

## NOVA Quality Day – Teaching

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**ROUND TABLE:** *Pedagogical Practices* (discussion of the pedagogical practices most valued by students)

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Covered topics:

- The importance of active learning
- The importance of educational resources, as new technologies
- The importance of feedback
- The importance of learning contexts beyond the classroom
- The importance of harmonizing curricula
- The importance of a healthy environment that promotes learning

### **The importance of active learning**

Very important topic, especially with regard to practical classes. It is essential that these are not just another theoretical exposition and that the teacher is able to motivate the students' involvement. This involvement implies responsibility, on the part of

students, as they assume their role as co-builders of their learning. It also implies not "leaving anyone behind", even the most timid. This co-accountability training should start early in the student's training - right at the beginning of the degree. In graduate school it will be required and has not been trained before.

The issues of active learning are critical, especially in this pandemic moment. Especially with online classes, where concentration is affected, even by the learning environment itself. There are strategies, there are games, there are quizzes that can be used. There is also the use of tasks / jobs / projects and the monitoring of these jobs.

On the other hand, there has to be a different availability on the part of the teacher - technologies help, but they also tend to massify. It is necessary to create moments of individualization or, at least, support for groups.

For online classes to work, some elements of the pedagogical process must have more weight. Two examples:

- Formal moments of feedback from teachers to students and from students to teachers. Round tables for taking stock of situations can be very useful.
- Duration of classes - the concentration in a physical classroom and a classroom by Zoom is very different. Distance classes have to be organized in blocks, with pause moments to systematize / relax / exemplify / work in groups (tools such as Kahoot or Mentimeter help to relax and systematize).

On the other hand, the mixture of various formats (synchronous and asynchronous) helps to reach students who have different ways of learning and different learning circumstances. In this area, technology is of great help.

Another way to make learning more active is to have each Organic Unit invest to get students to work and have contact with the world outside the academy. In addition to work and monitoring, it is essential to have the opportunity to contact the industry and work with tools that will be useful in the future. Students have to realize that there is more than just classes. It is also important to have early contact with the laboratory (in undergraduate courses, laboratory classes are not always given due value) and with research.

### **The importance of educational resources**

Resources have already been mentioned in the previous topic. In this topic, the importance of blended formats is reinforced. Some students highlighted the pedagogical potential of “simulation” - a safe and standardized way to train professional gestures.

It should be added that the availability of content on any platform, Moodle for example, facilitates learning and allows it to be done according to the students' learning rhythms.

With regard to technology, it is crucial to train teachers, but also to equip students with skills in this area, because it is not evident that these technological tools are used by all students in the same way. Many students use this type of technology more for recreational purposes than as tools for study and therefore learning.

### **The importance of feedback**

The feedback issue is essential.

In the case of teaching evaluation and, more specifically, the questionnaires for the evaluation of curricular units, these have little response, for various reasons. The most important is the fact that there are no results following the analysis of the questionnaires (or the results of that analysis do not have repercussions on the students they evaluated, having only consequences for those who come after). It would be important to demonstrate to students the usefulness of completing the questionnaires,

publicizing the changes introduced in the curricular units after analyzing the responses to the questionnaires. This information could be accessed by the entire educational community.

On the other hand, it would be important to think of mechanisms to give feedback to teachers more immediately (interim feedback given to teachers, at their request, in informal formats, for example). This information, given throughout the pedagogical process, can help the teacher to introduce changes in a timely manner.

Regarding the feedback given by students to teachers, it is also important that teachers show an interest in wanting to analyze the results of the questionnaires and in talking to students. If possible, a conversation with the teachers is more effective than filling out questionnaires.

It is important, in addition to collecting the students' opinions after the pedagogical sessions, to make a prior assessment of the students' expectations in relation to what they want to learn (in large schools this option may be difficult).

Also in this feedback area, technology can help, like the creation of platforms for discussion in each course unit, to complement the use of questionnaires.

Regarding teacher feedback to students, this is an extremely useful learning tool. The absence of feedback is the absence of reinforcement and correction.

In the context of a PhD, in addition to the feedback from the supervisor, it will be important to think about how it will be possible to create moments, during a PhD program, when colleagues or other professors can give feedback on the work. Seminar work can be an extremely useful tool. Thesis commissions can also be an excellent feedback tool.

On the other hand, students can also meet autonomously and discuss topics of interest. There is no need to use teachers permanently. It is a good training in autonomy and

accountability - they can be thematic meetings, they can be meetings to share details of the theses. The experience of others and feedback from peers is very important.

### **The importance of learning contexts beyond the classroom**

Learning takes place in the classroom, but also in other institutional spaces. The creation of learning environments, in which students can learn from each other, is essential - rooms to train presentations, to meet with colleagues, to meet with other people, with internet access, video, sound projectors. Rooms with some facilities that can promote learning in cozy environments, where you can have a coffee and exchange ideas. The architecture of a college must accompany this need.

In this area, confinement has been very tough.

### **The importance of harmonizing curricula**

In this topic, the (now very pressing) need to rethink the harmonization and alignment of contents to be taught was recalled. Distance learning implies greater effort and, consequently, the weight of the contents and tasks to be asked of students must be rethought.

### **The importance of a healthy environment that promotes learning**

In this topic, the need to signal and support students who, for the most varied reasons, need help, which often implies specific support, but should not be neglected, was highlighted.