

COURSE REPORT – Summary of course evaluation

Background information (To be completed by the course administrator)

Course LADOK code: KD643B	Scope (hp): 15,0
Course title: Interaction design: Master's (One-Year) Thesis	
Course coordinator: Niedenthal Simon	Number of registered students: 17
Semester in which the course is conducted: VT25	
Is the course an independent course, programme course or contract course? If the course has been completed within a programme, enter the programme name. TAIND24, TAINE24	

Forms of evaluation and feedback (To be completed by the course coordinator)

Formative course evaluation, for example dialogue during the course (optional)	Approx. number of students who participated in formative course evaluation(s):
Summative course evaluation (obligatory) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Only via Canvas <input type="checkbox"/> Canvas and other form <input type="checkbox"/> Only other form (written and/or oral)	Number of students who participated in the summative course evaluation: 3

Student's perspective (To be completed by the course coordinator)

<p>Summary of the students' oral and written feedback:</p> <p>The student experience of this course was mixed. The most appreciated part of the course is quality of supervision, while the most problematic is the duration of the course. Here are some quotations from the online survey:</p> <p>"The time frame is not enough time for a good design thesis project and it depends a lot on the student previous skills and the quality of the supervision."</p> <p>"The timeframe - it was extremely tight, it was "advertised" as a 10-week project, where it was actually less than 9."</p> <p>"Ideally, the thesis project should be extended or include at least one additional month beforehand to help students define their research focus and situate their work within the field's research traditions and literature. The "theme definition workshop" held before the course began was not enough, as our attention was still directed toward completing the previous group project and paper submission. One possible solution could be to repurpose the holiday break, using those two weeks as guided individual time for developing a thesis research plan and receiving feedback, rather than assigning other tasks during that period."</p> <p>One student was deeply dissatisfied with the course, opining that "nothing" was good about the course and that "everything" could be improved.</p>

Teacher's perspective (To be completed by the course coordinator)

Summary of the teacher's views:

We have struggled for a long time with the 10 week/15hp structure of TP1. An extended essay at the thesis level is required for any Swedish masters degree, but the contextualization of TP1 within the program—independent design research work required after only 3 initial classes—has always been difficult. The faculty has held discussions for years about alternatives, and we have put teaching activities in place to support students in discovering their ideas and understanding the practice of academic writing (not always familiar to all students).

Good work has always been done in 10 weeks, but, as the student above notes, that may be dependent upon students' previous skills and the quality of supervision. This year's examined theses exhibited a satisfying range of topics and approaches to design, and there was some truly outstanding work. However, the fact that 50% of the current cohort deferred until the August examination period confirms that the 10 week timeframe is very tough to manage.

There are curriculum plans afoot that will eventually change IDM, so it is difficult to propose radical alterations to TP1. Instead, I believe it is best to seek additional ways of supporting students in defining and getting started quickly with their projects. I have tended to resist calls for earlier and earlier introduction of the thesis (including student requests to introduce the thesis project in the fall), as this conflicts with existing coursework. I have intruded somewhat into the course preceding TP1 to conduct a project topic workshop. The student suggestion above—that it might be an idea to begin planning thesis project during the Christmas holiday—bears consideration, though I am not sure it is workable for several reasons, not the least of which is that students need some time off.

Besides the recurring issue of dealing with a compressed timeline, there were some immediate issues with administering the course this spring. Communication with students, supervisors and examiners was sometimes patchy and caused confusion. This is my responsibility as course coordinator to resolve (below). We are also making an effort to make sure our grading is as fair and based on shared (if not always uniform) understandings of the learning outcomes. The LOs for TP1 are new, and the process of writing grading rubrics to clarify key terms and thresholds for pass/fail have been somewhat delayed.

Action plan (To be completed by the course coordinator)

The underlying analysis and the action plan should be based on a summary of the students' individual course evaluations, views from teachers in the course and the knowledge development in the research field. If identified problems are left without action, this should be motivated.

The following changes are planned in the short and long term:

1. I will streamline communication with students, supervisors and examiners as much as possible, relying upon shared online documents rather than emails.
2. I will continue to drive the process of shaping grading rubrics for TP1, though this process may be reconsidered depending on the direction of IDM curriculum revisions.
3. I will participate in discussions about the new shape of our program.
4. I will seek for ways to provide additional support for students in shaping and refining their thesis projects.

Remember to orally feedback the results of the course evaluation to

- the students who have completed the course evaluation
- the students of the next course round, i.e. the next time the course is given