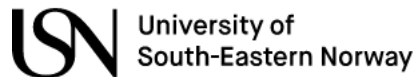


REPORT ON OUTPUT

Project: *"Improving environmental education through a synergy of knowledge, experience and critical reflection inspired by Scandinavian and Czech ecophilosophy"*

June 21, 2023

University of South-Eastern Norway (USN)
Professor Per Ingvar Haukeland



Innovations

The project has been successful in a number of innovative ways from the perspective of USN. We have been working on three kinds of innovations: curriculum, teaching and research. The main focus on these innovations have been to make theoretical teachings more practical, and to use practice to generate better teaching. In addition, we have conducted research projects that combine philosophy and practice in coastal outdoor education.

Here we will outline the kinds of innovations more specifically:

Courses (found at www.usn.no)

2631 Ecophilosophy (Fall 2022)

This course has been run for two decades, but the project has helped put attention to the practical teachings of ecophilosophical themes. Members of the project, with Martin Lee Muller, as one of them, has co-taught the course, which was a new innovation. It has never been co-taught before. We were also working on teaching more of the themes outside, and we got new tips from our colleagues in Czech republic on literature. This will not be visual in the curriculum until fall 2024.

Changes can be found here: <https://www.usn.no/english/academics/find-programmes/outdoor-leadership-culture-and-ecophilosophy/>

1312 Nature, experience and meaning (Spring 2023)

This master course is a more advanced course from the 2631 in our Nordic master in Outdoor Life (friluftsliv). Along with the 2631 course, we run this course (Spring 2023) more in the outdoors. It has been previously more of a classroom course, but the project inspired to make it more practical. Similar to the 2631 we will not see those changes in the curriculum until Fall semester 2024.

Innovations can be found here: <https://www.usn.no/english/academics/find-programmes/nordic-master-in-friluftsliv-studies/>

Research:

There are two parts in the research aspect of the project related to environmental studies: ecophilosophy in sustainability and craft and ecophilosophy in a health and environment.

We have been fortunate to visit, as a project team, with a master boat builder, outdoor educator and philosopher in Norway, and started a project with him on combining more of the theory and practice of ecophilosophy in relationship to traditional craft and boatbuilding. That turned out to be a great project, which we are planning on making an article out of. It has also been important in our teaching of a

course in "Outdoors and Hand craft", which has not been directly involved in the project, but has been helpful to it.

The second part of the research has been related to applying ecophilosophy to a health context, which is targeting the students themselves. By opening the courses to both theory and practice, we find that there are health effects on teaching outdoors, as you activate both mind and body. We see the environment not only as a physical environment, but also a human and social environment. So we try out how using the outdoors can also have an effect on this.

We have also exchanged information and findings when it comes to teaching-based research and research-based teaching between the partners in the project. This has been very fruitful.

Summary

The project is a pilot project, so it is too early to say how well the innovations have turned out. But evaluations with the students have been overall very good. They enjoyed very much the combination of theory and practice using the outdoors, which they only wanted more of. The challenge here is to find ways to teach the more complex theoretical perspectives, such as that of Actor-network theory (Latour), but we have been trying to do so in a more-than-human way by emphasizing the meshwork of threads in the outdoors. This work will continue.

The research part has been very good, and we have started on a process that may open new doors, both for our colleagues at USN, but perhaps also in further collaborations across the partners. We are especially pleased with the integration of ecophilosophy and handcraft, and that of ecophilosophy related to a broader understanding of health. We are planning on pursuing this further by applying for new funds in Norway on this topic.