

Course Analysis – FDT3304 Topics in Social Robotics Autumn 2023

0. Author

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1. Description of the course evaluation process

The course evaluation process involved using the KTH Learning Experience Questionnaire (LEQ) and dedicating some time for feedback in the final course meeting. All students were given the opportunity to provide feedback through the LEQ and those that attended the final meeting.

2. Description of meetings with students

Several meetings were arranged during the course and after its completion:

- Initial meeting to explain course objectives and evaluation methods.
- Regular teaching sessions with the topics that were also used to gather any feedback or issue encountered with the course so far.
- Final course iteration meeting to discuss overall course experience, focusing mainly on obtaining feedback on load, hybrid teaching and assessment methods.

The outcomes of these meetings are reported under section 7.

3. Course design

The course was designed with a focus on obtaining research experience in several topics of social robotics, it incorporates several activities that are important for a researcher. In the course the student has to present a research paper, provide strengths and weaknesses and discussion points to several other papers, and engage in discussions with other students. To support constructive alignment the course included clear intended learning outcomes (ILOs), learning activities, and assessments that supported these outcomes. The course format featured Hybrid teaching and the assessments included (1) a presentation assignment that also included a review of the paper, (2) several discussion point assignments (at least 5), and (3) quizzes for each of the research topics studied.

4. Students' workload

According to the LEQ, students worked an average of 3-5 hours per week on the course, this was spread out in a long period of 6 months which aligns with the expected workload for a 3-credit course. There was some variation, with a few students reporting 0-2 hours or 6-8 hours per week. This variation could be attributed to differences in individual learning paces and the complexity of topics covered.

5. Students' results on the course

All of the students that engaged in the course were successful. There were a few students who gave up on the course almost immediately after enrolling or midway through it as they either did not require the credits anymore or had an incompatible schedule. Nevertheless, in the LEQ it was reported that some students struggled with the technical aspects of certain papers. Although this can be interpreted as a positive as one of the goals of the course is to expose students to all different topics in Social Robotics (including the technical ones), we will still try to better align the course content with each students' background knowledge and future goals in future iterations of the course..

6. Students' answers to open questions

Students highlighted the value of discussions and the interdisciplinary approach of the course. They particularly enjoyed the breadth and deepness of the discussions in the course. However, they also noted challenges with the hybrid setup, where remote participants contributed less. Feedback suggested eliminating quizzes and having more people onsite as that could lead to even higher engagement in the discussions.

7. Summary of students' opinions

The questionnaire and meeting feedback indicated that students appreciated the diverse topics and the participatory nature of the course. They found the workload manageable but suggested more structured support for hybrid sessions to ensure equal participation. The need for better-aligned technical content was also a recurring theme. Some good suggestions were also made for the selection of topics for future iterations.

8. Overall impression

Overall, the course was well-received, with students particularly valuing the interdisciplinary and interactive aspects. The hybrid setup needs improvement, and quizzes were deemed unnecessary by most students.

9. Analysis

- Stronger areas:
 - Engaging and diverse course content.

- High levels of student participation in discussions.
- We attracted students from several Swedish Universities.
- **Weaker areas:**
 - Technical complexity of some papers.
 - Hybrid teaching setup while allowing for students from different universities led to uneven participation.
- **Differences in experience:**
 - Maybe given the small sample size of a PhD course, we did not find any differences between Female and Male students. Also, the LEQ results were not analyzed to address aspects for disabled students as there were no instances in the course.

10. Prioritized course development

For a future course iteration based on feedback we will:

- Improve hybrid teaching methods to ensure equal active participation from all students.
- Remove quizzes from the assessments.
- Align course content more closely with students' background knowledge. Maybe by introducing more structured support for technical topics or allowing students to opt out from these.

11. Other information you want to share

The LEQ results provided valuable insights into the students' learning experiences and alongside with the face-to-face feedback we have gotten from students we now know how to make an even better iteration of this course which was extremely successful already in its first offering.