Summer School on Algorithmic Data Analysis

Helsinki, May 28 - June 1, 2007

--- Questionnaire --- 57/73 returned questionnaire

Personal Information

[5] Master student	[50] PhD student	[2] Post doc	[0] Tenure/Senior	[0] Industry
Background in	[53] Computer Science	[6] Mathematics	[3] Other: Bioinformatics (1), Biology (1), Signal processing (1)	

Summer School Program

Quality of lectures		[49] high	[9] satisfactory	[-] disappointing
Level of lectures		[5] too high	[52] about right	[-] too low
Selected topics		[2] too diverse	[48] about right	[6] too narrow
Quality of lecture notes		[12] high	[32] satisfactory	[9] disappointing
	disappointing	"We didn't get any, right?"		
	disappointing	"It would have been nice to have handouts beforehand (to be able to do remarks)"		
	disappointing	"slides in the web before lectures"		
	disappointing	"there weren't too many of them"		
Length of lectures		[4] too long	[53] about right	[-] too short
	too long	"2*40 +break in between would have been better"		
	about right	"sometimes need break inside 1.5 hour lecture (sometimes it is, but sometimes not :( )"		
Poster sessions		[28] very useful	[28] somewhat useful	[1] waste of time
	very useful	"but it was hard + I haven't had an opportunity to ask about posters from my group"		
Daily program		[10] too long	[45] about right	[1] too short
Length of summer school		[1] too long	[53] about right	[3] too short
Number of lecturers		[3] too high	[51] about right	[4] too low
Number of participants		[5] too high	[51] about right	[1] too low

Summer School Organization

Correspondence between announcement and the actual school			[53] good	[4] acceptable [ ] bad
	acceptable	"Actually the school was much more relevant to me than what I thought based on the announcement"		
Pre-school information sent out to participant		[43] sufficiently informative	[10] acceptable	[3] disappointing
Services during school		[54] good	[3] acceptable	[ ] disappointing
Facilities at the conference site		[45] good	[9] acceptable	[3] disappointing
	disappointing	"No internet in rooms"		
	acceptable	"Air conditioning!!"		
	disappointing	"Heat"		
Social program		[36] good	[18] acceptable	[1] disappointing

Overall

Please rank the following aspects according to what meant most to you.
Use 1, 2, and 3 (1 = most important, 3 = least important).

1: 9 2: 19 3: 29 Average: 2.25 specific knowledge you obtained
1: 30.5 2: 14.5 3: 10 Average: 1.63 helping you to mature scientifically/ improving your overview of the field
1: 18.5 2: 25.5 3: 13 Average: 1.90 interacting with other participants and establishing scientific contacts

If you had been asked to pay parts of the local expenses in form of a registration fee of say EUR 300, would you still have participated?

[15] very likely so [49] maybe [4] definitely not

very likely so "assuming the university would have paid it, and in the end, the money might come from the same pocket..."
maybe "if university paid the fee"
very likely so "if covered by grad school"

Name the three most positive things you can think of saying about the summer school:

- excellent lecturers
- excellent location & food
- very good organization
- quality of speakers, topics and facilities
- good lecturers, topics
- good people & atmosphere
- convenient accommodation & good food (but too much of food)
- very nice lectures and interesting topics
- sauna and other social activities
- interesting people – good mixture
- good possibilities to get contact to other (PhD) students
- organization was very good
- nice location
- interesting lectures, good quality
- good location, both the hotel and Helsinki
- some very good lecturers
- nice location
- good organization
- good place and nice hotel, sea and forest
- interesting topics, right what I want :)
- good information before and inside school, friendly organizers
- nice food, btw.
- nice sauna
- high quality of lectures
- poster session, I have now a lot good new ideas
- good location
- interesting topic
- good lecturers
- appropriate location
- the lectures were very interesting. The speakers are great
- The people were very friendly, and it was nice to meet new people from this research field
- the organization was good
- poster session
- written proceedings of posters
- quality of lecturers
- good atmosphere

- sauna ;-)
- nice people
- good lectures
- nice venue
- very nice place
- good social program
- high quality talks
- most presentations were excellent. Also “reusing” the lecturers, i.e., having them present lectures that covered topics in greater detail than would have been possible in only one lecture. In particular I'd raise Ferragina in this respect as a great example (and his lectures were just excellent). Also the organization at the venue was good.
- excellent lecturers
- all arrangements worked well
- the venue was nice
- excellent lecturers
- good food
- nice venue
- food
- environment
- Ferragina
- quality of lecture(r)s
- nice people, both students and lecturers (Muthu!)
- night out in the town
- high average quality of lectures
- venue
- free food, good spirit among the students and lecturers, interesting lecturers
- interesting and skilled speakers
- very diverse audience from around the world
- in the program there were enough breaks and generally well planned
- nice location & good food
- interesting lectures
- meeting people
- poster session (excellent idea for sharing the ideas among us)
- interesting topics
- very high level of the speakers
- poster session is a perfect idea. Interaction with other PhD is really important
- nice place, no waste of time for moving
- nice topics
- meeting new people
- Muthu's lectures were outstanding
- I like that almost everything/everybody was in the hotel
- the pace was really well chosen (on macroscopic & microscopic level) as were the lecturers
- good speakers, from both academia & companies, broad but relevant topics
- rich social program, sauna in the evening
- nice location & venue
- the organization was very good
- very good speakers and interrelated topics
- many students
- location

- interaction with participants
- speakers (most of)
- very good organization of this school
- participants coming from different fields and different countries
- some lectures and topics were of great interest
- interesting topics
- nice people
- smooth organization
- interesting
- quality of lectures
- good global overview of the field
- interaction with scientific community
- interesting basic knowledge of what is going on in the different areas of science
- useful hints of what to do. Given by experienced lecturers.
- The social environment (sauna etc.) was perfect!
- Number of new ideas that came up with the lectures
- networking with other people
- food
- interesting lectures
- getting to know people
- very good organised
- very good lecturers
- good overview of the field of algorithmic analysis
- lecturers
- establishing scientific contacts
- nice place for the school
- good organization of the school
- lectures were informative
- good pace (i.e., sufficient breaks and time for socialising)
- seemed very well organized
- good quality of lectures
- good overview of topics
- recent results
- interaction
- good organization!
- Good not to have exercise sessions!
- High level lectures, speakers and participants
- topics for lectures were chosen carefully. Lectures tended to give an overview of things and not specific algorithms
- nice people
- seaside lectures
- good speakers
- international participation
- nice location
- interesting lecture topics (though not exactly my main subjects)
- maybe exercise sessions
- the lectures
- the hotel and its location
- the organization

- great lectures/lecturers
- good place
- high quality lectures (esp. Mutu & Paolo)
- good location
- international audience
- good organization
- informatively
- good topics
- poster session
- entertaining lecturers
- sauna
- both theoretical and applied examples
- organization
- quality of lectures
- location

Name the three most negative things you can think of saying about the summer school:

- too narrow topic (more machine learning !!! please)
- Finnish beer is not the best :)
- poster session should be earlier (to establish contacts)
- koffie
- a get-to-know session at the beginning was missing
- 4 lectures a day are a bit hard to digest
- the air in the small conference room was a bit sticky
- food
- social program
- no clue of what to do in Finland. The information about how to go to the hotel from airport is also misleading
- the food
- the food
- the food
- heat in the lecture halls, bad air in the presentation hall
- I cannot point to one (too) negative point, perhaps more machines with internet access (for those without notebooks)
- less interaction with Finnish students
- no free internet in hotel rooms
- a little too costly hotel
- internet access in rooms (for free)
- too much security at reception
- access to internet
- a bit more variety in meals (but I was generally happy with it)
- [Note: I do not have any major issues and was very happy with the summer school]
- program too long
- we were far from the center of Helsinki
- we could have more lecture notes

- days were long especially wen you add >1 hour of travel both on mornings and evenings
- passive and lecture based I had expected something more interactive)
- announcement of final program was late
- no preparator's material before school and no time to read the given material during the school
- bad facilities between Tuesday and Thursday
- I hope all the lecture notes can be found on the web site some day
- the place was quite far away from railway stations and airport
- our poster session could have been earlier. In Tuesday, for example.
- No free internet connection in the rooms
- air conditioning
- too much information over little time
- too long programs (esp. Monday)
- too weak coffee
- too short poster sessions; its better to have posters hanging during the whole school
- too narrow topics; it's better to have one “very broad” lecture (as an introduction lecture) and one “narrow” lecture so that anyone can follow an introduction lecture and interested people can follow “narrow” topics
- no seminar sessions; it's better to have some time to discuss, work in groups, solve some problems
- speakers (a few)
- Monday was exhausting
- too much diversity in topics
- there were no exercise sessions or work in groups to get to know better topics and people
- little narrow topics
- interesting but too different from my background to be really useful
- sun goes up too early, organize in spring/fall
- somewhat isolated location
- coffee was sometimes hard to drink
- coffee wasn't that good
- there is not much negative to say. However, the breaks could have been a little bit longer to give the people some minutes to relax (and to talk to each other).
- beer could have been less expensive – but I guess that I cannot really be influenced by you :)
- more time to work on exercises or group work as exercises may have been nice
- I did not know about the reception on Sunday before booking my light -> I could not attend it
- too short
- sometimes lecturers were difficult to understand
- felt in a nuclear testing zone! :-)
- maybe the place is far from the city centre
- coffee tastes like water
- title a bit misleading (SADA)
- many lectures on similar, mostly string processing topics
- the lecture rooms 1-2 were too hot and large auditorium not that nice for a classroom feeling
- Vuosaari is far away from Helsinki center
- recycling of the food (I got bored), the diverse background of participants that made it hard to form good connections, the lack of some social program
- distance room city centre to hotel
- most topics not very relevant for me
- too long poster sessions
- air quality in the small lecture room
- getting to know the city wasn't encouraged enough
- hang-over in Thursday morning

- took all the time for one week
- took 2 h to travel per day
- didn't find the nature path
- far from Helsinki downtown
- can't think of another
- the days were too long, esp. Monday
- the 4-hour poster session was too long, 2-3 hours would be ok
- the marathon poster session was too long. The IO issues were in my opinion overrepresented
- N/A
- located far away from the city centre
- the accommodation expense is a bit high
- expensive hotel
- could be more and better social events (more to see on excursion, some games or so in the evening)
- some proofs of some theorems could have been skipped
- the food was too good, have to eat too much
- no internet in rooms was a surprise
- no time to review the notes
- no slide printouts
- no time to sleep <= too interesting
- no sightseeing, except of boat trip, of Helsinki
- coffee was not always of some quality
- some fruit during the breaks would be nice
- lecturers sometimes went rather fast
- lecture slides (most) were not available before/during/shortly after the lectures themselves
- some lecturers were too difficult to follow or understand
- perfect break within a lecture is about in the middle of a lecture
- no handouts beforehand
- 4 hour of poster session – hard. It would be easy if the posters would be available for a longer time & people would be able to see them for a longer period
- getting lecture notes/hand-outs would have been very useful
- the poster session was somewhat long

Comments and suggestions for improvements of the summer school:

- give lecture notes or hand-outs on paper immediately (or even beforehand) so that is possible to go over the material again
- 2 * ca 40 min + break in the middle would have been better. Now it turned out as something like 70 + 5 min break + 20 min, which was too long
- I think it was a really good school
- poster session at the beginning of the summer school => more scientific contact with other students at the beginning of the school
- lectures at the morning, “work groups” in the afternoon (small groups, “talking” about open problems)
- - all in all: many thanks for this nice summer school
- see points above
- slide printouts (before school) (or even slides in the web)
- maybe some instruction how to survive in Helsinki (metro/bus tickets, some maps on SADA web page)

- evening not-CS lectures (like how to write a paper, etc. more complicated maybe)
- emails in the list of participants
- video/audio lectures on the web-page SADA
- list of participants with poster-subjects on the web before school
- poster session at the end of the week is not a good idea: there is no time to discuss with other participants on their posters in the following days, and many lecturers have left the school before the poster session
- internet :), WLAN is bad, slow, etc.
- poster session should be on one of the first days
- it could be a good idea to have the poster session at the first day
- the poster session should have been earlier
- videos of the lectures on the homepage
- poster session at the very beginning to get to know each other('s research)
- recordings would be nice
- posters on display through the entire summer school? This way there would also be more to discuss during the breaks
- I found 1.5h/2h of lectures in one go a bit too long, especially when the break of 5 min was usually only 30 min before the end
- I liked the lecture-only style, I think I wouldn't have learned as much from a more interactive system
- another shorter day with more social activities in the evening; maybe easier ways of recognizing people with similar background or research interests. However, I do think that diversion is good.
- More information about lectures in advance would be useful
- topics should be more diverse
- Hecse poster session was nicer due to seniors present, would be nice to have local seniors in other session for more interaction
- rantasauna was very nice
- poster session earlier
- some more interacting, not an examen but some tutorials (maybe)
- please ask lecturers to prepare and check presentations in advance
- poster session could have been earlier (say on Tuesday) -> through their work you get a better feeling for the other participants
- given that most of the people get less sleep than usually and the lectures are quite high level it would be nice to have more “active” parts interleaved with the lectures (instead of “only” caffeine”. Thanks.
- Not more than 3 times 1.5 hours of lectures per day
- comments are in the previous section
- poster session at the beginning of the school would have been useful for a more active interaction among participants
- more interaction
- time for reflection during the school
- more time from lectures about poster session in order to give some feedback to participants
- if you could somehow arrange more interaction with the lecturers, and perhaps try to have more of the lecturers at the poster sessions
- posters hanged up earlier, during several days (1 or 2 before poster session)
- please do audio/video recoding of lectures and put it on the web so that if students want to hear/watch again they have a possibility
- poster session earlier
- discussions in mini-groups, for narrower fields
- make sure all lecture halls are air-conditioned
- Don't separate the Hecse posters from the other participants posters if possible (OK, room constraints, but I believe the first session was not as well visited as the second one, causes weird group dynamics)
- video recording of lecture
- adopt Italian food
- more information about the place
- more diverse food (too European)
- the title is misleading

- need more interesting social program
- no big chance to communicate with the gurus
- poster session is somewhat boring
- poster session at the beginning
- maybe not have 4 lectures in any day
- poster session for longer time(poster hang in the area so that students can walk and see them before presentation) at the beginning of the summer school not at the end

In the feedback session on Friday afternoon:

- too long pauses
- poster session earlier
- a guide on the boat
- very broad name for school, could also have meant/expected more machine learning, statistics
- misleading name data analysis
- better description of what the school teaches
- contents very interesting
- expecting more interactivity, now only lectures, organized interactive sessions
- some interactive sessions would no suit everybody
- ides of interactivity
  - workshops – one problem/guru + group work in groups of 8-10 people, brainstorming to get new ideas
  - two sessions, one in the beginning and one a couple of days later
- (shorter summer school with) exercises after the summer school as some people need more time
- longer summer school with exercises
- poster session earlier and presentation of poster (e.g. One minute/poster)
- how to split poster sessions
  - A_L could not follow other A-Ls' posters
  - put up the posters earlier so that people get to know themselves
  - keep posters up for several days, but only have short sessions when presenters are present
  - put picture of presenter next to poster so that you can find the right person
  - put a small version of your poster on your badge for the same reason
- audio/video recoding of the lectures on the web
- social program
  - very long days, not much spare-time
  - shorter breaks perhaps
  - not too long breaks
  - 8 hours of lectures quite tough
  - too much program
  - the saunas were nice and people were eager to go, 2/3 went to the sauna