Christopher Riis Bubeck Eriksen, Bachelor Student
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Teaching Portfolio for Christopher Riis Bubeck Eriksen

Short about me:

I am currently on my third year of studying computer science at Aarhus University and I have recently begun teaching in some introductory courses in programming. The understanding look in peoples' eyes at the time of realization has always fascinated me.

So far, I have been a teaching assistant in two programming courses. In my first half year of teaching I have also attended a introductory science teaching course which has aroused my interest for didactics. I am keen on continuing not only to teach but also to learn - Hopefully I will be able to plan a course one day.

Courses taught:

Introduction to Programming, Fall 2014. First year bachelor course at the Department of Computer Science at Aarhus University. TA for 19 new computer science students through 7 weeks.

Programming 2, Fall-Winter 2014. First year bachelor course at the Department of Computer Science at Aarhus University. I was a TA for 22 students through 7 weeks.

Examination experience:

I was one of 6 censors in a written exam for about 90 students taking the Introduction to Programming course in Fall 2014 at the Department of Computer Science, Aarhus University.

Teaching courses followed:

Introduction to Science Teaching provided by the Faculty of Science at Aarhus University, 2014.

My philosophy of teaching:

I love the look in peoples' eyes when I can make them understand something they couldn't before - I find it even more fascinating when the same people discover something I didn't know and share it with me. I do not want to give my students concrete answers right away. I want to guide them towards trying things out, reflecting and discussing with each other - eventually sharing their answers with me and the others. When they are right, I am there to ensure them and agree, and if they are wrong, I want to encourage them and lead them towards the right knowledge. In my opinion active learning is the way to go.

It is of course important to make an introduction to a subject and some necessary tools for the students - and sometimes the only way to keep the motivation going is to give them a big hint - but what I really want to teach them is to think. I want to conserve generality.

While teaching programming, I sometimes live code something small. Sometimes I make a little error while coding and then we find it together, even though I know where the error is. Sometimes I make an error without intent, but I think that it is important for the students to see that errors are a common thing while coding - programmers make mistakes while coding, it is only natural. I try my best making them ask questions - my philosophy is that there are no stupid questions, only stupid answers.

If the students does something wrong in an assignment, I write detailed feedback, praising their good parts and notifying them about the problems of their less good parts. I am not afraid of using a little extra time to make them understand something. Even if I accept their assignments, I give them detailed feedback about their choices. I know from my own experience as a student that it can be frustrating to receive "That was great!" as the only feedback for an assignment, since I want to know what could have been done better or why it was good.

Evaluations and comments:

At the end of the Introduction to Programmering course 2014 I received the following evaluation:

Christopher Riis Bubeck Eriksen formidlede stoffet og afviklede kurset på bedste vis	Respondenter	Procent(%)
Ønsker ikke at svare	0	0,0
Helt uenig	0	0,0
Uenig	0	0,0
Hverken eller	0	0,0
Enig	2	20,0
Helt enig	8	80,0
Antal besvarelser	10	100,0

I also received a single comment: *"Christopher var meget dygig, og gjorde rigtig meget ud af at give feedback - hvilket var meget brugbart. Super godt!"*

I have yet to receive an evaluation of my efforts in the Programming 2 course.

Future plans:

I am eager to teach in courses which involves mathematical proofs, since I would like to try using Strip Sequencing as a technique in making the students understand a proof. I want to teach more so I can get more experience, and I am interested in reading about body language and participating in more courses about teaching.

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I am considering planning a lecture about the etiquette of modern programming, which could be helpful for first year computer science students. Making all students understand a concept despite differing learning styles is also an interesting concept that I would like to look more into.

Teaching projects:

Applying a new technique to an existing course

I have been participating in a project where we observed and investigated the consequences of injecting peer reviewing into a web programming course. Formerly the students got their assignments rated by TAs, but this year each group got their ratings from other groups. This proved to be a thrilling experience with many interesting discussions between another teacher and me. A lot of students elaborated about their feelings regarding the peer reviewing system - most of the students were happy about the idea, but they also had some ideas for changes. This experience has helped me learning to observe, reflect and discuss.

Making a small lecture

In connection with the Introduction to Science Teaching course I had to make a 15 minute video of me teaching. I planned a small lecture about programming recursive functions with matching exercises. Since I was teaching an introductory programming course at the time, I invited my students to come see it. To my amazement, one third of the students took the time to come even though it was Friday afternoon. Albeit there was only 7 students, it was a great experience - we ended up using nearly an hour talking about recursive functions and making extra exercises. It helped me reflect over the exercises I'd made, and their solving of the exercises served not only as an assessment of them but also of my lecture.