

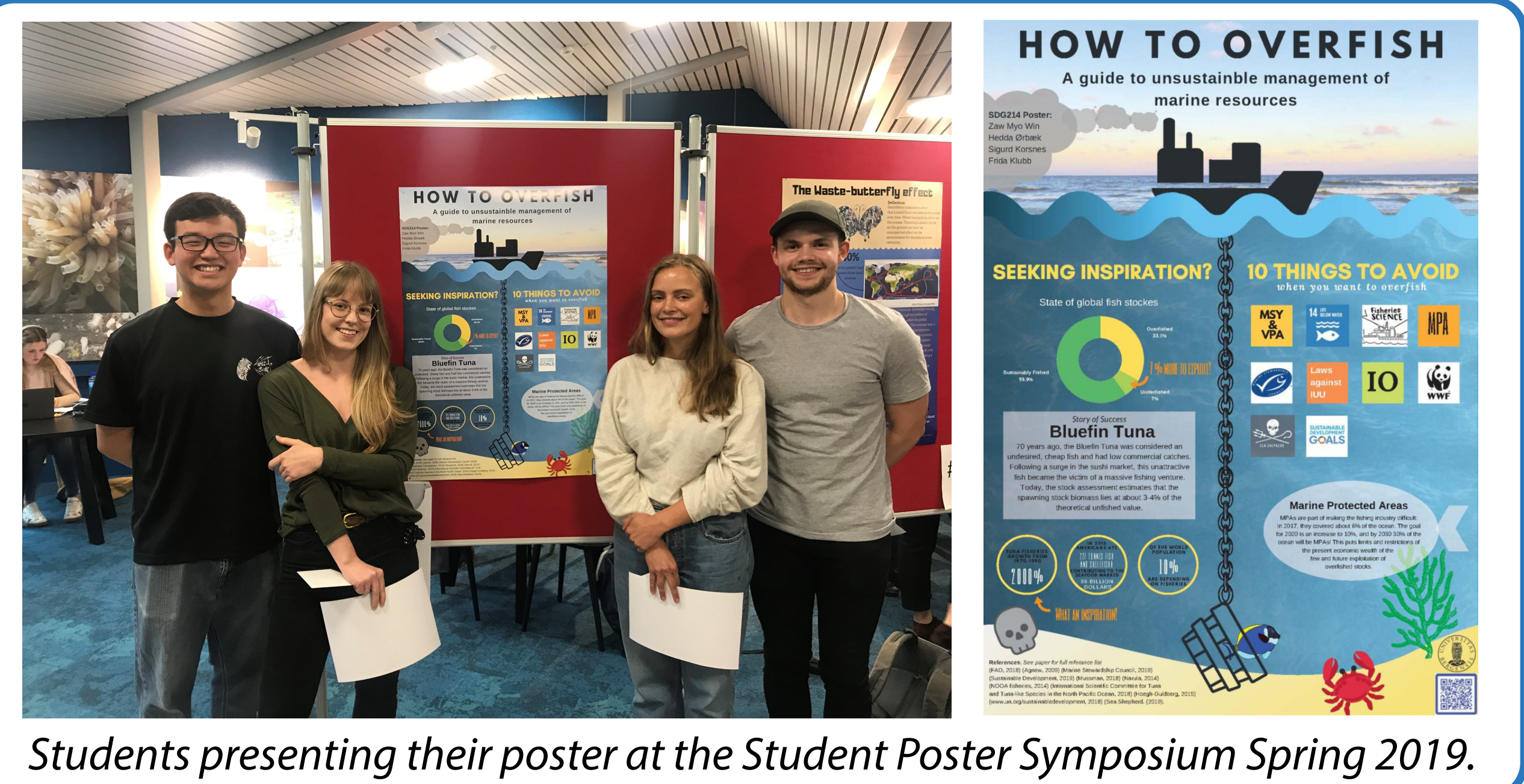
Poster sessions as constructive alignment in BIO courses

Kristin Holtermann, Jonathan Soulé and Sehoja Cotner
Centre for Excellence in Biology Education bioCEED
Department of Biological Sciences (BIO) - UiB

Posters as skill training and assessment.

Beyond constituting a standard way to communicate scientific results in conferences, posters are also a great pedagogical tool to help students learn the course content, while practicing dissemination as a skill (Marino et al., 2000).

At the Department of Biological Sciences (BIO), several biology courses now include science communication and dissemination as part of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). In line with the concept of constructive alignment (Biggs & Tangs, 2011), course teachers have added poster assignments to their curriculum, and redefined course assessment to include poster presentation.



Students presenting their poster at the Student Poster Symposium Spring 2019.

Peer feedback forms

Students, teachers and visitors get together at the mezzanine at Vilvite and engage in discussions around the posters. Participants use their mobiles to scan QR codes get access to online feedback forms. Their feedback thus contribute to student learning.



Student Poster Symposium at BIO

Since 2019, bioCEED has in collaboration with course teachers developed the biannual student poster symposium at BIO. All courses which include poster presentation either as assignment or assessment are invited to contribute to the symposium.

As of 2023, a total of 10 courses are involved. All posters are displayed at the mezzanine at Vilvite (see picture to the left) allowing student presenters, teachers and visitors to mingle and discuss topics as varied as ecology, palaeoecology, SDGs, molecular biology, biodiversity, bioethics, among others.

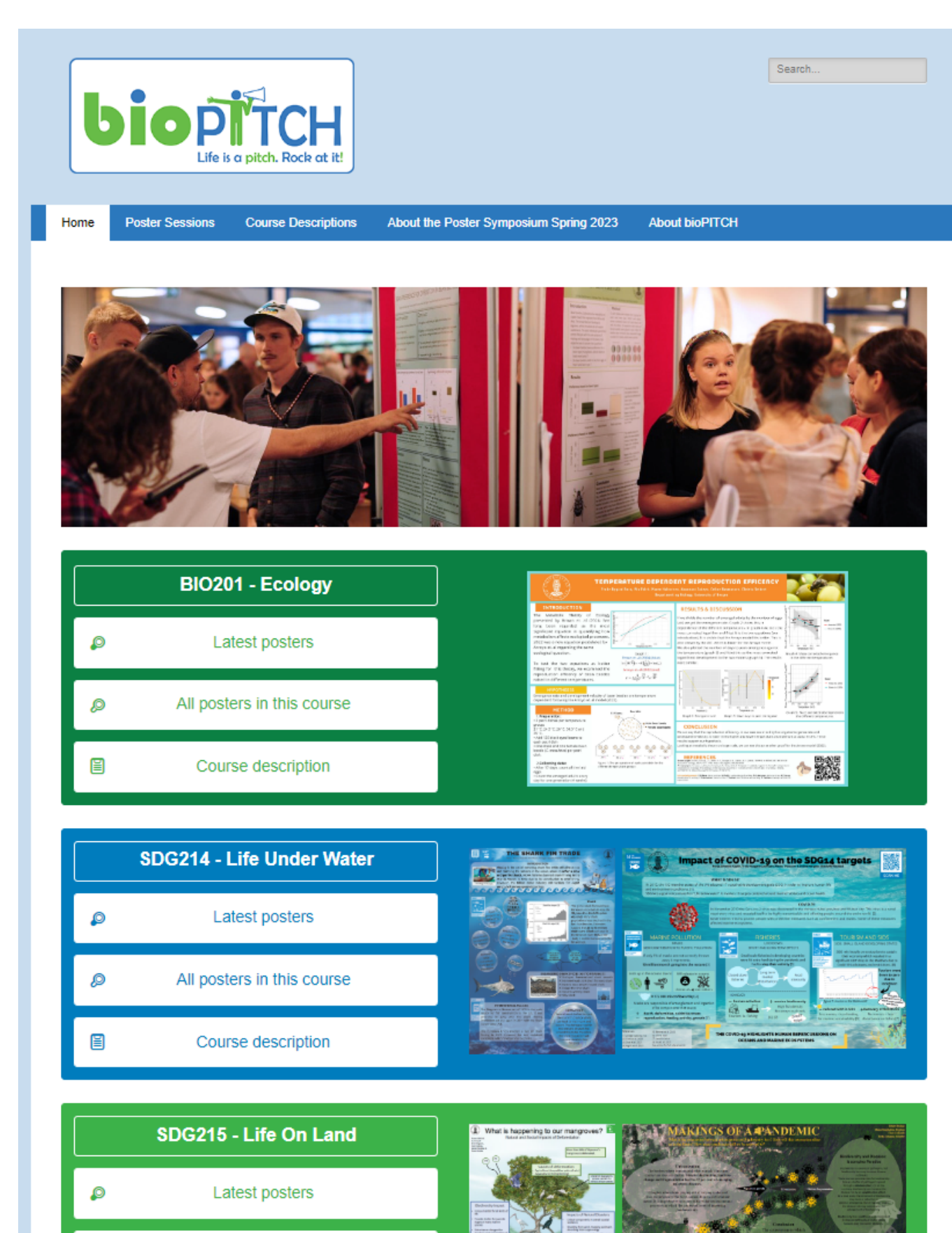
During the poster symposium, the students pitch their poster either as a group or individually in flash (60-second) presentations in the auditorium at Vilvite.



Showcasing student work on a dedicated website

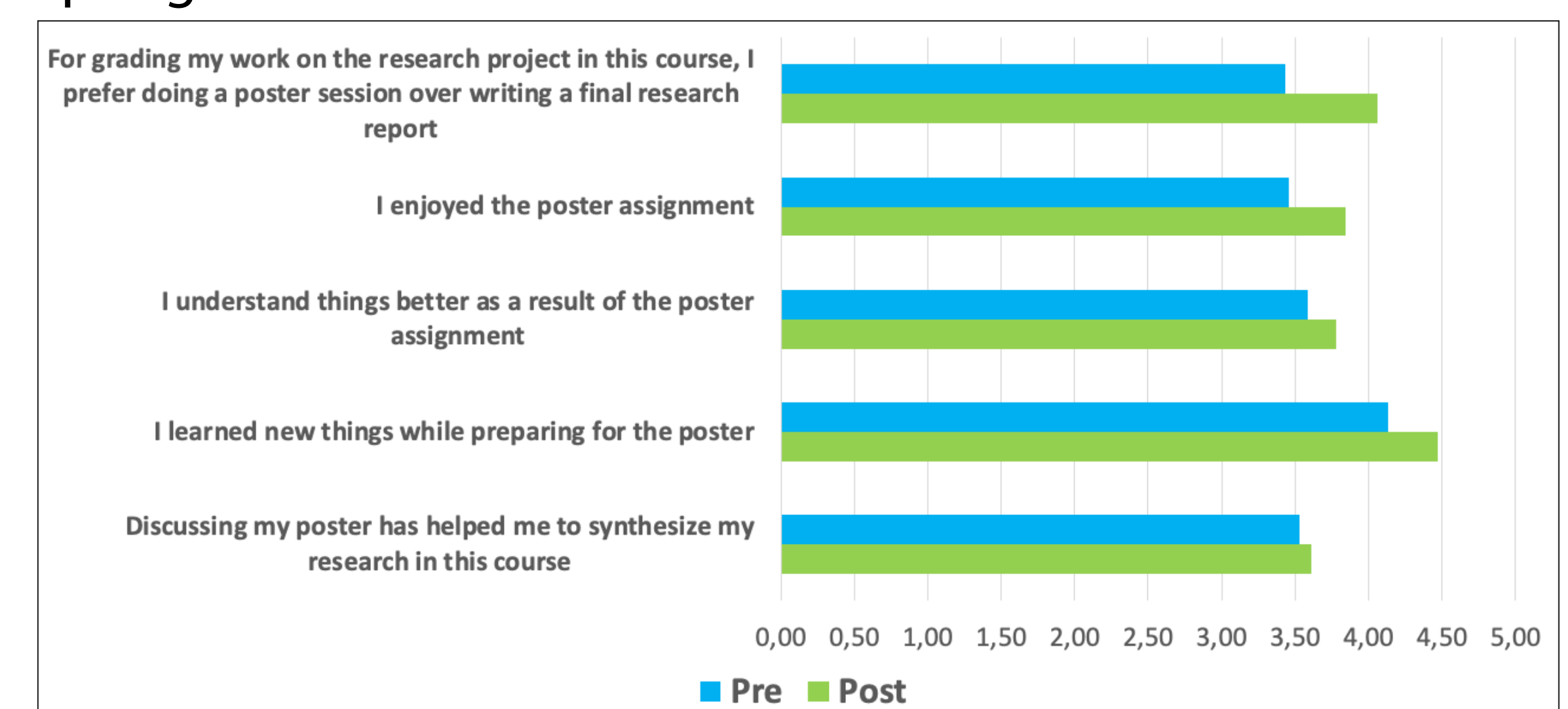
Semester after semester, we gather and display the posters online at biopitch.w.uib.no. Via this website, students may document and disseminate further their work to a larger audience, for example to potential employers by linking their posters to their CV.

Posters are given a unique QR code and link which the students may use to document their work.



What the students say

We asked students to answer a survey about their experience of the poster assignments and symposium. These are the preliminary results based on data collected in Spring 2021.



References

Biggs, J., & Tang, C. (2011). Teaching For Quality Learning At University. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
Marino, R. et al. (2000). Using poster sessions as an alternative to written examination—the poster exam. *J. Chem. Educ.* 77, 9, 1158.