

Trends in Students Opinions Concerning “Software Engineering” Course (Novi Sad and Tirana)

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History

- At the Department of Mathematics and Informatics in Novi Sad, the complete course in “Software Engineering” is conducted for “regular” students from 2004, i.e. for 6 years.
- Before that, course was twice conducted for graduate students in shorter version.



History



- At the Polytechnic University in Tirana, the complete course in “Software Engineering” is conducted at master level from 2007, i.e. for 4 years, and for 5 groups of students.
- Each time, after the course completion, the same questionnaire was given to students inquiring about their satisfaction with the course.

Survey overview



- Survey consists of four groups of questions:
 - Content and structure of the course
 - Usage of the media
 - Style of the lecture
 - Benefit of the lecture

Survey overview



- Different groups of students were interviewed:
 - master students – 2nd year
 - master students – 1st year
 - undergraduate students – 4th year
 - undergraduate students – 4th year (Bologna students)
 - undergraduate students – 3rd year
 - students of mixed informatics/geography direction

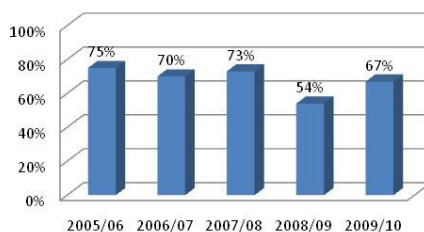
- “Unfortunately”, students are mixed among years, so deeper analysis is not possible.

Survey results

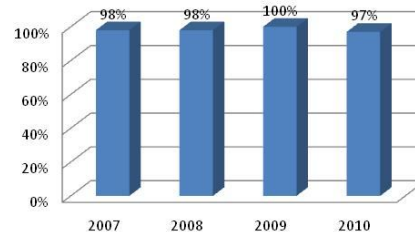


- Attendance:
 - “Estimate how much of the lectures you attended”.
 - In Novi Sad, attendance is NOT obligatory.
 - In Tirana, lectures are conducted in a form of crash-course.

Attendance - Novi Sad



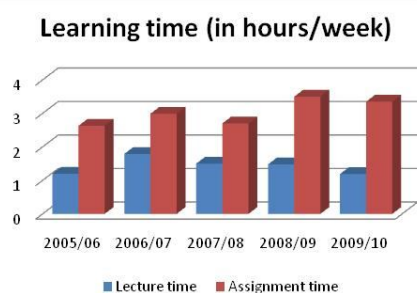
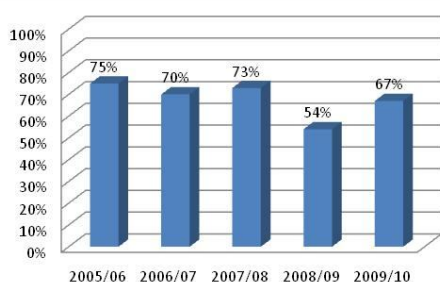
Attendance - Tirana



In addition



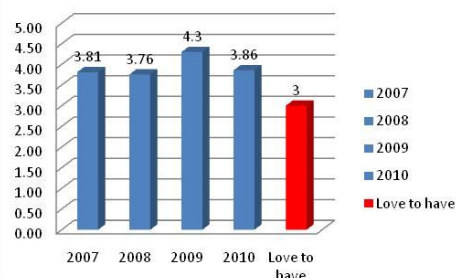
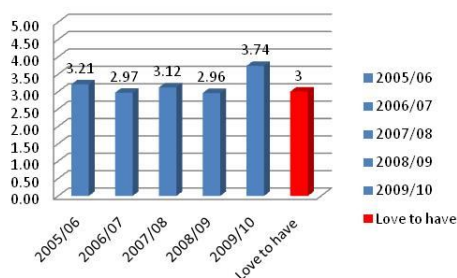
- In Novi Sad, we asked the students how much time they needed to solve assignments and to learn theory.
- Do you see the connection?



Content and structure of the course



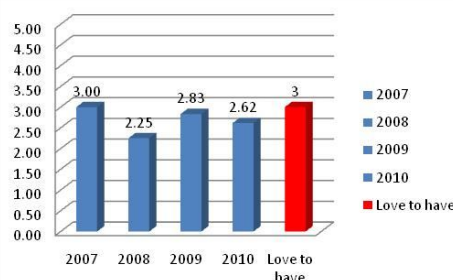
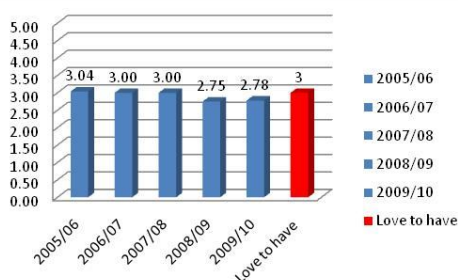
- Rate the amount of knowledge offered in the lectures (5 = too much, 1 = too few)
 - In Novi Sad, except for the last year, very close to “ideal” amount of knowledge
 - In Tirana, a bit “too much”. Language problem?



Content and structure of the course



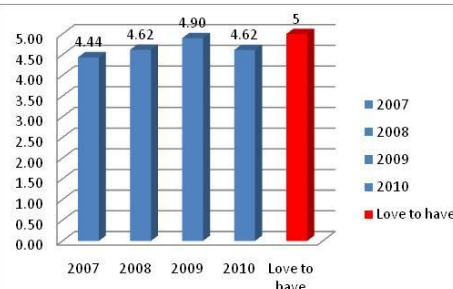
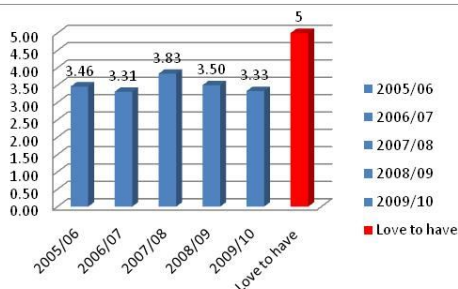
- Rate the contents of the lecture (5 = too easy, 1 = too difficult)
 - In Novi Sad, we moved from “ideal”, down to “too difficult”
 - At both places, an obvious problem with “younger” students.



Content and structure of the course



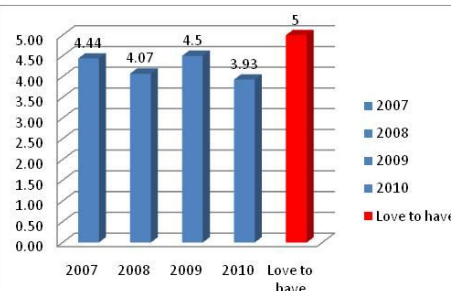
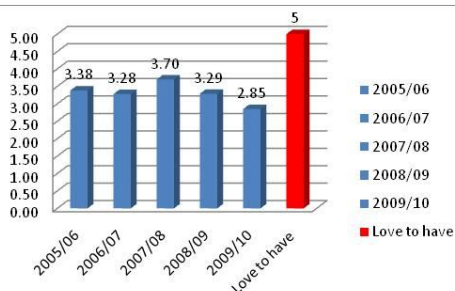
- Is the course well-structured? (5 = very well, 1 = unstructured)
 - Master students think more of a structure of our course.
 - Much more.



Usage of the media



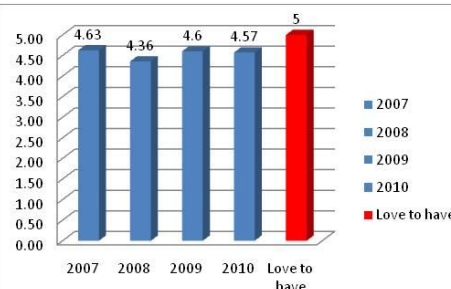
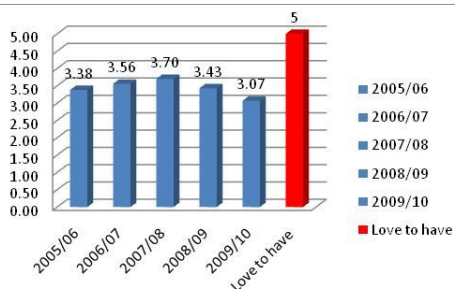
- Amount of information on the slides is adequate? (5 = very well, 1 = not so much)
 - Master students think more of the amount of information presented on slides.
 - Indefinitely more!



Usage of the media



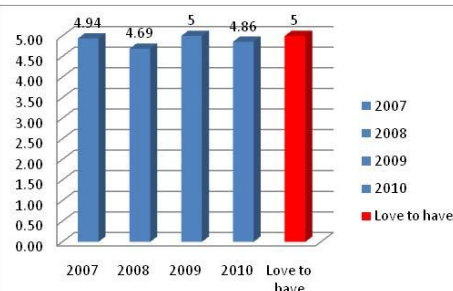
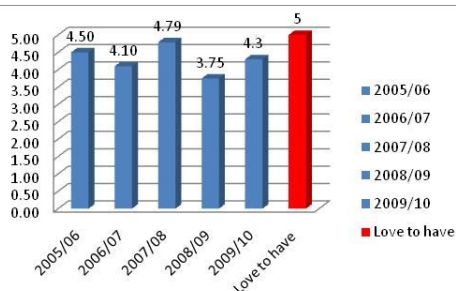
- Are the slides well-structured and clearly-arranged? (5 = very well, 1 = not so much)
 - Even the lowest average grade given to the course by master students is 0.66 higher than the highest grade given by undergraduate students. Any comments?



Style of the lecture



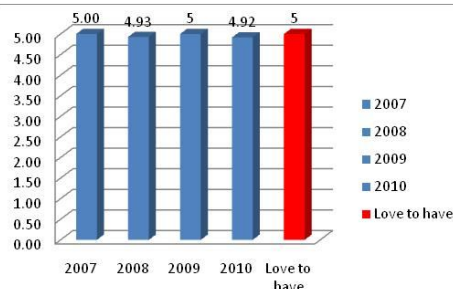
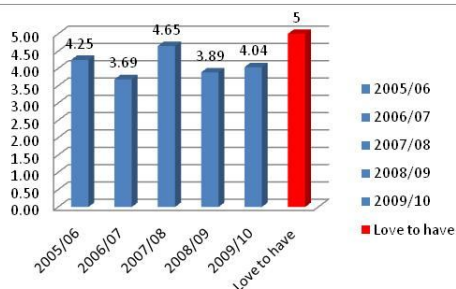
- Lecturer familiar with the contents of the lecture? (5 = very well, 1 = not so much)
 - Lecturers are generally well-graded!
 - Better by more-knowledgeable!



Style of the lecture



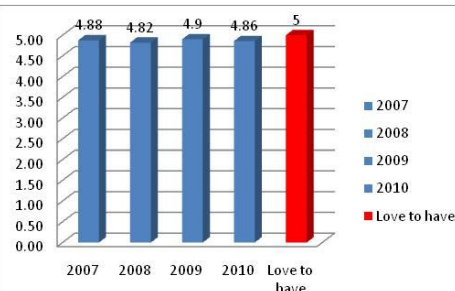
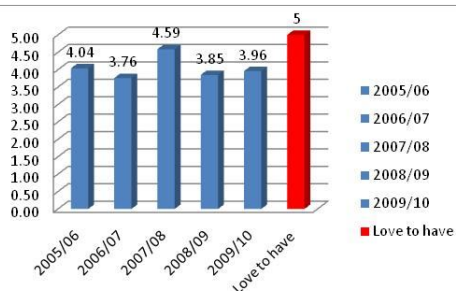
- Do the lectures seem to be well-prepared? (5 = very well, 1 = not so much)
 - Again, lecturers are generally well-graded!
 - Faaaaar better by more- knowledgeable!



Style of the lecture



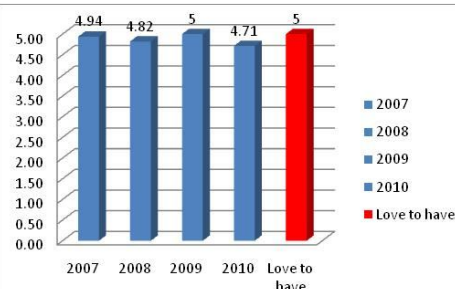
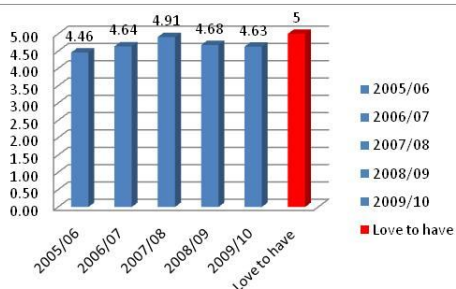
- Is the lecturer engaged?
(5 = very well, 1 = not so much)
 - Grades are becoming tiresome!
 - Trends are the same, specially in comparison between questions, but always lower in Novi Sad.



Style of the lecture



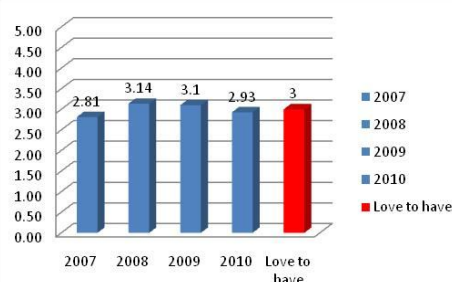
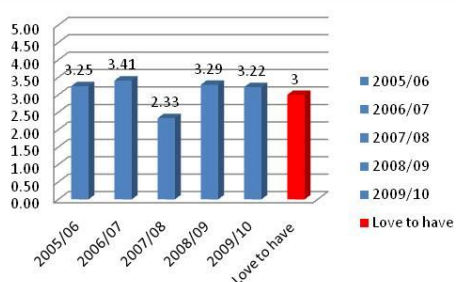
- Is the lecturer willing to answer questions?
(5 = very well, 1 = not so much)
 - Best grades for lecturers at both places.
 - Better in Tirana.



Style of the lecture



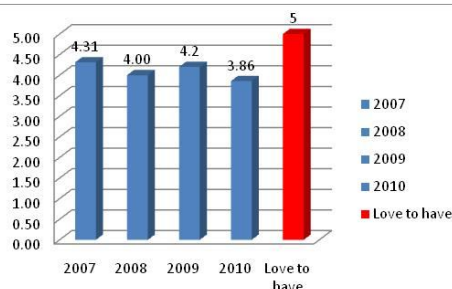
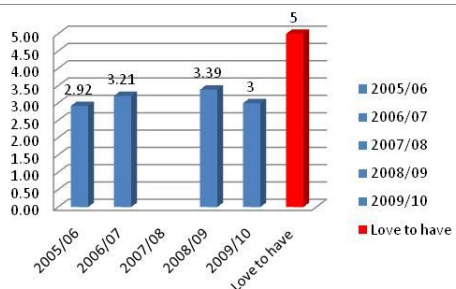
- Is the presentation of the lecture (5 = too fast, 1 = too slow)
 - For once, the difference is not that high.
 - Yet again, Tirana graded lecturers better.



Style of the lecture



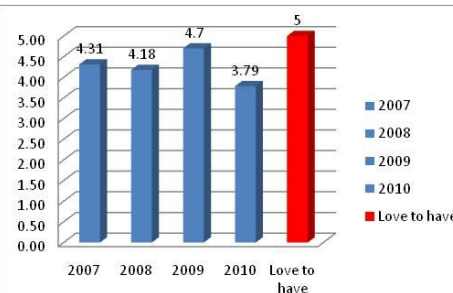
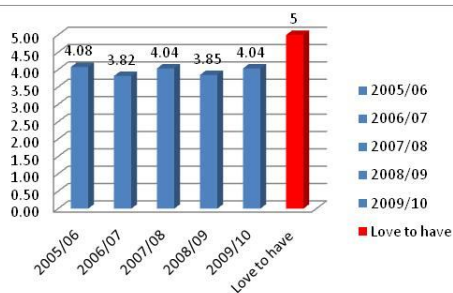
- Presentation style encourages lecture following? (5 = very well, 1 = not so much)
 - Here, I'm scared to comment!
 - Prof. Bothe said "... for normal situations at home universities 3 is quite well. It is not so easy to 'encourage' students"



Benefit of the lecture



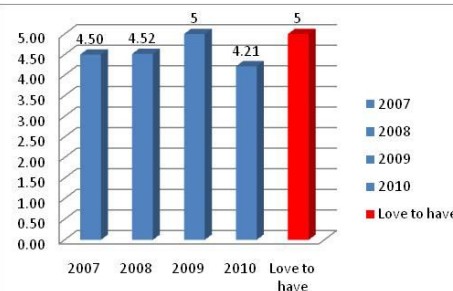
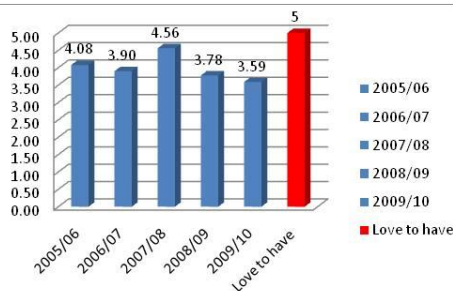
- Did you learn a lot of new things? (5 = much, 1 = not so much)
 - And after all of the previous grades – they think they learned enough new things.



Benefit of the lecture



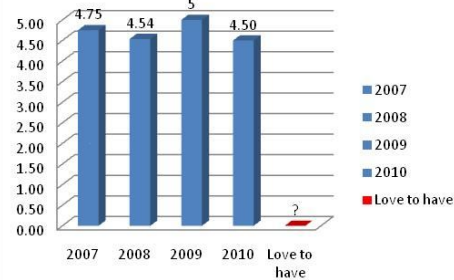
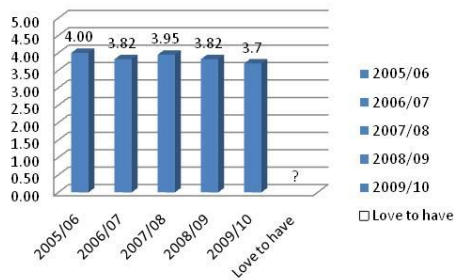
- Do you think the contents of the lecture is useful? (5 = completely, 1 = not so much)
 - More useful for master students of computer science, than for undergraduate students?
 - Some of them studying combination geography-informatics? Sure!



Benefit of the lecture



- What is your overall ranking of the lecture?
(5 = very well, 1 = bad)



Conclusion



- So – we're better graded in Tirana.
- Sometimes much better, sometimes just better.
- Professors are different, but Zoran Budimac is one of the best graded professors in Novi Sad in general, for all of his courses.
- Why then?

Conclusion



- Most probable reason is the great difference between students:
 - In Tirana:
 - Students are older – master students;
 - Students all belonged to the same group – computer science students.
 - And perhaps - we were guest lecturers, and they were polite.
 - In Novi Sad:
 - Course was obligatory while attendance was not;
 - Part of the students belongs to geography-informatics direction;
 - And, who knows if that matters, but – students were interviewed *after* they received their grades.

Conclusion



- The fact that supports the previous claim are grades for common things – structure and contents of slides is graded better by master students.
- Tirana students attended almost all of the lectures, each year. Novi Sad students didn't. Still, they felt that they should grade even those things they haven't participated in!
 - Grades in Novi Sad go down, as the attendance percentage goes down ...
 - Time needed for learning and for solving assignment goes up, as the attendance percentage goes down ...

In numbers:



- Grades in Novi Sad are lower. Is that with a reason?
- Maybe it is, but we'll never know!
- “No one” was there to listen and check!
- Attendance was:
 - Wednesdays (late evening, no other classes that day) 10%
 - Fridays (at noon, after several other classes) 40%

Interestingly, Novi Sad students have a very high opinion about themselves:



- Average grade during studies:
 - 9-10 – 8%
 - 8-9 – 32%
 - 7-8 – 60%
 - 6-7 – 0%
 - Grade student expects for SE:
 - 10 – 17%
 - 9 – 63%
 - 8 – 20%
 - 7 – 0%
 - 6 – 0%
- Average 8.97



Conclusions



- Can we correlate some data?
 - Lower attendance ↔ lower lecturers' grades
 - Lower attendance ↔ lower students' grades
 - Lower students' grades ↔ lower lecturers' grades
 - Lower attendance ↔ more time to study

- Lower attendance ↔ lower lecturers' grades
 ↔ lower students' grades ↔ more time to study
 ↔ generally, students with less knowledge

So if we take a closer look into lecturers:



- Over the years, they tend to:
 - forget the material,
 - become less prepared,
 - less engaged,
 - and too fast ...
- ... yet:
 - are still willing to answer questions.

- But, they inspire more and more!



While for the course, students tend to say that:



- Over the years, **course** sometimes:
 - delivered less knowledge, and
 - content became worse.
- Slides:
 - don't have enough info,
 - and are not so organized anymore.
- Assignments:
 - became more difficult, but
 - more motivating.
- In general, students:
 - learned less,
 - and much less useful things.
- Naturally, final grade for the course, drops down, too ☹️

Should we be worried, or we can just relax and enjoy ourselves?



Ya Otter Relax!
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