Teaching portfolio

1. Teaching CV: A list of any lecturing and supervision tasks, including specification of academic fields, scope, level (bachelor, master, continuing education, PhD) as well as any external examiner tasks.

IGNACIO BRESCÓ'S TEACHING PORTFOLIO I took my first teaching assignments in 2006 as part of my PhD scholarship at the Faculty of Psychology of the Autonomous University of Madrid. Since then I have accumulated almost ten years of uninterrupted teaching experience until July 2014, when I started my post-doc at Aalborg University. This teaching experience has been developed within a wide range of contexts –both in online and presence-based courses, in practical and theoretical courses, in Spanish, Catalan and English language, as well as inside and outside the academia. During all these years, and due to this wide spectrum of teaching environments, I have learnt to adapt my use of language and mode of communication to the particular needs of students and to the different types of teaching situations. I have also learned to develop well-structured lessons, bring my enthusiasm into the classroom, set up classroom tasks of interest to the students, incorporate various material props into the pedagogical situation, and, above all, to be a more dynamic and engaging teacher. Teaching at Autonomous University of Madrid (2005-214) I started developing these skills into my time as a PhD student at Autonomous University of Madrid, where I had different teaching roles, and covered many different subjects. As part of my scholarship –Beca de Formación del Profesorado Universitario (University Lecturer Training Scholarship in English)– I had to take assignments of different courses (Epistemology, Behaviour Psychology, History of Psychology, among others) which mainly consisted of teaching practical and case studies courses and supervising students' working projects. The close and continued interaction with students helped me to refine my skills at both giving productive feedback on the working projects and being aware of students' difficulties in working in groups in an autonomous way. During these years I also conducted two workshops: one on Bartlett's method of repeated reproduction (carried out within the History of Psychology course) and the other on Memory, History and Narrative (carried out in an elective course on Cultural Psychology). In both cases, the workshop consisted of providing the theoretical framework as well as supervising students' projects on these topics. These workshops –which took up two entire semesters– gave me the opportunity to endow students with a more active role in the class. As a result, the second halves of the workshops were devoted to discuss on students' working projects in the classroom. Furthermore, the great number of Erasmus students attending the latter course (coming from different European countries), was a valuable opportunity for me to adapt my supervisions to people with different academic backgrounds and curricula. After obtaining my PhD in 2010, I was hired at the Autonomous University of Madrid as an Associate professor. For four years I was responsible of teaching different subjects throughout a whole semester. These subjects were integrated in the General Psychology area: History of Psychology, Psychology of Thinking, Emotion and Motivation, Psychology of Memory, Epistemology, Psychology of Language, among others. This heavy load of teaching on a wide variety of subjects had the advantage of giving me a very valuable experience both in developing and consolidating my teaching skills and in widening my psychological expertise. Specifically, in this period I learnt how to prepare the syllabus of different subjects, to simultaneously coordinate different courses, and first and foremost, to deal with many areas beyond my own field of expertise. On the one hand, this was a very challenging and demanding period in which I took a lot of time both preparing my lectures and following up the students' learning process. But on the other hand, by being outside my "comfort zone", I learnt to be more open to different perspectives and more aware of the teacher's role. A lecturer should not simply convey some content to the students, but should also approach the subject highlighting controversies and unsettled issues. The lecturer who pretends that knowledge is settled does a disservice to students, since it prevents them from the possibility of entering into a discussion and the passion that comes with contributing with new ideas –ideas that may eventually feed into future practice as a psychology. The teaching method followed in my courses at the Autonomous University of Madrid combined theoretical lectures together with working projects in groups and group presentations and discussions in the classroom. For instance in the course I taught on History of Psychology, students (in groups of around 4) were asked to pick up an author among those included in the syllabus (e.g. John Searle) and present that author in class to their peers. Such presentation was set against another one on another author (e.g. Alan Turing), so that students could initiate a debate taking each author's theoretical position. This was an engaging way for students to work in groups and to feel committed and responsible in relation to their peers' learning process, in this case by taking an active part in the very process of teaching. As a result, the distinct roles of student and teacher were re-organized and redefined to create an orientation in which we were all producers of knowledge. Another example can be found in the course on Psychology of Thinking. For instance, in order to address argumentation theories, we used the classic film 12 angry men and then discuss it with the assistance of professional judge, invited for that particular occasion. Drawing on this initial framework, a mock court case was presented in class. Students had to work in groups and elaborate different arguments –using a set of previously handed out evidences– either for or against the hypothetical defendant. Then we had a mock trial in class, followed by a discussion vis-à-vis argumentation theories and Dewey's critical thinking approach. This activity was very well received by students (and also by teachers, to the extent that some of them incorporated it in the subsequent courses). The activity not only promoted critical thinking and a reflective orientation towards the topic, but also helped students to see the relevance and applicability of different theories in real contexts. Adjunct Professor at Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (2011-2014) Since 2011 I started combining my lectures at the Autonomous University of Madrid with the online teaching at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya –an open university where I worked as Adjunct Professor teaching History of Psychology and Psychology of Thinking in Catalan language. One of the main challenges when it comes to distance learning is getting students involved in the subject, something which requires fostering students' participation through different tools, such as chats, wiki tools, videos, news, etc. Thus, working in this new environment, not only has provided me with knowledge

about the tools used in distance learning contexts, but also has brought to the fore the importance of being available and close to students. In order to be an efficient resource for knowledge, teachers should be ready to listen, understand, dialogue and even encourage and animate students; something even more necessary in e-learning contexts where students can have the feeling of solitude when working alone in front of the computer. Furthermore, the system of continuous assessment followed at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya provided me with another valuable experience, that of elaborating teaching materials. Thus, in the case of History of Psychology, apart from the textbook used in this subject, I designed different activities aimed at assessing students' learning process throughout the course –e.g., exercises based on critical text analysis of classic authors. Teaching at the Spanish National Employment Service (2011-2012) Another teaching experience I would like to highlight refers to my work at the Spanish National Employment Service, and specifically, the six month course on Social Integration I gave to 30 unemployed in Madrid. This was a course quite different from those taught at University, the main challenge being to adapt the lessons and the teaching dynamics –including the mode of communication– to the wide range of age, educational background, expectations, needs, and motivations of the people who signed in. The class was composed of students ranging from youngsters –with and without higher education– to long-term unemployed people close to retirement age. Both student's profiles and the very subject were completely new to me. However, despite of it all, the result was extremely positive, since we managed to create a real learning space where the immense social disparities, far from being a drawback, became a unique opportunity for mutual enrichment. The course ranked among the most positively evaluated by the students in the Community of Madrid. Furthermore, this course also helped me in another fundamental educational aspect: connecting theory with practice. We need to move beyond scholastic learning of theories to a model in which concepts are learned such that the student can appropriate and apply them to the world outside the walls of the academia. To that end, in this course I constantly gave lots of real world examples of theoretical concepts –often taken from the students' own experiences– and tried to explain how these concepts are used to intervene in practice. Teaching at Aalborg University: some experiences and future challenges These have been the teaching experiences I have had in my country, Spain. Through them I have developed my teaching skills in relation to different teaching contents, contexts, as well as students' ages, backgrounds and interests. Based on those encounters and first-hand knowledge of what teaching strategies are successful and meaningful for students and the university, I have established both my own form of teaching and principles of education; principles which I think can fit nicely with University's distinctive problem and project based learning model. In fact, I had the opportunity to feel this during a master student course I gave last semester –together with Brady Wagoner and Luca Tateo– on Collective memory, imagination and the uses of the past. Being one of my areas of expertise, my experience with this workshop could not have been better. Theory, practical activities and discussion were combined during this 5 hour workshop in which students actively participated by bringing up questions and thought-provoking insights. The next teaching experience that awaits me is a 16 hour course on Social Psychology of refugees: Imagination, memory, and refugees (Valgfag § 25 Kulturpsykologi: flytninger, mellem fantasi og hukommelse) which will take place in late April. This course –co-organized by Luca Tateo, Sara Awad, Brady Wagoner and myself– will be another opportunity to get more involved in AAU's learning system. Teaching in another country opens up new perspectives and stimulating opportunities to get to know different pedagogical models and working cultures. It also offers the chance to contribute with one's cultural background and the teaching experience gained in one's own country. All these opportunities are not without challenges, challenges that are worth being aware of in order to better prepare and self-assess my form of teaching in the future: - The PBL system is an internationally renowned model, a model whose main principles and values are quite similar to those I have tried to put into practice throughout my almost ten years of teaching experience in different learning contexts. This model requires a full implication on the part of the teacher as well as a close and constant contact with the students –starting from the problem orientation and project organization to the final outcome assessment. In this regard, working at AAU would represent an exciting opportunity for me to get to know in more detail how this model works. - Another obvious aspect that comes out when teaching in another country is the different working culture and cultural background in which one has to integrate. In this respect, after two years living in Denmark and working at AAU as a post-doc, I have been able to get an overall view on the AAU's way of working as well as the Danish culture in general. I have attended different meetings organized by the University's International Staff Office (ISO) aimed to provide international staff with some tips along these lines. There is no doubt that AAU is getting more international both in terms of faculty members and students. However, integration in the Danish culture and society should be a priority if one wants to teach and do research here, since both aspects cannot be understood in isolation from the social context in which they take place. - This leads to the last challenge I would like to highlight, that of the language. It goes without saying that language is one of the main working tools when it comes to teach and research. Fortunately –unlike the case of Spain, for instance– most of Danish students can read, speak and understand English without any problem. However, language is more than that. Language also connects you to the social context you live in. This is particularly important within teaching contexts in order to attain a better the communication with students. Therefore, improving my Danish skills will be a must in the future. In this respect, I am taking Danish lessons at the Sprogcentre. So I hope that next year I will be able to, at least, understand most of written works in this language. These would be the opportunities and challenges I look forward to undertaking in the next coming years as Associate Professor at AAU.

2. Study administration: A list of any study administration tasks, e.g. study board membership, head of studies or semester or course coordinator, accreditation, etc.

Type your answer here...

3. University pedagogy qualifications: A list of any completed courses in university pedagogy, PBL courses, workshops, academic development projects, collegial guidance

and supervision, etc.

Type your answer here...

4. Other qualifications: Conference attendance, editorials, presentations, etc. relating to education, 'University Teaching Day', etc.

Type your answer here...

5. Teaching activity development and teaching materials: A list of any contributions to the development of new modules, teaching materials, study programmes, e-learning, collaboration with external business partners, etc.

Type your answer here...

6. Teaching awards you may have received or been nominated for.

Type your answer here...

7. Personal reflections and initiatives: Here you may state any personal deliberations as regards teaching and supervision, any wishes and plans for further pedagogic development, plans for following up on feedback/evaluations from students, etc.

Type your answer here...

8. Any other information or comments.

Type your answer here...