

Comments to midterm evaluation

November 15, 2019

There were 39 participants in the midterm evaluation that was held on November 11. Below I will list some of the comments and give my view on some of these.

Positive comments

- Explanation of the material is not boring (17 votes).
I see this as one of my main tasks.
- Good exercises (18 votes).
- Good drawings (18 votes).
Please let these inspire you and keep in mind that often it is better to argue from an abstract drawing than from an example (e.g. of a graph).
- Good web page (21 votes).
- Very good TAs (25 votes).
I will tell them this!
- Nice to show applicability of the different topics (26 votes).
I am happy that this is appreciated.
- Good topic selection (26 votes).
- Topics are interesting and seem relevant (28).
- Use of coloured chalk (29 votes)
Thanks, I will continue to use when relevant
- The happy attitude (29 votes).
Thanks
- Exam assignment no 1 was good and helped to understand the topics (30 votes).
That is exactly the intention and it seems to have worked fine as most of you did very well.

- The energy of the lecturer (31 votes).
Thanks, that gives me more energy!
- Great weekly notes and published in good time (34 votes).
I am happy to hear that the extra work I put here is appreciated.
- Good time for the project and it covered relevant material (34 votes).
- Projects and their role in the final exam (36 votes).
I am very happy to hear that this is so well received!

Wishes for improvements

- The exam format (12 votes).
Unless you are more specific as to what you think could be better, I cannot really do anything about it. It is my feeling that most of you are very happy with the possibility to get some credit for working hard during the course.
- Better connection between topics (feels like we jump around a lot) (17 votes).
The reason for not parsing through the material in a sequential way is two fold: one is to make sure you have some material for the written projects (not all topics are good for this so they are postponed). Another reason is to give you some time to learn a method before you see all the applications of it.
- Solutions to the exercises (18 votes).
I will not hand out such as these will inevitably circulate to students in the coming year, making it much harder to use exercises with approximately the same level every year. By now you should also have learned that you learn much more trying to solve an exercise and then seeing a solution at the exercise classes, than by just looking up the solution before having thought hard about the problem.
- Do not introduce variables in the middle of a proof (19 votes) + Can be a little confusing when things are changed in the middle of explaining them (32 votes).
I realize that this may be annoying when you are taking notes. On the other hand it comes from my attempt to let you see how one constructs a proof, rather than just copying one from the book. In the end I think you will learn more this way.
- High speed on difficult topics (23 votes).
I try to make extra notes on all topics where I go outside the book(s) or do it differently. If there is any of that material that you would like to see again, just tell me and I can say more about it.

- Please tell us applications of the algorithms (especially graph algorithms) (25 votes).
I do give examples in the lecture or the weekly notes. If you need more to be convinced of their importance, just try to google 'applications of flows' e.g.
- Do not write entire proofs on the board in the break (26 votes).
I believe that I never wrote an entire proof and when I did write something, it was something you could find in the book. I will refrain from writing further stuff on the board in the break.
- Focus on introducing the topics rather than immediately going in depth with them (26 votes).
I do think that I give a proper introduction and that the problem comes from the fact that I focus on letting you see careful explanations for those things that you cannot easily learn yourselves by reading the material.
- The graph related parts could use examples that contextualize use cases (26 votes).
I think I have done so, in part by mentioning important applications of e.g. matching and connectivity.
- It would be nice with points or grade for the assignments (27 votes).
As already said many times, the grades for the assignments will not be used to calculate an average grade between these and the oral exam, but merely to adjust the grade (up,down,stay). Note also that if you perform completely unacceptable at the oral exam (not showing knowledge of even the things from the assignments), then you will fail, no matter what the virtual grade was for the assignments)! If you are very interested in knowing what grade I have noted for you, please drop by my office or send me a mail.
- Jumping around on the board makes taking notes confusing. (27 votes)
As you have noticed, in most lecture rooms, the boards are not very well placed, so I always try to use the one in front as much as possible, without deleting stuff that I just wrote. This does result in some jumping around. I will try to reduce this when possible.
- The lecturer talks fast sometimes (28 votes).
This is related to being energetic, but I will try to slow down a bit
- Make it more clear what you are about to do and sum up the results (31 votes).
I will put (even) more emphasis on doing so.
- "As you already know", we often do not (32 votes).
This surprises me! I am absolutely sure that those things where I say that you know them from DM507 are covered there. The point in me saying

“as you know...” is to connect between the present course and things you (are supposed to) have seen in other courses.

- List exam topics so we can see what the expectations are (33 votes)
These will be listed very soon