

Course Report WASP Graduate School

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Deep Learning for Natural Language Processing, 6hp

Semester: Spring 2024

Number of registered students: 44

Answering frequency (course evaluation): 9/44 (20%)

Examination results

Number of students examined: 32

Fail: 0 (0%)

Pass: 32 (100%)

Brief summary of student viewpoints and suggestions

Results of WASP base-line quantitative questions

- What is your overall rating of the course? (1-5)
 - Average rating 4.4 (no answer below 3)
- Did you enjoy the course? (1-5)
 - Average rating 4.56 (no answer below 3)
- Was it time well spent? (1-5)
 - Average rating 4.33 (no answer below 3)
- To what extent do you consider that you've fulfilled the entry requirements / recommended prior knowledge for the course described on the WASP intranet? (<https://internal.wasp-sweden.org/graduate-school-2/wasp-graduate-school-courses/deep-learning-for-natural-language-processing/>) (1-5)
 - Average assessment 4.22 (no answer below 3)

Answers to free text-questions to be (shortly) summarized under "Strengths" and "Weaknesses"

- What was the best aspect of the course?
- What would you suggest improving?
- What advice would you like to give to future participants?
- Other comments. Is there anything else you would like to add?

"Strengths" according to students²

¹ The report should be written by the examiner together with the teachers and possibly others, such as teaching assistants

² Based on both quantitative results and key viewpoints from students' free-text answers

- The setup with videos and other material for independent self-studies being distributed prior to actual course meetings, to leave room for discussions and “spending the time together doing something meaningful” was much appreciated.
- Teachers were motivated and dedicated, which helped the learning.
- The course’s content was mentioned as extremely valuable, and some comments mention that attendees really felt to have learned a lot.

"Weaknesses" according to students²

- The main complaint is concerning the schedule and workload distribution of the course. Suggestions range from simply cutting away one assignment (2 instead of 3) to having two courses, one for beginners and one for more advanced students, to ease up the schedule.
- Some comments were made regarding the implementation of the in-person meetings, where some (too much) time was spent discussing assignments, or working on assignments in the classroom, which was difficult (very few answers, though).

Overall, there is quite some enthusiasm about the course, recommendations are mainly focusing on the timing and the workload (start early with the course project, be prepared for a heavy workload), while taking the course is clearly recommended.

Comments from teachers on the implementation and outcome of the course³

- This year was the first time we gave the course in person – the first two sessions (in 2020 and 2022) had to be online. We were uncertain whether our flipped classroom setup would work in the new format, so we are happy that the student feedback was largely positive.
- One thing we continue to find challenging about the course is the wide spread of students, especially regarding their educational backgrounds. Some students have minimal experience with machine learning and deep learning; others have extensive experience. We try to be accommodating to different backgrounds but can understand that some students can find the course to have a hefty workload.

Proposed changes/comments/measures

- Given the generally positive response, we do not plan any fundamental changes to the course format.
- We are discussing how we can communicate even more clearly what the prerequisites for the course are and what the course will “feel like” for different student groups.

³ Including changes effected during the course