

**Teaching Quality: How to Ensure Quality Teaching, and How to Recognize Teaching
Qualifications**

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ABSTRACT

Measuring teaching quality is challenging to say the least. Each instructor brings his/her training, experience, style, and capabilities to the classroom, making it notoriously difficult to establish a fair teaching quality metric. Commonly used metrics such as student evaluations are one-dimensional and cannot possibly capture all teaching quality elements. A better technique would identify each instructor's strengths on teaching-related activities, as well as places for improvement. While a perfect system may never be found, we present some guidance to broaden our understanding of teaching quality based on an application of service dominant logic and the joint co-creation of value between student and instructor. We also present one attempt to implement a framework, the Danish National Framework for Recognition of Teaching Qualifications, which provides a set of criteria that constitute quality teaching and can be used for assessing teaching qualifications.

Keywords: teaching quality, student evaluations, service dominant logic, co-creation of value, teaching qualifications, Danish National Framework for Recognition of Teaching Qualifications.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching and research are the core elements of the academic profession. The experiences and capabilities that each individual academic brings to his/her teaching are diverse, specific, and idiosyncratic. While it is desirable to measure teaching quality, it is notoriously difficult to establish a fair and equitable teaching quality metric, precisely due to the idiosyncratic skillset possessed by each instructor. Many universities rely on measures such as student evaluations, which are crude and one-dimensional metrics at best. In fact, it may be there never will be a perfectly objective method—any metric comparing the proverbial apples and oranges will inevitably overcount or undercount some skill, ability, or contribution, or fail to include some attributes altogether. Also, teaching quality and teaching qualifications are inextricably linked. A fair measure of teaching quality, which identifies an instructor's strengths on teaching-related activities, as well as places for improvement, could be used in assessing teaching qualifications, for example, when an academic department is evaluating new hires or making a tenure or promotion decision. Though we acknowledge that a perfect system may not exist, we would like to provide some guidance to broaden our understanding of teaching quality and offer a general framework for recognizing teaching quality and assessing teaching qualifications.

In the remaining parts of this editorial, we explore how to define teaching quality. Drawing from the work of Jarvis et al. (2014), we consider the instructor as a specific example of a service provider (where the student is the recipient or a “co-producer” of learning), and apply service dominant logic to explore how the instructor and student co-create value. This viewpoint helps define the instructor’s role and what quality teaching means within the context of value co-creation. We then present one attempt to implement a framework. This is the Danish National Framework for Recognition of Teaching Qualifications. It is accepted and in place at universities throughout Denmark. The framework that provides a set of criteria that constitute quality teaching and can be used for assessing teaching qualifications. We end with questions on teaching quality measurement and how to move forward on this challenging issue.

2. HOW TO ENSURE QUALITY TEACHING

Great teachers provide value by facilitating the co-creation of learning with their students. We support our ideas by using the principle of service dominant (S-D) logic (Vargo and Lusch, 2004), which focuses on the exchange between stakeholders. According to S-D logic, the recipient co-creates value with the supplier; the supplier does not deliver value unidirectionally but offers value propositions to the recipient. In our application, the instructor and student are supplier and recipient, respectively, and we can use S-D logic to understand the instructor-student exchange and student-student exchange. There is no one-way transfer of value from instructor to student in this interaction, nor is the student a passive receiver of value. Instead, the instructor provides a value proposition that can potentially be converted into value, co-created jointly by the instructor and student.

Several actions facilitate the learning process. First, there is the traditional role of the instructor, guiding the student by drawing on his/her well of academic knowledge and practical experience. The instructor should be adept at translating great research and practical experience into great teaching (Lindgreen, Di Benedetto, Brodie, and Naudé 2020).

A second action draws from the student-instructor interaction, where the student applies and develops new ideas based on their own experiences and contexts. The student translates the lesson from the contextual example into a resource that provides value-in-use for future contexts. The instructor guides the student in this translation process. The instructor can facilitate translation to understand how cases and other classroom tools can be used effectively to provide value-in-use (Lindgreen, Di Benedetto, and Beverland, 2021).

The third and final action results from student-student interaction: students share their experiences and jointly develop ideas. This can be the most effective way to generate synergy

and reciprocal value creation, though such benefits may also be derived from the first two actions.

Great teaching also recognizes the need to develop processes to deliver course material in an efficient way that creates value and connects to the recipient's own life. Instructors and students in business-to-business marketing both have excellent knowledge of business-to-business marketing management and strategy application, so course delivery must facilitate the learning process in all directions (instructor-student, student-instructor, and student-student). The most innovative technology can be used to advantage to create value. Course platforms such as Canvas or Brightspace offer several methods of interaction that facilitate multi-directional learning: discussion boards, pre-recorded class lectures, access to media, breakout discussion groups, in-class polling, online quizzes (professionally done by the publisher or created by the instructor), and so on. These platforms are essential to fully-online courses and can facilitate on-site and hybrid classes as well. When used effectively, these tools can enrich the classroom experience greatly and add much value-in-use (Lindgreen, Di Benedetto, Brodie, and Naudé 2020).

The growth in classroom technology has emerged simultaneously with the emergence of the flipped classroom (Green, 2015; Jarvis et al., 2014), a format that can facilitate learning in either an online or on-site setting. This format flips the traditional class structure (lecture in class and assignments outside of class). Lectures are pre-recorded, and students are expected to watch the videos, creating a kind of "virtual attendance." Students participate in discussion boards with instructors providing feedback, thus stimulating student-student and student-instructor interaction. Class time is not taken up by lectures, but rather by discussions, group work (facilitated by breakout sessions if online), and case analysis. By ensuring the learning process takes place in all three directions, the flipped classroom encourages value co-creation, which is critical to applying S-D logic in a classroom setting (Jarvis et al., 2014).

To further build the co-creation of value, instructors of flipped-classroom courses can be encouraged to personalize the course, by adding "war stories" gleaned from practical experience, adding current online news articles pertaining to course materials, requiring students to add relevant articles and websites in discussion board assignments, including enjoyable but relevant video clips or interesting websites in weekly announcements, and so on. Managerially-oriented publications such as *Harvard Business Review* or *Sloan Management Review* can be a rich source of articles that translate academic findings into managerial takeaways, and business cases or online articles can lead to a valuable discussion of reasons for company success or failure. Periodic updating of the articles and online resources ensures

the relevance and timeliness of the content. These methods provide a wide variety of information to the student and increase the co-creation of value.

3. HOW TO RECOGNIZE TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

As any departmental chairperson or administrator will attest, proper assessment of teaching quality is extremely difficult. Often, the only indicator used is student evaluations, and there are many reasons why this practice is questionable and far from an optimal metric for teaching quality (Judson and Taylor, 2014). In search of a more complete and accurate assessment, there is an increasing focus on documentation of teaching quality and the creation of standards for teaching quality. While no perfect solution exists, several approaches have been proposed to document the teaching quality, particularly teaching qualifications, of instructors. We will expand on one of these in an extended example: the Danish National Framework for Recognition of Teaching Qualifications (the “Danish Framework”).

The Danish Framework is an attempt to build categories of teaching qualifications, all of which are critical to teaching at the highest level of quality. The categories are presented and detailed in Tables 1 and 2. As shown in Table 1, teaching and thesis supervision are only one of several categories. Equally important are assessment (testing) tasks, contribution to teaching quality, and collaboration skills (with students, colleagues), including collaboration on quality assurance. In each of the six categories, instructors are evaluated on a 1-3 scale (scale 4 is for instructors with special education tasks), where higher scores indicate higher mastery (in terms of quality and quantity) of each category. The assessment has implications for hiring at Danish universities, as academic positions may have required minimum levels in each of these categories.

To better understand how teaching qualifications can be recognized, we now turn to what the Danish universities have developed to advance university pedagogy and expand upon this framework. We attempt to populate the framework with real-life examples of what is recognized as teaching quality.

The Danish Framework for Advancing University Pedagogy

The Danish Framework was initiated to provide benchmarks so that universities in Denmark could achieve optimal learning outcomes through student-engaging teaching and thesis supervision. It is used countrywide as a metric for recognizing and stimulating quality university pedagogy throughout the stages of an academic career. While the Danish Framework is used nationwide, individual universities can extend and apply it to their local situation,

priorities, and academic composition. The Danish Framework can be applied as a metric for assessing academic qualifications of potential new hires and can also be used to provide guidance to current faculty on competence development, in line with the employment structure guidelines for higher education in Denmark.

The Danish Framework is targeted to academics in research and development-based teaching careers, operating at the highest international level. Therefore, it is essential that teaching competency is a key component of the framework. It also, however, is applicable to faculty who are involved in other educational roles, such as quality assurance or university relations with external partners.

The Danish Framework comprises three levels of university pedagogical competencies, and an additional category, Special Educational Tasks. For faculty members at universities in the Danish system who have completed the University Pedagogical Course for assistant professors, existing practice is at Level 2 of the framework. Thus, Level 2 pedagogical qualifications would be expected of new hires at the associate professor level.

The objective of the Danish Framework is to ensure that faculty members will be at the level of each competency, which corresponds to their assigned teaching and educational tasks. These tasks increase in complexity and content for faculty members at higher levels in the academic hierarchy. The levels of the framework can also be chosen and combined to form targets for competence development. Additionally, some faculty members will desire to move up to Level 3 faster or will take on some of the Special Educational Tasks (Level 4). Their expected work will be a combination of elements from Level 3 and the Special Educational Tasks for these faculty members. It should also be noted that the generic framework can be adapted to differences across institutions and even different strategic priorities within an institution.

The Danish Framework considers the following competences. The operative space refers to the practice of teaching and education, and the collegial space concerns teaching and education as a collegial community of practice. This distinction shows that teaching quality is not measured just on the faculty member's teaching competence, but also on joint development of teaching and education skills to create strong connections and a supportive teaching environment for students. The two spaces are linked to different aspects of progress: the operative space is tied to autonomy in teaching and education, and the collegial space is linked to greater participation in joint process and collegial cooperation.

Levels of Competence

Here, we expand on the three levels of competence and the Special Educational Tasks (Level 4) mentioned briefly above. The three levels indicate progressively higher competencies, and the Special Educational Tasks category permits the institution special education-related efforts, tasks or duties.

Level 1 is an entry level, and represents basic, professional teaching qualifications that would be expected of anyone holding a teaching position at a university. In the operative space, Level 1 expectations are that the faculty member can plan, implement, and evaluate teaching and thesis supervision tasks. In the collegial space, Level 1 expects quality instructor-to-student interaction. This is, for instance, an entry requirement for an assistant professor position.

Level 2 sets higher expectations, as it is considered a starting point for a faculty member on a limited-time contract (a tenure-track academic), seeking an academic career and a permanent faculty position at a university. This faculty member would be expected to make desired levels of contributions to the university's research-related educational programs. In the operative space, Level 2 expects the faculty member can analyze, organize, implement, evaluate, and develop courses and supervise theses. In the collegial space, Level 2 expects increased instructor-student attention, as well as increased faculty interaction in the academic context.

Level 3 is most concerned about teaching competence development opportunities and thesis supervision, at the associate and full professor levels. Level 3 expectations ensure that the university continues to develop its teaching and thesis supervision tasks and permits associate and full professors to continue to grow their competencies within the core task of education. In the operative space, Level 3 focuses on development of scope and repertoire of teaching thesis supervision, and evaluation/examination. In the collegial space, Level 3 requires increased collegial responsibility and leadership in teaching and education development.

Special Education Tasks (Level 4) include opportunities for competence development related to special administrative functions (department head, deputy department head responsible for teaching), or other special tasks within teaching, pedagogy, curriculum development, quality assurance, and so forth. The Special Education Tasks category is more transformative than the previous three levels, as it pertains to the faculty member's impact on the content or form conditions for teaching or education. In this category, the faculty member is expected to make unique contributions toward teaching and education both within and outside the university; this holds for both operative and the collegial spaces.

There are sub-competencies within each of the three levels and for the Special Educational Tasks category as well; these are shown in Tables 1 and 2. A faculty members acquires these

sub-competencies at their current competence level; the sub-competencies are considered qualification criteria. In Tables 1 and 2, the sub-competencies are given in the vertical boxes under each competence level (Levels 1-3, plus the Special Educational Tasks category). So, for example, for appointment as an associate professor at a Danish university, the faculty member should have mastered all sub-competencies listed for Level 2. From here, the sub-competencies of Level 3 and Special Educational Tasks are considered, but it is not a strict requirement that each of these sub-competencies at the higher levels need to be acquired. Instead, a holistic view is taken. The university administrator and faculty member can use the framework to identify which sub-competencies he/she should develop and seek recognition for with respect to incentives. The university can also adapt to the sub-competencies such that competence development and qualification assessment is appropriate to the context of the specific university, and competency development contributes to the university's strategic direction and the faculty member's career advancement.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Teaching, along with research, is a cornerstone of the academic career. What constitutes good teaching has been a long-standing discussion. Some of the most recent thoughts on teaching contribution is based on the principle of service dominant logic (Jarvis et al., 2014; Vargo and Lusch, 2004). Using S-D logic, instructors and students are in a supplier-recipient type relationship, in which the instructor provides a value proposition, which has the potential to be converted into value-in-use, co-created jointly by the instructor and student. Recent trends toward the flipped classroom, for instance, facilitate learning in all directions (instructor-student, student-instructor, and student-student), resulting in greater opportunity for such a value co-creation (Green, 2015). Engaging students and creating value jointly with them is a hallmark of an instructor performing at a very high level of teaching quality.

Teaching quality, however, is notoriously difficult to assess and is inevitably related to teaching qualifications of the faculty. Many universities use measures such as student evaluations, which are crude and one-dimensional metrics at best and do not provide much information on whether the instructor has succeeded in co-creating value with students. A valid and reliable metric for assessing teaching qualifications would be critically important to university administration during the hiring process or at promotion and tenure decisions. However, there is no single objective tool that can be used as a reliable metric. The biographies and previous experiences of academics are so different, and each educator makes a unique

Table 1: The Individual in the Operative Space

	Level 1 Lowest	Level 2	Level 3 Highest	Level 4 Special Education Tasks
Teaching / thesis supervision	<p>Can, while under supervision, plan and carry out individual teaching and thesis supervision activities with a focus on the students' learning. This includes, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervising and teaching at minimum on a bachelor level. • Developing research ideas and a research plan with students. • Supervising empirical data collection. • Managing and guiding students through the full process (e.g., supervising student-team cooperative projects with local companies). • Giving academic feedback (e.g., writing guidance in a writing-intensive course). 	<p>Masters the subject's essential teaching and thesis supervision practices and can independently plan and carry out teaching, thesis supervision and course organization, taking into account both academic goals and the students' learning prerequisites. This includes the previous level plus additional skills like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervising and teaching at a master level. • Managing larger empirical projects with the students (e.g., consulting projects with local businesses). • Supervising a more diverse set of topics. • Supervising different methods for data collection and analysis. 	<p>Masters a broad spectrum of teaching and thesis supervision practices. Can develop, innovate and experiment with teaching and supervisory practices. This includes all previous levels and additional aspects like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervising (also) on PhD level. • Being able to develop new courses and/or teaching formats (e.g., adopting to flipped-classroom; adding a course in dissemination of research). • Showing a very large scale in topics and methods for the supervision. • Showing academic impact of thesis projects (e.g., through joint publications). 	<p>Can analyze, plan, implement, evaluate, improve and re-develop courses, educational elements or entire teaching curricula. Can participate in and take responsibility for university pedagogical development and innovation. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing study programs. • Developing new study programs (e.g., identifying an emerging need such as business analytics, and developing a graduate program to meet the need). • Developing new forms of students' feedback or teaching. • Being part of national and international educational development initiatives. • Being part of a PhD school or in other teaching quality assessment groups.
Assessment	<p>Can, under supervision, organize and carry out assessment in accordance with the academic objectives. This includes, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading of exams (at least on bachelor level). 	<p>Can independently plan, carry out and evaluate assessments in accordance with the academic objectives. This includes the previous level plus additional skills like:</p>	<p>Has mastered different types of assessment and can ascertain whether the selected assessment type is appropriate. Can develop, rethink and develop innovative types of assessment. This includes all</p>	<p>Can develop new and innovative assessment types. Can take responsibility for ensuring that new types of assessment are spread at the institution. For instance:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grading of theses (at least on bachelor level). Being able to give academic feedback during classes. Being able to justify grades to students (e.g., developing grading rubrics that are tied to course learning objectives). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grading of exams and theses (at least on master level). Using different exam and assessment forms. Using different forms of feedback to students. Being able to assess and file issues of plagiarism or academic misbehavior (e.g., using text duplication software to identify academic misconduct). Being able to respond to (legal) complaints (at least under supervision of more experienced teachers). 	<p>previous levels and additional aspects like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grading of theses (also) on a PhD level (e.g., establishing a detailed rubric to ensure that PhD grading and feedback is consistent). Using a very large variety of different exam and assessment formats. Being able to respond to (legal) complaints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing of new assessment formats. Being part of national or international educational development initiatives. Being part of educational assessment for teaching staff (e.g., pedagogy programs developing for assistant professors).
Quality assurance	<p>Can, under supervision, contribute to teaching evaluation of own teaching and thesis supervision and to discussions about the evaluation's significance for the development of teaching and thesis supervision. This includes, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being able to collect and increase participation in student feedback (e.g., strive for higher response rate on student evaluation forms). Being able to manage and reflect on student feedback (e.g., encourage written comments and constructive criticism). 	<p>Can work systematically to develop own teaching and thesis supervision based on the teaching evaluations. This includes the previous level plus additional skills like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being able to show how student feedback was implemented in improving the individuals teaching (e.g., identifying 2-3 key points for improvement from student evaluation forms and using them as metrics for improvement). Being able to critical reflect on the own teaching style and skills. 	<p>Can develop and test new formats for evaluating own teaching and thesis supervision. This includes all previous levels and additional aspects like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being able to show quality assurance from a variety of student backgrounds (e.g., professionals, or different cultures). Being able to show continues improvement in teaching quality (e.g., providing evidence of improvement based on peer review of classroom teaching). 	<p>Can contribute innovatively and systematically to the development of teaching quality, so that the institution's teaching, thesis supervision and educational practices are improved. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing of new teaching quality assessment formats. Being part of national or international educational development initiatives. Being part of teaching quality boards, etc.

Table 2: The Individual in the Collegial Community

	Level 1 Lowest	Level 2	Level 3 Highest	Level 4 Special Education Tasks
Collaboration with students	<p>Can, in collaboration with students, create a constructive and learning-oriented teaching environment. This includes, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to execute different learning activities. • Being able to create an interactive learning environment (e.g., implementing online or hybrid components) • Being able to be part of an academic debate with students. 	<p>Can, in collaboration with the students, create a constructive and learning-oriented teaching and study environment. This includes the previous level plus additional skills like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to execute a variety of learning activities and different teaching formats with students. • Being able to enable and manage academic debates with students (e.g., active participation on student discussion boards). 	<p>Can, in collaboration with the students, develop and test new initiatives for supporting the teaching and study environment. This includes all previous levels and additional aspects like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to execute a large variety of learning activities and different teaching formats with students. • Being able to create an academic debate and collaboration with students also outside the classroom. • Showing academic or societal impact of collaboration with students. 	<p>Can carry out university pedagogical teaching. Can carry out management functions at the teaching and educational program level. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being part of student initiatives regarding teaching. • Showing student participation in course or program development.
Collaboration with colleagues	<p>Can participate in collaboration on teaching with colleagues and/or students under the pedagogical leadership of others. This includes, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to teach together with colleagues. • Being able to create synergies in regard to teaching by collaborating with colleagues. 	<p>Can collaborate with colleagues and students on the development and implementation of teaching and thesis supervision, including on the responsibility for course administration. This includes the previous level plus additional skills like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using collegial feedback for improving teaching. • Being able (co-)develop and (co-)manage a course 	<p>Can disseminate, share knowledge, and act as sparring partner with colleagues for the development of teaching, thesis supervision and assessment. This includes all previous levels and additional aspects like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to manage colleagues for teaching. • Creating learning environments outside of the classroom with colleagues 	<p>Can conduct discipline-based pedagogical research and development activities. Can develop teaching, thesis supervision and training in collaboration with relevant external stakeholders. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being part of national or international educational development initiatives. • Being part of internal teaching facilities to teach

		with colleagues (e.g., identifying complementary skills required for program development, for example, management information systems, marketing, and statistics for a business analytics program).	(e.g., practitioner seminars). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborating with colleagues outside of academia (e.g., practitioner) for teaching (e.g., encouraging joint research with senior executives, aimed at leading practitioner journals). 	colleagues (e.g., PhD school or educational education). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with the academic field to discuss teaching developments (e.g., writing articles like this one).
Collaboration on quality assurance	Can ascertain the quality of own teaching/thesis supervision and, where relevant, seek out new knowledge and guidance. This includes, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing a strong level of reflection on the own teaching skill and teaching competences. • Seeking out actively to receive feedback for the own teaching (e.g., requesting a peer classroom visit to obtain objective and constructive feedback). 	Can ascertain own teaching and thesis supervision competencies and in collaboration with others, develop own teaching and thesis supervision practices. This includes the previous level plus additional skills like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receiving and incorporating several types of feedback for the own teaching and supervision. • Formally being assessed and rated at least as qualified for teaching (and/or supervision). 	Can carry out pedagogical guidance of younger colleagues and peer-to-peer collegial supervision. This includes all previous levels and additional aspects like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrating a constant and high level of reflection and active search for feedback how to improve teaching and supervision. • Giving feedback and guidance to other (early-career) colleagues for their teaching and supervision (e.g., senior colleagues providing seminars and/or peer review for junior colleagues and doctoral students). 	Can contribute to quality development and quality assurance at educational program, department, faculty, or institution level. For instance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being part of institution-wise initiatives on teaching quality assurance. • Being part of national or international educational development initiatives. • Engaging with the academic field to discuss teaching developments (e.g., writing articles or editorials like the current one).

contribution to his/her institution. Therefore, assessment of all academics by fitting them into a single evaluation scheme would seem challenging at best.

We have presented the Danish National Framework for Recognition of Teaching qualifications as one general structure, that is actually being used to recognize teaching quality along several dimensions and has a bearing on hiring and promotion/tenure decisions throughout Danish universities. The Danish Framework recognizes the multi-dimensional nature of quality teaching, in that teaching/Ph.D. student supervision makes up only one of the six components. Just as important are assessment, quality assurance, and collaboration with students and colleagues. Candidates for hire or promotion are assessed on each component using a four-level scale; the rubric for assessment is given in Tables 1 and 2.

It can be said that the Danish Framework provides a general structure to recognize teaching qualifications and can offer guidance on where opportunities for improvement exist so as to further increase teaching quality. It is widely used throughout Denmark and can be adapted to some extent to the requirements of individual universities. We recognize, however, that there is no perfect metric for teaching qualifications, so we conclude with a series of questions to stimulate further debate about (and hopefully continuous improvement of) measurement of teaching quality and teaching qualification. Can the Danish Framework successfully be applied in other countries? Does it provide an adequate structure, or are there other aspects of teaching quality that need to be added or weighted more heavily? Does it offer enough guidance to academic administrators who are implementing flipped-classroom teaching, and who want to assess the performance of instructors operating within a flipped-classroom format? If we think of the framework as a “living thing,” how will it evolve in the coming years?

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