

Course report Faculty of Technology and Society

This course report is based on student feedback and submitted course evaluations, exam results and the teacher's idea for further development. The course report is published on the course website and Canvas-site.

Course name	Distributed Intelligent Systems
Course code	DA382A
Semester	Vt 23
Number of registered students	33
Course coordinator	Gion Koch Svedberg

	Course report is published on Canvas-site
	Course report is published on course webpage

Compulsory course evaluation

Number of responses to the compulsory course evaluation	11
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The compulsory course evaluation has been conducted through:

x	Standard template via Reflex
	Extended standard template with <i>own questions</i> via Reflex
	Own evaluation method by the course coordinator
If own evaluation method was conducted, describe how:	

Additional evaluations that were conducted during the course

	Separate survey
	Oral evaluation in class
	Oral evaluation in smaller groups
X	Other evaluation method
If other evaluation method was conducted, describe how:	
- Continuous statistics of number of active students during discussions in class and during programming sessions	

Comments on the course evaluations

This year's course did not turn out as planned or expected. Very early on in the course many students in the class seemed to be stressed and unsatisfied with the layout of the course. Compared to earlier courses, I changed one detail this year:
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To make sure that a majority of students follow the idea of ‘flipped classroom’ by having read and thought about the reading material before meeting in class to discuss questions, I offered the alternative to turn in answers to reading questions during the course instead of only at the end with the promise that active students that fulfil the requirements would not have to be present at the final seminar. This somehow led till a lot of stress for the students where everybody focused entirely on answering the discussion-in-class questions and turning in them every week. The discussions in class focused less on the theory and its application but instead about my wording of the questions and trying to get a passing grade. A scientific discussion in the form of a seminar about the concrete implementation of different theories within the common project became very difficult, because the main interest of most students was to know which was the right answer to a question, as the following citation from the course evaluation illustrates: “Som sagt svårt att lära sig på detta sätt när man diskuterar men man kan aldrig komma fram till rätt svar för det verkar som att läraren själv inte vet svaret.”

For me, the main problem of ‘flipped classroom’ is how to get the students to prepare for the discussions in class. As earlier experiences show, without any means of ‘motivation’ no one usually completes the reading assignments. Instead of a discussion in class, the teacher ends up holding traditional lectures. This year this probably would have been the better solution.

However, the students were very active during the course and did learn a lot. Despite the very negative feedback from the course evaluation, question 5 shows that about half of all the respondents felt that the course has given them the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning. The polarisation of student’s answers to this question usually looks this way in flipped classroom courses.

Examination results

X	Examination results are as expected
	Examination results are not as expected
After the first retake, more than 60% passed the course. This number is slightly higher than from the year before, but the grades were less spread over the A-E scale, with only one A and most E.	

Recommendations and priorities for the course development

Either:

- 1) Look for alternative ways to activate students in flip classroom courses described by research in this subject, or
- 2) Turn back to the traditional class room setting with lectures and written exams instead of ‘flipped classroom’.