

BLEND IT and SHARE IT!

Invitation to participate

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Summary of the invitation

This is an invitation for teachers or teacher teams on the theme blended learning. The theme Blended Learning is in line with the faculty ambitions as it can boost learners' efficiency. High-quality short video lectures in combination with (inter)active learning activities are helpful for sustainable excellent education. The goal of this invitation is to provide EEMCS teachers a realistic opportunity, in terms of time and effort, for redesigning their courses towards blended learning.

What is blended learning?

Blended Learning (BL)¹ is defined as a combination of face to face learning and online learning. It typically involves students acquiring fundamental and conceptual knowledge online (e.g. digital diagnostic tests, microlectures, pencasts, screencasts) and applying, analyzing or evaluating this through activities in class on campus (e.g. tutorials, peerfeedback, discussions, assignments, quizzes). With BL the teacher can maximize the benefits of both online and face-to-face to support students to achieve better and deeper learning. BL could help the teacher to deal with the growing number of students, with explaining difficult concepts, with helping students to get deeper understanding of a topic, engage students to learn, make the course more flexible, etc. A [step by step approach](#) to blend the course can be found on the site of the University of Twente.

Guiding principles

Creating short videos and redesigning a course is a lot of work. Creating high quality short video lectures requires large time investment from the teacher: approximately 2-3 hours per 10 minutes of video. The design of alternative in-class on campus activities (assignments, quizzes, team-based learning) is very time consuming as well: a modest estimation is 8 hours per 1,5-hour class. On the other hand, once the short videos and course redesign are completed, the teachers and the students can benefit from these for many years.

High quality short video lectures are recommended for sustainable excellent education. Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the high urgency of developing online education. Even before the crisis, the great didactical advantages of blended learning and short video lectures were well known². Furthermore, the UT has excellent facilities for creating professional quality video lectures. One may argue that live lectures have some advantages, such as human contact, live interaction and time efficiency for the teacher, but these plus points become irrelevant when live education is limited or impossible. Video lectures remain valuable no matter if education is face to face or online; it is a useful resource for the long term in combination with (other) interactive learning activities.

Next to high quality short videos, high quality learning activities are supportive for deeper learning. There are

¹Evaluating blended learning: Bringing the elements together, J Bowyer, L Chambers. Research Matters: A Cambridge Assessment Publication 23, 17-26

²[You should record your teaching](#) – *Fluffy Sciences*, Feb 13, 2020
Research Matters: A Cambridge Assessment Publication 23, 17-26

a variety of instructional approaches and assessment methods that could engage students. And that allow students to think critically and to solve complex problems, incorporate feedback, work collaboratively and communicate effectively in order to stimulate students to master essential academic content and concepts and to develop academic mindsets. Short videos and other stimulating learning activities and assessment should match up³.

Promotion: Vimeo and YouTube

The plan is to set up an official YouTube channel and (a public or private channel on) Vimeo for each educational program with playlists of the lectures by different teachers on different topics. Potentially, this will be useful for students all over the world, and will give the EEMCS faculty great visibility.

Who can apply?

All teaching staff of EEMCS (an individual lecturer or a team of lecturers) with the following characteristics are eligible to apply.

- You have responsibilities related to teaching and learning;
- You have the ambition to redesigning a course or module by implementing short videos and other relevant BL learning activities to support the learner to achieve the desired learning objectives. Key is that all components in the teaching system (learning objectives, learning activities and assessment) are aligned to each other.
- You will share project results with colleagues.

Very important! There should be a realistic plan. As said before, it takes much time to blend a course and create videos and develop learning activities that stimulate the learning process. In order to free the time for designing the video-integrated blended courses, finding a PhD student or a post-doc who can take over a course in one or more quartiles could be considered. 'WSV money' can be used to extend the contract of the involved PhD student or post doc of your department by 2 months. This could lead to a win-win situation. Temporary staff will get (more) teaching experience, staff members can spend serious time and focus on the redesign of their course.

You are invited!

All staff is invited to write a mail with a short description of the plan and ideas. There is limited capacity, allocation will be on 'first-come-first-serve' basis. An individual meeting with Karen Slotman (educational advisor EEMCS) and Alisa Lochner (e-learning specialist) will be scheduled to evaluate ideas and ask clarifying questions and decide on your plan. The teacher is asked to join the [UTeachers' Academy](#). In this network the teacher gets feedback during the time of the redesign of the course, shares results and ideas to improve the course and discusses several educational topics and other project proposals. Also support from the educational advisors of EEMCS, the e-learning specialist EEMCS and/or the [CELT](#) / [TELT](#) team will be available.

In case of questions please contact Karen Slotman (k.slotman@utwente.nl: educational advisor EEMCS).

³ https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/resources/id477_aligning_teaching_for_constructing_learning.pdf