

Evaluation of ACP Summer School 2011

The evaluation is based on 29 replies from 34 participants.

Most questions could be answered in a numerical range of 1 to 5, the number 1 means complete agreement and 5 means complete disagreement. That is, 1 is good and 5 is bad.

Many thanks to those who participated in this evaluation,
and for the generally positive feedback,

— Christian Schulte and Pierre Flener, July 20, 2011

Participant Information

1. Level of study
 - PhD not yet started: 3
 - PhD 1st year: 10
 - PhD 2nd year or more: 8
 - PhD already obtained: 5
 - Other: 3

Courses

2. I appreciated the content and the level of the courses.
(Average: 1.48)
 - The curriculum covered the state-of-the-art in hybridising traditional CP and concepts from related areas. The content was taught at an appropriate level.
 - some parts of John's lectures were quite demanding to follow
 - Almost all the material was new to me, and some was quite challenging, but nothing seemed completely out of reach or unintelligible. A good balance.
 - Although some content is quite difficult for me to follow, it is still very nice to get some basic ideas of non-familiar topic.
 - An introductory lesson could be useful to those people who didn't work with this topics before.
 - I thought there was a good mix of topics, and the level was right for me.
 - The content was excellent for me – this was what attracted me to attend in the first place.

- Laurent Michel 1 (practical) John Hooker 2 (not so much about CP but still interesting) Ian Gent 3 Michel Rueher 4 (I could not relate to the interval topics)
- Although it has been very theoretical, I liked it.
- The courses were good overall. Different educational backgrounds resulted in variance in the perceived level of the courses
- sometimes it depends on the knowledge that each one acquires
- Sometimes not easy to follow, but still good overall.

3. I appreciated the quality of the presentations.

(Average: 1.45)

- The quality of presentation varied with the lecturer in charge. A renowned researcher is not automatically a renowned presenter. This problem, however, is not inherent to CP but also shows up in other areas. The overall quality was good, though. I would have liked a clear agenda in Laurent Michel's course. For my taste, it was also too focussed on Comet programming. Ian Gent's lectures were perfectly structured, and easy to follow. The same applies to John Hooker's course. I would have liked Michel Rueher to be more enthusiastic. This didn't affect the quality of his presentations, though.
- It would be good to have a decent break in the middle of the presentation. 45min + 15min break + 45mins.
- Almost universally excellent. A little more on SAT/CP integration (as opposed to cross-fertilization) would have been nice. LCG is really interesting, would have liked more time on that.
- Most of the lectures are very attractive.
- The lecturers did a good job to jam the amount of material they presented into a fairly short time.
- Quality was very good on all presentations.
- The presentations were overall well done.
- also, lecturers were very willing to teach and discuss with us
- Speakers were awesome!

4. I appreciated the nightcaps.

(Average: 2)

- The nightcaps were informative, but they mostly lacked the intellectual discussion as the title "intellectual nightcaps" promised. This doesn't (!) apply to Thursday's outstanding nightcap which covered insights to the CP community, including some controversy.

- Little of them and I expected more interaction, involving the students, discussions.
- Especially the last one was interesting.
- I like the idea, and it was a good way to work in presentations from the sponsors.
- I enjoy the last one especially.
- The sponsor presentations were OK but I did not get much out of them
- I didn't expect to be interested in what the two sponsor companies did, but I enjoyed their presentations. The nightcap discussion was useful too.
- From a pure study perspective I think they are of limited usefulness.
- This was more marketing than intellectual.
- On the first night, I had done a group activity to know everyone.
- The industrial presentations were largely irrelevant to me, though I realize the sponsors likely require it. The talk in the amphitheatre was more interesting.
- really intellectual
- Not my cup of tea, but I appreciate the last "sum-up" nightcap.

Organisation

5. The school has been well organised (for example: information, transport, responsiveness, timetable, ...).
(Average: 1.31)

- Perfect. Many thanks to the organisers.
- (Score of 2) Due to the 1.5h break between the two lectures in the afternoon. (**Comment from the organisers:** *We know of many events where the attendance dozed off without such a break!*)
- Sure
- Good work!
- wifi? :) (**Comment from the organisers:** *Organisation has nothing to do with the wifi; see item 9.*)
- Yes, thank you so much for all your hard work.
- The organisers, and especially Pierre, did an excellent job. Whoever arranged the weather should be complimented too.
- Excellent

- Perfect.
- Some additional information regarding transport would have been nice prior to the trip (how hard it would be to get from turunc to dalaman in the early morning). During the actual school, everything was well organized. (**Comment from the organisers:** *Links to ITAP and its transportation page were announced many times before the summer school.*)
- Everything was fine
- very much
- Everything was per-fect.

6. The school was a good deal (250 euros).

(Average: 1.28)

- Good. I have been to summer schools that are better funded, and therefore, can provide full/partial scholarships. (**Comment from the organisers:** *The opportunity to apply for scholarships was clearly advertised, and available to all those who applied on time! Due to the low demand, all half scholarships were even upgraded to full ones.*)
- Hard to believe that amount even covered room and board, frankly.
- Sure
- Extremely good deal!
- For me the price of the school is small compared to the cost of travel anyway.
- A very good deal
- Nearly a tenth of the travel cost.
- Really good deal
- very much
- I have never attended a cheaper summer school!
- coffee breaks could have been included in the total price (obviously with an increase in fees)

7. I enjoyed the excursion.

(Average: 1.34)

- Nice idea. Thanks.
- It was long with little "content" (**Comment from the organisers:** *The purpose was to relax and bond!*)
- It was great. Much better to have an organized excursion, instead of an impromptu afternoon off where everyone goes off in their cliques.

- It has lots of fun.
- It would have been terrible to be so close to the sea and not go for a cruise. The water was beautiful.
- Somewhat sun sensitive, I naturally end up an outlier for most activities.
- there was a lot of fun
- very much
- Just great!

8. I enjoyed that the school was organised in a conference centre grouping classrooms, restaurant, bar, accommodation at the same location.

(Average: 1.28)

- Best way to do it. And having the internet only on the terrace helped to keep (almost) everyone social! Awesome use of side-effects.
- Sure. It is very convenient.
- This was great for building relationships.
- This was great, because people would be together on the terrace even when doing different things, like using laptops, reading, swimming, etc.
- (I was staying in Loryma hotel)
- The food has been spectacular.
- The arrangement was nice, though I can't comment on it being superior to alternate arrangements. I certainly made good use of the common location.
- It's easier that way
- we didn't lose time at all and we shared more time all together
- Indeed, and the village was not so far anyway.

9. I appreciated the quality of ITAP (classroom, meals, accommodation, service, ...).

(Average: 1.69)

- Quality is generally good. For computer science related events, however, the IT infrastructure should be better (power outlets, ventilated rooms with desks, and - most of all - internet connection).
- Internet connection was a pain (**Comment from the organisers:** *Maybe it is sometimes better not to be on-line all the time, especially during such an event.*)
- A bit far from the town centre (shops, services, etc.) (**Comment from the organisers:** *Relative isolation is universally recognised to be an advantage for such events.*)

- Internet connection was very poor. Otherwise everything worked very well, especially the food. Wasp repellent would be a good idea in this location.
- (If it had been hot all week, the lack of air conditioning in the rooms would have been an issue. In the actual case, it was not.)
- The food is quite delicious, and people is very nice. The only shortcomings are the network access is poor, and the classroom is a little small.
- The only problems were: 1) Internet connectivity 2) Water should have been provided for free / been included in the prize 3) The mad roosters crowing at 5 AM like if it was the end of the world!
- The meals especially were excellent, and the staff were very friendly.
- The meals and the service were excellent.
- Nothing to complain about, but it wasn't anything to complement either.
- Meals were excellent. Internet was the only weak point.
- The only problem was the internet connection.
- Food was excellent. Classroom met the required needs. Accommodation was adequate, but could be improved.
- Everything was fine
- They were just fantastic! But drinks were a bit expensive.

Overall

10. The school met my expectations (content, scope, depth, format, ...).
(Average: 1.52)

- Good. I would have liked the format more student centred, e.g., "student sessions" where students can get feedback from experienced researchers on their research related to the school's topic.
- I can't follow some classes because I'm not an expert on the topics treated (**Comment from the organisers:** *The summer school was clearly advertised as an advanced one, with deep knowledge of CP a prerequisite.*)
- It was as I expected, and I found the material taught to be very useful.
- I had expected the lessons to be more practical.
- It has been more theoretical than expected

- A lot was learned, but the variance in student backgrounds means that depth suffered in topics for which I already had knowledge.
- yes
- Was a bit difficult sometimes since I don't come from the CP community (at the origin), but still very interesting. I have learned a lot!

11. I shall recommend to other students to attend such a school.

(Average: 1.14)

- I have done so, and will keep doing in the future.
- Absolutely.
- Sure
- Absolutely.
- I wish I could recommend to myself to go to previous schools too.
- Of course.
- yes
- it is a great experience regardless the students' background or PhD year
- yes
- Definitely.

General Comments

12. Give three positive aspects of this school.

- The nightcaps were important to me because they offered me a clear idea of how CP-technology is currently used in industry
- 1, organisation 2, audience = throughout promising (future) researchers 3 Ian Gent
- 1 Content of the courses, 2 Meeting students/lecturers from the CP area, 3 Nice atmosphere and place of the SS.
- 1 Venue (including food and the excursion) 2 Great collection of participants 3 John Hooker. (his talks were very interesting and right to the theme of hybridisation)
- 1, Good people 2, Good topics 3 Good location
- 1, courses and lecturers 2, organization 3, location
- 1, quality of lectures 2, location 3 organization

- 1 an inspiring environment for gaining insight and developing ideas, 2 a well balanced set of topics, 3 a reasonable schedule
- 1 The lectures were top-notch, 2 the location was wonderful, 3 and the conversations were really interesting.
- 1, It's well organized. We get lots of helps from the organizers. Also, people from ITAP are very nice. 2, I enjoy the workload of the lectures of this summer school. It is very nice to have long break during lectures, and also the excursion. 3, Most of the lecturers give very attractive lectures, and the place of the summer school has a very nice view.
- 1, very good atmosphere to meet other students in the field 2, amazing location, very good service at ITAP 3 very good lecturers, very relevant topic
- 1 Enjoy a really good time with all the people, 2 Get in contact with PhD students working on the same, 3 Listen classes from experts
- 1, The atmosphere was friendly and inclusive. 2, The content and delivery styles were varied, having something for everyone. 3, There were plenty of opportunities for getting to know people.
- 1, the location was perfect 2, the material was what I wanted to cover 3, the people (attendees, organisers, lecturers and ITAP staff) were a pleasure to spend time with
- Pleasant location, Good lecturers and lectures, Good schedule
- 1, Meet people who deal with CP 2, Nice location 3
- Presented subjects are interesting and actual, Teachers are prominent researchers in the field, Nice location
- 1, learning new things 2, know many people 3, the place
- 1. Meeting fellow researchers 2. Interesting lectures 3. Located outside of Europe
- 1, I learned a lot about CP techniques applicable to my PhD topic. 2, Hearing from sponsors at the nightcaps was great, as it showed that CP is useful in industry as well as academia. 3 The food was fantastic, and so was the location!
- 1, Valuable knowledge and perspective gained in the lectures 2, Scenic location 3 Great food
- 1 Content of the courses, 2 quality of the side discussions, 3 The place was really great
- 1, get advice and directions from professors or experts 2, get in touch with other PhD students 3, exchange opinions and ideas on research topics

- 1, The organizers were very nice and professional 2, The excursion was a very good idea. 3, Pierre was the man of the school
- 1, Good atmosphere. 2, Amazing speakers! 3 Great place and soooo cheap.
- 1, interesting program 2, super organizers 3 lovely place
- 1, Exchange with professors and students 2, Courses 3, Location

13. Give three aspects that could be improved.

- Considering, that the lectures were taught every day I think that some presentations could be more general. It is difficult to follow a lecture that is full of technical details.
- 1, IT infrastructure 2, intellectual discussions 3 student-centred format
- 1 More interaction/involvement of students (e.g. presentation of research topic on nightcap or smth like this), 2 A bit difficult place to reach
- 1 About the venue: Internet and coffee. 2 More interaction with the participants: maybe a session of hands-on problem solving, or rather a few short sessions to give people the opportunity to think on the problem on their own time.
- 1, Internet connection 2, More smaller social 'events' 3
- 1, Wi-Fi network reliability 2, badges :) 3, coffee breaks
- 1, wifi connection 2, 3
- 1 Internet connection, 2 a possibility to buy snacks outside regular meals, 3 more hands-on tutorials
- 1 Reliable internet, 2 air conditioning, 3 and the slides were really hard to see from the back half of the classroom.
- 1, The poor internet access :(2, The classroom is a little small. 3, It will be better if ITAP also provides water especially in the classroom.
- 1, maybe some hands-on workshop? e.g. the Comet presentation could have been complemented with that. 2, the contents in the global (numerical) optimisation lectures diverged from that topic in some points (e.g. when we learnt about constraint-based program verification) (**Comment from the organisers: Objection: Hybrid methods were used in that lecture!**) 3 the discussion on Thursday night could have been more fruitful with a better preparation (e.g. if we knew the topic in advance).
- 1 WiFi, 2 Introductions in each topic, 3

- 1, It felt like too large a group to have a discussion for the nightcap, so maybe we could have split up according to interest in a particular topic. 2, The flakiness of the internet connection was annoying, although it wasn't a major concern. 3, Some sort of magical insect barrier would be great!
- 1, I liked John's homework and would have liked more practical work to practice the things that were taught, although there wouldn't have been much time to do it. 2, Air conditioning would have made the rooms easier to sleep in at night, as would the strangulation of the roosters.
- Better coffee (!), During a period with slightly more comfortable temperatures (colder), Not in a tourist location (for better prices if you need to buy something)
- 1, Give a better idea of the course topics upfront 2, 3
- There should be some room for exercises (using pencil and paper, or laptop) Internet access was not so good Some bar, or at least machine with snacks since school was not so close to a supermarket
- 1, Internet connection 2, group activity to know everyone 3
- 1. Practical session would have been interesting, though admittedly quite difficult given the topic of this Summer School 2. A little bit more practical information on travel, local customs etc. could have been provided 3. Free coffe/tea during breaks, but the price of the school was so low, it didn't really matter
- 1, Shorter talks on a wider variety of topics might work better, as this would increase the breadth of topics, and make more talks useful for more students. 2, The network not being able to cope with 30-odd people was a bit annoying, but worth putting up with for the awesome location!
- 1, Sleep disturbances (roosters) and jet lag made for severe sleep deprivation - under these coniditons, arriving earlier to adjust would have been beneficial 2, More discussions would have been nice, though given aspect (1), I'm not sure I would have been capable 3 6 hours of lecture a day was a lot - using an extra day to reduce the daily lecture load would have been beneficial
- 1 Some practical lessons would help, 2 , 3
- 1, coffee breaks with free coffee and refreshments 2, a transportation from the hotel to the village/sea 3
- 1,the location 2,the student would be happy I think if they are able to discuss their own thesis problems withing a group that can help them sort them out. 3
- Really, I don't see. Just keep it up!

- 1,cofee break 2, 3