

MIED4190 23V Master Thesis

In the spring semester, I taught the MIED4190 Master thesis course. In this course, the students are expected to develop a proposal for their master's thesis. The course builds on the introduction to Methods 1 and 2 courses.

Overall Assessment: What went well

Overall, the course progressed well, and all students managed to submit their proposals. The students were also able to present their topics to other teachers and received feedback.

Issues that did not go well

- Similar to MIED4020, some students felt that they were not prepared to write a good proposal because they were in the middle of taking classes in their own specialisations. This means they had not covered enough themes to allow them to develop subject-focused topics. However, even though students felt less prepared to identify topics, I think the structure of the course works well and allows students to craft their research ideas step-by-step across the semester.
- This course requires students to submit three writing tasks and receive feedback from peers and students. While students seemed to appreciate the process of getting feedback from their peers and teachers, others felt the assignments were too many and conflicted with other course assignments.
- On the teachers' side, providing feedback to a class of 20+ students on three different tasks ahead of the classes was very demanding.
- At the end of the course, students submitted and presented their proposals to at least two other teachers. Even though this was positively received by students, the administration highlighted that this process required too many resources regarding the teachers involved. It was highlighted that this activity was meant for the fourth semester, where students present their proposals and receive feedback.

Recommendations

- Given the workload involved in assessing the formative tasks in this course, it is better to have two teachers to share the workload.
- The expectation that the students should present their proposals in the fourth semester should be revisited. It is better for students to present their proposals within the second semester before they are assigned supervisors. In the fourth semester, it is too late for students to make changes, and it is expected that at this stage, they are intensively working with their supervisors.