

Increasing student preparation and participation through flipped classroom and other measures

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ABSTRACT: This article presents and discusses my efforts to implement flipped classroom and other measures to increase student preparation and participation. It outlines the challenges that decision to implement changes, including under-preparation among students, describes the literature and collegial advice that I sought in preparation for the changes and the potential benefits and objections to implementing flipped classroom. It then describes the new course design, including the efforts made to clarify expectations and provide useful preparation materials for students, the increased emphasis on group work and some of the interactive classroom methods employed. To evaluate the effects of these measures, I consider my own logbook, course evaluations, discussions with the reference group and with my PhD student. I consider some of the challenges encountered, including students' frustrations over group work. I find that student preparation levels increased, that attendance rates improved and that the exam results also indicated improvements in student performance. By way of conclusion I discuss whether the implemented measures actually constitute flipped classroom and I suggest some alterations to a second iteration of the course before I consider what I have learned myself and recommend others to be inspired by these experiences.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Challenge

In this article, I will present and discuss my efforts to implement flipped classroom and other measures to increase student preparation and participation. The project was prompted by practical and pedagogical concerns: on the practical side, I was going on maternity leave halfway through the semester and therefore had to revise my existing course so that it could be finished early in the semester and potentially be taken over by another colleague if I had to go on leave sooner than planned. Pedagogically, I wanted to address challenges that came up when I taught this course a year ago. Here, I found that students were often under-prepared for class, many chose not to attend classes and those who did were often insecure about participating. To counter these challenges, I decided to try out so-called 'flipped classroom' as well as to implement a number of other measures that I believed might help counteract low preparation and participation levels, specifically an active use of group work and obligatory assignments.

1.2 The Course

The course I revised is called 'Memory Politics After Empire' (course code ENG2455 'History and Politics'). It is an elective course at the BA level which is taken by students from the English bachelor's degree, the lektor degree in English and the European Studies degree. The aim of the course is to introduce students to memory theory and to a series of different contexts within the former British Empire. It equips the students with tools for analysing struggles over the meaning of the past as well as practical experience in doing so and a basic familiarity with the manifold places in which the English language is spoken. The course had 80 students signed up at the beginning of the semester and 67 students sitting the exam. Normally the course runs for 12 weeks with one lecture a week (for all students) and a seminar every other week (where the students are split into two separate

classes). As will be explained in detail below, this semester it was run in half the time, due to the tight schedule, with the exam following ten days after the end of the course (see course outline in Appendix).

1.3 The Literature and Collegial Advice

When revising the course and writing the initial project report for the university pedagogy course in the spring of 2019, I consulted the research literature on flipped classroom and discussed the concept with a colleague who has experience with flipped classroom. Simply put, flipped classroom is about moving the transmission of information out of the classroom and instead spending time in class on in-depth understanding. Basic knowledge is presented and practiced in videos, readings and exercises or other material which the students prepare at home. The idea is that the students' time with the teacher can thus be spent on developing in-depth understanding and critical thinking at higher taxonomical levels with the teacher acting as a guide or mentor for the students ("Flipped classroom i undervisning - Wiki - innsida.ntnu.no," n.d.; O'Flaherty and Phillips, 2015, p. 93; Sams and Bergmann, 2013, p. 16).

1.4 Benefits

The research is still at an early stage with limited results, especially from a European or humanities perspective (O'Flaherty and Phillips, 2015, pp. 88; 90–93). However, the studies that have been conducted have found that flipped classroom improves student autonomy, sense of ownership, cooperation, openness to new ideas and that students did better at an exam and were able to discuss complexities at a higher level after being exposed to the flipped classroom method (Ebbeler, 2013; Hantla, 2017, pp. 12–13). Other studies report higher student satisfaction, academic performance, communication skills as well as increased participation and preparation (O'Flaherty and Phillips, 2015).

1.5 Objections

Objections may be raised against flipped classroom. Most importantly, one should consider the reasons for implementing flipped classroom. Is it a resource-saving device idea where the teacher is replaced with a video or will the format free up the teacher's time from lecturing to discussing with students? There is a risk of entering a slippery slope where the buzzword of flipped classroom is actually used to defend a hollowing out of students' time with teachers and/or of teachers' preparation hours (as videos can be recycled). Other objections relate more to how students react to the format, but since useful strategies have been developed for handling those, they will be addressed below.

1.6 Recommendations

Several of the recommendations regarding the implementation of flipped classroom are about how teachers should ensure that students feel safe and comfortable with the unfamiliar format. Much of the literature finds that students can react negatively if this is not the case (Ebbeler, 2013; "Flipped classroom i undervisning - Wiki - innsida.ntnu.no," n.d.; Hantla, 2017, p. 9; O'Flaherty and Phillips, 2015, p. 89). In their summary of the research, O'Flaherty and Phillips stress the need to clarify expectations with the students from the outset – something that my colleague also recommended ("Conversation with colleague about flipped classroom," 2019; O'Flaherty and Phillips, 2015, p. 89). Hantla recommends that the preparation material should be organised with a recognisable structure (Hantla, 2017, p. 9). For Ebbeler, this is about the role of the teacher who should be a clear and authoritative presence in the classroom, giving students a sense that everything is under control. Authors also recommend that home exercises should be clearly relevant to students and they should receive formative feedback on them (Ebbeler, 2013; O'Flaherty and Phillips, 2015, pp. 93–94). These are all recommendations that have been helpful in redesigning the course and thinking about how to help the students feel comfortable with the new format.

2 THE NEW DESIGN

As I implemented a form of flipped classroom in my course, I modified it slightly to fit my needs. Instead of replacing all lectures with videos, I decided to have one video, one lecture and one seminar a week for a six-week period. I also took a number of additional measures which are not necessarily part of a flipped classroom setup, but which I hoped would further student preparation and participation. In the following, I will present how I communicated the new format to the students and designed the preparation materials, the group work and the interactive classroom (see overview in *Table 1*).

2.1 Clarification of Expectations

Given the recommendations from my colleague and O’Flaherty and Phillips, I was keen to make the students aware of what the flipped classroom format meant and what I expected of them. Already in the ‘pensumhefte’ where students can read about next semester’s courses, it was mentioned that this would be run as an intensive course with a number of smaller obligatory assignments. In the course outline which I uploaded three weeks before semester start, I had an introductory section explaining the ideas behind the course and what was expected of the students. Along with this, the students had access to the first video of the course which also introduced both the academic content and the format and expectations of the course. Finally, in the first lecture I also addressed the format.

2.2 Preparation Materials

To make the course as clear and easy to follow as possible, the course outline stated both what materials to prepare, in which order, what questions to consider and what assignments to complete.

Each week, students were given a series of different materials to prepare. They were instructed to first watch a video in which I introduced the overall theme of the week and gave background knowledge as well as some pointers for relevant questions to consider. The videos were 20-30 minutes long so as to keep them short enough for students to be able to concentrate. They were recorded on my office computer, using the programme Camtasia for which NTNU has a licence.

In some weeks, there was also a youtube video which functioned as a primary source that illustrated a case of memory politics after empire, like a speech or an interview. Then, students were to read two-three texts on that week’s topic, using the provided questions to guide their reading. Finally, they were to complete an obligatory assignment.

In the first two weeks, the obligatory assignments were simply short quizzes that tested whether students had done the readings. In later weeks, they were: a group essay, an individual essay and a group poster. In addition, all groups had to write a reading report during the semester on one of the course readings, to be uploaded to a course blog where other students could read them and use them for exam preparation.

The essay questions were based on last year’s exam questions. This was a measure taken to keep the preparation relevant, as recommended by O’Flaherty and Phillips, as well as to ensure that the students felt as comfortable as possible with the exam format before the time of the actual exam, given the shortness of time available for them to prepare. Picking up on Ebbeler’s recommendation that students receive formative feedback, I and my PhD student provided thorough feedback on both the individual and group essays as well as the reading reports, specifically pointing out what should be done differently in an exam situation.

2.3 Group Work

In previous courses, I have encouraged students to form reading groups, but this has been voluntary, and it has been clear that not many students have done so. This semester, I decided instead to make obligatory group work an integrated part of the course.

The first step was to create groups that would work. To do so, I asked all students to fill out a questionnaire in advance of the course where they (anonymously, using a pseudonym) stated how many hours they intended to study per week and what grade they were hoping to achieve. I then sorted them into groups of 4-5 people with roughly the same ambitions. During the first lecture, I put up the groups with the pseudonyms on a slide and left the room while they found their groups. The hope was that they would avoid many of the problems of group work because they would share expectations about their own efforts and ambitions. Unfortunately, a number of people signed up late and joined random groups, so it was not possible to maintain this for all groups.

The second step was to make sure that the groups were put to meaningful use in and between classes. I believed that if they were simply told to read up together, they would not be able to see the benefits of collaboration. So in the third and fifth weeks of the course, the students had to prepare obligatory assignments together. In addition, all groups had to write a reading report at some point during the semester. In class, the groups were also activated through various exercises and discussions.

2.4 Interactive Classroom

An important part of flipped classroom is the idea that class time should be spent on applying the knowledge attained at home and clarifying uncertainties students might have. To that end, I included a number of different classroom activities, all aimed at getting the students to participate actively in both lectures and seminars, to get them to apply the theoretical framework they were learning and to help them overcome difficulties with comprehending the material.

I started each lecture with a couple of questions on menti.com. A typical question might ask the students about the key take home messages from the previous week. The mentimeter would create a word cloud of concepts, ideas or events for all to see that I would then pick up on. This is an exercise I've done in previous semesters as well as it allows students to retrieve information and hence improve their recollection of it (for a good introduction to this and other interactive exercises, see James M. Lang, 2016). Previously, though, I've simply asked the question into the room. The benefit of using menti.com was that more students could get involved in answering. I would also ask a question about what was most difficult or still unclear from last week and then use the answers to clarify those points before we moved on with the week's topic.

Another online tool I used with satisfaction was padlet.com. In lectures and seminars, I would ask the students to work on a question in groups and then write their response on a shared noticeboard on padlet. Here they could all see one another's answers and sometimes I would ask them to vote for the best answer and then get those who had written the winning answer to elaborate on it. Again, this allowed all students to have a real conversation with their neighbours about a question while also allowing me to get a sense of the level of understanding in the entire room rather than among those few who might have put up their hand had I asked the question to the class. This method also allowed for clarification of points that were clearly misunderstood by students.

I also included exercises where students had to produce materials in a more in-depth manner. In the second week of the course, the students had read a rather complex introduction to memory theory. I had asked each group to focus in particular on one reading question in advance of the class, each of which addressed one theoretical concept. In class, they then started by sitting in their groups and discussing how they would explain this concept to others. They were then sent out into new groups where they all had to explain their concepts to others. This forced all students to get a sufficient grasp of the concept that they could teach it to others and also gave all students introductions to all concepts. After the class, they had to upload their explanations to a wiki-site on Blackboard so that they could all draw benefit of them in their exam preparations.

A different type of exercise asked them to rapidly respond to an essay question, either by writing a draft introduction or a draft outline for an essay. Subsequently, they would give one another feedback

on the drafts and we would discuss good essay writing strategies in class. This was meant to give them more familiarity with the exam format and to give them tools for writing under pressure.

Finally, in the penultimate week of the course, all groups were asked to prepare a poster before class. The topic of the week was ‘memory in the public space’, and in the video and readings, students had been introduced to a number of examples of what this might constitute (museums, statues, film...). On the poster, each group then presented a case study of memory in the public space, finding examples from all across the former British Empire. The seminar was a poster session with a ‘speed-dating’ setup where half the group stood by their poster and presented it to half of another group. I managed the time and after five minutes, students were asked to move to the next poster. In the second half of the seminar, the students who had been circulating now stood by their poster. That way, all students had to present and all students saw all posters. Students were encouraged to ask questions about the posters and to think of the case studies presented as material they might draw on in their own exam essays.

Table 1. Overview of new design

Method	Specifics
Blended learning	Videos, readings, obligatory assignments. Clear preparation order
Clarification of expectations	Pensumhefte, course outline, first lecture
Group work	Obligatory, based on students’ own ambitions. Used for OAs
Interactive teaching	Menti.com, padlet.com, matrix, draft writing, poster session

3 FINDINGS

3.1 Data

The following reflection on challenges and positive outcomes of the measures taken are based on a range of different data: my own impressions, an evaluation survey, conversations with the reference group and with my PhD student. In addition, I have regularly encouraged students to give me feedback, stressing that this course is still under development, and several have been forthcoming with comments, in particular after exercises that they thought worked well.

Throughout the semester, I have kept a logbook for the course. During lectures and seminars, I have had a note book with me, jotting down immediate impressions, and after each class, I have written a longer reflection on what went well and what did not work and what should be considered for the next iteration of the course.

In the last lecture, I ran an extended evaluation survey, using kvass.no. While there were some checkbox questions like ‘Have you found the lectures useful?’ where students simply had to check off an answer, most of the question types were open ended, allowing students to provide comments. In this, I drew on the advice from NTNU’s page on course evaluations which recommends that students be given the chance to formulate their own answers (“Lage spørreskjema - kvalitetssystemet - Wiki - innsida.ntnu.no,” n.d.).

I have talked to the reference group several times throughout the semester. The first time was already in the second week, to get their immediate sense of the course and early suggestions for changes. The second time was in week three, where I asked reference group to do a midterm evaluation without my being present in the room, so that students might feel comfortable criticising the course. After the class, we discussed points that had come up in the evaluation. Our last meeting was the day after the exam, where I invited the reference group to my office to discuss the course. They had been given access to the evaluation survey in advance of this meeting. In addition, they had had a conversation with the class at the end of the last lecture, again without my being present, and had also talked to their peers after the exam.

Finally, I have talked to my PhD student who has given feedback on student essays, has reviewed all of my teaching materials, sat in on a couple of classes and has marked all the final exams.

3.2 Challenges

A number of the students' critical comments and frustrations circled around group work. Most significantly, while the method of dividing students into groups was generally welcomed, the fact that latecomers were free to join any group was clearly a source of frustration for many. Groups that felt they had found a rhythm together had to incorporate members that had been randomly assigned rather than sharing their ambitions (*Course evaluation survey*, 2019).

There were other challenges involved with group work, such as finding time to meet for students with diverging schedules and other obligations, and the typical frustrations of having to write a paper together. Some said that the feedback they received did not feel relevant to them as the essay was the result of other people's work as much as than their own. Several students commented that they would have preferred writing essays only by themselves (*Course evaluation survey*, 2019). However, this would have severely limited the amount of time I could have devoted to giving feedback on essays. While frustrating, I also believe that there are pedagogical advantages to learning to collaborate on a product like an essay. In other words, student frustrations should not necessarily lead us to abandon an activity if it still has pedagogical merit.

Several students stated that they would have preferred longer obligatory assignments, as that would have given them more space to elaborate their arguments and would have more accurately simulated the length of the exam ("Conversations with reference group," 2019; *Course evaluation survey*, 2019). Again, this might lead to problems with teacher time for giving thorough feedback. Also, it would have prevented the use of many small assignments which has kept students preparing for each class.

Regarding the videos, the most commonly cited frustrations regarded the audio quality and the download time. This is unfortunate, but can be addressed by recording the videos in one of NTNU's video labs next year where I might also get assistance in compressing the files in a way that allows for easier download.

The intensive format of running the course over six weeks followed immediately by an exam was the source of stress for some students, while other appreciated being able to concentrate and get one exam out of the way early in the semester. Some remarked that their other courses had suffered as a consequence ("Conversations with reference group," 2019; *Course evaluation survey*, 2019). This is of course unfortunate and must be considered if a similar course were to be run again. Given that the intensive format was a result of special circumstances regarding my maternity leave, it is not imperative that the course continues as an intensive course in the following semesters.

3.3 Positive Outcomes

While group work was a source of many frustrations, it was also subject of many positive remarks in the student evaluations. Students generally enjoyed being placed in groups by the teacher. Several remarked that this made for easy collaboration. The groups were celebrated by students for giving them an opportunity to make new friends and for creating a safe space to discuss course materials. One student remarked that they 'Liked having someone to be confused with and define things with' (*Course evaluation survey*, 2019). It is my firm conviction that this is precisely what students need in order to progress academically.

In my interactions with the class, it was also my impression that the groups made for a positive class dynamic where students seemed to have discussed issues at home with their group and tended to automatically sit together in during lectures and seminars and to continue their conversations into the

breaks. Put simply, they seemed more confident and at ease in the classroom than many students I have taught previously.

The class generally seemed more well-prepared than students in previous courses. Students remarked that the videos gave a good introduction to the week's theme which made it easier to start reading and said that the weekly obligatory assignments forced them to keep on top of the readings ("Conversations with reference group," 2019; *Course evaluation survey*, 2019). It was certainly my impression from the classroom that a much higher proportion of the students had prepared in advance, making it easier and more fun to teach the course. Perhaps as a consequence of this and the fact that obligatory assignments were modelled on previous exams, a high number of students also reported feeling ready for the exam, one even stating that they felt more ready for an exam than ever before. This person added that the videos were a good tool not only for weekly preparation but also in preparing for the exam (*Course evaluation survey*, 2019).

The course also had a consistently higher number of students attending both lectures and seminars than what I have seen in previous semesters. This might be partly ascribed to the shortness of the course – students tend to disappear towards the end of the semester. But I do believe that the fact that the course was structured to require students to prepare meant that more could see the point of attending teaching. Students stated that it felt worthwhile to show up, as lectures and seminars provided added value to the prepared materials (*Course evaluation survey*, 2019). It may also be that the attendance list has nudged some students to feel that they were expected to come, even if it was not a formal requirement.

The final results back up my impression that the changes to the course have generally been successful. Last year, the grades were as follows: 10 As, 14 Bs, 13 Cs, 10 Ds, 5 Es, 3 Fs. This year, the grades were distributed as: 15 As, 18 Bs, 21 Cs, 10 Ds, 3 Es and no Fs. This points to a higher grade point average than last year, with four out of five getting an A-C this year compared to two out of three last year, and 49 % getting A or B this year compared to 43 % last year. Just as importantly, it has been my impression from classroom interactions that students were generally able to relate to the course themes and concepts at a higher level of abstraction than last year. The fact that students had already viewed a video and discussed the material in groups before attending class could be felt in the way they handled tasks in class and seemed to produce more eagerness to participate than seen in the previous iteration of the course.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Actually Flipped Classroom?

A common remark from students in both the evaluation survey and through conversations with the reference group has been that this was not really flipped classroom ("Conversations with reference group," 2019; *Course evaluation survey*, 2019). As they pointed out, a more traditional flipped classroom format would not have had lectures and the seminars might have been even less structured and more focused on independent work than was the case in my classes. However, importantly, this has not been stated as a complaint. In fact, students who made the comment tended to add that they enjoyed having the lectures as well as videos and seminars. This seems to back up the recommendation from Ebbeler as well as my colleague that students can benefit from the teacher still being a clear authority in the room ("Conversation with colleague about flipped classroom," 2019; Ebbeler, 2013). A clear benefit of retaining some lectures in a course like this is that the teacher is able to see and hear the students' reactions and to adjust the teaching in real-time. If the transmission of knowledge is done only via video lectures, this opportunity for responsive teaching is lost. My seminars may also have been more structured than what is sometimes the case with flipped classroom. As I gather, in some instances, the teacher becomes more coach than teacher, whereas I decided to intersperse the activities with blackboard time where I summarised the findings of the group work.

4.2 Plans for the Future

While the obligatory group work has been the source of frustration for some students, I would not hesitate to repeat it, especially given the many positive remarks that have also been attached to it. In a later iteration of the course, I will thus repeat the method of devising groups and I will continue to use the groups as actively as possible. However, latecomers will be told to form one or several new groups rather than be incorporated into existing groups. Hopefully, this will minimise some of the frustration relating to the group dynamics. I will also consider inviting students to come and talk to me if their group is not well functioning.

After a discussion with the reference group and my PhD student, I am considering changing the exam format next year from the four-hour school exam to a portfolio exam (“Conversation with PhD student about the current iteration of the course,” 2019; “Conversations with reference group,” 2019). The idea would be that the various group- and individual assignments during the semester would count towards the final grade, some of them assessed pass/fail and others with a letter grade. The students expressed frustration at not being able to provide a detailed analysis at the exam. From reading the exam papers, it is clear that while the overall level is higher than last year, many students would have benefitted from being allowed more time to work with the exam question instead of trying to rattle off as much as possible in the allotted time (“Conversation with PhD student about the current iteration of the course,” 2019, as well as my own impression from reading a sample of exams). A change of format would also address the conflict between the students’ desire for longer, individual essays and the practical problem of the teacher not having enough time to give proper feedback on obligatory assignments as more time would be dedicated to assessment.

4.3 What I have Learned

Working on this project has been a great opportunity to work in a sustained manner with a problem that had frustrated me in my teaching. Reading the research literature and talking to students and colleagues about the changes I have made has made me more conscious of both the benefits and pitfalls of the measures I have taken.

In addition to what has already been outlined in terms of challenges and positive outcomes, the project has made me aware of my own preferences for teaching. While I have found the videos both fun to plan and record and a useful resource for students, I would not wish to convert all of my teaching hours to video-teaching. The responsiveness of the real classroom experience is clearly simultaneously of benefit to students and a source of personal enjoyment for me as a teacher. Online materials and home preparation through groups and assignments can support in-class learning to a significant degree, but they cannot replace the conversation between teacher and student.

4.4 What Others can Learn from this Project

As I see it, problem with the research literature on flipped classroom is that it is often not very concrete on what activities and strategies have actually been employed in the classroom. In contrast, I have found Lang’s *Small Teaching* a useful resource which actually does give very hands-on recommendations for teaching activities. It is my hope that this article can also be such a resource, providing a small catalogue of ideas for how to implement measures for improved student preparation and participation in practice.

The key take home message is that students can respond well to a certain degree of flipping but may appreciate and benefit from the continued authoritative presence of the teacher in the classroom. In addition, I have found that obligatory group work and regular obligatory assignments have indeed improved student preparation and participation. In combination, these measures have had a positive effect on student satisfaction, level of engagement and performance. As a consequence, I would very much recommend the measures I have taken to others, in particular if done with the minor adjustments suggested above.

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APPENDIX – COURSE OUTLINE

Memory Politics After Empire

Welcome to the course!

What is the course about?

The ENG2455 course 'Memory Politics After Empire' introduces you to memory politics in the age of decolonisation in different parts of the former British Empire. It sets out to examine struggles over the meaning of the imperial past and how that past is put to political use in the present. Looking at film, speeches, news articles, debates, memoirs, school curricula, monuments and commemorations, we will analyse the negotiations of the past in the present. Over the course of the semester, we will study the history of decolonisation, memory studies and contestations, memory in education and history writing, apologies and reparations, memory in the public space and in popular culture. We will look at memory in Britain, Australia, the Caribbean and South Africa, thus introducing you to some parts of the wider English-speaking world.

We will be studying a lot of explosive political debates. While it is perfectly legitimate to agree with one side of a dispute, a key learning goal is to be able to analyse these debates rather than simply partaking in them.

What is expected of you?

The course will be run as flipped classroom with videos and exercises to be prepared at home. It will run as an intensive course for seven weeks. Flipped classroom means that a lot of the transmission of basic knowledge is done at home instead of in the lectures, so that the time we have together is freed up for clarifying what you are in doubt about, for practising using the new knowledge and discussing it at a higher level of abstraction. Instead of having two weekly lectures and a seminar, you will have traditional lecture-like material to watch at home and then a more interactive lecture as well as a seminar each week.

This format requires an active effort on your behalf. You must watch the videos, read the material and finish the exercises in advance of each week's lecture and seminar. I recommend that you start with the videos, then read and then complete the obligatory assignment.

Since this course is done in half the time of a normal course, you should expect to spend twice the preparation time each week that you would for a normal 12-week course. As a 7.5 credit course, this amounts to 15 hours of work, of which only 4x45 minutes are class time. In other words, you should spend 10-12 hours on preparation each week. This will be intensive, but it will also mean that you are completely finished with the course and the exam by week 41.

The exam follows immediately after the course, in week 41. Thus, you should consider the course itself as exam preparation. The exercises at home and in the seminars are designed to familiarize you with the exam format and give you practice in answering the exam.

The seminars are as essential as the lectures, and so you are expected to attend both lectures and seminars each week.

How is the group work organised?

The groups will be made according to your expectations of your own work. Please fill out the survey uploaded in the folder for the first week **before 18 August**. Here you will be asked a couple of questions that you will answer anonymously, using a pseudonym (remember your pseudonym for later!). They will be questions about what grade you hope to get and how much time you plan to spend each week. That way, you will end up in a group with people who have roughly the same ambitions as yourself. Here, you will also be able to indicate your preferred seminar-day. However, it may not be possible to grant everybody their first priority. Please specify in the survey if you have extraordinary reasons for being able to attend only one of the two seminar time slots. You will be assigned a group and a seminar at the end of the first lecture.

As you will see below, some of the OAs will be completed in your group. In addition, I encourage you to use the groups in your preparations in all weeks, as discussing the course materials before class can be a good way of finding out what you are unsure about as well as practising how to explain historical events and theoretical concepts – skills that will be essential at the exam.

What is required for the Obligatory Assignment?

All weekly Obligatory Assignments should be submitted before that week's lecture, that is by Tuesday at 14. Some parts of the OA will be individual work, some will be group work. You find more information about each week's OA requirements in the course outline below. All OAs are designed to help you better grasp the course materials, practice using the new knowledge and concepts and gain relevant experience before the exam. You should do the OA after watching and reading the week's course materials.

In addition to the weekly OAs, each group must post one reading report on the seminar blog during the course. This means that you will be doing two exercises at home in one of the weeks. The reading reports of other groups will be a valuable resource for you when preparing for the exam. Your group will sign up for the week when you prefer to do the reading report in the first seminar. A reading report should be 2-300 words. It should consider the following questions: What are the main arguments of the text? How does the text relate to the broader question of how people remember empire or engage with imperial legacies after decolonisation?

Understanding the abbreviations

Each piece of course material has a code, like R4a.

The capital letter describes the kind of material: V for video, R for reading, OA for obligatory assignment, S for material that will be watched in the seminar, L for lecture slides. It is recommended that you watch videos before reading and doing the OA. You do not have to look at seminar material and lecture slides before class.

The number describes the week, so R4a is reading for week 4.

The lower-case letter indicates the recommended order of reading or watching, so read R4a before R4b etc.

	Lecture: Tuesdays 14.15-16.00 in D2 Seminar: Wednesdays 14.15-16.00 in D8 and Thursdays 8.15-10.00 in DI41	Questions for preparation
Week 1 (34)	<p>Decolonisation</p> <p>Watch: V1a: Welcome to the course! V1b: Decolonisation</p> <p>Read: R1a: Kennedy, <i>Decolonization: A Very Short Introduction</i>, chapters 3, 4 and 5 R1b: Assmann, 'Memories of Post-Imperial Nations'</p> <p>OA: OA1: Quiz: Decolonisation.</p>	<p>What pressures led to the decolonisation of the British and other European empires? What is a nation-state and how did the formation of new nation-states happen after decolonisation? What does Kennedy mean by the nation-state as the 'triumph and tragedy of decolonization'? How are national identities fostered? What is neo-colonialism? How has the British and other European empires been remembered or forgotten after decolonisation? In what forms do the legacies of empire linger on?</p>
Week 2 (35)	<p>Memory studies and contested memories</p> <p>Watch: V2: Memory studies</p> <p>Read: R2a: Erll, <i>Memory in Culture</i>, part of chapter III (pp. 38-66) and all of chapter V R2b: Buettner 'Remembering and Forgetting Empires' in <i>Europe After Empire</i>, pp. 440-448 Read particularly carefully for the concept(s) your group has been assigned for this week.</p> <p>OA: OA2: Quiz: Memory Studies</p>	<p>Mark the examples in Erll's text that relate to the former British Empire. What concepts do they illustrate in the text? Will we look at any of them? Were you familiar with them from before? Why is memory important for societies and social groups? What functions does it serve? How is individual memory related to the social context? Do people need to be able to remember a past event themselves in order for it to be part of their group's collective memory? What does it mean that the nation is an 'imagined community'? How is memory culturally mediated?</p> <p><u>For group work on concepts:</u> What is the difference (and relationship) between history and memory? What is the relationship between archives and power? What is oral history and what is the interest of oral historians in memory as retrospective constructions? What does it mean that memory is 'social'?</p>

		<p>What does the ‘politics of regret’ refer to?</p> <p>In what ways is memory global?</p> <p>What is the material dimension of media of memory?</p> <p>What is the social dimension of media of memory?</p> <p>What is the difference between storage, circulation and cue?</p> <p>How do media frame individual memory?</p> <p>How do photos and films mediate memory?</p> <p>What are remediation and premediation?</p>
<p>Week 3 (36)</p>	<p>Memory politics in education</p> <p>Watch: V3a: Memory politics in education V3b: Clip from Oxford Union debate on Rhodes Must Fall (first 23 minutes)</p> <p>Read: R3a: Burns, ‘The Jewel in the Curriculum’ R3b: Johnson, ‘Decolonising the history curriculum in the Anglophone Caribbean’</p> <p>OA: OA3: Write group essay (based on last year’s exam question). You will get feedback on the essay in the seminar.</p>	<p>What does ‘curriculum’ mean?</p> <p>Why are debates over curricula so contentious? What do these debates have to do with memory and empire? What does it mean to decolonise the curriculum? How was a revision of school curricula related to nationalist politics in the Caribbean during the 20th century?</p> <p>How are the #RhodesMustFall movements in South Africa and Oxford related? What does it tell us about memory politics after empire that the same movement can be taken up in these different countries? What arguments are made for and against taking down the Rhodes statue in Oxford in the Oxford Union Debate? Can you apply any of the concepts for understanding contested memory to this debate?</p> <p>Think about your own curricula for this course and other courses. Do they need to be ‘decolonised’? How would such a decolonisation look?</p>
<p>Week 4 (37)</p>	<p>Politics of regret</p> <p>Watch: V4a: Politics of regret V4b: Rudd’s apology V4c: Phil Fontaine’s reception of apology</p> <p>Read: R4a: MacLachlan, ‘The State of “Sorry”’: Official Apologies and their Absence’ R4b: Celemajer, ‘Australia’s Divided History’</p> <p>OA: OA4: write individual (short) essay responding to exam-like question (based on last year’s exam question). Bring the essay</p>	<p>Why is giving an apology controversial?</p> <p>What ramifications does an apology have? What functions does an apology serve? Who is the entity that apologises? Is it meaningful to apologise for wrongs that one has not personally committed? Why might people want an apology? What examples of apologies does MacLachlan mention from parts of the former British Empire?</p> <p>How has the question of the treatment of indigenous people been caught up with debates about Australian national identity? What is the relationship between indigenous and majority populations in Australia and Canada in</p>

	<p>with you to the seminar. You will be giving each other feedback in class.</p>	<p>the case of the apologies? What is the relationship between the past and the future in Rudd and Fontaine's speeches? Consider whether there is a parallel to be made with Norway and the Sami population. Is there a need for an apology?</p>
<p>Week 5 (38)</p>	<p>Memory in the public space Watch: V5a: Memory in the public space V5b: Toyin Agbetu protest against Queen and Blair V5c: "Uncomfortable art" tours show the dark side of Britain's museums'</p> <p>Read: R5a: Vervaecke, "Wilberfest" No More? The Memory of Slavery and Anti-Slavery in Britain 1833-2007.' R5b: Cummins. 'Caribbean Museums and National Identity'.</p> <p>OA: OA5: in your groups, find an example of memory in the public space. It does not need to be related to slavery. Make a poster (A3) together where you discuss it using concepts from the course. Print it before the seminar and upload the file in Blackboard before 18 September at 14. You will present the poster in class. All members of the group should be able to present the poster.</p>	<p>In what areas of public space (museums, memorials, films...) have slavery and abolition been commemorated in Britain? What kind of memory media are these? What sort of attention, resources and space have been devoted to slavery and abolition respectively? What different stages has the memory of slavery and abolition gone through in Britain? What has caused the changes? How was the bicentenary of the abolition of slavery commemorated? Why were there protests about the official commemorations? How did Caribbean museums refashion themselves after decolonisation? What is the relationship between national identity and museums?</p>
<p>Week 6 (39)</p>	<p>Nostalgia and popular culture Watch: <i>Victoria and Abdul</i>. Film screening instead of lecture (same time and place). There will be a sweet snack :-)</p> <p>Read: R6a: Rushdie, 'Outside the Whale' R6b: Hans, 'Victoria and Abdul Review' R6c: Bandyopadhyay, "Raj Revival" Tourism'</p> <p>OA: No OA</p> <p>No regular lecture Note: shared seminar on Wednesday at 14.15-16 in room D156 (no Thursday seminar)</p>	<p>How is the imperial past remembered in <i>Victoria and Abdul</i>? How is Victoria represented? What about Abdul? How does Rushdie describe 'the Raj revival'? Is the film a case of Raj revival? Is it nostalgic for empire? Is there any criticism of the imperial record in the film? How is it voiced? How does Hans review the film? According to Bandyopadhyay, how can tourism be a nostalgic practice? What do the interviewed Britons say about visiting India? What is the relationship between British national identity and tourism to India?</p>

Week 7 (40)	<p>Concluding lecture Lecture only</p> <p>Read up on entire course Come prepared with questions about themes, concepts or events that are unclear</p> <p>OA: No OA</p> <p>No seminar</p>	What are the take home messages of the course? What are the most important concepts from memory studies? How can they be applied to the post-imperial contexts we have studied?
Week 8 (41)	Exam	

Bibliography

Course textbook:

Erll, Astrid. *Memory in Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

Other readings (available on Blackboard):

Assmann, Aleida. 'Memories of Post-Imperial Nations', in *Memories of Post-Imperial Nations: The Aftermath of Decolonization, 1945-2013*, ed. Dietmar Rothermund (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 171–80.

Bandyopadhyay, Ranjan. "'Raj Revival' Tourism: Consuming Imperial/Colonial Nostalgia'. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 39 (2012), 1718-1722.

Buettner, Elizabeth. *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

Celemajer, Danielle. 'Australia's Divided History' in Danielle Celermajer, *The Sins of the Nation and the Ritual of Apologies* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Cummins, Alissandra. 'Caribbean Museums and National Identity', *History Workshop Journal*. 58. 2004. 224–45.

Burns, A.D. 'The Jewel in the Curriculum: Teaching the History of the British Empire'. *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research*. 2014. 12:2. 109-121.

Clarke, Austin. *Growing Up Stupid Under the Union Jack, a Memoir* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980). To be read in class.

Hans, Simran. 'Victoria and Abdul Review – Rather Fun in a Royalist Way', *The Observer*, 17 September 2017, <http://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/sep/17/victoria-and-abdul-review-rather-fun-in-a-royalist-way>

Johnson, Howard. 'Decolonising the history curriculum in the Anglophone Caribbean'. *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*. 2002. 30:1. 27-60.

Kennedy, Dane. *Decolonization: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

MacLachlan, 'The State of "Sorry": Official Apologies and their Absence', *Journal of Human Rights*. 9:3. 2010. 373-385.

Rushdie, Salman Rushdie, 'Outside the Whale', in *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991* (London: Granta Books, 1991), 87–101.

Vervaecke, Philippe. "'Wilberfest' No More? The Memory of Slavery and Anti-Slavery in Britain 1833-2007." *Crafting Identities, Remapping Nationalities: The English-Speaking World in the Age of Globalization*, edited by Trevor Harris and Cécile Coquet-Mokoko, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011, pp. 1–18.

Websites:

Caricom reparations: <http://caricomreparations.org/caricom/caricoms-10-point-reparation-plan/>. To be read in class.

Film:

Clip from Oxford Union debate on Rhodes Must Fall:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y3aBDBdDIgU>

Kevin Rudd's Apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples (2008):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RThkO3XBThs>

Phil Fontaine's reception of apology: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyXjnGeBDNY>

Toyin Agbetu protest against Queen and Blair: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0qWkRrABXQ>

'"Uncomfortable art" tours show the dark side of Britain's museums':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iiBxoZrAxNw>

Victoria and Abdul. 2017. Directed by Stephen Frears.

Further readings (not required):

The rest of Erll, *Memory in Culture*

Akala's Full Address at the Oxford Union on the teaching of black history:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUtAxUQjwB4>

Buettner, Elizabeth. 'Cemeteries, Public Memory and Raj Nostalgia in Postcolonial Britain and India.' *History & Memory*. 18:1. 2006. 5-42.

Grindel, Susanne. 'The End of Empire: Colonial Heritage and the Politics of Memory in Britain'. *Journal of Educational Media, Memory, and Society*. 5:1. 2013. 33-49.

Kennedy, Dane. 'The Imperial History Wars'. *Journal of British Studies*. 54. 2015. 5-22.