CONSTRUCTIVE ALIGNMENT
AS AN EDUCATIONAL PLATFORM
Department of Care Science

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INTRODUCTION
The composition of an educational platform for the Department of Care Science has as its foundation the necessity to both ensure and further develop the quality of the education offered by the faculty, in both the first and the second cycle. Lifelong learning can be held up as a central foundation for the department's underlying educational philosophy with regard to future activities. This means that teaching should support the student's independent knowledge development, critical thinking, reflection and problem solving ability. Furthermore, the educational format should facilitate an active and creative involvement in teaching, in order to stimulate the student's development of professional competence.

Educational Theory
The basis for the department's educational platform can be traced back to Aristotle's thoughts on the forms of knowledge: episteme, theoretical scientific knowledge, techne, practical productive knowledge and phronesis, political ethical knowledge (Gustavsson 2000). Our basic educational philosophy emanates, however, from educationalists such as Rogers1, Vygotsky2, Piaget3 and Dewey4. These educationalists highlight the significance of giving students the opportunity to actively take part in the learning process, that knowledge is built up through interaction and communication and that theory, practice, reflection and action constitute each others' conditions for continuous lifelong learning (Jarvis 2010).

The complexity of education is described further in the theory of sociocultural learning. Learning thus involves the whole individual, not only in relation to specific activities, but also in relation to a social solidarity and how learning is construed in teamwork (Säljö 2000). To summarise, the courses at the

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1 American psychologist (1902-1987) who, together with A.H. Maslow, founded humanistic psychology and developed ideas from psychology for an educational setting.
2 Russian psychologist and educationalist (1896-1934) whose theories about learning as sociocultural, where relationships, communication and culture are central, were pioneering for their time and influence educational theory even today.
3 Swiss educationalist and philosopher (1896-1980) who is best known for his theory on the development of children, but has also been of significance to adult education as it has been shown that adults' thought and reflection processes change and develop throughout life.
4 American educationalist and philosopher (1859-1952) who decreed a pragmatic view of learning, i.e. that learning should be of practical benefit. Dewey coined the term "learning by doing".
Department of Care Science aim to promote lifelong learning. This is well reflected throughout the breadth of our educational programmes, from the first to the third cycle, as well as in the large number of stand-alone courses which we offer in the first and second cycle.

Constructive Alignment
Biggs and Tang (2007) describe how the content of a course should be a motivating, but also challenging experience for the student. Constructive alignment (CA) involves clearly linking learning goals with working practices and examinations in the course plans and with clear progression within and between programmes in the first and second cycles. Constructive means, simply, that students construe the purpose, i.e. understanding of a phenomenon (that which will be learned) through relevant learning activities or that which we call study formats. Alignment refers to the structure, from the teacher's point of view, that the learning goals, working practices and examinations complement one another, i.e. that the student is given the opportunity to learn that which is later examined.

PRECEPTING AND CLINICAL PRACTICE

Clinical training is an important part of the nursing programme. This means that the training at, for example, the simulator centre and at the clinical skills centre (procedural exercises) together with clinical practice constitute the programme's clinical training. At the Department of Care Science, clinical practice is defined as that portion of the training which takes place in proximity to patients in various health and long-term care environments. During the clinical practice portion of the training, the students are precepted by clinically active nurses. The preceptor's function is complex and they should support the student's ability to apply their generalised formal theoretical knowledge to problems relating to the individual in a specific care context. At the Department for Care Science, reflective preceptorship is central. This becomes particularly clear when precepting students who are undergoing specialist training during the second cycle. Reflection is a precepting strategy which may increase the awareness and understanding of
nursing situations experienced by the student; it is enabling for the student, and also develops the student's ability for critical thinking (Carlson 2012).

**The Paired Clinical Nurse Teachers Model**

At the Department of Care Science, educational development of clinical practice takes place using the, so called, paired clinical nurse teachers model. The model was instituted in 2001 and is now a permanent collaboration between the department, Skåne University Hospital (SUS) in Malmö and the hospitals in Ystad and Trelleborg. The model is constructed around a pair of clinical teachers, one of whom represents the educational institution and the other the hospital. They share responsibility for providing educational support to the students and preceptors, as well as managing educational development in either a clinic or a number of wards.

**Precepting in the Clinical Education Ward**

A training format which is increasingly attracting interest as a way of training healthcare personnel is interprofessional training. Since 2005, the Department of Care Science, in collaboration with SUS in Malmö and the Faculty of Medicine in Lund, has had a successful collaboration with the clinical education ward (KUA). The educational philosophy behind the training at KUA can be summarised as "working together to learn together". The students who come together at KUA are from the medical nursing, physiotherapy and occupational therapy programmes.

**Collaborative Learning**

Collaborative learning involves a collaboration between students in which involvement, independence, critical thought and problem solving are central. The focus is on learning, not on teaching, and one of the models which is used in clinical practice is peer learning (Ross and Cameron 2007).

**Educational Development and Care Educational Research at the Institution**

The continued development of our educational efforts and research is an important part of the department's work to ensure quality. An intensive effort is taking place in the department to make it clear in the course plans how learning goals, working practices and examination formats relate to one another. The care
educational research is an integral part of the department's care science research that has a multi-disciplinary and interprofessional character so that the development of the department's educational models can be clearly linked to research.

REFERENCES


