

UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND MEDIAEVALISM: REFLECTIONS ON HOW TO TEACH AND LEARN MEDIÉVAL HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

For some years now, we have been witnessing a debate on how to teach in the university setting. This debate covers all fields, and even though the change has particularly focused on practical aspects of learning, disciplines with a high level of theoretical contents have also been involved. One of the key issues is determining whether our job is to teach history or train future historians, whether we have to convey key contents or skills. There is no doubt that ICTs play a prominent role in this transformation, although not in and of themselves but instead in the way we use them. The lockdown caused by the pandemic forced us to seek alternatives to teacher-led face-to-face classes, albeit not always with the expected outcomes. Now that this situation is over, we continue to wonder how to use ICTs, with what learning objectives and in what way. We analyse here what the role of the humanities teacher should be in the twenty-first-century university, what the challenges are and what tools we have available to face them.

KEYWORDS

Formative feedback, teaching portfolio, learning folder, peer assessment, teaching teams.

CAPITALIA VERBA

Responsa didactica, Curricula didactica, Collectio doctrinalis, Probatio inter pares, Congregationes didacticae.

1. Introduction¹

The reflections we are offering are based on teaching practice at the university and are far from the theoretical underpinnings of teaching history.² These contributions have also been developed through participation in innovation projects alongside experts and attending debates and working sessions focused on our work as teachers.³ Drawing from all of this, we have been able to come up with an opinion on how we teach and especially on our students' learning process.

It seems clear that fortunately the traditional model of university professor, the utmost repository of knowledge whose main purpose used to be to convey that knowledge to a passive audience without the possibility or ability to question the master, no longer exists today. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that it should not exist.

Currently, it is not even possible to hold all the information on what we believe to be our speciality that is generated in a globalised world, so acting like we know everything is not only impossible but also ridiculous in our students' eyes. It is futile to hide behind a veil of dignity or self-importance or to try to conceal what we do not know and our weaknesses by building a wall between us and our students.

Nor should the alternative be to turn into one of them or openly expose our gaps or limitations. Ultimately, we are and will continue to be their professors, and we have certain obligations to meet.

Inasmuch as we are aware of this reality, we will be able to reconsider our position and find our place in what we could call the learning process which takes place among a group of students and a team of professors with the sole objective of learning.

The goal of this article is to explore a series of topics and teaching practices and to question whether they are suitable for the learning process we want our students to experience.

2. Learning to learn

Learning to learn is one of the prime issues we should address: how to train our students to become aware of their learning process and know what they have

1. This article is part of Research Project PID2019-104285GB-I00 funded by MCIN/AEI/10.13039/501100011033: *Análisis de los efectos de la provisión de feedback soportado por tecnologías digitales de monitoreo sobre las competencias transversales* (Analysis of the effects of providing feedback supported by digital monitoring technologies on transversal competences).

2. Sancho, Marta; Garí, Blanca; Vinyoles, Teresa; Lluch, Rosa. "Dels continguts a les competències: disseny integral d'una assignatura de nova creació del grau d'Història". *Revista d'Innovació Docent Universitària RIDU*, 5 (2013): 9-19.

3. The most recent include the REDICE project (18-2120) *Anàlisi de la interacció entre recerca i docència: plantejaments estratègics, indicadors i propostes de millora* and REDICE (20-2380) *Anàlisi de les pràctiques d'avaluació en entorns de docència mixta orientades al desenvolupament de les competències transversals*; the project (PID2019-104285GB-I00) *Análisis de los efectos de la provisión de feedback soportado por tecnologías de monitoreo sobre las competencias transversales* and the workshop on the Academic and Teaching Model of the University of Barcelona organised by the Vice-Rectorates of Academic Teaching Policy and Quality at the University of Barcelona (1 June 2022).



to do to learn.⁴ It seems like they should already know this, but they don't for several reasons, two of which we shall highlight. The majority of students who reach the university have a low level of critical analysis due to a type of education that is unfortunately still more rote than analytical, critical and experimental. In history, too, and especially in the humanities, it is essential to implement the kind of learning that stimulates students' own learning process by conducting actions designed to develop their critical and analytical capacity.

Secondly, we have to deal with our long term, complex and ongoing subjects along with the demands of a society characterised by immediacy, brevity and fleetingness. This forces us to seek strategies to foster our students' reflection on and awareness of the nature of our disciplines and what learning them entails.

We should begin by considering that what we usually consider 'good students' exist now just as they did 50 years ago, and that we only need to stimulate them and awaken their intellect so that they act and become eager to learn complex knowledge, like the knowledge in the humanities and especially history subjects. All we need is to find the formula and the action capable of unleashing the process.

Learning to learn, awakening the intellect, conveying a passion for knowledge, showing our humility in the face of an infinite historical reality, sparking curiosity, posing enigmas, stimulating the neurons until achieving the expected effect: these could be some of the initial approaches to our task as professors.

Along the way, it is important to acknowledge the areas in which our young students are more skilled than we are, such as their ability to handle digital programmes and tools, the quickness with which they capture simulated situations and especially their visual memory and their quick response to certain stimuli.

Another aspect worth highlighting in the learning dynamic is our students' dedication to studying and especially to autonomous work. It is essential to stress the need for hard work outside the classroom, either individually or in groups, especially reading, which is absolutely indispensable in the humanities, along with preparation for the continuous assessment exercises. Therefore, as we shall see below, from the very first day we have to tell them what they have to do to learn and therefore pass the class. It is important to ask students about their objectives, whether they only want to pass or whether they are at the university to learn. When you ask them this question, you realise that often they have not even thought about it themselves.

3. The role of the teacher

The first question we should ask ourselves is what we want our students to learn.⁵ This question seems so obvious, yet we seldom ask ourselves it, and when we do we

4. Lluch, Laia; Cabrera, Nati (eds.). *Competencia de aprender a aprender y autorregulación en la universidad. Evaluación entre iguales y propuestas metodológicas para su desarrollo*. Barcelona: Octaedro - IDP/ICE, 2022.

5. Bain, Ken. *Lo que hacen los mejores profesores universitarios* Valencia, PUV, 2006.



often succumb to the temptation of making a list of topics, a detailed programme that never fully satisfies us and is often absolutely impossible to teach within the time allotted. Seldom do we think whether ultimately we're teaching history or training future historians. Nor do we consider what we want to convey: knowledge or skills. The key probably entails considering that our goal is to teach the historian's profession, so capacities or competences are as important as contents.⁶

As stated above, clinging to the teacher-led classroom, or master class, currently entails serious problems.⁷ By this we do not mean that master classes should be eliminated, although for them to truly be master classes the teacher must have very profound knowledge of the topic being discussed. This is often only possible in certain parts of the syllabus where we feel particularly comfortable and which are part of our most developed line of research. In other words, there tend to be very few true master classes that we can teach during an academic year.

Therefore, we university professors can no longer be talking heads that pour out all our information to an audience who dutifully take notes to later study them and then take an exam in which they will pour the same knowledge out on to a blank piece of paper.

Given this reality, some of us set out to become guides of the learning process, like the shepherds of a flock we must feed. In our historical disciplines, our teaching action used to be aimed at establishing chrono-spatial theoretical and thematic frameworks within which we tried to provide further information via readings and selected documents that we shared in the classroom.⁸ In this model, our influence on students remained just there, in the classroom and not beyond, so the little time spent on in-person sessions was insufficient to convey what we wanted to convey. Frustration was one of the most widespread feelings among many professors.

We often debated the relationship between research and teaching, namely to what extent should we incorporate our research into teaching and whether or not we actually do this. This topic was the subject of a research project on university teaching directed by Manuel Viader which analysed professors' and students' perceptions of the introduction of more advanced research into the teaching practice of different disciplines.⁹ The theoretical examinations of this issue lead to a major change in students' perceptions of professors, as well as the teacher's own positioning before a group of students in either theoretical or practical sessions.¹⁰

6. [contra] TAEDIUM. "Baixem de les tarimes i connectem: Recerca en Història Medieval i innovació docent". *Acta Historica et Archaeologica Mediaevalia*, 25 (2003-2004): 977-1004.

7. Gatica-Saavedra, Mariela; Rubi, Patricia. "La classe magistral en el contexto del modelo educativo basado en competencias". *Revista Electrónica Educare*, 25 (2021) <10.15359/ree.25-1.17>.

8. Imbernon, Francesc; Medina, José Luís. *Metodologia participativa a l'aula. La participació de l'alumnat*. Barcelona: Institut de Ciències de l'Educació de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2005.

9. *Anàlisi de la interacció entre recerca i docència: plantejaments estratègics, indicadors i propostes de millora*. Universitat de Barcelona, Institut de Ciències de l'Educació, Programa de recerca en docència universitària (Convocatòria d'ajuts a la recerca en docència universitària REDICE-18). 2020.

10. Healey, Mick. "Linking research and teaching to benefit student learning". *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 29/2 (2015): 183-201; Elken, Mari; Wollscheid, Sabine. *The relationship between research and education: typologies and indicators. A literature review*. Oslo: Nordic Institute for Studies in



This vision offers us a new possibility in which our role is nothing more than one of the many factors that are part of the learning process. We are clearly necessary and crucial, but not the only factor. In reality, the first task is to recognise ourselves for what we are: expert researchers in certain subjects who wish to convey our knowledge to people who want to learn something of what we know. This latter aspect is important to assimilate and convey to our students from the very first time we enter into contact with them. What we will try to establish is a pact based on the exchange of knowledge, because we as teachers can and should also learn from our students. This raises the possibility of planning our teaching activities as an act of creating a learning environment that extends beyond the classroom. What we seek is to stimulate our students to join a spatiotemporal setting that extends beyond the classroom and class time.

We don't want a diligent, silent student who dutifully takes notes and even forgets the day they have to study for the exam. Instead, what we seek is one who actively listens and participates in the sessions, who goes home thinking about what we talked about in class and who discusses how to solve the activity or gain further knowledge of the topic the professor has suggested with their classmates.

The professor does not tell all but only introduces and provides information, questions, shares, encourages and joins debates, reaffirms opinions and suggests other possible answers. Ultimately, the professor designs a set of assessable activities which are the evidence of progress in each student's learning process and are also formative activities which are solved with qualitative and facilitative feedback to help students pass on the next challenge.

But the question is how to do this. We can no longer bring the true dynamic of research project into the classroom, plus we cannot forget that each subject is a different course with students at different training and maturity levels. Despite this, we can generate simulations with varying degrees of difficulty, or propose research simulations or case studies adapted to different levels. These teaching actions can be envisioned both in the day-to-day classroom dynamic and for the class as a whole, and even for the set of classes that are part of a given subject or field of knowledge.

For this reason, it is absolutely essential to work on teaching teams at different levels: within the same class, within a given specialisation, by academic years and even by degree programmes. In this way, cooperative work will enable us to prepare materials, design tasks and organise activities along with the top experts around us. Only in this way will we be able to do the most difficult task and the one that requires the most dedication in this type of teaching proposal: preparing and planning each of our classes (choosing materials for the formative tasks, designing assessment activities, preparing rubrics, specifying guidelines or working guides for students, choosing resources, etc.). Sharing our teaching experiences with our peers

Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU), 2016: 8 (rapport) <<https://nifu.brage.unit.no/nifu-xmlui/handle/11250/2386141>>; Jenkins, Alan; Healey, Mick. "Undergraduate Research and International Initiatives to Link Teaching and Research", *Cur Quaterly*, 30/3 (2010): 36-42; Gros, Begoña; Viader, Manel; Cornet, Albert; Martínez, Miquel; Palés, Jordi; Sancho, Marta. "The Research-Teaching Nexus and Its Influence on Student Learning", *International Journal of Higher Education*, 9/3 (2020): 109-119.



provides us with an enriching experience while also preventing us from becoming too self-absorbed. We could also consider work on teaching teams a high-level collaborative learning environment.¹¹

4. The classroom dynamic

Generally speaking, class sessions tend to be no less than 90 minutes long. As professors, we have to be aware that we are only going to be capable of keeping our students' attention at a high level in the first 30 minutes.¹² After this time, it is advisable to introduce a dynamic activity, preferably one that can be done in small groups. One example would be analysing a written source that we digitally provide them provide them via the online campus, although we can also project it on the screen or send it by e-mail in order to avoid photocopies. Three things should be clear: 1. The objective of the exercise (what we want to do); 2. The key aspects of the material with which the students are working (what we have and how to deal with it); 3. How the results of the exercise should materialise (how we are going to present it).

A similar type of activity can be done in each session but with different resources (document or archaeological sources, artistic representations, maps, toponyms, etc.). The materials used in a session can be diversified, and each team can have a different resource, or you can assign homework for the day or the next week to speed up classroom work. In this case, we could suggest that students watch a lecture by a researcher who is an expert in the topic, or a film or documentary, or read an article with many pages, or any other material that appropriately deals with the topic.¹³

This type of activity may be very demanding for the professor, yet it is also stimulating, because two classes are never the same and therefore there is no sense of always doing the same thing, year after year. The first part involving theoretical development requires a strong ability to synthesise and appropriate knowledge from the literature that will be recommended to the students to delve more deeply into the topic. For the second part of the session, resources and materials and how they will be dealt with (objectives, analysis guidelines, concluding proposal for evidence of learning) are needed. Finally, we must choose the activities we are going to assess personally or as a group, which will give rise to continuous assessment and the final mark.

Using these approaches, we can now have an organised class and even conduct it in the same way or copy the model and apply it to all the classes we teach.¹⁴ When

11. Novella, Ana María (ed.). *Impulsando los equipos docentes*. Barcelona: Octaedro – ICE/UB, 2017.

12. Bernabéu, Elena. "La atención y la memoria como claves del proceso de aprendizaje. Aplicaciones para el entorno escolar", *ReiDoCrea. Revista electrónica de investigación y docencia*, 6/2 (2017). 16-23 (<<http://hdl.handle.net/10481/47141>>).

13. Sancho, Marta; Garí, Blanca; Vinyoles, Teresa; Lluch, Rosa. "Dels continguts a les competències: disseny integral d'una assignatura de nova creació del grau d'Història". *Revista d'Innovació Docent Universitària RIDU*, 5 (2013): 9-19.

14. Parcerisa, Artur. *Planificación de la docencia universitaria. Del plan de estudios a la programación de aula*. Barcelona: Octaedro - IDP/ICE, 2019.



designing these activities, it is important to think about the learning objective and the form of assessment, as well as its weight within the final mark.

5. Assessment models

The active teaching proposals we are suggesting do not adapt well to traditional assessment models, including exams, book or article reviews or projects on a bibliography. If we are working on an active teaching proposal with the students' participation, we can find a way of generating evidence of their learning that we can use to design the assessment model, which should always be in line with the initial learning objectives. We could imagine the assessment model as the conclusion of an entire process, as this model will be what guides students in the way they work and learn.¹⁵

In order for assessment to truly be continuous, it has to be formative and make progressiveness in the learning process possible. For this reason, good feedback, either automated or personalised, is essential. For students, the way they are going to be assessed is a core concern, so any assessment proposal should be explained in full detail at the beginning of the class, especially in group tasks, in which the aspects to be assessed individually and as a group should be specified. All the exercises that are part of the continuous assessment should be accompanied by clear instructions about what is going to be assessed, through either rubrics or a list of specific aspects, along with the weight of each item within the total.¹⁶

As professors, we should be capable of avoiding certain fears, such as whether a student copies or whether in teamwork some student does not do the tasks they are assigned and their classmates have to cover their gaps. We should also think about how we are going to approach assessment so that it is truly continuous yet not such a high workload that it becomes unfeasible for either professors or students. This is a key aspect that we should not forget, especially when teaching large classes.

If we are truly convinced that our teaching goes beyond contents, it is essential to include competences in the assessment model, so the initial question about what we want our students to learn or what we want to teach is once again at the core of our teaching activity and in this case of our assessment.

There are several guidelines we should bear in mind when designing our continuous assessment model. We, in particular, have carried out different

15. As the results of the REDICE project (20-2380), *Anàlisi de les pràctiques d'avaluació en entorns de docència mixta orientades al desenvolupament de les competències transversals*, two infographics were published which may be useful in relation to assessment practices and models: *Claus per a una bona pràctica d'avaluació en entorns de docència mixta* <<https://view.genial.ly/60b739f03e770a0d4cdc88d6/interactive-content-claus-per-una-bona-practica-davaluacio>> and *Quines han estat les practiques d'avaluació orientades al desenvolupament de les competències transversals que s'han desenvolupat en entorns de docència mixta?* <<https://view.genial.ly/60b739f03e770a0d4cdc88d6/interactive-content-claus-per-una-bona-practica-davaluacio>>.

16. Sabariego Puig, Marta. "La evaluación de competencias transversales a través de rúbricas." @tic. *Revista d'Innovació Educativa*, 14 (2015): 50-58 (<<https://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=349541425007>>).



experiments and right now choose the following: none of the exercises or evidence of learning can account for more than 50% of the final mark, and preferably should not be worth more than 40%. We try to set aside around 20% of the total for self-assessment exams which cover the basic contents of the class. In this regard, the options provided by the platform Moodle, which is what we use, enable us to avoid plagiarism and copying as long as the exams are well designed (banks of questions, types of questions, random mix of questions and answers, test time allowed, assessment of the first attempt, etc.). The different exercises have to be planned progressively in terms of their difficulty, and they should always be accompanied by formative feedback that students should use to improve in the next assignment. It is important to specify the maximum and minimum number of students for group exercises; currently we have chosen to stay away from groups of more than five people and fewer than three.

The diversification of the assessment tasks in terms of both number and type and assessment via rubrics make it possible for all students to earn higher marks because they avoid discrimination stemming from imposing standards like memorisation, quick execution or the mastery of certain technologies. The goal is to respect students' diversity based on gender, cultural backgrounds or diverse capabilities, while also fostering excellence given that a minimum is established to pass yet the door can be left open to contributions and initiatives at the students' discretion that enable them to develop their full potential.

6. The secret is in the feedback

We all give some kind of feedback when we hand back exercises or exams with more less extensive comments. The question is not whether or not we provide feedback but the characteristics and quality of this feedback.

The main purpose of feedback is to provide information that the students need to improve their learning process, so they should have the opportunity to demonstrate that they have used it to improve what was not good enough.¹⁷ Therefore, the exchange of information between professor and student should take place within a lasting, continuous project through which the student can demonstrate their progress. We can imagine it like a dialogue that extends over time, beginning with a task proposal and ending with a final mark. Along the way, we interact with each of our students so that they climb a step further up each time. Thus, feedback takes on all its formative potential and encourages self-regulation inasmuch as it turns into a

17. Chou, Chih-Yueh; Zou, Nian-Bao. "An analysis of internal and external feedback in self-regulated learning activities mediated by self-regulated learning tools and open learner models" *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 17 (2020): 55 (<<https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-020-00233-y>>).



process that the student has to do to make sense of and apply the information they receive in order to improve their learning.¹⁸

There are different ways of providing formative feedback; the format does not actually matter but the content does, as well as the consequences it has on the students' learning process: written comments on paper, automated responses to self-assessable questionnaires, opinions expressed in the classroom while doing formative tasks, critical comments on oral presentations, self-assessment questionnaires with specific closed-ended questions in which the student reflects on what they have and have not done, Chatbot guides to do certain tasks... In reality, the goal of feedback should be to foster self-reflection and self-monitoring of the formative actions that each student does.¹⁹

In practice, doing peer feedback, either in working teams or individually, is very stimulating and tends to yield great results. We are generally more capable of detecting mistakes or aspects to improve in others than in ourselves, so doing peer assessment exercises tends to have a rebound effect, such that the assessor starts to self-assess when making comments for a peer.²⁰

Regardless, planning good feedback is a key factor in designing teaching activities, as long as we are thinking about a learning process that goes beyond merely assimilating content. The goal is to teach our students how to learn and to equip them with the tools they need to act in any situation and know how to solve challenges. The goal is to teach the profession, that is, to train for competences and skills.

Far from rendering our task as teachers banal, the exercise of our profession grows and becomes much more interesting from both the intellectual and personal standpoints. This type of teaching requires a sound mastery of the material and requires continuous preparation in order to always be ready to answer the questions that our students may ask us. If we show them the way to think for themselves, logically we will also question ourselves and have to be prepared to accept it or to learn how to learn, just as they do. This is true feedback. If we manage to reach this point, we will have formed that learning community that we discussed at the beginning of this text.

7. Reflections on teaching history and the humanities in general

As historians, we are concerned that our students, disciples and future colleagues have the knowledge we consider essential in order to work as researchers. Perhaps

18. Pitt, Edd; Winstone, Naomi. "Enabling and valuing feedback literacies". *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 48/2 (2022): 1-9.

19. Chou, Chih-Yueh; Zou, Nian-Bao. "An analysis of internal and external feedback in self-regulated learning activities mediated by self-regulated learning tools and open learner models" *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 17 (2020): 55 (<<https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-020-00233-y>>).

20. Sambell, Kay. *Rethinking feedback in higher education: an assessment for learning perspective*. Bristol: HEA Subject Centre for Education University of Bristol, 2011.



we are not fully aware that the majority of this knowledge we consider essential can currently be found with just a few well-guided clicks that lead us to a host of articles in digital, open-source format, complete books and endless high-quality digital resources ranging from repositories to video conferences, along with databases, virtual reality and more.

Therefore, the problem is not getting or having certain information but having the ability to understand the complexity of historical processes, critically consider the different approaches to the same historical phenomenon, have the ability to relate different data used to construct historical knowledge that is useful for and adapted to our society.

In this vein, our students' notes on data, names and dates are not worth much, nor are their notes on concepts, definitions or processes, because they will not assimilate this type of information; they will simply, with any luck, memorise it and manage to repeat it for a certain period of time until they forget it.

Given the characteristics of the students who reach the university from secondary school, the main problem we find is that they do not read. More accurately, they are unable to understand what they read because they are used to brevity, immediacy and simplicity, three features that are utterly the opposite of the characteristics of historical material specifically and the humanities in general.

Therefore, one of the goals that all history teachers should have in all years and level is to encourage our students to read long, complex texts associated with our subjects, both classics and more innovative ones. The solution is not to assign reviews, as there are piles of them online and it is too easy to pass them on from one year to the next. It is much more effective to organise reading seminars in groups of no more than 20 students, with previously established reading guides, in which each student expresses themselves orally about one of the key points in the readings. A brief summary of the seminar which recapitulates the key ideas expressed during the session could be outstanding assessable evidence.

8. Proposals of classroom activities and assessable tasks

Thus far we have sketched a frame of action of a university teaching model that seeks to place students at the core of the process, motivate them and train them in the competences we consider necessary to learn the historian's profession. The question that this approach usually prompts is always the same: So how do you do that?

Perhaps one good tip would be not to change everything at once, because it could be difficult for the professor and lead to failure. It is better to begin by implementing minor changes in specific parts of the course consensually with the teaching team with whom we are working, if possible.

In fact, each task proposed as a student activity should come with a definition of the objectives and materials, guidelines for doing it, a working dynamic, an end



result and an assessment that may or may not be part of continuous assessment, which we identify with feedback. It seems obvious that preparing all of this requires prior work that is easier if shared.

We could begin with several examples of a task to do in the classroom. As stated above, these are brief activities supported by selected materials which are provided to students in the class session. The list of materials is extensive, from documents to maps, along with images of artworks, graphics, diagrams, archaeological maps, archaeological materials, etc. As an example, we will discuss a task associated with an archival document.

Possible instructions for this exercise could be the following:

With this document (working material) we are going to analyse how feudal justice worked in the Catalan countships from the eleventh to twelfth centuries (objective). Read the text and take notes on who the judge is, who is on the jury, who the rival parties are, whether or not there are witnesses, whether proof is submitted and if so what it is, whether a specific juridical corpus is applied that is explicitly cited... (guidelines for doing the activity). You have 15 minutes to debate this in groups of three, and I'll walk through the class to answer any question (working dynamic). Afterwards, we'll spend 15 minutes sharing our work (end result). We'll set aside the last 15 minutes of class for ourselves to cover anything that did not come out in the debate but that is considered essential (assessment of the task with feedback). We can use this activity as evidence for continuous assessment or not. If we do, we can suggest that each student write a brief text (2000-3000 characters) summarising the main ideas of the activity, in this case on the administration of justice in the Catalan countships from the eleventh to twelfth centuries. Plus, we can provide a couple of specific readings on the topic as material to supplement the activity.

In the case of documentation, especially in the first few years at the university, we can first provide an image of an archival document and tackle the issue of reading an original document, then show the transcription and pose the issue of the language, and finally look at the translation, which will be used to examine the content of the document. This level of source analysis can also be done with other materials like maps or cross-sections from a site, or we can work on the toponymy of a region and analyse the meanings of the toponyms by relating them to productive activities or types of settlements, or we can discuss a range of iconography to observe the spaces, objects and attitudes depicted. In fact, this model can be adapted to any other materials we use, and thus it makes sense to work on teaching teams, because each professor can facilitate the work with materials from their area of specialisation and share them with the others, thus saving efforts and clearly leading to an optimal selection of the best materials.

Another example of a classroom activity with different kinds of sources may be these instructions:

You have four images of archaeological materials: a ceramic pot, a bronze belt buckle, a bone musical instrument and a lacrimarium (working material). We are going to discover the conditions needed to obtain each of these objects (objective).



Each work team will focus on one of the objects (working dynamic) and will fill in the attached table to define a series of factors (material, place of production, specialised personnel, distribution, production techniques, etc.) (guidelines for doing the activity). Finally, each team will share their table and we'll all debate their ideas (end result).

In this debate, we should provide any opinions that we consider valuable as feedback. As an element of assessment, evidence of learning, we could use the filled out table with the contributions of all the teams, which each student should fill out individually.

If we look at them carefully, each activity fosters critical analysis, working with sources, peer debate, collaborative teamwork, oral and written expression, the capacity for synthesis and even peer assessment. Organising a course with a series of activities of this type solves the issue of face-to-face classes, autonomous work and part of continuous assessment.

To compile all the evidence of learning, we could suggest that students create a learning folder, portfolio or dossier in each they each organise the tasks they have done. We can establish two or three deadlines for turning in the learning folder throughout the term so we can check it and return it with feedback.²¹

9. Learning folder, dossier or portfolio

Until now we have not spoken about the usefulness of this tool, which can be a good way to effectively monitor our students' learning process in an orderly way without it being an excessive or overwhelming task. In fact, it is a way to present evidence of the formative activities and share good formative feedback while also establishing a progressive, well-organised continuous assessment model. Volumes have been written about portfolios, especially regarding their digital version, and there are a number of computer programmes or applications designed for this purpose.²²

21. Guasch y Espasa, Teresa. *Guia pel disseny d'un feedback formatiu i dialògic*. Barcelona: Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, 2014 <https://openaccess.uoc.edu/bitstream/10609/37801/1/guia_feedback_formatiu_dialogic_2014_def_tguasch_aespa.pdf>; Alcañiz Zanón, Manuela; Riera i Prunera, Carme; Santolino Prieto, Miguel. "Feedback i oportunitats de millora: una avaluació orientada a l'aprenentatge actiu". *Revista d'Innovació Docent Universitària RIDU*, 5 (2013): 1-8; Cano García, Elena; Pons-Seguí, Laura; Fernández-Ferrer, Maite. "Efectos de los tipos de feedback entre iguales en los trabajos escritos", *Profesorado. Revista de currículum y formación del profesorado*, 26 (2022): 127-148.

22. Colén, Maite. "El dossier d'aprenentatge de l'alumnat universitari, un instrument que afavoreix l'aprenentatge autònom", *Metodologies actives i TIC per a la millora docente i de l'aprenentatge*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2016: 4-14 <https://www.ub.edu/portal/documents/814711/1020261/Dossier_aprenentatge_EXTENS.pdf/e9473b4c-bc77-499c-9e2a-d63ef8fa4a7f>; Joan-Tomàs Pujolà (ed.), *El portafolio digital en la docència universitària*. Barcelona: Octaedro -IDP/ICE, 2019; Pujolà, Joan-Tomàs; Suárez, M. del Mar. "El potencial del portafolio digital: plataformas y herramientas", *El portafolio digital en la docència universitària*. Barcelona: Octaedro -IDP/ICE, 2019: 67-85; Sancho i Planas, Marta. "L'aprenentatge a través del dossier d'aprenentatge docent: una experiència d'aplicació en el grau d'Arqueologia".



Beyond just compiling exercises, the purpose of the learning folder is not for students to reproduce what was explained in class or what they have read or done in practices but to be able to show that they have understood the contents they have worked on and are able to apply them in different situations. In this vein, it is a good idea to suggest that a mixed learning folder be made, in which they combine compulsory and optional evidence, so that students have certain minimum contents they should include yet the door is left open for them to work towards maximums, which will depend on their interest in the subject they are studying. In the first few years, there should be a lower proportion of optional materials, while in more advanced classes, students may be given total freedom to include their own evidence. The actual goal is to break with the tight strictures of traditional exams to allow students to create and develop contents. Instead of having to answer closed-ended questions proposed by the professor, they face the challenge of having to tell the professor what they have understood and incorporated into their intellectual baggage.

To undertake this kind of portfolio, it is essential to prepare well and to organise the class according to and at the pace of the evidence that will be built during the class. It may be a good idea to create an information sheet for each face-to-face session which states all the parameters, from prior tasks to the evidence that should be included in the folder, as well as the classroom dynamic.²³

The figure below shows one of these real information sheets that we use in our everyday teaching dynamics.

On the upper part we identify the class, the session, the topic, the points from the syllabus and the learning objectives. Next is a section with obligatory and additional resources, where we can list the readings, sources, videos to be watched or online consultations, among other resources. Finally, we outline the activities that should be done before the face-to-face class and suggest the classroom dynamic and obligatory evidence that should be added to the learning folder. In each case, we can specify whether the activities are to be done individually, in small working groups or with the entire class, and we can add guides for readings or documentation or guidelines for analysing the sources, along with any other instructions that help students do the exercise and gain the target knowledge and/or skills and competences. Creating each information sheet entails the preparation or treatment of the resources we are offering our students, reflection on what we want them to learn with the exercise, a definition of the personal working dynamic prior to the class and synchronously in the class, the choice of resources and a description of the evidence they should produce.

Metodologies actives i TIC per a la millora docent i de l'aprenentatge. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2016: 4-14 <https://www.ub.edu/portal/documents/814711/1020261/Dossier_aprenentatge_EXTENS.pdf/e9473b4c-bc77-499c-9e2a-d63ef8fa4a7f>; Sancho i Planas, Marta; Soler Sala, Maria. *La carpeta d'aprenentatge com a eina d'avaluació per competències*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2014 <<http://diposit.ub.edu/dspace/bitstream/2445/65269/1/SanchoSoler.pdf>>. About the implementation of this learning skill in the different levels, see the footage and materials on: <<https://www.ub.edu/portal/web/metodologies>>. A practical is available on: <<https://sites.google.com/view/mtpem/inici?pli=1>> and on: <<https://materialsitecnologiamedievalub.blogspot.com/search/label/Inici>>.

23. Regarding active participation methodologies in the classroom, see: Imbernon, Francesc; Medina, José Luís, *Metodologia...*




PLANIFICACIÓ D'ASSIGNATURES - CARPETA D'APRENENTATGE		
Assignatura	23M	Sessió 01-02 Tema 1. Societat i tecnologia
Programa	1.1 Què entenem per procés productiu 1.2 Coneixements tècnics, nivell tècnic i progrés tècnic	
Objectius	Prendre consciència del què implica l'obtenció d'un determinat objecte o bé material des del punt de vista tècnic i productiu. Reflexionar sobre conceptes bàsics.	
Recursos	<p>Bibliografia complementària i altres fonts</p> <p>Mannoni, Tiziano; Giannichedda, Enrico, 2003. <i>Arqueologia de la producció</i>. Barcelona. Ariel.</p>	
<p>Procés productiu: Es tracta del procés que permet aconseguir un producte, des de l'obtenció de la matèria primera fins a l'objecte desitjat. En l'anàlisi d'un procés productiu -i des del punt de vista històric i arqueològic- cal tenir en compte diferents aspectes com ara: els materials, les tècniques aplicades durant el procés, les fases del procés, els espais on es realitzen, els operaris que intervenen, els materials de rebuig que genera i finalment l'us que tindrà l'objecte final i els destinataris del mateix.</p> <p>NOTA: definició pròpia realitzada a partir de la consulta de diversos diccionaris i enciclopèdies</p>		
<p>Imatges</p> 		
<p>Activitats prèvies individuals</p> <p>Escolliu un dels objectes de les fotografies (veure presentació penjada al campus amb les fotografies ampliades) i intenteu descriure el procés productiu que ha fet possible la obtenció d'aquests productes. No es tracta d'aprofundir en les tècniques, ni en els materials concrets sinó de veure les relacions entre els materials emprats, els espais on es realitzen les diferents fases i les traces que han pogut deixar en el registre arqueològic. Sintetitzeu la informació segons el quadre adjunt que trobareu penjat al campus (Procesos productius).</p>		<p>Activitats a l'aula</p> <p>Posada en comú dels treballs realitzats.</p>
Evidència	<p>Quadre "processos productius" amb la informació corresponent a tots els objectes treballats</p>	

ILLUSTRATION 1. EXAMPLE OF A LEARNING FOLDER USED IN UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA.



While doing the activity, we are developing important competences which universities tend to stipulate and define in protocols and documents, as the University of Barcelona does.²⁴ These transversal competences are reflected in each subject's teaching plan, which specifies the way they are going to be implemented. Therefore, we believe that the point of departure of designing all these actions should be the competences established by the institution and specified by each teaching team.

In continuous assessment, the folder cannot account for 100% of the final mark, and we recommend that it not exceed 50%. It can be complemented with self-assessable questionnaires using online tools (30%) and an oral presentation in which the students explain an aspect related to the course contents or part of their learning folder (20%).²⁵

10. Other possibilities and many more

Thus far we have presented some ways of teaching that we have experimented with in the University of Barcelona's GID [contra]TAEDIUM. We have experimented with and implemented all of them, and they have become common practice in many of the subjects that the professors in the group teach. We could continue to outline other proposals we have also tested and adapted to specific subjects, such as the comprehensive design of a subject based on implementing case studies that the students worked on throughout the entire semester, or proposals to promote autonomous work, or proposals to develop concept maps which were then peer assessed using guided feedback.²⁶

24. In 2014 the *Grup de Treball de Competències Transversal de la Universitat de Barcelona*, formed by Manuela Alcañiz Zanón, Conxita Amat Miralles, Montserrat Cruells Cadevall, Jaime López Sánchez, Margarita Mauri Álvarez, José Luís Menéndez Varela, Carme Riera i Prunera, Magdalena Rivero García, Pilar Sabater Mateu, Marta Sancho i Planas, Marina Solé Català, Maite Fernández Ferrer (group secretary) and Elena Cano García (work coordinator), wrote a report revising the implementation of the *las Competències Transversals de la Universitat de Barcelona*, which had been defined, approved and published in 2008. About the transversal competences in the Universitat de Barcelona, see: <<https://www.ub.edu/portal/web/competencies/detall/-/recurs/814553/competencies-transversals-de-la-universitat-de-barcelona>>.

25. Using the resources and tools on the virtual campus is essential in in this design process. At the University of Barcelona, the following studies may be useful: Simon, Joan. *Campus virtual UB: un nou entorn d'ensenyament-aprenentatge*. Barcelona: Institut de Ciències de la Educació de la Universitat de Barcelona, 2007; Simon Pallisé, Joan. *Campus virtual UB: Un nuevo entorno de enseñanza-aprendizaje*. Barcelona: Octaedro – ICE, 2009; Forés, Anna; Garcia, Iolanda; Rubió, Anna. *MetRodològic: guia metodològica del Campus Virtual*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2008. <<http://hdl.handle.net/2445/2821>> [consulted 13 February 2023].

26. Sancho, Marta; Garí, Blanca; Vinyoles, Teresa; Lluch, Rosa. "Dels continguts a les competències: disseny integral d'una assignatura de nova creació del grau d'Història". *Revista d'Innovació Docent Universitària RIDU*, 5 (2013): 9-19; Solé, Queralt. "Itinerario de prácticas en una asignatura obligatòria del grado de arqueología" *Innovación docente e investigación en Arte y Humanidades*. Madrid: Dickinson, 2019: 895-902; Alvaro Rueda, Karen, "Propuesta de contenidos docentes en Historia Medieval: materiales para el aprendizaje autónomo". *Innovación docente e investigación en Arte y Humanidades*. Madrid: Dickinson, 2019: 1161-1170; Soler Sala, Maria; Sancho i Planas, Marta. "Herramientas de evaluación por competencias



Likewise, we have yet to explore the potential of the teaching practice outside the more academic and institutional environments represented by the classroom. In this sense, we have launched a few experiments focused on fieldwork in archaeology.²⁷ But there is a long road ahead and many teaching experiments to implement, such as the gamification of certain learning processes or the flipped classroom. From our vantage point, we find them interesting, although they have to be very precisely planned in full detail to ensure that they do not become an empty experience devoid of content.

After carrying out many experiments, some of which failed, and participating in debate forums, projects and seminars with experts on the subject, we believe it is worthwhile to conclude that the road we are on is exciting and affords us the possibility of implementing new teaching methodologies to prevent the fatigue of years saying the same thing, and to awaken students' interest, motivate them to construct their own knowledge both inside and outside the classroom and learn to learn together in collaborative environments where they can share the desire to know more.

I have often wondered whether applying these methods means a much higher workload. The answer is a resounding 'no'. In any case, it is a different way of working and one that is clearly much more gratifying.

en asignaturas de grado y máster: la carpeta de aprendizaje y la exposición virtual", *Innovación docente e investigación en Arte y Humanidades*. Madrid: Dickinson, 2019: 591-604; Comas Via, Mireia, "Itinerario de prácticas y evaluación por competencias en asignaturas de Historia Medieval". *Innovación docente e investigación en Arte y Humanidades*. Madrid: Dickinson, 2019: 1001-1012; Travé Allepuz, Esther, "Una nueva propuesta didáctica para el estudio de cerámicas arqueológicas de época medieval: aprendizaje autónomo y entre iguales a partir del desarrollo de proyectos", *Innovación docente e investigación en Arte y Humanidades*. Madrid: Dickinson, 2019: 545-556; Sancho i Planas, Marta. "Aprender con la elaboración de mapas conceptuales: trabajo colaborativo y feedback entre iguales, una oportunidad para desarrollar la capacidad de síntesis e impulsar una actitud crítica y autocrítica", *Competencia de aprender a aprender y autorregulación en la universidad. Evaluación entre iguales y propuestas metodológicas para su desarrollo*, Lluch, Laia; Cabrera, Nati, eds. Barcelona: Octaedro - IDP/ICE, 2022.

27. Sancho i Planas, Marta; Soler Sala, Maria y Solé Barjau, Queralt. "Les excavacions arqueològiques com a espais d'aprenentatge en competències de recerca. Del treball de camp al laboratori" *Revista del Congrés Internacional de Docència Universitària i Innovació (CIDUI)*, 5 (2021) <<https://raco.cat/index.php/RevistaCIDUI/article/view/380127>>.

