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Det naturvidenskabelige Studienævn
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DM505 Database Design and Programming, Spring 2012, Action Plan

The course DM505 Database Design and Programming was evaluated as it is a first year course. Out of the 42 students, 19 have answered the course evaluation sheet.

The course seems to have been at an adequate level for most of the participants as demonstrated by their use of time and their relative assessment of difficulty and work load. The only remarkable trend here is that some students use too little time and seem to perceive the course as rather easy. This can very likely be explained by the diverse entry qualifications of the participants. A small part of the students had previous experience with database design and programming (from school, previous educations, job experience, or self-taught). To stimulate this group of students, the project task was left with a lot of open ends that could be filled as optional challenge tasks. At least 4 students took up this offer and designed for example graphical user interfaces for their database applications.

The vast majority of the participants considered the course to be well-aligned, meaningfully integrated in their studies, and both well-planned and well-executed. The teaching material received a little bit more mixed evaluations. Looking back at previous editions of this course, this seems to be due to the course book. For the next edition of this course, the choice of book could be reconsidered.

The project was well-received as an opportunity to obtain hands-on experience and deepen ones knowledge about the course topic. It was not perceived to be well-aligned with the written exam. This had to be anticipated, though, as project and written exam both count towards the final grade, but test different skills. A future edition of the course might want to refine the evaluation criteria such that alignment is improved or at least the discrepancy is better understood by the students.

Students were overall very satisfied with the teacher (academic level

>93% postive, pedagogical >83% positive, preparation >94% positive, commitment >94% positive). A single comment addresses that the speed of some lectures was too high. This has to bee seen in the light of the majority of students clearly perceiving this course to be at an adequate level and the use of time being on the low side.

Students were less positive about the teaching assistant, but gave average to slightly-above-average ratings. The preparation was critized in one of the comments.

Finally, in the general comments, a student complains about the lack of connection to real-world database programming. This is very likely the same student that complained about this in his project. The external censor, who works in the industry with large-scale database applications, completely rejects this criticism and approves the approach taken by the course.

To summarize, for the next iteration, the following actions should be considered:

- Make sure that students with some previous experience get challenging tasks while keeping the general level as it was.
- Reconsider the course book used.
- Try to improve the alignment between project and exam.

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