

*MEDIS: A Methodology for the Formation of Highly
Qualified Engineers at Masters Level in the Design and
Development of Advanced Industrial Informatics Systems*

WP1.4: Design AIISM - Evaluation



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1 Executive summary

This deliverable describes the evaluation methodology proposed to evaluate the AIISM-PBL methodology and also the evaluation of the skills and knowledge of the students who participate in this course.

The main idea for the methodology is to use a continuous evaluation along the course that can give to instructors a lot of information in order to determine the real progress of each student. Part of the evaluation will measure the work in groups and other part at individual level.

The methodology also evaluate important skills for engineers as competition, working in teams, cooperation, oral presentations, budget management, report redaction, etc.

A section about assessment of the system is included in order to evaluate how this methodology is working around the academic year and the benefits for students and lecturers. This evaluation of the system is performed from the student point of view and also from the lectures.

2 Introduction

Evaluation is a very important aspect of the learning process as it will allow us to determine the level of assimilation of knowledge and skills by students [5][6].

Evaluation should not only be focused on the technical knowledge of the subject but should also include assessment of those skills and competencies that students must acquire [1]. So the evaluation should pay attention to how they have developed cognitive skills (analysis, synthesis, application, evaluation, and critique) and action skills (organizing time, resources, coordination, negotiating, tolerating) [4].

Most students are not satisfied with the evaluation process followed in the different subjects, and that often is not focused on assessing the actual progress in student learning. The assessment must take into account how students are acquiring the knowledge, skills and competencies and ensure that those who pass the course have appropriate capabilities [8].

Problem solving related to real world problems is motivating for students as they see direct application and better assimilate concepts [2]. Students identify the problem, research on how to solve it applying concepts and principles. If they work in teams, develop communication skills and collaborative work, developing analytic skills [10].

During the evaluation process large amount of information will be collected, that will reveal whether the student has achieved the required objectives. This is for a process of continuous assessment throughout the course, collecting a wealth of information that allows the end to put the student an overall rating. This will allow the teachers know how students are learning the concepts and in the case of deviations from expected are detected may take corrective action [7].

3 Formation of teams

For students to work better the PBL methodology will need to form teams of 2 or 3 students. These groups should remain invariant throughout the course.

For students to get the most out of the course, it is important that students who form a team have a similar level of knowledge. This will prevent one student take an overly active role against another student will not participate enough with the loss of content assimilation [13].

To set the level of students, the first day of class an objective type test will be performed, with around 25 questions, each one with 3 possible answers and only one answer will be correct. In this way we can know the real starting level of the students. This test should contain questions on microprocessor-based hardware and programming system.

Questions should be aimed to collect general aspects of the concepts required as prerequisites to begin to pursue the matter. For example:

- Basic Engineering concepts: we must determine the level that provides the student with respect to each of the functional units that make up the microprocessor based system. Learn options trading hardware and embedded systems concepts. It should also be assessed in relation to the concepts of control theory are provided, differentiate the concepts of open and closed loop. We should also know the level of knowledge of analog and digital electronics and the differences between analog and digital signals.
- For programming (Software): we determine to what level of programming knowledge the student has. By the questions we can determine the level of functional programming, modular programming and object-oriented programming. It also should determine more generic software concepts such as the concept of operating system or real-time systems. Also knowledge of programming languages and of low-level programming.

Once we know the initial level of knowledge of the students, we will proceed to the proposal of forming groups looking to students to form a group have similar knowledge of the subject. This will make the groups are balanced and performance is greater.

Taking advantage of the information available in relation to knowledge of the students who present low level, it will recommend material to reinforce the lack of knowledge and that from the beginning of the course to improve their level.

4 Student evaluation methodology

In this section we will address the evaluation strategy to be followed in the matter. To properly address the evaluation system will be structured in three levels [9].

4.1 Level One: Attitude (Student engagement)

At this level, we pay special attention to the motivation that students have within the course. It is important for them to perceive the usefulness of the matter and how important it is for their future career [12][15].

For information on this level we should keep an ongoing dialogue with different student groups of the course, this should be maintained by the lecturer throughout the entire course.

We should also pay special attention to students deliver activities in the time and manner agreed as it is a clear indicator of student motivation. If different groups meet deadlines will mean they are working well and are motivated to find that while the subject is useful for training.

It is important that a deadline for delivery of the different activities that students set and meet deadlines. This should be something to evaluate.

In order to improve the motivation of students, this level of evaluation should be a part of the final mark. This part can be 10% of the final overall rating.

Also should identify those students with a special motivation for the subject because their attitude is above average, as his good predisposition can be made to work to achieve higher goals.

It is important that students meet requirements of work deadlines in the subject. This will facilitate the professional future of the graduates in order to work in environments with strict deadlines.

4.2 Level Two: Learning

This level of evaluation is very important and crucial. At this level we determine the acquisition of knowledge and skills that students have acquired throughout the course. From our part, taking into account the proposed methodology, we are going to address the evaluation to [11]:

- **Problems:** Lecturer presents main ideas of lecture contents and proposes some application problems which student solves individually. The teachers throughout the course individually assess how the student has solved different problems. Those problems of particular interest will be evaluated. For example, through the problems we can assess how students interpret a transfer function of a sensor/actuator. How to interpret the voltage as a physical quantity. The analytical representation by an equation. We can see if the student can interpret the current temperature if the input value is X volts, etc. For the evaluation of the problem must take into account: Approach resolution procedures, steps followed in the resolution, final result, method, clarity of presentation and approach, inclusion of units of measure, focus on the important issues facing superfluous. In the event that the final result is not correct, will be important to evaluate the procedure and see where the error occurred and evaluate the approach undertaken.
- **Laboratory:** A practical problem previously presented during lecture. Students work by teams of two/three students. During the lab sessions students will show the teacher how they are solving the proposed activities and the teacher will make questions about how is the resolution of the activity [3]. At the end of each lab session the teacher will rate each group based on the work done and the objectives achieved. For evaluation can take into account:
 - **Introduction phase:** will reflect 20% of the grade. Aspects to be evaluated for example are clearly in the developed code, comments included, code legibility.

Check that the exercises have been completed and the results are as expected. The answers of the questions on the exercise will be reviewed and ensure that students understand what has been done.

- Reinforcement Phase: will reflect 40% of the grade. Some aspects will assess like the level of achievement of the exercises, check whether results are consistent. The answers on the exercise will be reviewed and ensure that students understand what has made.
- Advanced stage: Will represent a 40% of the grade. The aspects to be evaluated are the robustness of the solution, the degree of integration of parts, documentation provided. Integration of the laboratory with the previous ones, quality of the solution presented, etc.
- Seminars: A panel discussion with student teams (around six students) is proposed, consisting generally of solving a problem by means of PBL. The teachers will meet with each of the groups who will present how they have raised the issue, what options for the resolution are viable and which ones have been taken. It is important that the teacher dialogue with all members of the group to identify how well attended and have acquired the relevant knowledge. Some aspects to be taken into account for the assessment:
 - Level of responsibility among group members.
 - Number of studied and analysis in terms of advantages and disadvantages of each possible solution solutions.
 - Quality technical report writing as to the work done
 - Defense of ideas and how to defend against constructive criticism
 - Interaction of knowledge of this area with other
 - Management of bibliographic sources
 - Extra work done with respect to the requested
 - Robustness of the proposed solution adopted
 - Etc.
- Mini-project: Dedicated to planning, design and development of the control system of a real problem design. The developed project will presented publicly to a jury composed of three lecturers. The jury assesses the following aspects including some transversal skills:
 - Report: Maximum score of this part is 25% of the total mark. Quality of technical writing will be assessed, clarity in presentation of ideas, document structure, figures and tables included, the references, the precision in the wording, paragraph numbering and index, etc.
 - Oral presentation: The score of this part is 10% maximum. The team presents the work during maximum of 20 minutes. Aspects considered in the presentation are: description of the problem specification, design and provided solution, intervention of each component group and coordination among team members, participation of all members of the group, explanation coherence, language style, PowerPoint presentation, presentation of important issues facing surface, clearly

exposing ideas, the quality of responses to different questions, time spent in the presentation, gestures and staging, etc.

- **Implementation:** The score assigned to this part is 65% of total mark. After the oral presentation, the team shows the project application. The evaluators assess how it works, such as: experimental assembly, code structure, prototype robustness, quality of user interface, robustness of design, clarity of implementation, fault tolerance, level of detail, ease of future expansion, developed additional aspects concerning requested, participation of each member of the group, connection between hardware and software, modularity, innovative ideas, economic assessment of the proposal, etc.

In each of these sections in addition to the assessment of knowledge, the teacher should take into consideration and evaluate all the important skills and transversal skills for engineers. Specifically we evaluate [15]:

- **Cognitive skills:** Analysis, synthesis, application, evaluation, critique, etc.
- **Action skills:** Organizing time, resources, coordination, negotiating, tolerating, etc.

The advantage of the methodology is that it allows including other skills that assessment allow an integrated formation of the student: competition, working in teams, cooperation, oral presentations, budget management, report redaction, etc.

The rating of these skills should be included in the appropriate rating to each of the evaluation issues associated at this level.

4.3 Level Three: Grading (outcome)

At this level we will collect all grades earned along the continuous assessment developed along the course and proceed to obtain the final grade for the course.

To do this we establish a just proportion between the different sections to ensure a fair rating for differentiating their individual acquisition of knowledge and skills against the student group work.

The proposal will apply as follows:

- The evaluation of the student attitude (A) a 10% of the final score.
- The evaluation of the miniproject represents (MP) a 40% of the final score.
- The evaluation of the Laboratory (L): 20% of the final score.
- The evaluation of the Problems (P): 15% of the final score.
- The evaluation of the Seminars (S): 15% of the final score.

With all the information of ratings and percentages described will get a single grade for each student.

For the calculation of the final grade (FG) can be followed as the following equation:

$$FG = A * 0.1 + MP * 0.4 + L * 0.2 + P * 0.15 + S * 0.15$$

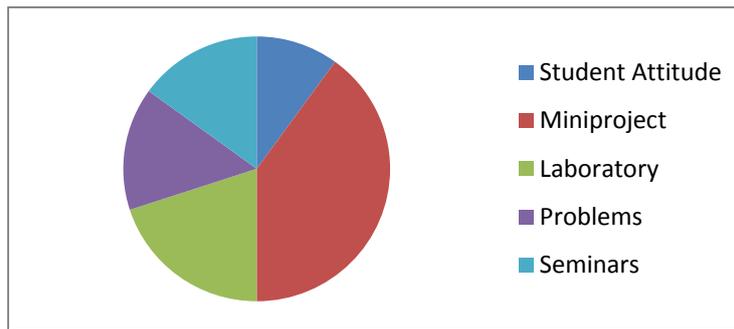


FIGURE 4.3-1 DISTRIBUTION OF PERCENTAGES FOR FINAL GRADE

5 Assessment of the methodology system

The last level in the evaluation methodology is the evaluation of the system used for teaching this subject. It is important to know the opinion of students and teachers involved to find out what has been done well and what parts could be improved [11].

In this sense the evaluation board system from two points of view:

- Student point of view: Is important to conduct a survey among students to have information about the acceptance of the course [15]. Students can give their opinion at the end of the course and before obtaining their qualifications so they have a more objective well-formed opinion on the course system. The idea can be design a survey in a way that can be simple and easy to answer. For instance, can be made based on 6 questions with 5 possible answers (“A”: Strongly Agree; “B”: Agree; “C”: Unsure; “D”: Disagree; “E”: Strongly Disagree) for each, rated from A to E marks. The questions can be of the type:
 - Has the subject methodology facilitated your learning process?
 - Has every important concept of the subject been addressed in the miniproject?
 - Has the complexity level of every part of the subject been reasonable?
 - Has the activities promoted cooperation skills as in real work environments?
 - Have you felt motivated during the learning process?
 - Would you recommend taking this course to other students?
- Lecturer viewpoint: The opinion of teachers is important to make an overall assessment of how the course has worked and what aspects should be improved [14]. Teachers should maintain an open dialogue throughout the course and at the end make the balance. The aspects to be evaluated are for example the ratio of approved students, the quality of ratings, the amount of work done by teachers, problems that have arisen and how they have been resolved, possible updating of content, duplication and overlap with other subjects, etc.

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