This brings the total to 208 who were allowed to take the exam. Three students were sykemeldt and took a later exam.

22 students were previously godkjent. This means that 22 students had most likely failed at least once and sometimes twice earlier. This number needs to be added to the number that a normal curve would predict would fail from the course. Given the large number of students, the statistical requirements that predict a normal curve are satisfied.

Indeed, when you look at the grade curve, it does fit the normal curve. It is slightly bottom heavy because of the students who failed earlier and the fact that this is a first semester course. However, there were considerably more C's than D's, and only slightly more D's than B's.

With a class of this size, the fact that grades do fall within the predictions of the normal curve should serve as proof that the exam is fair and that course expectations are clearly communicated and fairly defined and assessed. It would be shocking – and statistically very improbable to have a curve that was higher – especially for a course in which many students are in their first semester of university studies.

- Tilbakemeldinger til lærere og administrasjon.
- Tilbakemeldinger på informasjonen/veiledningen studentene får om emnet.

Mid-term evaluations were filled out by four times as many students as the official computer generated survey and are hence more illuminating. Students, in general, feel the need for more classroom time. We agree. It is an administrative decision, however.

Those who complained about the lectures generally said the problem was that they were unable to attend. Some claimed I should do power point slides and put them in Fronter. Clearly, they never looked because there is a folder in fronter that holds slides from every lecture. Some wanted the lectures taped so they wouldn't have to attend. I do not think that is a good policy to pursue – either pedagogically or in terms of employee rights. Some wanted me to essentially read the textbook to them, but that is their job. Mine is to give examples and illustrate what the textbook is teaching – explaining the material in another format. That is absolutely NOT the same as telling stories or making personal comments. My presentation style is meant to be more engaging than a dry textbook. Every lecture was based clearly on specified portions of the pensum, that they were asked to read prior to each class. This agenda is in the syllabus, which was posted on fronter.

Evaluations tend to focus on those who are unhappy. I had many, many students talk to me during the break and after class every week to follow up and extend their learning and understanding. Many times I answered the question for the whole class after the break as well, and was told by many that they appreciated that. I heard from many – in person and on the mid-term evaluation – how much

Vedtatt 11. februar 2010

they enjoyed the lectures. The students asked what I thought of the presidential candidates and certainly Trump supporters would have been disappointed. Because someone speaks with friendliness and interest in the subject, rather than dry droning on with what they read, is not a bad thing. With 200-300 students, it is impossible to please everyone.

Comments on group teachers were split. Either students loved learning how to write an essay – and how not to plagiarize – or they hated it, felt it was useless and wanted to discuss (or more accurately be lectured to) by the group teachers on content. This is a matter of time and resources. The students who complained about lack of exam preparation clearly were not paying attention. The group teachers used my study tools in groups. They told me this and many students told me it was helpful. They used the 5 W's for term IDs. I also gave them a short slide presentation on how you build a good term ID, with examples similar to answers I have read for years in this course. The main textbook includes study terms and sample essay questions at the end of every chapter. I took all, or most, of the Term ID choices directly from those lists for the exam. I focused on those which I had also included in lectures (and on the slides). I also taught both teachers and students how to construct study grids and how to use an overall study grid for predicting every possible essay question. At the end of the last lecture, I reviewed with them the topics and themes that they would find important and how to fit information together from across lectures.

- Hvordan emnet fungerer i emnegruppene det inngår i.

This is a basic survey course that provides an introduction and prepares students for work in more specialized heisemner. Note that for LEP students, it may be the only American Civilization course they take during their studies.

It would be helpful to get our American History course back. In losing that, we are forced to have this course do double duty more so than before.

- Om emnet er riktig plassert med hensyn til nivå/anbefalt semester.

Yes. However, during the fall semester, many new students are learning how to be university students and live on their own. This first semester is often a shock to students – whichever courses they take in the fall. This affects the grading curve tremendously. Of all the 1xxx ENG courses that must be offered, half must be in the fall.

- Om emnet er riktig definert med hensyn til anbefalte/påkrevde forkunnskaper.

Yes. However, many students are not as competent in English as they should be coming into the program. Very few come to this course with writing competence. The greatest problem is not academic English. Rather it is the ability to organize and write any academic essay – whether in English or Norwegian. We hope that the new Writing Center will be able to support students as they learn how to write academically.

4. Har du gjort noen endringer siden forrige periodiske evaluering? Hvilke?

I have not taught this course since 2010. There have been several changes in how we divide the teaching hours. None of them are great because they have all demanded that some part of teaching be cut. The doubling of hours, described below, is the first time in more than a decade that we have been allowed to add teaching time.

5. Forslag til forbedringer.

Vedtatt 11. februar 2010

Tor Erik informs me that the leadership has now approved doubling the group meetings. That is an excellent idea. Both in the official student comments and in the more comprehensive mid-term evaluations, students indicate a need for more time. I think that all of us agree with that. We have been restricted by resources too much. We need the 14 double hours of lecture to cover enough information. But students also need more discussion time.

Students need to be told in Orientation materials what is expected from them. A definition of full-time study broken down by hours per course is needed – at least. I gave them information throughout the course, but first semester students need a clearer definition that the difference between vgs and university is not just the opportunity to cut classes. And they need to hear it from the administration. Students complained about the lectures because they couldn't be there.

There were several students who informed me they could not attend the lectures at all after the first week because they were signed up for other courses at the same time. This should be blocked administratively, so that the computer does not allow this kind of double-booking.

I ask that the administration consider their role in cutting our resources, rather than place the blame on us. They need to also recognize that when only 25% of the students even respond to their survey, that they will not get a general overview – merely those who were upset about something whether or not they attended. An essential aspect of dealing with any comment needs to be to look at that student's attendance and self-reported study time.