Use of webboard in two programming courses

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Department of Computer Science

• **First year bachelor course (5 ETCS)**
  – 450 participants
  – CS, IT, MATH, etc.
  – Traditional course
    • 4 hours of lectures per week
    • 4 hours of labs per week (TØ)
    • Study café 6 hours per week
  – 15 mandatory assignments
  – Most assignments made in groups of 2 persons

Webboard was nice to have
• Limited number of postings
• Used by a limited number of students
• Easy to establish and run
• Valuable tool for communication between me and the 15 instructors

• **Course for high-school teachers (10 ECTS)**
  – Supplementary education (EVU)
  – 30 participants distributed all over DK
  – 8 full day seminars
  – Between seminars all help was provided via the webboard
  – More than 20 mandatory assignments
  – Assignments made in groups of 1-2 persons

Webboard was essential
• Huge number of postings
• Used by nearly all students
• Only way to get help between the seminars
# Webboard in bachelor course

Only 160 postings (few participants)
- 20 general announcements
- 70 questions + answers
- Average of far less than one question per student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forum</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Posts</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generelt</td>
<td>Alt hvad der relaterer sig til kurset, og ikke er dækket af et andet forum.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uge 1 (35)</td>
<td>Alt hvad der relaterer sig til første uge af kurset.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uge 2 (36)</td>
<td>Alt hvad der relaterer sig til anden uge af kurset.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uge 3 (37)</td>
<td>Alt hvad der relaterer sig til tredje uge af kurset.</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uge 4 (38)</td>
<td>Alt hvad der relaterer sig til fjerde uge af kurset.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uge 5 (39)</td>
<td>Alt hvad der relaterer sig til femte uge af kurset.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eksamen</td>
<td>Alt hvad der relaterer sig til eksamen på kurset.</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Diskussioner udenfor pensum</td>
<td>Giver vist sig selv.</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Staff Discussion**
Dette forum er i øjeblikket ikke tilgængeligt.

**Total:** 253 posts
Limited use in the bachelor course

- **Students had many other ways to get help**
  - 4 hours of labs (TØ) per week
  - 6 hours in the study café per week
  - They worked in pairs (groups of 2 persons)
  - Study group (with 4 persons)

- **Webboard was still useful**
  - Used by some students to get help
  - Postings were read (and used) by much more students
  - Also used for general announcements to the students
  - Heavily used for communication with the 15 instructors on the course

**Course evaluation: Has the webboard been useful?**

- Don't know: 56%
- Not at all: 14%
- Little: 17%
- Some: 7%
- Much: 7%

125 students
Webboard for high-school teachers

- Completely different picture
  - In the course the webboard was used extensively

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forum</th>
<th>Beskrivelse</th>
<th>Indlæg i alt</th>
<th>Læste indlæg</th>
<th>Deltagere</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uge 1-3</td>
<td>Alt om uge 1-3</td>
<td>229</td>
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<td>Uge 4-7</td>
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<td>Uge 9-11</td>
<td>Alt om uge 9-11</td>
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<td>Uge 12-15</td>
<td>Alt om uge 12-15</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mundtlig eksamen</td>
<td>Alt om mundtlig eksamen</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Alt andet</td>
<td>Alt andet</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td><strong>Staff Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Internfor underviser og instruktører</td>
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</table>

Nearly 1,000 postings
- Many general announcements
- 450 questions + answers
- Average of 15 questions per student
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Views</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19-04-17</td>
<td>23:43</td>
<td>for banalt ikk sandt</td>
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<td>21:25</td>
<td>tests generelt - lidt mere gennemgang/forklaring?</td>
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<td>09:50</td>
<td>test for arrive i opgave 4</td>
<td>Heidi Skovbak Graversen</td>
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<td>17-04-17</td>
<td>20:01</td>
<td>opgave 1 computerspil</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>17-04-17</td>
<td>20:00</td>
<td>computerspil 2 opgave 4</td>
<td>Heidi Degnemark</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>17-04-17</td>
<td>18:59</td>
<td>CG2, opgave 4 - arrive</td>
<td>Mikkel Zeilberger Herold</td>
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<td>23:15</td>
<td>Computerspil 2 opgave 5</td>
<td>Anne Sofie Haun Eriksen</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extensive use in the course for HS teachers

• Only way to get help (from us) in the 2-4 weeks between seminars
  – We refused to answer questions sent by mail
  – Webboard questions were answered fast and at nearly all hours of the day/evening including weekends (by me and 2 instructors)
  – Answers were used extensively by other students
  – Students also answered and commented each others questions
  – Traffic peak Monday in the late evening (deadline for assignments at midnight)

Course evaluation: Has the webboard been useful?

- Don’t know: 4%
- Not at all: 12%
- Little: 20%
- Some: 36%
- Much: 28%

For this course the webboard was essential
Lessons to be learnt (from both courses)

- **Important to teach the students how to use the webboard**
  - Use descriptive titles
  - One problem per thread
  - Precise unambiguous questions

- **Students must be encouraged to use the webboard**
  - Useful to allow anonymous postings

- **Questions must be answered as fast as possible**
  - Preferably within a few minutes (also outside normal working hours)
  - Involve instructors (and other students)
  - At the bachelor course we have a small gift to the instructor who is most active on the webboard

- **Webboard is very easy to establish and run**
  - Setup time is minimal (10-15 minutes)
  - It is useful for some students (number depends on the course)
  - It is extremely useful for communication with the instructors (via a special closed forum)
  - Work of maintaining the webboard is proportional to the use
Questions or comments…..