

PREP

- Pragmatic Research on Educational Practice

Öresundsdagen
2022-11-02

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Starting point

Ambitious university teachers

- tries different things in their teaching and strives to understand the effect
- often do not have time, data or ambition to write an article for a scientific educational journal

... hence, the ideas and lessons learned only reach the lunchmates

Today there are some for a, such as Öresundsdagen, Utvecklingskonferensen för Sveriges ingenjörsutbildning, and local conferences (such as KUL at Chalmers).

Something is missing!

- opportunities to share the ideas and results
- better possibilities to reference the work

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Suggestion – PREP

- Use what is already being done when teachers plan and develop and evaluate their courses and do exams.
- Simple reporting that allows for several different qualitative levels

Goal

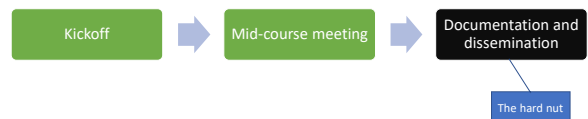
- Improving quality, not least at a collective level
- Make the development of teaching more visible
- Meritorious for the individual
- Limit the extra work for the individual

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Suggested program

- A project normally spans one course.
- Can be part of a group with teachers that teaches during the same period, locally or online.

The process has three parts



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Kickoff

Activity

Everyone describes what they want to try (intervention) and initial thoughts about how the effect should be measured (data).

- What am I curious about?
- What am I going to test in my teaching?
- What ways do I see to determine the effect?

Others respond.

- Have I tried, heard or read about something similar?
- Do I spontaneously see any that should be considered?

Purpose

- To articulate initial ideas
- Get ideas and suggestions from colleagues

Format

- Physical, online or asynchronous

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Mid-course meeting

Activity

Everyone gives a brief account of how things are going.

- What have I done?
- What do I plan to do in the near future?
- What's stopping me?

Aim

- Pushing oneself to have something to report.
- Get ideas on how to get passed hurdles.

Format

- Physical, online or asynchronous

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Documentation and dissemination

Activity

- The study is documented
- Filling in a template.
- Different levels of ambition are allowed, from minimal answers in the template to more complete reports
- The target group is teaching colleagues

Purpose

- Spread ideas about teaching among colleagues
- Becomes a merit

Publishing threshold

“Failed” studies are also documented

- Unfinished
 - The ideas can perhaps be implemented by others.
 - Lessons learned about why the study was not completed.
- No result or unclear,
 - with changes others may see effect
 - may be statistical coincident due to little data

Publication channels

- Does not exist, needs to be created

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Initial idea for a documentation template

1. Personal data
 - name
 - contact details
2. Course information
 - subject content
 - level
 - size
3. Intervention,
 - purpose
 - description
 - concerned part: [lecture], [exercise sessions], [final assessment], [assignment], [other]
4. Data collection
 - [questionnaire], [exam question], [observations], [other]
4. Results and interpretation
 - graphs, tables
 - interpretation/conclusions
5. Practical implications for teaching
6. Related studies, PREP or regular
 - based on
 - contradicts
 - confirms
7. Other,
 - other insights,
 - obstacles to avoid
 - next step

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PREP - characteristic

Pragmatic

- Start from actions, existing teaching and logical thinking rather than orthodoxy and theories.
- Captures what is possible on the fly. Do not put too much effort into eliminating all conceivable influencing variables.

Educational practice

- Investigates within the natural environment of teaching
- For example, normally have no control groups
- Settle for what you can be seen during a course

Research

- Strives to be systematic and honest
- Tries to make use of what others have already done, but do not put too much focus on that.
- Do not strive for the highest possible scientific evidence accuracy, rather, leave it to others to see if they get the same results.
- An individual PREP study does not provide enough for a claim.
- Replications are essential.

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Publishing channel and IT support

- Filling out a template online (membership)
- Should be easy to find and refer to other relevant PREP studies
- The system works similar to a meta-study, i.e. aggregate all replications, which contradict or confirm

Possibly also

- Help in finding a PREP group
- Provide support throughout the process from the beginning, with deadlines and reminders
- Peer review system? Not raising the bar, just to support the individual, still allow different qualitative levels.

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Thanks!

- Questions?
- Collaborate? Try out together? Apply for funding together?
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