Experience report on the first regular JCSE application in Novi Sad

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Agenda

- Facts
- Problems
- Implementation
- Students' evaluation

Facts

- Winter semester 2004 – the ‘usual subset’ of JCSE given to graduate students – 8 of them
  - 6 Saturdays × 5 hours
- Winter/summer semester 2004/2005 the ‘full’ JCSE given to undergraduate students for the first time – 49 of them
  - 2 lecture h/week + 1 exercise h/week + 1 consultation h/week

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Problems (1)

- Timing
  - We lost one month ☹
    - Two weeks lost because of national holidays
    - One week lost because of an extra examination period
    - One week lost because of we organize the test at the time slot reserved for lectures
  - Therefore we did not cover
    - Systematic testing
    - Software maintenance
    - Introduction to software ergonomics
    - Project management
  - Solution → start more aggressively next year

Problems (2)

- Assignments
  - Students were confused and frustrated about the assignments – up to this course they were accustomed to very precise formulation (e.g., let $1 < N < 2436$ and the array elements are of the INTEGER type, …)
  - - " – about that there is NO definite and correct solutions (unlike to the most of previous assignments)
  - We did not succeed in explaining them why there is NO definitive correct solution nor why assignments are so confusing (telling them that is it so in the real life did not help – we did not persuade them ☹)
- Solution → in the last several assignments we make them to discuss and defend their own solutions. It helped. To continue with this right from the first assignment the next year.

Problems (3)

- Different methodology/understanding with respect to partially overlapping course on IS, where they use OOAD.
  - They have 'sliced' approach: a) first class diagram to model the database, i.e., no methods in class diagrams, b) methods are introduced later, if at all.
    It was problem with graduate students trying to make requirements specification.
  - Different understanding of what actor is (direct vs. indirect access).
  - What is analysis and what is design (they make no explicit border between the two)
- Solution → to bring students' attention to possible different understandings of various aspects of OOAD.

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Implementation

- 49 students divided into 12 teams
- Lectures organized around English slides (students' wish)
- Local web-site established – 6 versions of PDF versions of slides published after lectures: 3 (1x1, 1x2, 1x6) in Serbian and English.
- 7 assignments given
  - Review of requirements specification
  - Application of function point method
  - Review of SA product model
  - OOA for the new software product
  - Formal specification
  - Review of the OOA solutions (assignment 4) of other team (!!!)
  - Application of software metrics on 'SemOrg' implementation (!!!)

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Students' evaluation

- 25 of 49 filled in the questionnaire
  - Solution → bind the questionnaire with getting a signature (to prove the regular attendance to lectures)
- Original questionnaire - questions on assistant ☹ + additional questions

Details

Spreadsheet