

Effective teaching for international students. A professional development course

Call for applications

This call was announced: 18 February 2020

Application deadline: 11 March 2020

Expected notification of applicants about the results of their application: 11 April 2020

Course purpose

The purpose of this course is to improve internationalisation through enhancing the teaching competences of university teachers, including designing courses in English and facilitating the learning of international students.

Expected learning outcomes

By the end of this course participants shall be able to

- recognise and address the needs and expectations of a diverse body of local and international students;
- use a set of principles, concepts, approaches, and instruments to design and implement new or revise existing (under)graduate courses that
 1. help local students cope with international challenges and practices (“internationalization at home”) and
 2. cater to the needs of international students and support their learning effectively;
- assess student learning and evaluate the outcomes of their courses in a self-reflective, enhancement-led and critical manner.

Course format and structure

The course uses active learning as the key method through which participants are to develop knowledge and skills. By active learning it is meant that participant teachers will predominantly learn through other ways than listening to session leaders and reading assigned materials. During the course, session leaders will create a range of opportunities for participants to formulate their own understanding of studied concepts, to trial new teaching and learning methods, to collaborate with peers in small groups and to exchange feedback. Further to that, participants will be encouraged and aided to implement active learning in their own classes.

This four-semester course four-semester course consists of the following 4 sections:

- 1) a series of 5 or 6 **face-to-face workshops** totalling 20 hours (Autumn semester 2020/2021). Workshops will focus on the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching international students, including teaching in English and teaching diverse students. The workshops will be supported by pre-workshop reading assignments, short written exercises and take-home assignments.

- 2) a **course design** section (Spring semester 2020/2021), whereby participants will work to develop a new (under)graduate course taught in English or course sessions or they redesign an existing one based on the principles of facilitating good learning of international students. Participants will also design a plan for evaluating course outcomes. During this period, participants will meet twice to present their progress with course design. The first meeting will be organised for sharing and discussing ideas while during the second participants will present their course designs and exchange peer feedback. In between the two meetings, online coaches will support participants by providing them with guidance and feedback.
- 3) a **teaching section** (Autumn semester 2021/2022) where participants will teach the (re)designed course (or course sessions) to a cohort of students, preferably including international students and collect data on the outcomes of student learning.
- 4) a **teaching evaluation** section (Spring semester 2021/2022) whereby participants will write and present a reflection report on student learning arising from their own practice and lessons learned from the presentations of others.

Course instructors

The team of instructors consists of the following experienced international tutors:

- Agnes Simon, Masaryk University
- Eszter Simon, Nottingham Trent University
- Mátyás Szabó, Central European University
- Jaroslav Varchola, Comenius University in Bratislava
- Sylvia Walsarie Wolff, Technical University Delft
- Gina Wisker, University of Brighton

Course venue

The face-to-face part of the course will be taught at Comenius University, Faculty of Arts, Gondova 2, Bratislava.

Course fees and funding

There is no course fee thanks to a generous grant from the Erasmus+ Strategic partnership (project IMPACT 2019-1-SK01-KA203-060671). Course organisers acknowledge the support.



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

Course accreditation

The course leaders work on having the course accredited through the Staff and Educational Development Association ([SEDA](#)) so that every course graduate received an internationally recognized certificate.

Eligibility

Faculty members from Comenius University, Faculty of Arts, **who expect to teach a course or some of its components at either the Bachelors or Masters level in the Autumn semester of the 2021-2022 academic year** are eligible to apply for the course. Teaching engagement in Autumn 2021 should entail the independent teaching of at least three sessions of a course (seminars, lectures, tutorials etc.) and, preferably, participation in student assessment. This practical part (i.e. the design, conduct, reflection on and evaluation of own teaching) is an integral course element, essential for the successful completion of the course.

PhD students are encouraged to apply, too, but they are required to attach a support letter from the head of the department confirming that the PhD student will have a teaching appointment in the Autumn semester 2021/2022 and ideally naming the course/s that the PhD student is going to teach or be involved in.

All applicants should have current teaching experience (teaching at least several course sessions at either the Bachelors or Masters level). Previous experience with teaching foreign students or teaching a class in a foreign language is not required.

The applicants are expected to have a good command of English in order to be able to communicate with session leaders/coaches, to read and reflect on the course materials and to write assignments. The course leaders assume that course participants will teach their (re)designed courses (or course sessions) in English but if they have a preference for teaching in a different foreign language than English, they are advised to clearly indicate this with the course coordinator (see later).

Criteria for selecting the applicants

We offer 20 places for teachers from Comenius University, Faculty of Arts. The following criteria will be used to select the course participants:

- 1) applicants' level of interest in participating in the course including a commitment to teach a course (or course sessions) in English or another foreign language;
- 2) applicants' level of commitment to work as a teacher and to improve their own teaching as well as their students' learning experience; and
- 3) the overall quality of the application.

How to apply

Applications should be submitted in English, containing the following documents:

1. Curriculum vitae (1-2 pages)
The applicant's CVs should highlight educational background, previous and current teaching-related responsibilities, teaching and research interests, and activities related to the internationalization of higher education (if any).
2. A short reflective essay on applicant's teaching experience (800 words)
In this essay, the applicant should discuss the following questions:

- What characterizes the course(s) the applicant has taught so far? (Name, subject, class size, level, class composition, number of sessions per week, length of the sessions, student preparedness, etc.) What was the applicant's main role? (Seminar leader, teaching assistant, independent lecturer, etc.)
- If the applicant has taught more than one course, it is preferred that—after listing all courses taught—he/she singles out one course and discusses that course in the rest of the essay. If the applicant has taught a course attended by international students or a course in a foreign language, please choose that one. The applicant may also discuss own experience while teaching several such courses, summarising the strengths of own teaching and main challenges while facilitating the learning of international students,
- How did the applicant teach? (Prevalent teaching methods, experience with using other methods—e.g. lectures, discussion, lab activities, games, simulations, etc.)
- What was one aspect of the applicant's teaching that went well? What were the biggest challenges experienced and how did he/she deal with them?
- With whom and how frequently does the applicant usually discuss teaching? What do these conversations on teaching entail and how useful are they for the applicant's development as a teacher?

3. Motivation Letter (400-600 words)

The applicant should address their motivation to participate in the course and their future plans and ambitions as educators. In this, they should consider the following questions

- What has been their main reason to apply for this course?
- Why is it important to get prepared for teaching international students and /or teaching in a foreign language?
- What characterizes good teaching?
- What kind of educator does the applicant want to become, specifically in relation to teaching international students? What do the applicant currently do to improve as a teacher?
- How does the applicant like to see himself/herself as a teacher at the end of the course in relation to how they see themselves today? What important developments does the applicant have in mind?

Participants are welcome to discuss their application before submission with the course coordinator, Dr. Gabriela Pleschová via email (gabriela.pleschova@uniba.sk) or over the phone (0904 525846).

How to submit the application

The applications should be submitted by email to gabriela.pleschova@uniba.sk, preferably as one file (for example, one Word or rtf. document including first the CV, the short reflection and the motivation letter). The application files should be named using the following format: applicants' firstname_surname.doc, e.g. jan_novak.doc. All data provided by the applicants will be handled in harmony with the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Our dedicated team is very much looking forward to receiving all applications!