

Study programmes in Decision Sciences at Corvinus University of Budapest

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Abstract: The presentation describes the joint curriculum development activities of the researchers and professors of MTA SZTAKI and Corvinus University in various areas of decision sciences. The framework of the programmes, the subject areas, and the results of different periods in the last 15 years' teaching activities will be presented. Our aim is to discuss our approaches, the teaching methodology, the assessment methods, and to exchange ideas how to run attractive and successful programmes in decision sciences.

Keywords: curriculum development; study programmes in decision sciences; decision support; decision software in the classroom

The collaboration of Computer and Automation Research Institute, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA SZTAKI) and Corvinus University of Budapest (CUB) started in the middle of the 1990s. Tamás Rapcsák the Head of the Laboratory of Operations Research and Decision Sciences and József Temesi Professor of the Department of Operations Research decided to develop a minor for those students in the Business School of CUB who were interested in the theory and applications of decision making. The minor consisted of four subjects with different objectives: one of them introduced the students to the field, another one dealt with multiattribute decision making, and the other two covered modelling and computational aspects in decision sciences.

The minor was surprisingly successful. Every year about 30-35 students got a certification in the diploma indicating that they have finished the major successfully. This minor opened the way not only to plan other study programmes together, but fruitful research collaboration, as well.

From 2003 to 2009 a new minor was also implemented for students of the School of Economics. The presentation will give some details about the subjects of both minors: the teaching methodology, the textbooks and materials have been used, the software background and the assessment methods.

With the introduction of the Bologna compatible programmes at the university in 2005, the majors have been reorganized, and most of the minors disappeared. Having been prepared for the changes and based on our experience we have developed new courses for business and economics students in Bachelor's and Master's level, too. The second part of our presentation will report the main results and some problems emerged with the new system.

We always had excellent students around the programmes as teaching assistants, some of them wrote a Thesis Work on decision support systems, multiattribute decision making, application of a particular decision software, etc. Recently doctoral students also assist in our teaching and research.

Although our presentation will focus on our achievements, some challenges will also be discussed. We want to share our experience with the colleagues during the workshop and to talk about various aspects of our teaching methodology. How to involve the students actively in the classroom work? What textbooks/software are recommended to use? What is the role of classroom experiments? How to motivate students to be involved in research?

One of the major questions does not belong to the teaching methodology, but it is very relevant: how to convince the deans and the academic committees that our field is important enough to be a significant part of the new Bologna-type programmes?