

# Stimulating change through quality assurance

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**The Norwegian University and College Act states (§1-6, our translation) that:**

*”Universities and colleges shall have a satisfactory internal system for quality assurance. The system for quality assurance shall include student evaluations.”*

# University and College Act of January 2003 (our translation):

*”§ 2-1. Requirement for a quality assurance system*

*(1) Universities and colleges shall have a system for their quality assurance work that ensures continual improvement, provides satisfactory documentation of the work and reveals unsatisfactory quality.*

*(2) The quality assurance system shall encompass all processes of significance for educational quality, from information to potential applicants to termination of the studies. The routines for student evaluation of the instruction, self-evaluation and followup of evaluations, documentation of the institution’s work with the learning environment as well as routines for quality assurance of new programmes offers, shall be included.”*

# Trenger flere studenter på skogfag



**ÅS:** Søkningen til skogfaget på Universitetet for miljø- og biovitenskap er for dårlig. I år er det bare fem som går første år på bachelor-graden, og tendensen er bekymringsfull. Men på instituttet sitter man ikke med hendene i fanget. En bred og langvarig kampanje er satt i gang for å sikre rekruttering til studiet, og næringen selv deltar.

Av Inge Jahren

Instituttleder Hans Fredrik Hoen.

**I**nstituttleder Hans Fredrik Hoen orienterte om studentsituasjonen på skogfaget på Institutt for naturforvaltning under Mulighetskonferansen på Sundvolden i vinter.

Da var rekrutteringskampanjen i full gang og går i første omgang til søknadsfristen for kommende studieår er ute 15. april. Det er utarbeidet forskjellig slags informasjonsmateriale, deriblant en multimediapresentasjon, og det er avlagt en rekke besøk på videregående skoler rundt om for å friste

skullene på mellom 50 og 65 studenter. Det var for mange i et vanskelig arbeidsmarked. På 2000-tallet sank det til det halve og altså langt under det.

- Vi gjør undersøkelser hvert år av hvordan det går med studentene våre og jobb etterpå, og det bildet er ganske bra. Stort sett kommer alle inn i relevante stillinger, iallfall etter en stund. Nå er det også lysere tider i skognæringen igjen og satsing på nye felter som bioenergi. Alt tyder på gode karrieremuligheter for dem som vil gå inn for

legg til instituttet selv: skogbruket, skogindustrien, Trefokus, LMD, Naturviterforbundet, Skog og landskap. Utviklingsfondet for skogbruket yter en oppstartsfinansiering på 500 000 kr.

For Skogeierforbundet er styreleder Helge Evju kontaktperson og meget engasjert i saken. Han sier i en kommentar:

- Det vi ser nå, er altfor små studentkull, og det er bekymringsfullt. Det er åpenbart at vi trenger god kompetanse i alle ledd i verdikjeden i årene som kommer. Mange kommer til å slut

## Mechanisms for quality assurance of the study programmes at UMB:

- 1) study regulations that are revised periodically
- 2) criteria for specification and approval of all courses and programmes
- 3) student evaluation of courses in all subjects (since 2002) and
- 4) periodic external evaluation of all study programmes by international panels of experts (since 2003).

# How do the academic departments follow up course evaluations?

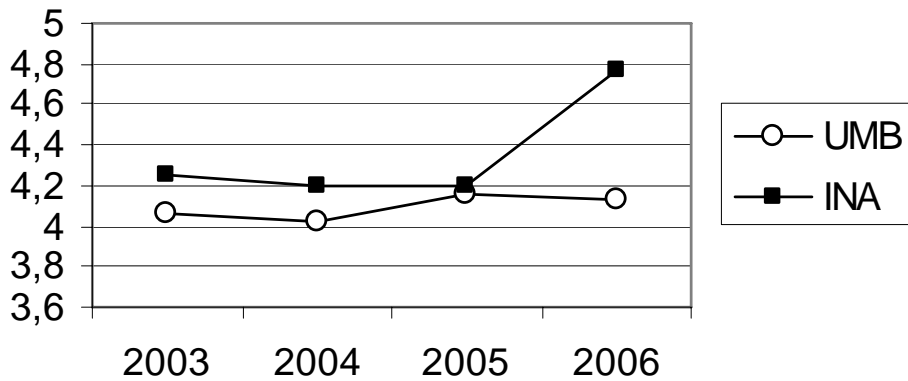
## The example of INA

- Require teachers to comment on the evaluation, suggest changes and discuss improvement
- Department-wide pedagogical development effort
- Prizes
- Revise course content and teaching methods
- Build competence through courses, cooperation
- Change teaching assignments
- Remove teacher from teaching a course
- Assign other non-teaching tasks

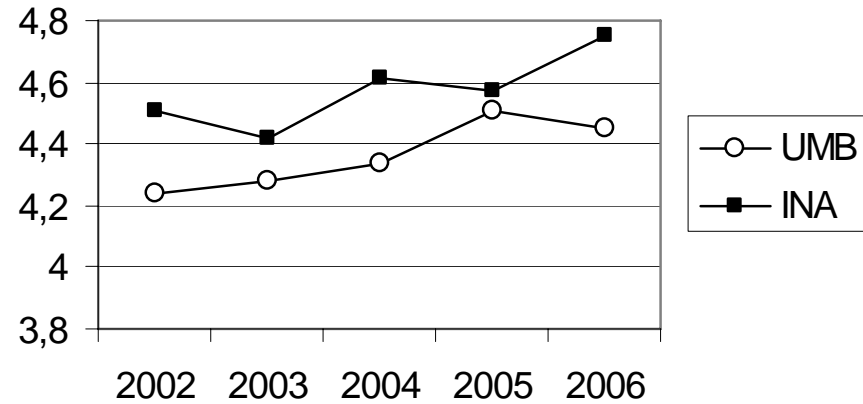
Student course evaluations from 2002-2006  
show improved student satisfaction

- ❖ UMB as a whole
- ❖ Department of Ecology and Natural  
Resource Management (INA)

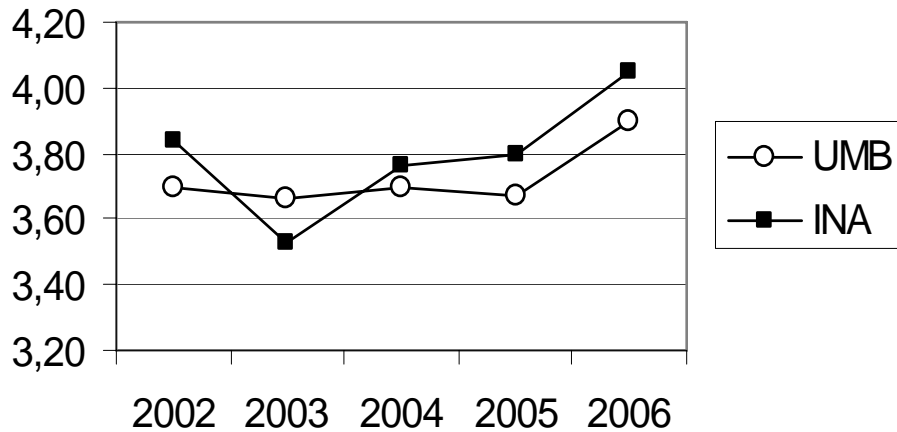
### How much did you learn from the lectures?



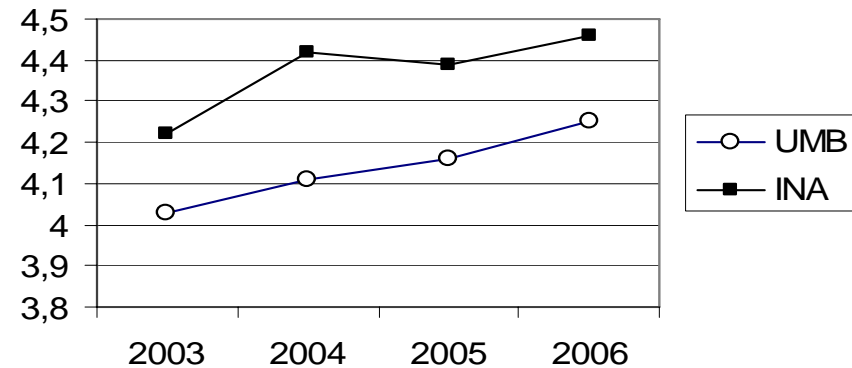
### All in all, I think the teaching by the main teacher is good



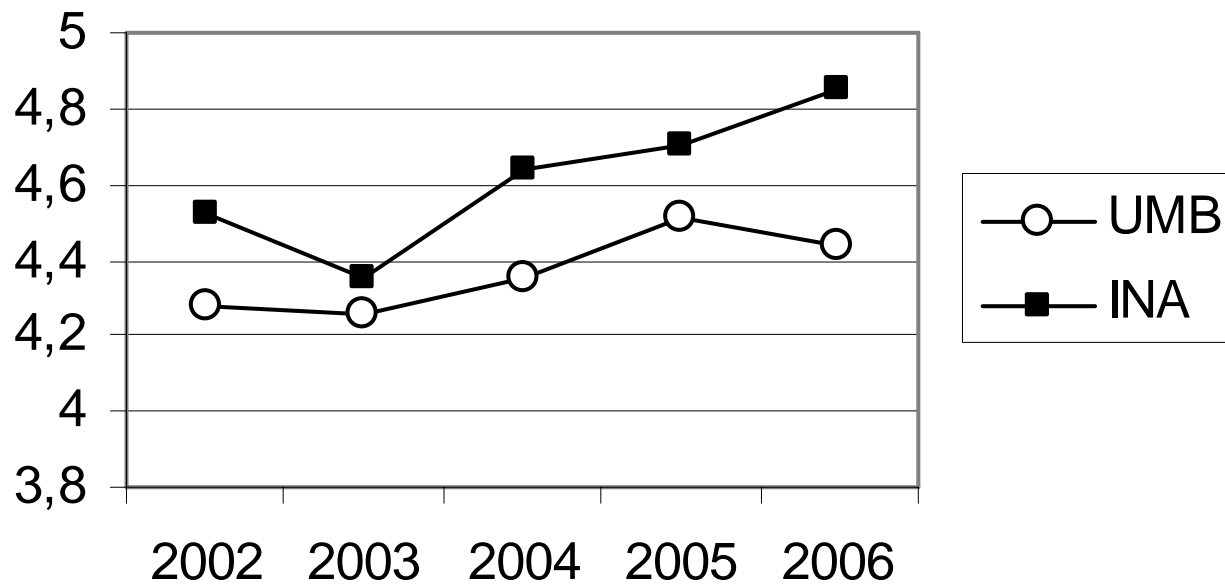
### The course literature is good



### I am satisfied with the way the course material is illustrated using practical or applied examples



## All in all, I think the course is good



# External programme evaluations in INA

## Major comments by the expert panel

- Programmes (especially at the master level) lacked a coherent core of required courses and content defining the programme
- Learning outcomes (or goals for the competence to be developed and demonstrated by students in the programmes) were far from being sufficiently clear
- Develop more clarity of mission in society: offerings should be constructed to “work proudly on a niche important for society” rather than focusing on adapting or responding to current student trends and preferences.

# INA's response to the evaluation

Preliminary committee work on central issues

1-2 years of followup seminars, workshops, coursing.  
teacher work and committee work

Goal was to review and revise each programme and the courses, *to define the learning outcomes more clearly and ensure that the programme in fact leads to these outcomes*

- Establish programme committees
- Develop new programme learning outcomes
- Build staff competence on learning outcomes
- Increase required core coursework
- Examine and improve the fit of learning goals of each course with those of programme as a whole



New competence goals (learning outcomes) - Bachelor of Forestry

*“A bachelor degree holder in Forestry shall have broad knowledge of forest nature and be capable of working with interdisciplinary issues related to forest management. Forest management is about finding a sustainable balance between economic, environmental and social considerations.*

*The graduate will understand various kinds of forest treatment and plan processes related to this. The graduate will also be familiar with all elements of the value chain from the forest ecosystem to wood and paper products, biological diversity and recreation. Based on a solid foundation of knowledge in the sciences and familiarity with various social sciences related to management of forest area, the graduate should therefore be able to apply knowledge from fields such as resource inventory, forest ecology, forest management, economics, wood technology and forestry techniques for various kinds of analytical purposes.*

*The degree holder will be able to solve operative tasks related to management of forest area and forest resources. He or she must therefore understand the necessity of cooperation across disciplines and be able to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.”*

New competence goals (learning outcomes) - Master of Forestry

*“A master degree holder in Forestry shall have knowledge in both breadth and depth about forest nature and be capable of working with interdisciplinary issues related to forest management. Forest management is about finding a sustainable balance between economic, environmental and social considerations.*

*The graduate will be capable of evaluating various kinds of forest treatments and plan processes related to this. This means that the graduate must have the ability to analyze and synthesize knowledge from fields such as forest ecology, forest management, resource inventory, economics, wood technology and multiple forest use.*

*The degree holder will be able to plan and lead both operative and strategic activities related to use and management of forest areas and forest resources. He or she must therefore be able to fully utilize tools of communication, cooperation and conflict resolution across disciplines.”*

## QA routines and evaluations:

- Create a formal structure for following up poor evaluations with improvement work
- Create a formal structure for contact and dialog about educational quality
  - with current and former students
  - with expert colleagues
  - with employers and interest groups

WHAT ARE WE REALLY DOING  
WITH QUALITY ASSURANCE???

*Creating arenas for quality  
improvement*

søknadsfrist.

Det er mange instanser involvert i til-

for å sikre næringen de fagkreftene vi trenger på lang sikt. ■



Før elevmøtet på Ås 23. mars. F.v. Håvard Dufseth, stud.bach., Dag Okkenhaug Bævre, stud.bach., Leif Magne Vangen, Sverre Lundebj Krekvik og Johan Gaarder Tøraasen, solør vg. skole, og studieveileder Christina Qvam Heggertveit, inst. for naturforvaltning.

# Arenas

## for quality improvement dialog: Course evaluations

- the individual teacher
- student government and students
- the personnel department
- the departmental teaching committee
- the university and department leadership
- the university board

# Arenas

## for quality improvement dialog: Programme evaluations

- Discussions with the external evaluation committee
- Student panels
- Employer/interest panels or committees
- Interdepartmental cooperation
- Departmental teaching committee and programme committees
- Individual teachers or groups of teachers, as part of a programme
- The university and department leadership
- The university board

<b><i>"Control" mind frame</i></b>	<b><i>"Improvement" mind frame</i></b>
<b>Information</b>	<b>Understanding, insight</b>
<b>Formalization of quality assurance requirements</b>	<b>Legitimacy to use resources</b>
<b>Routines and procedures</b>	<b>Creation of arenas for critical review and discussion with stakeholders</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>Expectations for quality</b>
<b>Breach of quality</b>	<b>Area needing improvement</b>
<b>Follow-up work</b>	<b>Solution-seeking, identification of paths forward</b>
<b>Compliance with the routine</b>	<b>Commitment and motivation for change and improvement</b>

# Quality culture

**Quality culture: The continual and endless effort to become better and more competitive, with participation of all interest groups”**

(European Forum for Quality Assurance Nov. 2006)

Experiences and results at UMB show  
”control” and ”development” can be combined  
in each QA procedure, developing an  
institutional quality culture