Seminar – Guidelines for participants

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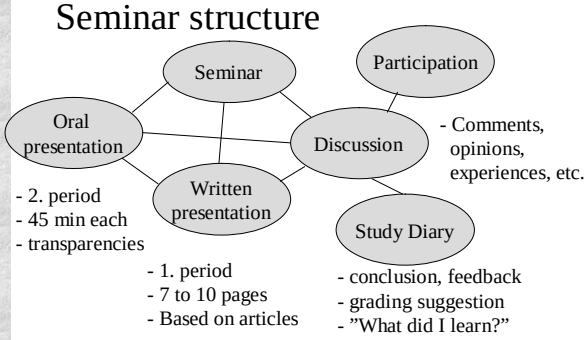
based on material by Timo Alanko

Seminar structure



Grading

- Active participation during the meetings
  - comments, questions, etc
- Presentation (obligatory)
- Grading based on
  - Written presentation
  - Oral presentation
  - Participation in the discussions
  - Study diary

Teaching goals of a seminar

- The development of communication skills
- The development of intellectual and professional competence
- The personal growth of students (and the tutor)

source: *Brown & Atkins: Effective teaching on Higher Education*

Goals (continue)

- Improving the presentation skills
  - practice written and oral presentations
- Study new subject
  - get an overview of the current trends
  - learn some part in more details
- Learn the research methods used in that specific field

Some types of thinking

- Analysing
- Logical reasoning
- Evaluating evidence or data
- Appraising and judging perceptively
- Thinking critically
- Synthesizing
- Speculating creatively
- Designing
- Arguing rationally
- Transferring skills to new contexts
- Problem-solving

Outline model

- Environment & problem } *The goal*
- Problem solving principle
- Actual content
- Results } *New knowledge*
- Evaluation of the research paper

Written presentation

- Structure
  - Terminology, Background
  - Questions
  - Methods
  - Results, evaluation
  - References (essential, others)
- Concise presentation, independently understandable
- Extended abstract (?)

Oral presentation: Transparencies

- **key words**, no sentences, mistsakes
- Figures, pictures
- Tables, lists
- Numbers (used in the presentation)
- **Examples**

- Do not overfill one page
- **Avoid too small font size (this is 14)**. this is 18, this is 24, this is 12

Font size

- 32 points : automatically offered by PowerPoint
- 28 points
- 24 points: smallest useable in Auditorium
- 20 points
- 18 points: smallest useable in any presentation (occasionaly too small)
- 16 points
- 14 points
- 12 points: Normal size in written papers
- 10 points: A bit small even for printed reports

Slide layout

Please, try to avoid full written sentences. They make the work for the audience very difficult. There is no time to follow the speech, because all the time and concentration goes to reading the slide.

This becomes even worse, if the presentation is directly read from the transparencies. There is no point in listening anymore. Also, the presenter eagerly uses very complex sentences that try to cover in one extreamly long sentence most of the material without loosing any details and facts.

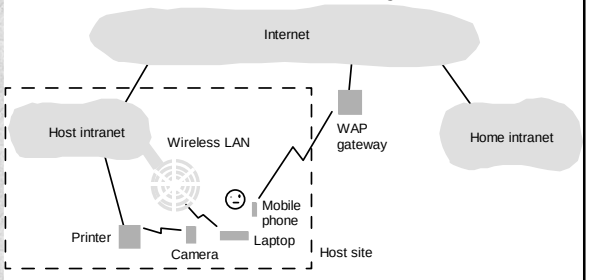
Example: Portable and handheld devices in a distributed system

- Devices
  - Mobile phone
  - Laptop
  - Camera
- Connection points
  - WAP
  - WLAN
  - USB
  - Intranet, Internet

How to clarify?

Figure !

Figure: Portable and handheld devices in a distributed system



Coulouris, Dollimore and Kindberg Distributed Systems: Concepts and Design Edn. 3

Oral presentation: speech

- Based on the transparencies
- Each item on the transparencies covered
- Nothing else is handled (except shortly)
- Other notes
  - to remember facts, extensions
  - presentation hints
- Use short sentences

Oral presentation: voice

- Clarity and strength
  - avoid sitting
  - speak to the furthest person
- Voice makes the structure
  - Stressing
    - importance
    - new theme
  - Pauses
    - new theme

Oral presentation: Other things

- Computer, transparencies, blackboard
- Notice the audience
- Movements
- *Hands*

- **Practice,** practice,
  - NEVER write down the whole oral presentation
  - If uncertain, speak (and time) the whole presentation on your own or for a small audience

How to start

- Locate material
- Read articles
- Use the structure model
- Make first sketch of the structure
- Go into more details

- 'Scientific Writing' –course material useful

Examples of probing questions

- Does that always apply?
- How is that relevant?
- Can you give me an example?
- Is there an alternative viewpoint?
- How reliable is the evidence?
- How accurate is your description?
- You say it is *x*, which particular kind of *x*?
- What's the underlying principle then?
- In what situation would this rule break down?
- What distinguishes the two cases?