

## Class culture I

### Purpose

To support students in creating a good class culture with room for diversity and where everyone has a role to play.

### Content (2x45 min.)

- Presentation on class culture (approx. 15 min.)
  - What is class culture?
    - Behavior
    - Unwritten rules
    - It is everyone's responsibility
- Discussion based on cases (approx. 30 min.)
- Break
- Formulation of ideals in writing (approx. 45 min.)

### Practical

The double lesson is introduced using the PowerPoint presentation. The presentation focuses on the concept of class culture and why it is important to work with. The presentation lasts approx. 15 minutes.

### Class Culture

Culture is often defined as habits or traditions and it is necessary to create coherence. As human beings we need some things to be 'as usual' and some things to be 'just the way they are', in order to not have to start all over again every day in terms of figuring out how to do things and what others expect of you.

Class culture consists of many different elements. In Network, the focus is on the social behaviors - the unwritten rules determining how to act in class. They are unwritten because they are formed all by themselves in the interaction between students. In Lesson 2, the unwritten rules are made visible so they can be the subject of discussion. It is only when the topic is brought up in class, that everyone has the opportunity to make their contribution to the culture. This allows the students to learn about each other and gain new perspectives on something they may have taken for granted.

After the presentation, the students must therefore contribute themselves. With their buddy, they should, on the basis of some cases, discuss their ideals for their perception of what makes 'a good class'.

The students have approx. 30 minutes to come up with specific suggestions.

### Ideals

After the 30 minutes, you take a short break, and after the break, you should gather in plenary, where the buddies give their suggestions for the ideals. All suggestions are noted on the board. It is important that all proposals are written down - it is very demotivating to hear one's proposal being 'shot down', even before it is noted on the board. Once all proposals are registered, it is important to categorize them in different groups. Look at the document 'Inspirations for ideals' for suggestions on categorization.

Finally, it must be rendered specific. For example: What does it mean to respect each other? We are silent

when others speak. We give constructive criticism to others, etc. The students must also form examples of how to live up to the ideals.

The ideals and the associated examples of how they can be achieved must be written down, and it is a good idea to do in class, for example by a student who has a laptop.

### Ideals formulated in writing:

- Makes it easier to be specific when talking about good class culture.
- Makes it easier to remember what has been agreed.
- Obliges more than oral agreements / unwritten rules.
- Provides an opportunity to hear what others think about the unwritten rules - there may be different ideas on how they should be perceived.

When students discuss class culture and work out ideals for the class, it is a step on the way to ensuring a healthy class culture - and thus a strong community in the class. But it is just one step. From here on, the real work towards creating a good culture begins. Here the students need help from you as a teacher. You need to support a healthy culture by leading by example, and you need to remind students what they have talked about. In the lesson plan, there are two more lessons focusing on class culture; lessons 5 and 7, which give you and the students the opportunity to follow up on how the culture in the class is doing and whether the students still live up to their own ideals for a good class.

It is you as a teacher who should store the ideals, so remember to get a copy of the student who wrote down the ideals. Note that other teachers in the class are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the ideals in order for them to help students live up to them. It might be a good idea to upload the ideals to the intranet.

All teachers are responsible of being good leaders in the class. This means that it is up to you and the other teachers to assess whether the class culture should be taken up between the planned Network lessons. You can do this if you experience that there are central ideals that are not lived up to at all.

### Main points in lesson 2

- Class culture is about the manners and behavior in class.
- A healthy class culture helps creating a strong community.
- Strong communities are important for the well-being of students.
- A healthy class culture helps ensuring a good teaching environment.
- A good teaching environment increases the academic level for all students.

### Preparation

- Read about class culture in the teacher's guide under lesson 2.
- Print cases for the exercise.
- Familiarize yourself with the inspiration for ideals.