

# The Interdisciplinary Assessment Project Connecting Science & Business

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Amsterdam – 02/02/2017



# Interdisciplinary Assessment Project

- Concept
- Rationale
- Structure
- Evaluation
- Critical success factors
- Added value

# IAP: concept

A collaboration between:

## **Agoria**

Belgian trade association for technological industries

## **KU Leuven, Department of Economics and business**

Master of Business Engineering

Master in Environment, Health and Safety Management

## **KU Leuven, Department of Engineering technology**

Master of Industrial Engineering

# IAP: concept

Students from different disciplines  
work together in interdisciplinary teams  
on interdisciplinary projects  
for technological companies

Student teams advise companies  
on a specific problem  
from different perspectives:

**ECONOMICS – TECHNOLOGY – SUSTAINABILITY**

# Why engage in interdisciplinary teamwork?

Two opposing disciplinarians can look at the same thing  
and not see the same thing

Petrie, H. G. (1976). Do You See What I See? The Epistemology of Interdisciplinary Inquiry. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 10(1), 29-43.

Interdisciplinarity generally refers to the appropriate combination of knowledge from many different specialties – especially as a means to shed new light on an actual problem. In notably effective efforts, the combination of disciplines adds value: the total is more interesting than the sum of the individual contributions or parts.

Brewer, G. D. (1999). The challenges of interdisciplinarity. *Policy Sciences*, 32, 327-337.

# Why engage in interdisciplinary teamwork?

**To respond to a need of the business world  
and the challenges of a complex society**

interdisciplinary problem solving

communicate across and collaborate with other disciplines

employability and adaptability

function in a complex – but realistic - environment

# Topics

Sustainable energy

Lean management

Eco-efficiency

Safety and social welfare

Sustainable production

Natural resources

Resource efficiency and resources out of waste

Best available techniques

Factory of the Future: Made Different (Agoria)

...

# Some examples

- Best available techniques for photo oxidation and ionisation
- Optimizing waste processing and potential for recycling of materials
- Resource efficiency and resources out of waste: recycling foundry sand
- The circular economy: end-of-waste criteria
- Recycling of fiberglass
- World Class Energy Efficiency and Eco-production



# Course characteristics

- 4 → 6 credits (150 to 180 hours of study load)
- ICT support (university digital platform, Adobe Connect)
- ± 15 professors involved (coaches)
- ± 10 partner companies, each with one or two projects
- Output: consultancy report, poster, presentation

# Structure of the course

Selection of companies and projects (Agoria)

Students choose their favorite projects

Introductory lecture

Students are assigned to a team

Kick-off meeting

Independent teamwork with coaching

Three milestones with feedback sessions

Web conferences

Closing event: presentations + ceremony

# Evaluation

- Evaluation of product, process and presentation
- Evaluatie by coaches, company and peers
- Clear evaluation criteria

	Company	Coaches	
Product	25%	25%	50%
Process	15%	15%	30%
Presentation	20%		20%
	50%	50%	

Group
Individual

# Evaluation details (1)

- Product evaluation: grade at group level (50%)
  - Product evaluation by internal coaches (25%)
    - = average of the three grades...
    - ... unless the students fail for one discipline.  
Then the lowest score counts for all disciplines.
  - Product evaluation by company coach (25%)
- Process evaluation
  - Score at team level by company coach (15%)
  - Individual score by internal coaches (15%)
- Presentation: individual score (max=4 points)

**Productevaluatie (consultancy report)<sup>1</sup>**

<b>BEOORDELAAR:</b>	
<b>BEDRIJF:</b>	
<b>GROEP:</b>	

**Toelichting bij de puntenschaal**

- ONV = Onvoldoende resultaat, extra werk is vereist ( ≤ 9 / 20)  
 VOL = Voldoende, de prestatie is volgens de verwachtingen (10 – 12 / 20)  
 G = Goed, globaal genomen een meer dan behoorlijk werk (13 – 14 / 20)  
 ZG = Zeer goed, het resultaat is aanzienlijk beter dan gemiddeld (15 – 16 / 20)  
 U = Uitstekend, een uitmuntende prestatie, werk van uitzonderlijk hoog niveau ( ≥ 17 / 20)

<b>1. VORM EN LEESBAARHEID VAN HET RAPPORT</b>	ONV	VOL	G	ZG	U
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>De vorm van het rapport komt overeen met het doel (doelgroep, werkwijze, randvoorwaarden).</li> <li>De opbouw van het rapport is logisch en helder.</li> <li>Het taalgebruik sluit aan bij de doelgroep.</li> <li>Begrippen worden gedefinieerd en indien nodig uitgelegd.</li> <li>Alle elementen van de tekst zijn relevant met het oog op de probleemstelling.</li> <li>De rode draad van het betoog wordt goed vastgehouden.</li> </ul>					
<b>2. PROBLEEMDEFINITIE, ARGUMENTATIE EN OPLOSSING</b>	ONV	VOL	G	ZG	U
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Het probleem is gedefinieerd overeenkomstig de opdracht.</li> <li>De probleemstelling is helder geformuleerd en zo nodig in deelvragen uiteengelegd.</li> <li>De argumenten worden in termen van het onderwerp van het project en overeenkomstig de belangen van het bedrijf gegeven.</li> <li>Bij standpunten zijn steeds zowel argumenten pro als contra vermeld (beredeneerde afweging).</li> <li>De herkomst van belangrijke uitspraken is duidelijk. Zo nodig is de bron vermeld.</li> <li>Argumenten zijn onderbouwd door verwijzingen naar gebruikte bronnen en literatuur.</li> <li>Het rapport wordt afgesloten met helder geformuleerde aanbevelingen.</li> <li>De aanbevelingen sluiten aan bij de probleemstelling.</li> </ul>					
<b>3. BUSINESSORIENTATIE</b>	ONV	VOL	G	ZG	U
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Het rapport is concreet: het is direct bruikbaar binnen het bedrijf.</li> <li>Het rapport en de voorgestelde oplossingen zijn toegespitst op het bedrijf.</li> <li>Het rapport en de aanbevelingen bevatten een duidelijke bedrijfseconomische component.</li> <li>Het rapport en de aanbevelingen bevatten een duidelijke technologische component.</li> <li>Het rapport en de aanbevelingen bevatten een duidelijke component milieu/duurzaamheid.</li> <li>Het rapport vertoont een samenhang in de dimensies economie, technologie en duurzaamheid.</li> </ul>					

**Globale beoordeling voor dit deel (score op 20): \_\_\_\_\_ / 20**

OPMERKINGEN

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Het punt voor het product is altijd een groepspunt. Hier hoeft dus geen onderscheid gemaakt te worden tussen de studenten.

# Evaluation details (2)

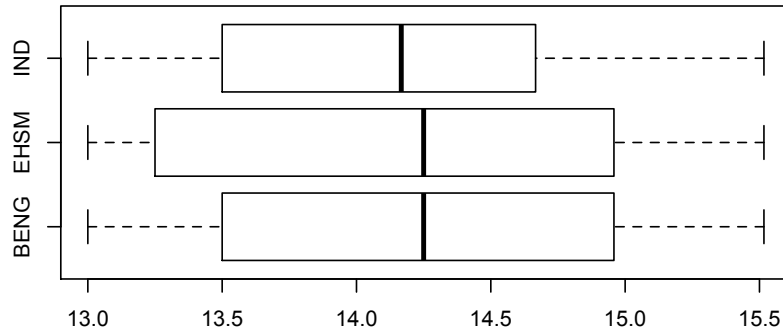
- Peer evaluation
  - Evaluation of how team members work together
  - We ask students to rank the *other* students of the team and assign them a percentage that reflects their contribution
  - Percentages are 100% on average
  - Based on an average peer percentage for each student, the weight for product evaluation (50%) is corrected.
  - Difference between the unweighted and weighted final grade is at most 5 points out of 20.
- Final grade after the presentation: correction + or - by 2 points max

# Average peer scores: results 2016

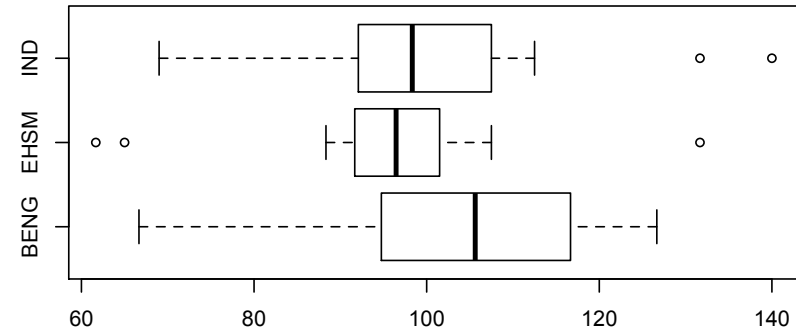
FROM \ TO	IND	BENG	EHSM
IND	114,25	96,43	90,77
BENG	96,52	112,50	102,14
EHSM	94,16	110,21	96,38

# Grading (2016)

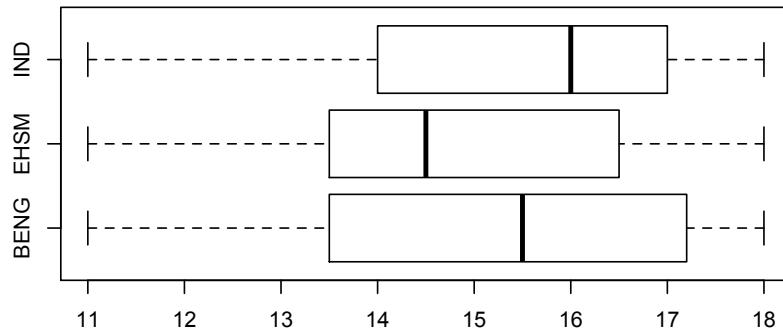
Product evaluation



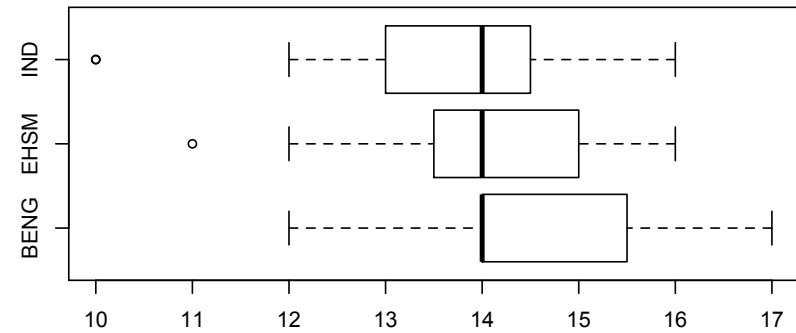
Peer scores received



Process evaluation

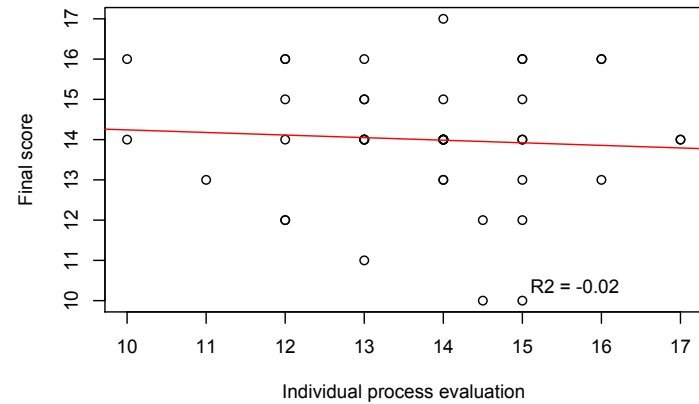
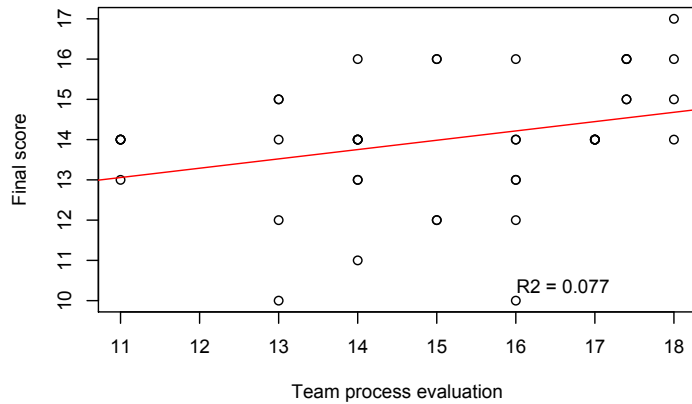
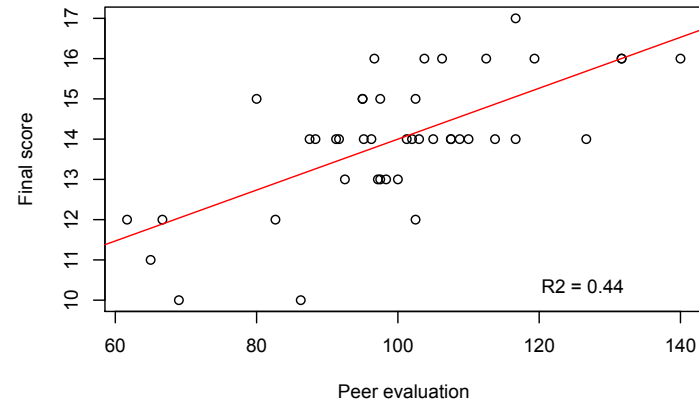
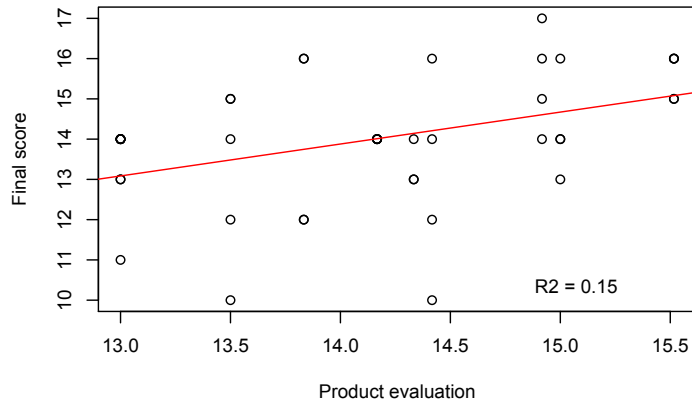


Final grades





# Grading (2016)



# Critical success factors

Interdisciplinary topic appealing for students, with added value for the companies

Collaboration of companies / sector federation / university

Involvement (ownership!) and time investment of colleagues

Multicampus project: attention to communication, planning, etc.

# Added value (1)

- **For students**

- Relevant, “real” and topical subject
- Experience interdisciplinary teamwork in a realistic setting
- Use acquired knowledge and skills outside “classical” courses
- Develop intrapreneurial skills

- **For the departments**

- Professional network (also for research, internships, etc.)
- Strengthen contacts with the job market of our students

# Added value (2)

- **For participating companies:**
  - Suggested actions and solutions: have a fresh and interdisciplinary view on the investigated matter
  - Get in touch with potential employees
  - Get in touch with faculty
- **For the sector federation:**
  - A service tailored to their members

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