A publication about the Faculty of Education and Society at Malmö University
LEARNING IN A CHANGING WORLD IS THE FOCUS OF OUR RESEARCH AND TEACHING.
Dear reader,
We all live in a world of globalisation, multilingualism and mediatisation. The mission of education and research at the Faculty of Education and Society at Malmö University is to contribute to professional and academic knowledge and debate on these issues.

We are convinced that the quality of our education and research will be further improved in close cooperation with public and private institutions of various kinds, regionally, nationally and internationally. Since several years we work in partnership with schools, municipalities and sports associations. We are now making efforts to strengthen our relations to cultural institutions and creative industries.

By this book, our aim is to present an inspiring selection of what is going on at our faculty. We are more than eager to hear from you whenever you wish!

Best regards
Johan Elmfeldt
Dean, Faculty of Education and Society
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“Apps” that inspire

“Which accommodation is the most expensive over the course of a week? Give as elaborate an answer as possible!”

Per-Eskil Persson starts his lesson with the pupils of the Bernadotte programme at Pauli upper secondary school in Malmö. Some twenty pupils in the course Maths A, think hard about this question.

“If you use them correctly, you will learn more, and understand more mathematics with good tools. That’s my theory.”

Per-Eskil Persson is a senior lecturer in mathematics with a didactic focus, and is running a research project in cooperation with Malmö City and Texas Instruments. The company has developed the software used by the pupils at Pauli upper secondary school to find out which holiday village was the least expensive. It is interactive and dynamic, and contains seven different applications, among others, a computer algebra system (CAS), dynamic graphs and geometric calculations. You can also enter film clips and images.

Schools in several Swedish cities are involved in the project. The pupils at Pauli upper secondary school are using laptops. At other schools, an advanced calculator with the same functions is used. In the afternoon, Per-Eskil Persson will continue to a school in Helsingborg that uses both. The project is a continuation of an earlier study he did on learning with the help of a calculator. The results were inconclusive as to whether the calculators had contributed to a deeper understanding of mathematics, but the three pilot classes at the time felt that the calculators sparked their interest, motivation and curiosity. Another benefit is that it is easy to bring with you.

“An important part of teacher education is to get out into the schools and look at the similarities and differences between different groups of pupils,” says Per-Eskil Persson.

One of the questions to ask is which alternative provides the most possibilities.

“I want to know what teachers and pupils feel that it adds to the teaching process, compared with using a simpler calculator and pen and paper. What, if anything, is preventing them from using new technology,” says Per-Eskil Persson, who wrote his thesis on how school algebra education can be improved.

Most of the pupils in the class at Pauli are positive about using computers for mathematics, but one of them is completely adamant about what he prefers:

“It is always best to use pen and paper.”
Per-Eskil Persson wants to know whether tools increase the interest in and understanding of mathematics. In cooperation with Latinskolan in Malmö he has initiated a project on mathematics and language: What can technology contribute to decrease the language issues in this subject?
IMPROVING TEACHING BY FOCUSING ON SUBJECT SPECIFIC LANGUAGE

Multilingual Malmö, with nearly 170 mother tongues, is working intensively to ensure that all its pupils reach the curriculum targets. A promising approach is to include language teaching within school subjects. Maaike Hajer, professor at Utrecht University of Applied Sciences and the Faculty of Education and Society at Malmö University, wants to implement insights in the teaching of language in school subjects and teacher training.

“It is time for schools and teacher education to realise that we live in a multilingual society, where many different mother tongues are spoken in the same classroom,” says Maaike Hajer.

“Identifying ways in which all teachers contribute to academic language development and subject specific language requires researchers who enter that classroom. We have to look what function language activities have for teachers of physics, math, and history.”

A film sequence is played of a teacher trying to establish the concept of scale on a map to a group of year 5 pupils. Pupils exchange the distances they travelled, in town, or all the way to relatives in Turkey. Is that a large distance? The teacher allows most of the pupils to have a say about distance and the associations flow back and forth, and together they construct the concept of distance. The teacher then shows that a distance can be measured on a map, if you understand scales. The teacher knows exactly where she wants her 11 year-olds to arrive at.

This clip is played at one of Maaike Hajer’s seminars, to school teachers and teacher educators in Malmö. The quality of classroom interaction is the theme. Some vocational education teachers from an upper secondary school comment on what they have just seen: the teacher’s ability to see and allow the pupils to express themselves, while at the same time keeping to the goal of the lesson.

Maaike Hajer is clear on what she wants: teachers to become aware of their role and to allow the pupils to develop language simultaneously with subject knowledge. The pupils should be active, think aloud, to express their thoughts. Listening to them then gives the teacher opportunities to explain and provide them with feedback. It is necessary to be aware of language objectives related to your content objectives and work with them explicitly. Help students to express themselves like mathematicians, scientists, historians, in talking and writing and plan your feedback moments.

“It is all too common that teachers in multilingual classrooms cut back on the difficult
words, shorten texts and focus on facts, lowering their demands,” says Maaike Hajer. “But this leads to a downwards spiral, where pupils with language difficulties learn less and at a superficial level.

In school, as at university, we need to cooperate over disciplinary boundaries to find better ways. There is a lot going on in Malmö right now, where language and subject teachers are finding each other, which is of course positive.”
Sports are not only good for motor skills, they also sharpen learning abilities. Especially in boys. Over a period of nine years, Ingegerd Ericsson followed the progress of over two hundred school children in Malmö to look at the effects of sports education.

“There is a significant difference between the children who had more physical education and health classes and the ones who only had regular classes,” says Ingegerd Ericsson, senior lecturer of Sports Science.

Ingegerd Ericsson monitored three birth cohorts of children in year 1-3 of primary school, and compared the progress of the children in an intervention group, who were having scheduled sports classes five days a week plus additional motor skills training, with that of a control group who only had regular sports classes twice per week. Over nine years, she observed the balance and coordination of a total 220 children. She then also compared their results from diagnostic tests in year two, and their final grades in year nine.

It turned out that 93 per cent of the pupils in the intervention group had good motor skills, compared to 53 per cent in the control group. 96 per cent of the pupils in the intervention group, and 89 per cent of the control group, passed primary and lower secondary school to become eligible for upper secondary school. It is primarily the boys’ results, with 96 and 83 per cent in the respective groups, that have led to this result. The boys in the intervention group also had significantly higher grades in Swedish, English, maths and physical education and health than the boys in the control group.

“The greatest difference in motor development is also between the boys. Physical education and health is the only school subject where boys have better grades than girls. One explanation, according to Ingegerd Ericsson, could be that boys are happier in school when they have more physical education, and that this makes them also perform better in other subjects.”

This investigation is unique. There are no previous results that statistically show a connection over that many years. The results are also backed by the homogeneity of the groups studied: the children are the same age, they attend the same school and their parents have comparable educations, incomes and interest in physical activity.

For Ingegerd Ericsson the conclusion is a given:

“Sports classes have been cut from three times a week to two. There is a lot of talk about the poor academic results of Swedish children, and how it is important to invest in theo-
retical subjects. We now have scientific proof that daily, scheduled sports classes and conscious motor training not only improve motor skills, but also performance in school. So with more physical education and health classes, more children will get passing grades.”

The Bunkeflo project
The Bunkeflo project in Malmö was initiated in the autumn of 1999, as a cooperation between schools, sports associations and research. The project studied the effect of daily, scheduled physical activity (45 minutes per school day) on children in school years 1-9. The results indicate a connection between physical activity, motor training and school performance.
HISTORY IS NOT ALL ABOUT THE PAST

New course syllabi, teaching materials and new national tests for the pupils in year nine. Professor Per Eliasson has had a great influence over the design of the history taught in Swedish schools in recent years.

In the new national history syllabus for primary and lower secondary school, the contents and knowledge requirements have been more clearly defined. If you ask Per Eliasson, who has been the subject coordinator for the history syllabus, the subject has been given a core content, for the first time in 30 years, that clearly describes what the pupils should know at the different stages of their compulsory education. Knowledge development now also characterises the national tests taken in year nine. More than 20,000 pupils in around 1000 schools take this test each year.

The knowledge that the pupils have developed in primary and lower secondary school they will need later for their upper secondary school education. “Such a progression has always been evident in subjects such as mathematics and English, but never before in history,” says Per Eliasson.

As the greatest change, he stresses that the term historical consciousness pervades the entire syllabus, i.e., there is more emphasis on context, and being able to use and evaluate source material. It is through interpreting the past that we understand the now, and can relate to the future. “History is not only about the past, but is a current topic.”

Included in the commission from the Swedish National Agency for Education was the sensitive task of prioritising world history. What can you get through in the mere 25 hours or so of history per school year? To include the complete world history from antiquity and on is simply impossible.

“We wanted to prioritise later history over older, but also emphasise a history that looks at the meeting of peoples and cultures and countries, not just the political history centred around the nation state,” says Per Eliasson.

One of the consequences is that late 20th century history has been given more space. The intention was to create an understanding of present times, and a historical perspective.

Previously, many pupils in year nine finished their history at the end of World War II in 1945. Much time was spent on World War II and the Holocaust, but few had time to talk about the post-war era, decolonisation, the Cold War or the democratisation of Sweden in the 1900s.

In one of the assessment support documents for teachers, published by the Swedish National Agency for Education and developed in Malmö, the main question is how the Holocaust has been used in the public debate; how is it used by different interests?
“The idea is for the pupils to discuss and evaluate this question from an ethical viewpoint. Through historical examples, we can draw parallels with our own times, but also see the differences,” says Per Eliasson.

New knowledge requirements state that pupils in lower secondary school should be able to reflect on our use of history. This along with the pupils’ use of references and ability to work with sources are assessed in the new national test in history. Per Eliasson feels that since history as a subject poses such open questions, it is important to give clear teacher instructions for the national test, so that they can make a comparable assessment.

“But the most important thing is that the tests reflect the complexity of the new syllabus. Only then can the test really support the work and grading of the teachers,” he says.

With new and improved syllabi, a clearer grading scale and national tests intended to increase the completion of goals, Per Eliasson thinks that history education will develop and change. “And Malmö University has a big part in that change.”
WHEN ORGANISATIONS NEED SUPPORT

A large part of the activities within the Faculty of Education and Society are related to assignments for schools, municipalities, authorities and sports organisations. These assignments are funded by the client. The ambition is to widen services for cultural institutions, the business sector and civil society. These would involve education of staff and development projects, assessments, and research projects.

Cooperation is a complex matter, and an assignment for professional development could lead to a research project, or a research project could lead to development of skills and capabilities. It's impossible to draw any clear lines, says Karl-Gunnar Starck, head of the Regional Development Centre at ES.

“Right now, a lot of our efforts are focused on supporting and assisting schools and preschools, as a consequence of the reforms being introduced.”

The reforms include new curricula for preschools and compulsory school, a new Education Act, new course syllabi for compulsory school, new subject syllabi and a new programme structure for upper secondary school, etc.

“We get assignments from heads of preschools and principals, to come along and help develop teaching and learning in accordance with these reforms. This includes interpreting steering documents, anticipating consequences of them, and training staff. We have also carried out several targeted efforts with regard to grades and assessment.”

Another major assignment is the life-long learning of active teachers, within the government Teacher In-Service Training Initiative.

The faculty is at the centre of these measures, but commission and employ researchers and teachers from all of Malmö University.

“If I could choose, I would also want us to get more involved in general and practice-related long-term projects, where we really could reflect on teaching, and thereby be a more active part of the development of schools and teaching,” continues Karl-Gunnar Starck. “But I'm starting to see a trend of more activity-related development assignments, which I feel is a positive thing.”

At the same time, the activities have to be adapted to the needs and conditions of the surrounding society.
Regional Development Centre
The assignments which are conveyed through the Development Centre are equivalent of a little more than 40 per cent of all commissioned courses at Malmö University and had a turnover of SEK 23 million in 2012.
TO INCLUDE EVERYONE IN SCHOOL

On this sunny but freezing morning, senior lecturer Lena Lang is headed for a school in Landskrona in the south of Sweden, to do a group interview with a school team consisting of teachers and special needs educators. How do they work to include all pupils and to help them learn and develop in school? The interview is one piece of the puzzle in an extensive research project at Malmö University, which concerns the disadvantaged pupils at the school.

“This project has been initiated in a time where there is much focus on grades and on the assessment of individual performances,” says Lena Lang. “We have been commissioned by 12 municipalities and 33 schools wanting to reach a deeper understanding of inclusive teaching situations and we researchers have now reached the actual survey phase.

How do the schools handle the fact that the pupils have different learning conditions and come from different social and cultural backgrounds? What consideration is given to this fact in the individual classrooms, schools and municipalities?”

This particular school in Landskrona has chosen to work with a challenging group in secondary school. The school team wants to improve the pupils’ working atmosphere, motivation to really learn, their respect for each other, while reducing the disturbingly high level of absence. They have introduced clearer regulations and double staffing in the classrooms, with one teacher and one observer.

“How do you work on trust and on getting the pupils to participate?” Lena Lang wants to know.

The day before, Lena Lang visited another school in Landskrona, where many of the pupils have Swedish as second language. At this school, several teachers work simultaneously in one classroom, to provide mutual support and knowledge.

“Politicians often say that schools must show better results,” continues Lena Lang. At the same time, the people working at the school know that there is no easy fix to get everyone on board.

Parallel to the research project, there is also a development project underway. The twelve municipalities want the results to be applicable in the classroom as well as at the management and system levels. There is already an online platform where the schools share their working methods for inclusion, so that they can learn from each other. The aim is for the schools to have developed their inclusive teaching environments by the end of the project in three years.

At the same time, the researchers want to continue their in-depth analyses of strategic cases in order to catch successful and forward thinking, but also to contribute to knowledge
on how different approaches and actions affect the learning situation.

“If we are to have a socially sustainable society, it must include everyone,” says Lena Lang.

**The research and development project**

An inclusive school is financed by 12 Swedish municipalities. It is coordinated by the independent research institute Ifous – Innovation, Research and Development in School – which strives to benefit Swedish schools.
WHY DO WE ASSESS THE YOUNGEST?


“We need to reflect critically on why, and for whom, we are documenting and assessing the youngest children,” she says.

In the revised Swedish preschool curriculum, Ann-Christine Vallberg Roth has noticed guidelines for a systematic documentation and assessment that have not been there before.

“The problem is that we run the risk of reproducing social patterns already in preschool,” she says.

Testing materials, assessments and surveys are a few ways of monitoring a child’s development. Individual development plans register whether the child is speaking properly, is able to write their own name, or name 15 letters. This increased monitoring can be affirmative and supportive, Ann-Christine Vallberg Roth points out, but it can also weaken and mislead.

The studies she has conducted at a few preschools have shown great variation in both assessment and what content the preschool focuses on. Language development featured in all of them. However, in areas where many of the children had Swedish as their mother tongue, the knowledge-based assessment was dominant whereas in the areas with a large proportion of children with an immigrant background, more emphasis was placed on social education, creation and Swedish language assessment.

“There is then a difference based on where you grow up and what preschool you attend, and this can lead to a lack of equivalence”, says Ann-Christine Vallberg Roth.

An individual child should, in accordance with the Swedish Education Act, not be assessed in terms of achievable targets. But there is a trend that focuses more on individual learning and knowledge than on what the institution can offer. This is a trend that, in her opinion, can be seen as part of a general pro-assessment movement, and a rationalised, goal-oriented market thinking in a globalised society.

“The children are also supposed to carry out self-assessments. They are socialised at an early age to focus on their own learning, on a goal-oriented learning; ‘What have I learned, what do I want, what do I know, what don’t I know’, “ says Ann-Christine Vallberg Roth.

According to Ann-Christine Vallberg Roth, the documentation focuses on the skilled and reflective child, at as young an age as one. The dependent and impulsive child is not, for example, as prominent.
Much time is spent on documentation. Does this contribute to keeping the children’s options open, wonders Ann-Christine Vallberg Roth, who would like to point out the complex nature of documentation and assessment in preschool.

The Swedish preschool
The preschool is intended to lay the foundation for the first step in a learning process that continues throughout life. The municipalities are responsible for providing preschool places for children from the age of one, when their parents are working or studying.

“It is important that we problematise this matter within the teacher education, so that the students are prepared, and not only absorbed into something when they graduate,” she says. “At the same time, there is a great level of commitment at the preschools. The teachers listen to the children. There is a built-in democratic potential that is argued. No child must be overlooked. The positive in every child is emphasised.”
Swedish school children have fallen behind in international knowledge tests. But professor Anders Jakobsson feels that the intense and politicised discussion regarding the deteriorating results has become somewhat unbalanced. Our knowledge is adapted to the society we live in, he says.

Anders Jakobsson is a professor of Natural Science didactics, and was the project manager of a major research project on how school children have performed in Natural Science from a long-term perspective. The researchers have carried out a profound analysis of the results from the PISA international knowledge tests, which consist of fact-based tests using pen and paper and four alternative answers. These tests are taken by thousands of fifteen-year-olds all over the world. The overall question of the project was what these international tests actually indicate about knowledge.

“This type of national ranking only provides a partial description, and says very little about the Swedish educational organisation and contents,” says Anders Jakobsson.

The project has carried out a special study of the results from four years, and when it comes to the fact-based questions, the pupils from Swedish schools still do well. Unequivocally however, they have become significantly worse at applying their knowledge. From being clearly above the international average to clearly below between 2000 and 2009. The researchers must get better at investigating how pupils develop their ability to solve problems, is the opinion of Anders Jakobsson.

“The situation is particularly bad when it comes to what we call the nature of science. Understanding how new knowledge is created and how we can tell what is certain knowledge; this seems to be something that we have completely excluded from our teaching in Sweden.”

The research group can clearly see that it is the low and medium range pupils that fall behind, while the highest performing pupils still do well. The gap between the schools has increased.

“We find one possible explanation in the free school choice; that it has become a type of sorting mechanism. There is research to indicate that when a school loses its highly motivated pupils, the teaching also suffers. This is a current trend in Swedish schools that we are very concerned about.”
Funding from the Swedish Research Council
The Swedish Research Council gave SEK 5.6 million to the three-year research project Perspectives on large scale studies (PELS), which was a cooperation between Malmö University, Mid Sweden University and the Department of Education in Denmark.
Josefhin Jartsjö is a subject teacher of geography and English and is currently working as project and fund-raising manager at the non-profit organisation Wewe na Maasai WeMa, in a Maasai village in Tanzania.

“My job is to support a school located in the village, which no-one has really taken care of. The school has lots of problems, for example, there isn’t enough water, the toilets have no doors and it’s very common for the children to not go to school at all. So far, I have spent a lot of time at the school documenting these problems.”

It was a longing to go to Africa, to see the world, and to make comparisons with Sweden that led her and a friend to apply for the Sida Minor Fields Study scholarship when they were still studying. Prior to leaving, they did thorough research on the current situation in Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of reading and literacy, and on why it is twice as common for girls than for boys to quit school early. This despite the fact that promoting gender equality in the world is one of the UN Millennium Development Goals, and that education is one of the best ways of achieving it. Or as former Secretary-General of the UN Kofi Annan said: “To educate girls is to reduce poverty.”

They chose Zanzibar because it, unlike the rest of Tanzania, has no tuition fees for secondary school. They stayed for eight weeks, lived in a village, compiled material and worked on their paper nearly the whole time, as there was not much else to do.

“We thought that we had left well-prepared, but once we got there it was pretty chaotic,” says Josefhin Jartsjö.

They had to find a good interpreter to translate from Swahili to English, even though they thought they had a contact person on site. Nor was it completely easy to socialise with the people of the village, but they did make a few friends there.

The paper shows that the reasons for dropping out of school are many and complex, and they often intertwine. The parents are equally eager for their daughters to continue school as their sons, and the girls themselves feel that education will lead to a better life. The drop-outs are rather a result of poverty, which means that the girls cannot afford to buy school uniforms or lunches. They are forced to walk too far to get to school. Someone is ill at home, and they have to help provide for the family.

The fact that classes are taught in English is also a major contributing reason for the
Josefhin Järtsjö is currently working in a school in Tanzania. As a student, she did a Minor Field Study, MFS, with a scholarship from the government agency SIDA. The scholarship is intended for first and second cycle students, and can be used to collect material, on site or in a developing country, for a paper or thesis. The field study must be carried out for at least eight weeks.

drop-outs. Many find it difficult to keep up in secondary school, when there is a sudden switch from Swahili to English. Several of the girls also indicate illness and harassment form the teachers as contributing causes, a few also fell pregnant.

Josefhin Järtsjö is now back in Tanzania, but on the mainland this time. Even if she is not currently working as a teacher, she feels that she benefits a lot from her education in her current job.

“Thanks to my education, I understand how to plan a school, and what is needed to create a positive environment for the teachers and pupils.”
DRAMA AND DEMOCRACY

The pupils in year nine at a secondary school in Lund get to use all of their creativity when making the variety show “Senaste nytt” (Latest news). The drama teacher Balli Lelinge from Malmö University is also present to help challenge the pupils. To come up with clever talk shows, to find a chord on the guitar that sounds good, to become an investigative news reporter or to just express themselves through their bodies and to dance like crazy.

“For me, it’s about getting involved in this pupil production by providing support but also by questioning and challenging,” says Balli Lelinge.

This direct contact with the pupils is essential. “It is important to both apply current research in the schools and to bring experiences from those schools back to the university.”

As a teacher at the Faculty of Education and Society he must have credibility with his students, which is why he must have a solid foundation in both proven experience and current research.

“Us university teachers must get out there and work in the schools. Not only through professional development for school management and teachers, but also through meeting with pupils and their teachers in their everyday activities.”

Balli Lelinge is convinced that the departure point should always be the pupils’ own experiences and interests, for them to feel that it is for real.

Like this variety show. Some want to express themselves through dances they have choreographed, others want to do a satire on the principal, and a third group is inspired by Big Brother or other television programmes to write their own sketches; they all look for expressions and approaches, try different things and receive critique, support and praise. There is a significant desire to work, where the pupils’ entrepreneurial sides are challenged as well, according to Balli Lelinge.

“I see it as socialisation, identification and group dynamics, with me constantly challenging the pupils,” he continues. “I want them to develop critical thinking, where they can explore and reassess old knowledge, and process what they have seen, heard or done together with others.”

Balli Lelinge is of the opinion that you have to both bring research to the schools and take your practical experience back to university. That way, the pupils and the teachers can reach a deeper understanding and insight into success factors in school, and the students get a teacher trainer/researcher who is able to connect practice and theory.

“How can we discuss our surrounding society if we are not in it?”
For this reason, Balli Lelinge also brings in his drama students to this school variety show production; to listen in and to be a part of a learning context. They must experience the creative process in person and understand that practice and theory go hand in hand.

The work of Balli Lelinge to deepen and support this production is done as an external assignment through the Regional Development Centre (RUC).
THE EDUCATOR WITHOUT GRADING REQUIREMENTS

He sees himself as an educator rather than a teacher, and feels that the most important thing is the willingness to learn.

Fredrik Karlsson found a job at the library learning centre where he can help people develop without having to evaluate their knowledge.

“Some say that the teacher should be like a coach. I have always found this difficult when one party is not in school voluntarily.”

At the learning centre, there is neither judgment nor coercion. The computers are all taken. Fredrik, who is a qualified upper secondary school teacher of Swedish and philosophy, is helping a woman upload a film she has made into a video editing programme. He describes his workplace as an educational, experimental workshop, where they are trying to close the digital gap that exists in Malmö. A place where you can try out new technology and programmes such as Photoshop and InDesign, but assistance is also offered to people who have dyslexia or need help reading and writing. In the Public Service Plaza, they have lectures and workshops. After three years, the learning centre has become a great success, where visitors help one another and find new contacts.

Fredrik Karlsson started his academic career in molecular biology before he realised that with his “didactic approach to life”, he should probably be a teacher instead. He is a dedicated young man, who was the student union ombudsman during his teacher education, wrote his thesis on social sorting in schools, and who is involved in the debate on school matters. As an active feminist, he feels that the whole world would profit from an equal society. He thinks that current education policy is simplistic.

“The main issue is that the people making the decisions are not the most qualified to do so. They refer to Swedish pupils’ poor results in international knowledge tests, but these analyses are not useful when it comes to what people will need in the future, in my opinion. They are measuring tools that belong to a different view of knowledge than mine.”

Fredrik Karlsson is very pleased with his teacher education; it provided him with subject knowledge and didactic tools, but also with a lot of fruitful conversations with his lecturers. But the schools could learn from the flexible way that the libraries work with knowledge and different media, such as up to eight different versions of a book.

“I also think it is good to have some academic experience before starting a teacher education programme. You have to be able to attend a lecture and remain critical. Have an idea
Fredrik Karlsson is 29 years old and comes from Trosa. He is a singer/songwriter in the band Solander, who have toured all over Europe and the USA.

of what you want to do, see what tools you need and make sure you find the people who are able to provide them, says Fredrik, who is about to become the head of the library's non-fiction section.
MORE ALIKE THAN DIFFERENT

A group of students are sitting with a collection of images of faces in front of them. All the people in the photographs are young, close to androgynous and hardly easy to identify in terms of class, gender or ethnicity.

The lesson is part of the course “Language, Culture and Identity” and is included in the subject “English and learning” for future teachers. The goal is for the students to develop a knowledge and awareness of the role of the school and of the English language in relation to democracy, citizenship, cultural heterogeneity and globalisation.

And surely the photocopied faces taken from Time Magazine raise a few questions. What associations come up, and what is the difference between race and ethnicity? What groups are not represented in this image? Can these faces even be considered representative?

There is vivid discussion between the students, who speak English in their small groups. Many are of the opinion that the images are too narrow, and that there are more than the seven explicitly displayed ethnical groups in the pictures. They wonder who is included and who is excluded. Where are the aboriginal peoples, the Russians and the Indians? They also feel that Africa is a continent of many different peoples, and that the images from that part of the world are misleading, and rather confirm stereotypical, colonial perceptions.

And yet there is a sort of coherence in the images that, for example, makes it difficult to distinguish the Spanish-speakers from the others.

“This is the whole point”, says senior lecturer Björn Sundmark. “The fact that we live in a multilingual society and that we are fundamentally very similar as people, regardless of origin. That’s the message these images want to get across.”

Björn Sundmark wants to get the students to realise how the way you categorise people affects the way you learn and teach languages, which in turn affects your perception of culture.

“It is important to be able to reflect on language, culture and identity in relation to democracy, migration, power, environment and citizenship, and also connect this to the social role of the school,” says Björn Sundmark.

The course also aims to problematise the subject of English, in relation to Swedish, as a global language. How is English used in countries where it is not the native language? What importance does English have in these countries as a status marker? The questions are many and lead to continued discussion in this communicative classroom.
Culture and Identity
The course “Language, Culture and Identity” is part of the English and Learning programme at Malmö University. A total of around 150 students are currently studying to become English teachers at the Faculty of Education and Society.
CLASS AND GENDER CONTROL
CAREER CHOICES

The more than 30 women and some 10 men who have recently started the Study and Career Guidance programme immediately catch on. The lecture is about how class and gender affect our career choices to a greater extent than we think. Senior lecturer Frida Wikstrand dispels the myth that our choice of profession is guided primarily by our interests. Structures such as class and gender are decisive, according to current research.

“In your training, you learn that interest is an important factor in people’s career choices,” says Frida Wikstrand. “I want to leave no stone unturned, and make you students truly understand the extreme importance that class and gender have on the choice of career. In particular because you will guide others in the future and, in accordance with the Education Act, you will be working against recruitment bias.”

Frida Wikstrand is determined. She talks of concepts like objective class and subjective class. She introduces theorists like Pierre Bourdieu and Paul Willis; the latter of the two showed in the 70s how working class boys would reproduce class structures.

In the same way, she is very clear on gender as a sorting mechanism. She presents diagrams on gender-stereotypical upper secondary school choices, and a figure for the salary difference between men and women, with the same academic background, in the 30 most common professions. The images speak volumes.

For student Dalal Diab it is only the second week in the Study and Career Guidance programme, and she is a bit overwhelmed.

“This lecture gave a general idea of the situation, and it is frightening,” she says. “I don’t want to categorise people after class, gender and ethnicity, but I probably do. I used to work in a hierarchic hospital environment, and that made me think about how people are sorted into professional roles.”

It gets even more real when Frida Wikstrand tells the class about her current research project on the professional categories defined by the Swedish Public Employment Service, and whether these are neutral. The students get to evaluate the differences in a few examples, such as ‘solicitor’, ‘sanitation worker’, ‘plumber’ and ‘assistant nurse’. They quickly realise that the abstract language that applies to ‘solicitor’ is exclusive, and that the description of ‘assistant nurse’ is unclear.
In a study, Frida Wikstrand will interview Study and Career counsellors regarding their use of these category descriptions.

“Our preconceptions colour our idea of our possibilities and those of others”, says Frida Wikstrand.

“We should instead focus on how we can use research on gender, class and ethnicity in counselling.”
THE ART OF PROMOTING A BRAND

The first thing he noticed on campus was three football pitches. All the sports clubs at Stirling University were a good start to a rich social life for Sports Science student Anders Gustavsson, who studied branding and marketing in Scotland for one term.

“It was really interesting. You learn a lot about yourself, meet loads of new people and build a whole new network. It was a bit more strict than at home, and the standards were high. You simply had to bring the best you had,” says Anders Gustavsson, who graduated with a degree in Sport management.

Sterling University is one of the highest ranking Universities in Great Britain within Sports Sciences. Anders Gustavsson feels that he developed academically, his English improved and he has built up a good network for the future.

“You learn to understand and to listen to others,” says Anders Gustavsson.

In the future, he would like to work abroad, with sports sponsoring, marketing and communications. There are many options in this field. Few clubs in Allsvenskan (the Swedish football premiership league) stand out from the norm, and individual athletes could promote their own brand, according to Anders Gustavsson, who has written a paper on personal branding in extreme skiing.

Sports have always been a part of his life. He attended the Åre upper secondary school ski programme, and his resume includes a few medals from the Swedish Junior Slalom Championships and participation in the Youth Olympic Games.

It was when his girlfriend was accepted to dental school that this 26-year-old from Sorunda in Nynäshamn ended up in Skåne. His studies at Malmö University began with a course on the history of football, which he thought would mostly be for fun, but it whetted his appetite and he applied for the Sport Management programme.

“I always wanted to work in sports, but not as a coach. It is the organisations behind the sports, and how they can be developed that attracts me,” says Anders Gustavsson, who is now working with sponsoring and events in Stockholm.
Anders Gustavsson is now working with sponsoring and events in Stockholm.
GATEWAY TO A RICHER LIFE

After becoming a qualified special needs teacher at Malmö University, Pia Witte has returned to the primary and lower secondary school in Gudmundtorp outside of Höör.

“As a teacher you quickly discover that not all children are able to keep up in school. I wanted to know why, and to be able to help these pupils in a more systematic and skilled way.”

A picturesque setting, for the uninitiated, where the rectangular country schoolhouse stands majestically among red and yellow autumn maples; dark and bare mudfields stretch out around it and the church can be spotted around the corner. 150 children, from preschool to year 6, arrive at the school by bus each day. All the pupils and adults know each other.

Pia Witte, who previously taught Swedish and social sciences, is currently working as both special needs teacher and special needs educator. She says that she has children with diagnoses such as Asperger's and ADHD, but her work is primarily geared towards children with different language difficulties; everything from vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, linguistic awareness and writing. At least one or a few of the children in each class do not learn to read the way the others do. She feels that she has benefited a lot from her further education.

“What I appreciate the most was the progression and the depth of the education, and how it was clearly based in research. Cause and effect were highlighted from a lot of different angles.”

Despite the fact that she specialised in reading and writing development, the education was structured in a way that allowed her to also attend lectures on mathematical development.

“If, like me, you are working alone out in the country, you need to have a good foundation to stand on when deciding on measures, and be able to motivate why you are working with different methods, and what you are trying to achieve.”

Pia Witte provides direct support in the classroom for children with concentration difficulties. Others need individual exercises. She is in contact with speech therapists, but also has exchanges with special needs teachers and educators in the municipality, and with a colleague who was in the Special Needs Education programme with her.

At her own initiative, she has started a programme called “Språkis” at her school. It is directed primarily towards pupils, to get them to speak better and more often, and thereby practice their language skills. But these activities are also for the staff at the school, with Pia
The Special Needs Teacher programme in Malmö
The Special Needs Teacher programme in Malmö has four branches: language, reading and writing development, mathematic development, and severe language impairments and learning disabilities.
Malmö University also has a Special Needs Educator programme.

Witte as a tutor. “Språkis” is based in language sounds, forms, contents and use. Anyone can develop their language and communicative skills according to Pia Witte.
“I want everyone to understand how closely linked language, learning and identity development are. My real passion is to get as many as possible, as soon as possible, the chance to learn how to read, since reading is the gateway to a richer life.”
“WHY DO WE FIGHT WHEN WE HAVE ALMOST THE SAME CULTURE AND RELIGION?”

In the project “Children of Abraham”, future subject teachers in religion get to choose and enact religious stories. For many, it comes as a big surprise that major world religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam have so much in common.

_We work a lot with fundamental values. “Instead of just looking for differences, you can see that it is about the major universal questions in life; about life and death,” says Bodil Liljefors Persson, professor of History of Religions_

“Children of Abraham” is part of the course Cultural Encounters and Identity in School, which can be taken within the Teacher Education programme in Comparative Religion. Getting the students to see the similarities is an important mission for Bodil Liljefors Persson as a teacher. At the presentation, the students also hand in course evaluations, and many of them have had a great aha-moment when realising how many links there are between the histories of several of the major religions and cultures. Abraham is the patriarch of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

“Why do we fight so much when we have almost the same culture and religion?” as one student put it.

Several of the courses focus on religious diversity and global existential questions. The students contribute their own experiences, which makes the discussions interesting and stimulating for everyone.

“In Malmö, many cultures and religions are living side by side, and this diversity is also reflected in our student groups, which is something that we would like to see as beneficial to our education,” says Bodil Liljefors Persson.

She has presented this project at conferences in the didactics of religion and civic education, and wants to inspire further reflection among the students on matters of democracy and power, ethics and human rights. Tales from the Bible and the Quran about fratricide, jealousy and betrayal can inspire existential discussion about a person’s responsibility in relation to a fellow human being, human worth and how much individual freedom a person can have without causing harm to others. But the discussions can also relate to gender issues, world politics or the Israel-Palestine conflict.

“We are trying to shift the perspective of the education, to reach an understanding and respect for others by learning about one’s own culture and religion as well as those of others,” says Bodil Liljefors Persson.
The education for future teachers of comparative religion works consciously with historical, sociological and social science perspectives on religious matters. Religious tales are used as a basis for discussions on fundamental values and citizenship.
The “academic fifteen” is organised each Wednesday at 12:30 in cooperation with the Malmö City Library. The idea is to present the range of the research conducted at Malmö University.
“If you expect me to tell you how to study yourselves healthy, I’m afraid I have to disappoint you.”

It is one of the warmest days of the year so far, but some twenty people have made their way to the “Castle”-part of Malmö City Library to hear professor Magnus Persson speak, in a talk entitled: “Read yourself healthy? Fiction as medicine.”

The speaker gets fifteen minutes. This is a challenge in itself for a researcher who is used to having a one to two-hour lecture at his disposal. By now, several people in the audience are regulars at “En akademisk kvart” (the Academic fifteen), as these popular science lectures and subsequent Q&A are called. Some use their lunch hour. Others have come to the library for a different reason, and stop and listen for a while. One visitor sits down next to the lecture and plans out the week’s bets using a horse racing magazine from the periodicals section. The library is as busy as usual, and this particular day they have their hands full trying to track down enough chairs for the appearance later that night by star author Paul Auster.

Even if Magnus Persson personally does not want to give any guarantees, others insist that it is possible to read oneself healthy. There is a growing interest in the connection between culture and health, and if the so called bibliotherapy is to be trusted, fiction actually has medicinal and healing functions.

“This trend has been around for 50 years or so, but it is experiencing a very strong boom at the moment,” says Magnus Persson, and promises to present critical, if not completely dismissive observations.

As a literary scholar, he is interested in the underlying view of literature, and he illustrates his point using two books that, despite various differences, he says have a lot in common: Bertil Söderling’s “Om vänskapen med böcker och ordens läkedom” (A friendship with books and the healing power of words) and the anthology “Att tiga eller att tala” (To remain silent or to speak).

“Literature is seen as a physician or as medicine, and the reader as a patient. The view of literature is expressive, romantic, idealistic. The reader and the world are ill, perishable and full of flaws. Only literature is whole, and can heal.”

He believes that when professional writers, literary scholars or critics are unable to define why it is important to read, it opens up for others to assign positive characteristics to literature.

What are you waiting for? Go home and read, but also think a little about why literature matters, or doesn’t matter to you, and why that could be. “I think these are some really exciting questions that will probably lead to interesting answers,” says Magnus Persson.
How Manly Can You Be?

Schoolboys play King of the Hill. They fight, bite and grab each other. This is the scene painted in a debate article claiming that there is no freedom in ordinary schoolyard games.

“Is this your experience too?” asks lecturer Mats Olsson.

The article, in which behavioural scientist Ingemar Gens argues that children's games are controlled by traditional gender roles maintained by the adult world, is the discussion topic of this month's meeting of the male network “Men at the Teachers Education”. Students and a few teachers have gathered in the coffee room at the Department of Children, Youth and Society. Sandwiches with cheese and sprouts. Coffee from a thermos.

“You shouldn't fight, sure, but at the same time it is important to get to play whatever game you want,” says one participant.

“The whole argument is based on traditional masculinity being a bad thing,” another muses.

The teacher Mikael Björk is of the opinion that you make things too easy on yourself as a teacher if you only refer to the positive aspects of children's creativity.

When, then, will you give the child the freedom to choose? Is it possible to only give a little direction and still give the children a feeling of being in charge? When are you old enough to play King of the Hill? Would it be different if girls also participated? Is it true that girls are not as lacking in empathy as boys are expected to be?

“A lack of empathy isn’t really a common trait of all men, is it? Maybe that’s why we’re sitting here,” says Mats Olsson, who initiated the network two years ago.

The Swedish Agency for Higher Education Services had recently published the report “Man ska bli lärare” (Deciding to become a teacher), which showed that 75 per cent of the candidates for the teacher education programme were women, and that 50 per cent of the men would drop out before graduating.

“The universities had no idea that this was the case, or why,” says Mats Olsson.

Barely a fourth of today’s teacher students are men, and the Men at the Teachers Education want to get more men to choose this profession. Since most men prefer to work with older children, the problem is particularly great in preschool and primary school. The group therefore also talk about why men do not feel drawn to those levels, and about the particular challenges that come with working in a female-dominated profession.

“Should the men try to fit in, or be different? Is ‘being different’ a quality? What is masculinity, and does the answer have to be gender-based?” asks Mats, and continues

“If we feel that it is important for men to become teachers, it is also important to explain why they are needed.”
“School is a culture that needs to be challenged and in that regard, men represent a different experience, which is also needed. Gender education aims to combat stereotypes.” Future teachers Donald Mészáros and Sasa Milosevic listen to Mats Olsson, who started Men at the Teachers Education.
“THE FUTURE IS NOT ONLY ABOUT ME”

“How can I use my knowledge to contribute to learning for a sustainable development within my subject?”

This question is raised during a lecture by senior lecturer Kerstin Sonesson, who is speaking to a delegation of 15 Chinese teachers, school managers and officials from the Yunnan province in China.

This is a return visit, through the project The Global Journey, which is intended to create intercultural dialogue with another country. As the Swedes did in Yunnan, the Chinese are staying with host families. They visit environmental projects and schools in the City of Malmö, and meet with representatives of Malmö University.

Swedish universities are to promote sustainable development. At Malmö University education for sustainable development is included in all the teacher education programmes, and the course “Global challenges in a subject context, 9 ECTS” is part of the teacher education programmes for secondary and upper secondary school. There is also a separate international course in Education for Sustainable Development.

“The transportation of food can be a good subject to start the discussion about sustainability issues in school. The issue of ecological sustainability is not only about the environment, but also has social, economic and cultural dimensions,” says Kerstin Sonesson, who also emphasises the democracy aspect and the active participation of the students.

Our ecological footprint is illustrated by shoe soles, where a size 38 represents the available global resources per individual. Sweden consumes more, the United Arab Emirates is at the top, while a country like Malawi is a tiny baby shoe in comparison. China has an average value, so far.

“But what will happen in the future? If the people in China get as many cars as the average Swede, the total number of cars on earth will nearly double.”

The guests nod their heads. They are aware of the great challenges. The senior official Ya Bing Jiang takes out a phone and finds the statistics on how many cars there are in the province capital of Kunming. 1.46 million for 6 million inhabitants. There are now 100 million cars on the country’s roads.

“China is a large country, and the development is not as rapid everywhere. We learn a lot, and get inspiration when we are here,” says Ya Bing Jiang and adds that the education for a sustainable development is now a compulsory part of the Chinese school.

“It is about making people aware that the future is not about them alone.”
Yi Kong from the international office at Yunnan University has also noticed an increased awareness of global issues in China:

“The economic development is important to us. Chinese people also want a better life. But we have started something. I can take what I learn here, and apply it in my teaching. I can talk to my friends, and maybe get the university cafeteria to recycle more.”

Yunnan University and Malmö University are planning a student and teacher exchange. “As teacher educators, we can learn a lot from the working situation of our Chinese colleagues, about our own activities as well by reflecting on theirs,” says Kerstin Sonesson.
Adam Wasrin and Issa Mohammed
“ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE”

Issa Mohammed, soon turning twelve, had never rapped before. Not to mention being in a recording studio. Now he is standing in a studio near Dalaplan in Malmö, singing the songs he wrote together with his mentor, 29-year-old teacher student Adam Wassrin.

They have met every week since the autumn semester, doing completely ordinary things like playing games or going to the cinema. Adam has been to Issa’s house to watch a movie. Issa came to Adam’s house to make cinnamon buns, and they have been to AqVaKul and Laserdome.

“It was pretty uneven, ‘cause all the adults were on one team,” says Issa.

In the summer, the Nightingale had an end of semester-party at the beach for all the mentors and children, with football, a quiz walk, rounders and face painting. It was a little bitter-sweet, but Adam and Issa have had a fun year, and they have gotten to know each other.

“We talk more now than we did in the beginning. It was kind of slow at first, wasn’t it?” says Adam to Issa, who nods in agreement.

All students at Malmö University can become a mentor to a child of eight to twelve years old. The idea behind the Nightingale is to create meetings between people who can learn from one another.

“It’s a good thing, and I like the idea of trying to make young people from different areas interested in going to university,” says Adam, who is studying to be a teacher of Social Sciences and Religion, and has previously worked at a leisure-time centre and as a child minder.

Adam, who plays a lot of gigs with the hip-hop duo Calle & Adam, has a recording studio together with a few friends. This is where Adam and Issa have recorded the songs “Allt är möjligt” (Anything is possible) and “Varje dag” (Every day).

“I like ‘Allt är möjligt‘ the best,” says Issa.

Issa was a little uncomfortable, but mostly happy when his 14-year-old uncle Anders took the songs to school and played them to his whole class. At home, Issa has a drum from Tunisia, and he says there are a lot of musicians in the family:

“My dad plays the piano and my uncle plays the drums. They play together at weddings and parties and stuff.”

He is in year 5 at Lindängen primary school. His dream job is to be a doctor, or maybe a dental technician like his mother. When asked what a good doctor should be like, he quickly answers:

“He should be smart, respect children, and be kind.” Sounds a bit like Adam.
Issa Mohammed is in year 5 at Lindängen primary school. His favourite subjects are history, geography, maths, English, sports, crafts and home economics. Swedish is not always as fun.
The Nightingale
Since the start in 1997, more than 2,000 children and mentors have been brought together through the Nightingale programme. One long-term goal for the programme is to contribute to a broader recruitment base for universities and higher education. The basic idea of the Nightingale programme is for it to be mutually beneficial. One very important part of this is to promote cultural diversity, both in society and at Malmö University.
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

- 3,800 full-time students
- 300 employees

The Faculty of Education and Society (ES) offers specialist education for professionals working within education, culture, leisure, and sports. In addition to our programmes in Sport Sciences, Pedagogy, Special Needs Education and Study and Career Guidance, we offer independent courses, PhD Education and study programmes as well as professional development and commissioned courses.

The faculty has one of the most extensive Teacher Education programmes in Sweden, and our students can choose to study for one of four degrees: preschool teacher, primary school teacher, subject teacher or vocational education teacher.

These programmes are developed in cooperation with the other faculties of Malmö University, the educational community, sports associations and cultural institutions. This allows the Faculty of Education and Society to offer education programmes that are founded in research, in demand and of relevance to society.

Work is in progress to strengthen the cooperation with public institutions, non-profit organisations and companies, primarily in creative businesses. An increased level of cooperation will strengthen the social relevance of both education and research, and will contribute to broadening the scope of the faculty activities.

The faculty research and third-cycle education are constantly growing.

The research carried out within the faculty concerns sports and educational sciences.

Third-cycle studies are conducted in Sports sciences within a social perspective, History and its didactic methods, the didactic methods of Natural sciences and mathematics, Pedagogy and Swedish with a didactic focus.