

Bonni: [00:00:00] Teresa Sörö provides ideas on how we can keep Evergreen as professors and educators on episode 143 of the Teaching in Higher Ed podcast.

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Bonni: [00:00:22] Welcome to this episode of Teaching in Higher Ed. I'm Bonnie Stachowiak and this is the space where we explore the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. We also share ways to increase our productivity so we can have more peace in our lives and be even more present for our students.

Bonni: [00:00:51] I'm really excited to be welcoming to the show today Teresa Sörö she's been employed at Case Medical Center since 2012 and she is responsible for the Department of Medicines training activities. She has experience implementing different kinds of case methodology in the courses since she joined in 2007 and she's developed and managed the specialist training in intensive care at Red Cross College with case methodology and pedagogical pillars. She's also in recent years been pedagogically responsible for introducing university studies and interactive learning for new students in the nursing program. For more about her you can go to the show notes and look at the profile all the way down at the bottom and that's at teachinginhighered.com/143. Teresa, welcome to Teaching in Higher Ed.

Teresa: [00:01:50] Thank you.

Bonni: [00:01:51] I'm so glad you're here. And one of the things I knew I would stumble over a little bit is the pronunciation of your name. And I just wonder if you would pronounce it for us so we make sure that the audience gets to hear it correctly.

Teresa: [00:02:02] So I'm very used to having you pronounce the English way. But the Swedish way or Norwegian that is Sörö.

Bonni: [00:02:10] Sörö. Is there kind of a roll of the tongue.

Teresa: [00:02:13] Yeah it is. Yes.

Bonni: [00:02:15] Oh wonderful. Well I know that you have been listening to the show for a while and you were asking me how I first heard of you and I thought it was Twitter and I'm excited because today we're going to talk a little bit about how we stay evergreen in our own teaching and I know that Twitter is going to be a part of that. But before we get to that could you talk a little bit about how you got into higher ed and a little bit about your career journey.

Teresa: [00:02:38] So I have a background in nursing and I have been in the ICU intensive care unit nurse in Pensacola for a long while. But in that it was kind of strange for me to always kind of rank deducing a little bit. And how can we be better in our job and the professionals.

Teresa: [00:03:01] When I started teaching and a lot of professionals in health care education or get mission critical and we educate clinically all the time. So for me from clinically to it and doing it in that program or academic life that wasn't really big it was. I mean you need a muscle degree and I thought that man was rolling in his.

Teresa: [00:03:31] So my first educational (big educational) thing I did was I was able to design a curriculum for a critical care nursing program and that was a bit tricky but I have good colleagues with me and I became very curious in the pedagogic behind it because we started with very active learning strategy and in it. Yeah. That was how it started. I was doing it at Red Cross universal college in Stockholm and it was very close to the clinic I had been working with war and so on.

Teresa: [00:04:11] So we kind of rolled on from that, you could say...

Bonni: [00:04:14] It's very rare that I hear someone talk about their first class that they ever developed was one that involved active learning. Usually we start by making the mistake of thinking that our role is to pour our knowledge into someone else. And so. And it sounded like maybe you had a mentor in that or that was something that came intuitively to you.

Teresa: [00:04:33] Well by all means I had good colleagues with me and I think being used to working in UCI then you're used to work in teams. That for me it

was very good to have the faculty with me in developing the program. So I was by no means the one that was pedagogy the heavy part in the beginning but my colleague was she was she was very driven in that and she had a view of active learning in case-based learning in it. So we teamed up well and I learned a lot.

Bonni: [00:05:13] That's wonderful. So great when you have the ability to collaborate like that. Were there times where you felt early on in your teaching that you wished for even more of a connection and perhaps is that what then drove you toward things like Twitter and other opportunities to connect.

Teresa: [00:05:31] Yeah I think so. When you when you've been working for a while I did that program for four almost I think I did it five years and then after awhile when you want to learn new things and stay current and I had been to Boston to Harvard Business school and Harvard Business Institute and that more and you have new questions in your head and you your organization within that you work in and maybe you're the only one that had those questions within your little silo. But you're definitely not alone in the world with those questions. That is a very good way to reach out and get inspired and learn more I would say.

Bonni: [00:06:16] We had a really good Twitter conversation the other day because a couple of times a year I teach in a doctoral program to educators. And one of the parts of the classes for many of them starting to blog for the first time and for many of them starting to use Twitter for the first time and one of the women in the program she really wrote such a delightful blog and she really has a gift at that sort of thing and she hadn't made it private.

Bonni: [00:06:46] And we talked a little bit about why that was and she had started to get weird messages and that wasn't anything that would be cyber bullying. It wasn't anything that extreme but of course it's our first time putting herself out there. And as if this is a very attractive woman and so that was part of it was inappropriate comments like "Oh will you leave your boyfriend to come see me" or something like that. And so it was great because some of the people who are on Twitter they're so respectful of yes we need to keep ourselves safe online and I got a couple of resources that I'll be sharing. You know in a blog post at some point in the future but ways we can help keep ourselves safe.

Bonni: [00:07:27] But I always feel a little bit sad I guess when and by the way this young woman does plan on starting to blog and to learn more about how to keep yourself safe. I think the story is probably going to have a happy ending

but when you think about yeah what you're describing when you think about what's possible. I mean it's really staggering to think about we can have connections with people all over the world who we possibly have more in common with then or at least the same kinds of questions like you were saying them people who are right next door to us down the hall.

Teresa: [00:07:57] Yes and I think I think sometimes we're too afraid. I think you had a great pod with I can't remember who now. But about Twitter about how we get those people that are right and what they are. And so I actually tried out and most of them hear those examples that are very horrifying and they say wait but I think that's a bit sad because I think there's so much good in it that to me yes that is. I would like more of my colleagues where I work at the Red Cross or the Medical Case Institute. I would I would love for more effective development within Twitter and because I think you know we can then work together.

Bonni: [00:08:43] Tell us about the chat that you lead on Twitter and what that's done for you and what it could possibly do for others.

Teresa: [00:08:51] I have been fortunate enough to go to Boston and the Harvard Macy Institute a couple of times and taking courses and I'm I'm also practically one of the courses. But as a participant a year ago me and two of my colleagues Alyssa Hall and Justin ? that we kind of started this monthly chat with the topics that are relevant for their Lumley's and we are trying to to make it a little bit more than just sharing articles. And we would like to foster not foster our colleagues but in a way to try out and stay evergreen and stay active and learn from each other because it is it is a way like I have can I agree to work on my own but they always get better if I bounce them a couple time with others.

Teresa: [00:09:51] And we need to do that and we need to do that regularly.

Bonni: [00:09:55] Just in case anyone has never participated in a Twitter chat before. How would I even know that one was. What does one look like what how do I know something is a chat and how how would I check myself out. What are some of the signs or the tools that you used in this chat process.

Teresa: [00:10:11] So I'm no expert. I would say that. And I'm talking about it big but it's that I think we have developed a community within it. I think we are getting there slowly. In a Twitter chat you have a hash tag that you follow. So you're not, you don't need to follow a lot of people. Just look at the hash tag search as that. And then you on a certain time you go online and someone is

welcoming you and having those announced questions or are and all the kind of netiquette and how to respond and so on.

Bonni: [00:10:57] So I've gone up on Twitter right now I'm laughing because my search results produced nothing but it's because that wasn't Twitter. It's a case of having too many windows open on my computer right now. So if I go to hash tag which would be the number sign #HMI chat I'll see the default is the top tweets that have come out under this chat. But I could also click on latest and then click on people and see the kinds of people. But as of this recording there's not one going on right now but I can still take a peek at past conversations.

Bonni: [00:11:31] But if I wanted to participate in one live I would then need to know when that was actually going to happen. And that kind of thing and there's just wonderful when you can be live and have a chance to do that. For people who are newer to Twitter you can just type right in the search box. But there's also tools like Tweetdeck and there's Hootsuite as another one that I know of where you can have it sort of doing the searching and the showing of it to you and if I'm going to heaven I don't participate in too many Twitter chats but occasionally I'll go to the actual a desktop client that will let me see things a little better if it's one I really want to pay close close attention to.

Teresa: [00:12:10] Yes and that's that more common than Twitter chat is. That is a certain time and a certain duration. I'm also when we do because we have a mobile community. We have it open for 24 hours and then we have two live discussions that goes on to kind of capture some of the times. I know we haven't really we didn't know Australia's a bit difficult but they are doing the first one. It's OK but it is difficult to get get it. But I can see that we are getting activity during the full 24 hours and which is good because also when the live discussion is on it could be a little bit messy if you're not used to it following the threads. And it's easier to go back and oh that was a common [question]. If I were to linger a little bit more and maybe think about it and ponder what will I answer. I have I have the time to do it.

Bonni: [00:13:18] Yeah that's the nice thing it sounds like you're accommodating a much more global audience for your chats which is wonderful because it sounds like there are a lot of the alumni that come from the Harvard Macy Institute are coming from all over the world.

Teresa: [00:13:31] They are.

Bonni: [00:13:31] Yeah that's wonderful. Talk a little bit. I know another thing you were introduced to along the way in your career is using cases in your studies. Could you share a little bit about that and how that keeps you stay stay at Evergreen with your teaching.

Teresa: [00:13:45] There is a link between them because when it comes to Twitter chats, I have an allergic reaction when when when someone just put out links to things and doesn't really say something about them or just say oh this is a great article and for me that sadly is kind off a and this is very personal. I know that there are many people that are appreciating this.

Teresa: [00:14:14] I would like to know why would you think it's a great article. It's like when when they're in a discussion in the classroom I would assume that as an educator you allow or students say that well I read this and this well and then what? You need to kind of fill it a little bit more of yourself in it or your interpretation of it.

Teresa: [00:14:41] The I think my my approach to Twitter chat and how we moderate the Twitter chat is the way we I'm used to facilitate a case based session. I have linked those too and get a more fuller discussion and maybe also a deeper learning in it for the participant.

Bonni: [00:15:06] Did you use cases right away in your teaching. Or is that something that you came across at in a little bit further down the road.

Teresa: [00:15:16] So when I start a full time as an educator with that critical care nursing program I was talking about... We integrated into and we actually started that case based learning then. Now when I kind of look in the rear mirror I see that well we called it case based learning. It might not have fulfilled all of the elements of it but I think we did we did as good as we could at the time and I think we achieved the kind of discussion that we were aiming for and what we aim for in case is stunning is that given a complex situation with a certain context and the students are kind of getting curious then they get to read a lot about it. So instead of studying laws if you're in law school or studying physiology and pharmacology only in silence as you do in medical school and you kind of apply things.

Teresa: [00:16:20] So in law school you practice you of you're studying the practice of law instead of just the law. And now in a medical school you started that application of medicine or nursing my my case. It is a way of getting through the noise as disputant because that is what real life looks like and figure

out what is important. And in the facilitated discussion you need to not only look at the facts and get the facts right. And you need to analyze it a lot and motivate your actions some kind of see the consequences in doing it. And this you do with peers. And again no brain is very smart. You need those other perspectives.

Teresa: [00:17:12] You might have gone into the session and think well I have it all figured out when you go back you should be book. Well I thought I got it figured out. But now I got to figure out like oh this much.

Bonni: [00:17:27] What are some of the common mistakes that people make when they are first trying to develop their own ability to facilitate cases.

Teresa: [00:17:37] I think is it is the educator role that it's a bit tricky because then you go from being the expert to being the one facilitate learning and you're not the one that are going to get the answers right. That is the students.

Teresa: [00:17:56] So it's that you are facilitating the discussion but you're not answering a lot of questions because they are figuring out themselves but also the big cases are not supposed to be the right or wrong answers in that it is the tricky ones, the complex ones. The goal of the discussion is not to come to consensus or come to a conclusion well this is that. The goal of a discussion is to kind of paint the picture. It could be this but it could also be this. But if it is like this the other thing. Well we should consider this and that as well.

Teresa: [00:18:38] And so it kind of paints a fuller picture. And being able to do that the thought is that you're also able to apply in a different context afterwards. That is the tricky part when you or you learn something that you could do it in one context but to transfer it to another context that is really hard. And we need to we need to push a little bit backwards. OK. How would that this look in another context and that comes to us as well as etiquette as we go back to the Twitter chat. OK we have discussed this. So how would that apply in your own context or another context because we need to try to try our mind in that way those kind of road pathways and to be able to do that transfer more easily.

Bonni: [00:19:43] You were reminding me the other day I had a conversation it wasn't it was a asynchronous conversation but back and forth with one of the doctoral students who had they had just written their first research paper paper for my course not for the program but for my course. And some of them are still struggling a little bit with not using the databases as much as they should in their academic writing.

Bonni: [00:20:04] And I was giving them the feedback that those are going to be a gold mine for you in getting you know better at searching and using some boolean logic and things like that in their own academic research. She wrote a paper that was brilliant and both followed the rules but also broke them. So I'll give you an example she wrote her paper on on fake news on digital literacy. And so she cited the Huffington Post and you would normally say in an academic paper you should never cite the Huffington Post I'm sorry Arianna Huffington but it's not going to cut it right? But in her particular paper that was exactly right.

Bonni: [00:20:45] But it's so hard as you're describing this to say you know these are rules. But then once you know the rules it's like becoming an artist you know once you know the rules for art and design then you break them and you become you know world famous. You did that. But it's very hard. It's hard to explain and I don't know about you but it certainly in the courses that I teach. You're teaching such a broad level of experience and skills and prior knowledge. It's really a it's an exhilarating challenge but certainly a challenge nonetheless.

Teresa: [00:21:18] Yes. And I love the way that you wrote. Breaking the rules. I think it's important to be able to allow a little bit more room for for not only mistakes but also kind of creativity and they try things because we don't need to control everything.

Bonni: [00:21:40] Yes.

Teresa: [00:21:41] We need to let go of control because it's their learning. It's not me teaching them that's the most important thing. It's them learning. I think. Yeah. If they if they go on a path you've never seen one go that could be an interesting path. And and don't don't make good on the main road. Yes. There's a lot of people on the main road, we don't need more people there.

Bonni: [00:22:06] Yeah I love that. I love it when I occasionally am doing what's called retrieval practice and that's a multiple choice question. And so they'll they'll answer it and I have the answers hidden how people how other people are answering so they don't get swayed by what other people say and then I'll sometimes then unhide the answers and say well what do you think. Who's right.

Bonni: [00:22:30] And I always love when they can explain why one of the answers that wasn't the intended answer was correct in their mind because I

think that's the deepest learning of all. But I mean understandably though they are going to be asked to take tests on the information so it's not I don't want to pretend that that I have to I can just leave them there and say well no that you know I guess every answer is right. Sometimes it's not. But I do think that's so helpful for their learning to go through that path that maybe even the wrong answer but there's some really interesting clues along the way that well actually when they get to what the right answer is make them understand that way more than if they hadn't been going on that little side path in the first place.

Teresa: [00:23:17] Yes. And the suddenly in health professional education and a medical education we are we are in this new century and the facts are changing so we can't really rely on on on what we learned in school because then we're not relevant. And when patients say they are not that's not good if we are relying on them in school, so that is not the competence that we need to educate our students.

Teresa: [00:23:52] And of course they need to know the facts but they need to kind of know how to check the facts and how to interpret and apply the facts. But it's that it is a very challenging time and it becomes I think I see that curriculum is kind of having that content overload we keep on pushing things in the curricula with content and maybe we should take a step back as the Lancet Commission had a report just a couple of years ago saying that well we need to have change agents we need to have health professionals that are able to evolve with the society.

Bonni: [00:24:40] What are some other ways that you keep your own learning Evergreen or that you advise others to do the same.

Teresa: [00:24:48] Oh I think this is going to it's sound like I'm flattering you, but I'm I'm a podcast listener and I truly am and I like to listen to and that maybe it's because I don't typically find the time to read log books with the family situation right now. But I like to listen to people and I like to listen to people that discuss things because it kind of triggered my thoughts as well.

Teresa: [00:25:22] But then after that I need to discuss with some peers. So I love to start with the forecast for an article or something about I would like to meet my peers and discuss amongst those. I have some in Karolinska Institute and I have some at the Red Cross University Hospital. But the main part I haven't whether it is a way to kind of hmm what do you think about this? And then you can take it from there.

Bonni: [00:25:58] I always find myself after the conversations with people such as yourself wanting to then have the conversation about the conversation. But sometimes we record three or four weeks earlier so I'm also going to talk to. Them but it's so fun to get to talk to people like such as yourself. That's wonderful.

Bonni: [00:26:17] Well this is the point in the show where we each get to give some recommendations and I have a piece of music I wanted to recommend my dad actually sent it over to me and just this wonderful musician Kristin Chenoweth. And this is a new album that she just put out called The Art of Elegance and I'm just going to play a little bit of "Let's Fall in Love"

Kritin : [00:27:12] *Let's Fall in Love .

Bonni: [00:27:13] It's so hard for me to turn her off. She's so good.

Teresa: [00:27:18] That's lovely.

Bonni: [00:27:18] Oh she's got so many good songs on this one Bewitched, Bothered and Bewildered, Zing went the Strings of my Heart, The Very Thought of You, They Can't Take That Away from Me, And A House is Not a Home and a bunch others. It's really a great album. And she just has such a great it's both a classic take. You know she doesn't go too far in terms of changing. I think the original composer and songwriters intent. But I mean it's just her own her own way of doing it is just a wonderful album I highly suggest people listen. What do you have to recommend today?

Teresa: [00:27:53] I'm not going to recommend a thing. Per say, I'm going to recommend that process or something. And that is to co-create. And there is a lot of tools to be able to co-create when your students or with your learners. You use Google Docs or you can use Padlet and so on. I think we can add something in the show notes.

Teresa: [00:28:20] But to be able to co-create with people is... It's very enriching and I've learned a lot and I have had so much fun doing it also. And I think having fun in learning is something that we should have more or more of.

Bonni: [00:28:41] Can you tell me about a time when you co-created something with your students just so we can have a sense of what this looks like in your own classroom.

Teresa: [00:28:48] So I was about to do a submission of a paper together with a colleague, two colleagues of mine, and I was in the time, I was in Vancouver at a meeting. And my colleague she was in Rochester, Alyssa. And so we kind of edited the same document. And this was in the beginning of the process when you are kind of creating a lot of kind of figuring out how and what to put and that and being a bit you know brainstorming but in a way that you're getting ideas in it.

Teresa: [00:29:33] And then I could see her "blip" and then our other colleague Justin come in I could see his "blip" when he was writing at the same time as I was doing it. Being able to see what they were doing. And I'm doing it at the same time. We certainly got ideas from each other and it just could build on each other very well. That was a really fun way of starting out the paper.

Bonni: [00:29:58] It's great. How many of these tools are just increasing the abilities we have to collaborate something so small it's is not truly what you're talking about but it's a related one to what you're talking about. I posted a file as a part of the show notes from last week's episode and it's in Dropbox and as many people might know now. Dropbox allows you to comment on files and I think I can turn this off but I didn't even think about it.

Bonni: [00:30:26] So I heard from one of the listeners saying oh this is such a great idea. She's accessing the PTF from last week's episode. Oh this is a great idea to try and my classroom and I thought you know here's just one other way of collaborating that we don't normally do. And they're just offering more and more opportunities for that back and forth conversation even with something I didn't intend on Venus back and forth which was just posting a shared link to a PDF file it's really fun how they're just thinking that and building it into their own ways of delivering their software.

Bonni: [00:30:59] Well I just so appreciate you joining me. And to have this conversation today I know it's very late for you as we're recording so I appreciate your coming on to join this conversation that's absolutely been delightful to get to talk to you and we're actually face to face on Skype. It's great.

Teresa: [00:31:14] Yeah. Thank you for having me. I'm really honored, thanks Bonni.

Bonni: [00:31:19] Thanks thanks so much again to Teresa for being on today's Teaching in Higher Ed episode. And thanks to all of you for listening and I really

appreciate getting to see this community growing and I really appreciate those of you who have written a review recently for the show up on iTunes it's so great to get other people discovering the show that way and that's one of the ways the algorithm uses to bump it up in it's ranking and let this community continue to grow.

Bonni: [00:31:46] And if you have yet to subscribe to the weekly e-mail you send out an e-mail with all the showboats the links to the things that I talk about today as well as future episodes. It's a single e-mail a week and if you want to come into your inbox you can go to teachinginhighered.com/subscribe.

Bonni: [00:32:03] And in addition on that same email there's an article about either teaching or productivity each week. Thanks so much for listening and I'll see you next time. As always if you have ideas about the show get in touch with me at teachinginhighered.com/feedback. See you next time.

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