An illustration of a woman with dark hair, wearing a white cardigan and a dark skirt, standing and speaking to a group of people seated around a table. The background features a mural of a woman's face. The scene is set in a room with warm lighting and colorful wall art.

Group Work Requires a Facilitator

TAL 2023

Teaching for Active Learning

Keynote presentation

Nov. 2, 2023, 9:20-10:45AM

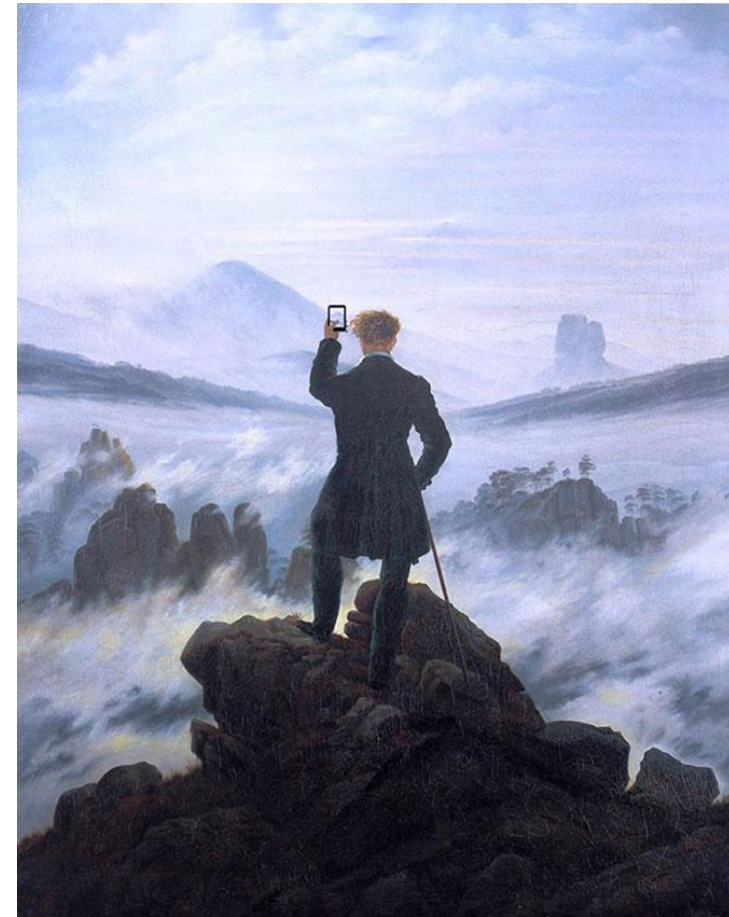
Ib Ravn, Ph.D.

DPU, Aarhus University



2. Overview

- 9.25 **Keynote:** The value of facilitated group work—and how to get started
- 9.55 **Conversations:** Your experience—and prospects
- 10.25 **Plenary:** Your input and Q&A
- 10.45 Break





3. The Value of Group Work

- An opportunity to be **active learners**.
Digest the study material.
Share understandings, help each other.
Make the material **personally meaningful**.
- A way to **connect** and find friends—on the big, scary campus
- Danish students **know groups** and are comfortable.
- Prevent student **attrition** (huge problem!)
- **Social and academic** factors are interwoven





4. The Democratic (Self-Organizing) Group: Drawbacks

- Collectivist and liberal: **Everybody can speak!**
- Conversations are **unregulated**
- **Talkative** members dominate the meetings
- Getting off-topic. How to get **back on track?**
- How to **delegate** tasks?
- What if delegated tasks are **not completed?** Who will handle that?
- A "**mean dictator**" may emerge





”Det er blevet et socialt netværk” - forbedring af studiemiljøet gennem studiefacilitering

Hanne Kirstine Adriansen, ph.d., lektor, Institut for Uddannelse og Pædagogik, Aarhus Universitet, hkoa@dpu.dk.

Ib Ravn, ph.d., lektor, Institut for Uddannelse og Pædagogik, Aarhus Universitet, ibr@dpu.dk.

Reviewet artikel

Vi søgte at forbedre studiemiljøet på DPU ved at styrke samarbejdet i studiegrupperne. Til det formål trænede vi 17 studerende i facilitering. Disse

Hanne K. Adriansen & Ib Ravn

5. An Experiment at DPU: Improve Study Environment

- Project “Study facilitation” for 222 graduate students in Educational Psych.
- A. **Study group facilitation**. B. Facilitated “study bar”. C. An identity event
- We trained **17 student facilitators** in a two-day workshop.
- Each would facilitate a semester-long **12-person group** for deeper learning





6. Some Results

- Compared with no-facilitation the previous year:
- "I feel part of a *større fællesskab på uddannelsen*": 21% → 60%
- "Opportunities for **social contact** with fellow students?" 29% → 74%
- "I feel **lonely** til daglig på uddannelsen?" 19% → 8%
- "De siger, det er blevet et **socialt netværk**.

At studiet er blevet anderledes.

Der er flere at henvende sig til.

Når man står i kø, snakker

man med nogen.

Man synes, man hører til.

Man smiler, når man kommer ind.

Man ved, hvad folk hedder."





7. What Does a Group Facilitator Do?

- A facilitator is a trained **peer** who participates equally in all group work
- Has **mandate** = other members consent to her powers
- Responsible for **process**, not content (not an expert)
- **Structures** each meeting: "What do we need to accomplish today?"
- Holds conversation **on topic**. Must interrupt off-topic talk
- Ensures everyone **participates**, by inviting or breakouts
- **Delegates** tasks by asking: "Who will do X? Who? You, Joe? You, Jane?"
- **Reassigns** non-completed tasks: "Okay, Joe, you were unable to complete X. Will you try again? No. Will someone else? No. Are we dropping X? What happens then, do you realize? Okay, so who will do it?"



8. Some Context on Facilitated Groups

- **One-shot** groups (½ hr in class) or **semester-long** groups
- For **discussions** of material – or for producing an **assignment**
- **One or two** can facilitate (take volunteers), not everyone.
- For longer-term use: **Training** workshop in facilitation
- **Institutional** support. If conflicts: An office to go to, with **counsellors**.





9. Creating One-Shot Groups, Finding Facilitators

- Create 4-person groups in class by **counting** 1-2-3-4-5 etc.
- “You guys I **identified** first are facilitator in your group!”
- “You will **regulate traffic discreetly**, holding back the talkers, inviting the thinkers to speak.”
- Give **basic instructions**:
a slide/handout (like the next slide).
Go through it in class
- A couple of **simple processes**,
a free discussion and conclusions.





10. Discuss "Group Work and Facilitation"

- In a minute, **exit**. Take pen and paper
- In the lobby, fill up a **4-person table** with strangers
- First-name alphabetic **facilitates** the discussion. Keep it constructive!
 1. **Introduce** yourselves (2 minutes total)
 2. **Silent reflection**: "What did you find interesting in Ib's talk" (2 minutes)
 3. **Everyone shares** (runde) (5 minutes)
 4. Facilitator formulates **two problems** for discussion, 6-8 minutes each (like: "How can we try facilitated group work?" or "How can we overcome obstacles X and Y?")
 5. Formulate **a question** or a comment for the Q&A, or delegate it to Joe.
 6. Be back in here by 10:25AM



11. References

- Adriansen, H. K, & Ravn, I. (2012). Det er blevet et socialt netværk: Forbedring af studiemiljøet gennem facilitering. **Dansk Universitetspædagogisk Tidsskrift**, årg. 7, nr. 13, pp. 14-26.
- Ravn, I. (2023). **Den faciliterende underviser**. Hans Reitzel.
- Rask, L.; Hansen, M. B.; Ravn, I. og Rask, A. K. (2018) **Studiegrupper: Samarbejde og facilitering**. Hans Reitzel.
- Ravn, I., Adriansen, H. K., & Tange, N. (2010). Studiemiljø. Bedre trivsel giver mindre frafald. Analyse, **Politiken**, 15. feb.

