

Evaluation of the first semester group meetings

The first semester group meeting started by appointing the representatives. The next step was an evaluation of the courses held so far. We will only emphasize on the most important issues.

Perception I:

Nice to start out doing a small practical assignment together with your whole new group. In general the course was positive, playful and stimulating. The students learned new phrases and terms, but due to none-using most of them have been forgotten.

Art history and science I:

The material for the first lecture was very hard to grasp because of its strictly theoretical nature. However lecture two was more graspable, since it dealt with more basic introduction to art history. Throughout the course volunteered students had to do presentations on different artworks, which proved useful to connecting theory and practice. All materials were uploaded on moodle on time with the exception of some presentations.

Problem-based learning:

The PBL teachers had trouble understanding the educational structure of ArT since it differed from what they were used too. PBL was a useful tool because we needed some guidance for our newly started group work. The timing of the lectures was appropriate since it coincided with the perception workshop. However, PBL lectures could start earlier because of the need for 'tools' for working in a group. Furthermore, the gaps between the different lectures were too long.

Tectonics I:

Everybody agreed that the hands on experience was very nice compared to having lectures all the time. The main issues with the course were that the lectures did not last as long as they were supposed to. This issue has to be taken care of because some students come from afar. The teachers did try to compensate by staying after the lectures and answering questions. Also, some teachers sometimes had slides in Danish which was irritating for those who do not speaking the language.

A discussion on other relevant topics: pros and cons::

Pre-made groups were helpful for us because we did not have to go through the struggle of choosing the right group members from people we did not yet know. On top of giving the students a sense of belonging it also acted as a preparation for the working world.

Supervisors tried to make groups so most had at least 2 international students to avoid isolating non-danish students among Danish, yet the amount of international students did not favour this in each group.

Moodle:

A lack of explanation on how to use moodle made us frustrated throughout semester one. Not only students, but also teachers have problems with using moodle from time to time. It will be for the best if an experienced user could give an introduction for those not familiar with the site.

The second group meeting kept to the same structure as group meeting one.

Sculpture:

A lot of tools were not used even though we had to buy them before the lecture

It seem like the course was not properly planned and this of course affected the students' will to participate. Nevertheless the workshop worked out well and provided very useful information.

Module A and VVVV at P4

It was irritating that other lectures were scheduled during the workshop period. The working space for vvvv was unacceptable because of the low temperatures and the broken heater. Even so the workshop worked out well.

Other issues addressed:

- Supervision: students should not feel like they are bothering their supervisor and are free to write to them anytime.
- Styles of teaching: As first semester students we feel we need: clear explanation of assignments and their requirements; more images illustrating points of the lectures, if possible; well-defined lectures with both students and teachers engaged.
- Concerns have been voiced about the low level of engagement of students in lectures and other events. For example almost no students showed up for the Biotopia conference, although this could be explained by a rumour that no more free spots for participants were available. Overall, students should be able to speak their minds and be more open, and be aware that they can influence how the time in class is spent. On a bright note, the Open Academy lectures received very positive feedback from all participants.
- As a conclusion:
 - Organisation of semesters should be improved.
 - Students need to be more open and engage in dialogue more frequently.
 - More complains were made about moodle

The third group meeting dealt mainly with the problem with making the portfolio and the examination. An evaluation on the courses before Christmas was also conducted.

General discussions:

We decided to put videos, pictures etc. On various websites. We want to document what we do for everybody.

We also had a discussion on how to arrange the chairs the best possible way in order to improve our learning experience.

The studyguide is understood differently, because of that we need a collective walkthrough of the main points.

Agreements were made to make better use of the supervisors next semester.

Art history and science:

The final assignment of the course was a good way to get introduced to academic writing. It was not too big or demanding. Everyone was happy with the work process and the time given. There were plenty of supervision sessions.

The portfolio:

We all agreed that the lectures used for teaching us how to make a portfolio should be placed earlier in the schedule. Overall the lectures Jakob Sabra gave were a nice way to learn the different useful programs from the Adobe package.

Design and artistic methodology:

In general this course helped all the groups with the work process. The course presented a lot of useful tools for idea generation and development

Photo (workshop with Sune):

An excellent workshop although as pointed out with the portfolio course, it should have been placed earlier in the semester. Had we learned about taking and editing photos in the beginning of the semester, our portfolio images would have been of a better quality.

Illutron:

Very nice course and an excellent hands on experience. It was a good idea to get us to prepare something for a small exhibition. The amount of time was very limited; we could

easily have used a few more days. Working in new groups was good for everyone, as a break from the routine at the middle of the submodule C project.

The exam:

All students wanted more information on the examination process. The fact that we did not know anything about the exam, made us insecure about it. We suggest that the next first semester students be explained more about the exam in good time beforehand.

Recommendations – Actions taken (BLM/LMBJ)

On behalf of the semester evaluation, actions have been taken to meet and adjust the most problematic issues raised in relation to an improvement of the 1.sem. 2011.

The following has been noted and acted upon;

The PBL – course has been changed from its general content to an ArT-specific content, which takes its outset in the assignments and assessments of the semester. The course is now both a general introduction to PBL/PpBL combined with context specific content in order to better support both the writing of the report and the portfolio. The focus is also put more on the group as an art producing collaborative.

In relation to the planning, we now have a tighter follow-up on the course content to ensure a logical progression and focus have been put on “hands-on” skills both in relation to construction using solid materials as well as more technology is introduced on the semester in form of a sensor-workshop given early in the semester, to ensure that the students can continue to work with and implement technology into the main semester assignment.

The 1st Sem. will be experienced as confusing for some, but some of the issues raised is seen mainly as general and natural starting-up issues, which settles with the students becoming more confident and accustomed to the academic form.

Moodle is a problem on its own and generally it would be recommended that the students get on the internet and connected to printers quicker.