

16 January 2014

<b>Semester Evaluation</b>		
Study programme:	Art & Technology	1 <sup>st</sup> semester 2013
Semester Coordinator:	Carsten Friberg	

### *1. A general description of the semester.*

The semester began with a project and a P0-report in an experimental form; not a formal project but a test of a format for future P0-projects. The project was Parking-Day, which ArT 1 now has participated in more times. The project is a fine start as it gives the students an opportunity to make something real within the first weeks, make their first experiences with group-work, and get to know Aalborg to find materials for the project. The P0-report became the first experiment with academic report writing in an informal context.

The semester project was introduced immediately after: to create a sculptural installation that invites to a communication, and by using scrap materials to the extent possible.

Courses in the beginning of the project period were meant to emphasize visual forms of working (sketching, drawings, visual notes) and creative techniques. More presentations of projects were held in the class to share ideas and feedback, and to exercise presentation. The semester exhibition was joined with all semesters, a very positive experience to have an ArT event for all. 8 groups exhibited.

The students have formed a very well-functioning group. Socially aware of each other, self-organizing to an extent beyond the expectations of 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

Some students have left the semester. Some wanted a more artistic focus and a more narrow focus on artistic topics than ArT offers; some a more technical focus; some for personal reasons.

### *2. What should the future coordinator and planning team be aware of?*

As many things are new to the students repeating information is recommended. As a source of communication Facebook is highly recommended.

Also short meetings with all students to inform about what happens and to answer questions especially in the beginning of the semester is recommended. After the start of the semester project such meetings become less needed and more seen as duties interfering with the work time.

Informal talks with the students are very important, also to make new students feeling welcome, and to answer questions of doubt and confusion about the study. Social events are important, and teachers participation is important for creating the feeling of a study we all share and as an opportunity for students to express opinions and concerns they tend not to share at group meetings or in larger (formal) contexts.

It is important from the beginning to make their room a place they want to stay and work in – to give it a touch of being their workplace, which this year was done with e.g. many drawings from courses staying on the walls.

Following the advice from previous coordinators a planning with the RUS-planners has been a positive experience. Important outcome has been a good contact between 1<sup>st</sup> semester and

the older students. Also, the RUS-students can be included for practical informations, knowing well what the needs for the students are.

It is important for the coordinator to know exactly what information is given to the students from external partners, such as about library, technical facilities, etc. Apparently the introduction to Moodle was never given where it was expected, and has caused confusion, also as the students have found Moodle a very badly functioning tool.

Introduction to tools, basic construction and electronics, and security course – preferable in relation to P0 – should be as early as possible. Tools and electronics is where the students come with very different backgrounds, and it should be dealt with within the first weeks, in forms of workshops or project to see, what is needed through practice. This is also an opportunity for older students to participate and teach the new students while contacts across semesters are established.

Courses exercising some practical skills like drawing and construction should be offered through a longer period as weekly courses and not in more compact groupings. This will work as a red thread, show progress through exercises, and perhaps also increase the student's use of such skills in semester report, where especially visual presentations in form of sketches and diagrams should be encouraged. Also to emphasize an ArT-work form where visual means of communication should be prominent.

Instructions about how to write the semester report is very important and apparently need to be repeated more times. Advantages and especially disadvantages about different templates should be discussed, and the academic requirements offered substantial space.

### *3. What should the lecturers be aware of?*

The purposes of the courses must be clear – what can the students expect from it and how are they to use it. Last minutes changes in schedules should be very clearly communicated.

### *4. What must the department and service personnel be aware of?*

When moving to new buildings it becomes important to make sure we can use them as a work places and also a good place for exhibitions.

### *5. What should the Study Board act upon?*

More ArT events should be created and if possible courses/workshops across the semesters, to create a stronger feeling of belonging all to the same study, and for the new students to see where the study brings them.

Especially information about what the study leads to is important, with for example older ArT-students visiting and telling about what they do now.