

Tell us about the most exciting study course, lecture, seminar or lesson!

Why it is/was exciting?

Student answer compilation:

1. Lecturer's own interest and passion for the subject.
2. Theory together with practical application (use in reality).
3. Practical tasks.
4. Real life experience stories.
5. The most topical events of Latvia and the world in the field, comments and opinions about them.
6. Lecturer's attitude towards students:
 - a. Open,
 - b. Positive,
 - c. It is important for a teacher to know that students understand the subject;
 - d. There are no wrong answers.
7. Students must be prepared for the lectures in advance.
 - a. Students then discuss the topic at lectures. Students are looking for answers very enthusiastically. In addition to the knowledge gained, students learn to accept the views of others, to discuss, and cope with emotions during the discussion.
 - b. Presentations – they have to prepare information and learn to present it to other students.



From the answers of students:

- It was important to me that everything we did was practical and up-to-date.
- The topical and sensitive political and economic events in Latvia – the teacher could comment on them.
- Lecturer is welcoming to the students with the attitude – "Wow, students!"
- Everyone could recall one lecturer who came to the 1st lecture, sat down on the table and showed Star Wars and Harry Potter. Even if after that she never did anything like this, the impression remained. You can feel comfortable with her. Even if it's a serious topic, we really like it.
- I personally liked the discussion most of all.
- We went out, we draw maps. It was important to me that everything we did was practical and up-to-date.
- The lecturer knew each student's name.
- The lecturer's method of teaching was interesting (different); there were not so many formulas as the drawing, the explanation.
- We went to the market and did an observation. I had to do something practical rather than just sitting in a lecture.
- We were interested in subject only because of the excitement of the lecturer.
- Every lawyer would say that the most memorable is the "court play". For lawyers, all lectures are the same – with or without a presentation, but a lecture. And the tests are the same. But preparing for the "court play" was exiting.



I personally liked the discussion most of all.

Is there any study course that seems boring to you? Why?

Student answer compilation:

1. If a lecturer is telling only a theory – with or without a Power Point presentation:
 - a. If a lecturer is reading the theory, for example, from the book;
 - b. If a lecturer is reading from slides.
2. Lecturer's attitude towards students:
 - a. If a lecturer is not interested and not enthusiastic.
 - b. Tired and bored lecturer;
 - c. Disrespectful attitude towards students;
 - d. Unfair approach to the evaluation of students.
3. Inappropriate content:
 - a. If a lecturer tells the topic superficially, without going into further detail, so that in the end, the general topic does not make sense;
 - b. If a lecturer does not provide what would really be useful and applicable for students;
 - c. If it is unclear why a lecturer gives certain task;
 - d. If a lecturer teaches facts that have not been new to students for a long time;
 - e. If a teacher is talking too complicated for students, for example, too many scientific or industry-specific terms for which students are not ready yet.

From the answers of students:

- All lecturers are so serious. Speaking without emotions ... for that reason I'm not able to concentrate, I'm losing my attention even if I try. I can also read it in the book.
- The lecturer says: "I'm lazy to do it", and comes to a lecture with that attitude, just talking about the presentation. And we, too, have no interest and motivation to do anything.
- There are courses that teachers are not interested in teaching at all.
- If there is only theory without emotions, a lecturer is just telling "what he needs", marks something on the blackboard, and that's it.
- Enthusiasm is not always good. Because we have a passionate, smiling teacher, but she has no idea what we know. For example, she teaches Excel and is so passionate about it, and if we try to say that we know it, she just says: "O, that's good!".
- Lecturer's style – sitting on a chair and reading slides. Not even getting up from the chair. And the lecture was from 16:00 until late at night. People simply slept.

What do you expect from a lecture?

Student answer compilation:

1. Knowledge that can't be read in books and slides.
2. Knowledge and skills that can be applied in real life and will really be necessary and applicable for a profession.
3. Examples from professional experience, from real life.
4. Practical work.
5. Lecturers are well informed about what is happening in the industry, teach about the latest in the industry, or even about what is coming.
6. Understanding of modern communication on the Internet, social networks.
7. Modern English skills.
8. Acknowledgment of the work done by the students.

*I expect examples, practical tasks,
solving some problems with the teacher.*



From the answers of students:

- I expect from the lecture that I will get something more than you can read from the slides.
- Myspace and Twitter are a miracle to some of them. There is also no modern English, and they themselves don't know that they don't know.
- It also depends on the student - whether you only want a diploma or a knowledge and a diploma.
- Once only 20 minutes from all the course were worth, when the lecturer shared her real experience in the industry.
- It is important that the teacher is interested in working with every student.

Look at the table (with "21st century skills"). Please tell which of these skills you have developed during your studies? How? Please describe!
Can you name any other skills that have not been taught or are not sufficiently taught at the university?

critical thinking
problem solving
decision making
creativity and innovation
communication
collaboration (teamwork)
curiosity
initiative
persistence/grit
leadership
personal & social responsibility – including cultural awareness and competence ICT literacy



Student answer compilation:

1. Mostly, all students could confirm that all of the "21st Century skills" are developed directly or indirectly.
2. Critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, creativity and innovation, communication, collaboration, curiosity are being developed. It has already been "programmed" in the study process itself.
3. Personal and social responsibility – to some extent, depends on a study program.
4. Initiative, persistence/grit, leadership – is being developed, but predominantly for those who want to. Nothing happens to those who do not develop.
5. ICT literacy – depending on the study program. More programmes should include this.

From the answers of students:

- Of course, it all depends on your personality and what you want to achieve. I can mark every thing because those who want – all the possibilities and can find opportunities to develop these qualities. For example, a business incubator – an opportunity for everyone.
- One practical example, a technique that develops all these qualities [leadership, initiative]. We have a lecturer who gives a bonus to students who say something in the lecture. It works because even those who do not speak at other courses speak at her course.
- Initiative, perseverance, leadership – for those who want, there is every opportunity to develop all these qualities. I have not experienced that my teachers would require leadership. I do not see that this is purposefully developed.
- Persistence is an inevitable thing, otherwise, you will not be able to finish university.
- But then there's an average student who just goes to studies...
- Maybe I'm that average student. I do not know what might happen to me, so I can become a leader.
- I have to point out that teaching of critical thinking, problem-solving – it does not happen. There is the amount of knowledge that is provided.



*I do not know what might happen to me,
so I can become a leader.*

Would you describe some of the methods as innovative?

If yes, why? Please describe!

Students were not sure if any of the methods they mentioned were innovative, but they were talking about something that seemed different and helped to understand a topic.

From the answers of students:

- Video from YouTube. Very helpful. Pretty motivating.
- We all went to the court and our task was to understand the judge's mistakes.
- Integrated practical work –when information from 3 different subjects “comes together”.
- Bonus points for the engagement in the lecture.
- For presentations – it is necessary to put moving pictures in the presentation.
- Uncommon topics. For example, in French – write down 10 ways how to refuse an admirer.
- I do not see anything innovative in my study process.
- Provocation. Provocative questions, ideas.
- Unfortunately, I have nothing to tell you, because most of the studies at our faculty are “engraved in stone”.
- The case study with a small baby boot, that has been found, and we had to think – from which century, social background, what happened to this child's family.
- We had to rate our course mates.
- Field research (in religious science). It was necessary to go out in the streets, ask people questions. At last, we could be researchers, not just sit and study.
- To study the research data in the system.
- Practical theology - to go to sick children at the parents' house. We were forced to go and to do, and it felt good.
- Students could choose - to prepare a presentation or video on a particular topic.
- I like creative work. To draw, to make. For example, we had to choose a topic and make a social advertisement. We wrote about the air in schools.
- That lectures are not just inside. We went down the street, we observed the people, interviewed.
- I also like just to read texts, and it also takes less time.
- I like: 1. compulsory practice, 2. creative exercises, 3. a lot of practical work.
- Why not to get out for a lecture if there is good weather????

Can any of the methods be called "engaging" and "exiting"?

Students have not experienced many engaging and exiting methods. Many of them say: "I can't name anything". They can name a few moments they recall as "engaging" and "exiting".

Student answer compilation:

1. Most of the students name the discussion.
2. Addressing current issues.
3. Work on the whiteboard.
4. Video demonstrations.
5. All kinds of excursions.
6. Occasional guest lectures or tours to professionals, especially if they are well known or have high positions.
7. Practical examples, stories from experience.



From the answers of students:

- There are study subjects where there is only a theory. Except for pedagogy, I really do not see engaging methods.
- Creative and innovative methods are exiting. The rest are not.
- To play a court.
- Maybe laboratory work ...
- Visiting different places. We travel regularly somewhere - to the places where potential work could be done, where our graduates work, or a person from the Government delivered a lecture. It is very motivating to study if you see you can be there as well.
- The teacher organized a Skype interview with an outstanding, known anthropologist.
- I do not have much to say.

Imagine being a teacher and teaching lectures / seminars / practical work in a study course. What teaching methods would you use?

What knowledge and skills would students gain?

What else would they learn?

Student answer compilation:

1. Link together theory and practice; study works that are applicable and can be used in real life.
2. Involve students in different ways – with tasks, creative work, asking students' opinion, with discussions etc.
3. To tell about current developments in the sector in our country and in the world.
4. Open, positive attitude towards students.
5. Do not teach what we know or what is obvious.

From the answers of students:

- Give problem-solving tasks, discussions, ask students' opinions, try to involve everyone. Make video.
- Less theory, more practical tasks.
- Speak less if it's just theory. Perhaps a student has experience and he can tell it.
- Such as a mentor's approach, with tasks from a company or life.
- Practical tasks that can after be applied in life, rather than remain on the professor's shelf.
- If I tell children something and they do not see it – they do not understand anything. So right away – tell, show, tell, show.
- Keep up with what's happening in the world, including in Latvia, and add – what students think about it.
- Tell personal experience.



From the answers of students:

- An example of a particular study course led by a teacher – a practitioner in his field. "First of all, during the whole course, we were in teams and we participated in the competition at all times. You need to keep track of how much everybody is working in the team, what exactly everybody does. We could see the result of other teams quite openly. Lectures were different – sometimes the teacher was speaking himself, sometimes, for example, his friend came from the head office from United States. Not that study course or the topic was so interesting, but the way of teaching it. With a complete feedback from each student."
- Introducing an electronic system for students' questions – a lecturer is talking, and students' questions appear on the screen, and afterwards, the teacher answers the questions or students discuss them.
- I immediately see a lively discussion. Because often students forget that their words have power. Because always when imagining yourself saying something, you can start doubting. Somehow, students should feel free and encouraged to ask questions and discuss.
- Make students feel that I am not higher in the hierarchy so that students can freely come to me. Go with students to informal events outside. Organize board games with students.

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Project no: 2017-LV01-KA203-035485

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

