

10 recommendations from senior staff to lecturers at CBS

1. Agree on a code of conduct with your students.
2. Make sure that your students understand the connection between learning objectives, teaching and exam.
3. Include the students' preparation in teaching activities.
4. Do not ban laptops. Include them in teaching activities.
5. Activate as many students as possible.
6. Move around.
7. Comment on noise - and students who are late for class.
8. Establish a dialogue with your students - be flexible to their ideas and input.
9. Give feedback on your students' academic skills.
10. Talk to colleagues who teach the same class/year.

1. Agree on a code of conduct with your students

It is important that you and your students adjust your expectations and the general understanding of the planning and realisation of the teaching activities. Talk about your role, their role and expectations from each other in relation to preparation, etc.

It is essential that you are able to speak openly about the teaching and more importantly; if teaching does not work smoothly. The themes of the 9 other recommendations can be discussed in connection with the code of conduct.

2. Make sure that your students understand the connection between learning objectives, teaching and exam.

The objective is to create a mutual understanding of the formalised and institutional requirements for competences that the students are expected to demonstrate during an examination. The students have no influence on the planning of the exams, but it is a good idea to let them know why the examination is organised the way it is. We recommend that you specify your interpretation of the formalised requirements and give examples of exam performances and assessments of performances.

It is not necessarily the best idea to only go through formulations of learning objectives and requirements for exams in the very first lesson. It may be more appropriate to take up these formulations when it makes sense to relate them to the teaching activities. Bear in mind that bachelor students may have more difficulties understanding the formulated concepts.

3. Include the students' preparation in teaching activities.

A quote from a master student:

There is so much to read. Often you don't know why you're reading it. You read 100-200 pages and don't understand why you're reading them. Then you go to class and you still don't know why you had to read those pages. At some point you start thinking that reading everything before class isn't necessary.

This is an unsound situation. University programmes are based on the assumption that students prepare for classes. CBS has no standard for student preparation, but 2-3 hours per lesson is not wide off the mark. Teaching and student preparation must be closely linked and the students must feel that they gain far more from teaching activities by being prepared.

You can motivate preparation by concluding the lesson with a few questions for discussion next time. Tell them that they might find (some of) the answers in the texts for the next lesson. If you find that your students meet up unprepared, it is a good idea to refer to the agreed code of conduct. Do not adapt the teaching activities to unprepared students.

4. Do not ban laptops. Include them in teaching activities

Students always have the option to opt out of teaching activities when they feel bored or have a hard time to follow the class. In the past, they were only able to daydream, which couldn't be observed by other students. An open laptop attracts the attention of other students. Many students believe that multitasking is possible. However, recent research documents unequivocally and distinctively the opposite. When we do more than one thing at a time, we do it slower and poorer, than we would otherwise do. Students who opt out of teaching activities by looking at a screen may inspire other students to opt out.

The use of social media during lectures can disturb the lecturer and fellow students. Just like with any other kind of disturbance, it is important not to ignore these. Instead, the lecturer should talk to the students about their use of the internet and social media in class – especially when it disturbs rather than supports the initiated learning processes. However, it is not the policy of CBS to ban open laptops and tablets during class. Communication technology tools can be integrated in teaching activities.

Moreover, research shows that it is better to ignore than to ban laptops (if you cannot use them for teaching purposes), because students may find it challenging to defy a ban.ⁱ Check out the possibilities of using communication technology at teach.cbs.dk to find inspiration. It can be used for dialogue, for computations, information retrieval or brainstorming.

5. Activate as many students as possible

Students are very often just expected to listen to the lecturer for a very long time

When a lecturer interrupts his/her own flow of talk by posing questions and wait for answers, the students who think about the answer are activated. A lot of lecturers are satisfied with a few answers and often let the quickest student answer - the result being that the rest of the students become passive listeners and stop looking for answers. Wait for more answers. When you have heard their answers, ask if the other students agree. It is possible to activate students in numerous ways. Group work, buzz groups, use of the above mentioned communication technologies such as CBS Write, clickers, etc.

6. Move around

Not all of CBS' classrooms make it easy for the lecturer to move around. The large auditoriums without middle aisles do in fact encourage the lecturer to stay at his/her desk, which maintains a 'you vs. them' situation: You have to deliver and they have to receive.

If you move back and forth and mingle with the students, you will actually send a physical signal that everybody is responsible for the outcome of the lesson. As a bonus you show involvement and care for the students.

7. Comment on noise - and students who are late for class

Report from a teaching observation:

15 minutes after the lesson has started, the most beautiful girl in class enters the auditorium. When she walks, it sounds like a hard hit on a snare drum. She walks down the stairs, and signals with both hands that she wants to sit in the middle on the third row. Latecomers interrupt teaching activities. They may not bother you, but they bother the other students. There are many reasons for the students' tardiness, and they can be late in many ways. This behaviour should be addressed when you discuss the code of conduct. If students need to

enter the room after teaching has started, the students who are on time may help by not taking the most accessible seats. The latecomer will then be able to enter the room silently.

8. Establish a dialogue with your students - be flexible to their ideas and input.

Who are you teaching? What are they thinking? What do they care about? The answers to these questions may help you understand how to motivate them further and to promote their interests and attention. Talk to them. Before the lecture, after the lecture, during the break. The fact that you show an interest in them will help them feel welcome in the teaching situation and possibly reduce any resistance. In the end, it will strengthen their learning process.

If you include ideas and input from the students during the teaching, you will demonstrate that they are essential to the teaching and indicate that you take their co-responsibility seriously.

Obviously, you cannot include each and every proposal from the students. However, if one or more proposals seem interesting to you, talk to the other students and find out if the idea is worth working on.

9. Give feedback on your students' academic skills

Students are often unaware of their academic level. Naturally, it is hard for them to evaluate their own skills, but it is also hard for them to sense what characterises good academic input. Therefore, it is essential that you give the students feedback during the course when they make presentations, assignments or participate in class discussions. In this way you can demonstrate and exemplify what you think is a good academic contribution and what isn't.

10. Talk to colleagues who teach the same class/year

You can learn a lot from talking to your colleagues about teaching. Especially those who teach the same cohort. It is a good idea if you experience problems during teaching, or if there is a great enthusiasm or atmosphere among the students, which makes the class particularly delightful to teach.

ⁱ The in this recommendation referred research is taken from Tække and Paulsen: Sociale medier i gymnasiet.