

Training Assessment : Elementary Modules I in FORTH September 2018

Following the Project Meeting in FORTH, a questionnaire was submitted to the PhD Students to have a feed-back on both the practical organization of the Elementary Modules and on the content of the courses given.

1. Practical organization

We will focus first on the practical organization of the Elementary Modules.

The feed-back on the accommodation was mitigated. 4 of them regarded it as “ok” whereas 3 stated it was “good” and 3 that it was “bad”.

Transport to and from the venue was mostly seen as “excellent” (68 % of participants).

69 % saw the schedule of the event and the programme as excellent. No bad reviews were given on the programme.

The timing of the event was positively rated, ranging from “ok” up to “excellent”.

53 % of participants saw the lunch breaks as “excellent”.

The lab visit was also appreciated with only positive feed-back on the visit and 46 % of students rating the visit as “excellent”.

All participants stated they had received sufficient information regarding the organization of the event. No one pointed out they would have liked some additional information on the event.

2. Content of the Elementary Modules I

All the PhD students agreed to say that the courses covered the basics of their field.

83 % noted that they were satisfied with the content of the courses given. Two students made the following suggestions on courses that could have been given during these Modules:

- “From the perspective of researchers who have studied in the field of polymer physics and chemistry for a long time: How to carry out the fundamental scientific research systematically?”
- “More about the synthesis of polymer networks”.

Regarding the content of the material given to follow the training (course online, printed material, PowerPoint presentations), 61% of the students would have like to have more material to help them follow the courses.

However, the preference for the material to give does not stand out clearly as all the suggestions were rated in a similar way:

- PowerPoint Presentation in advance (5)
- Printed course material (4)
- Course available online before the presentation (5)

On the course material, the following comments were given:

- One student finds it better to get some materials introducing the experimental theory before visiting the lab.
- Another asked for the possibility to record the courses by video so they could understand the courses better and have a review on them.
- Taking into account that “last minute changes” cannot be made if all the slides are given in advance, the students would like the slides of the courses right after the lecture for consultation. For example, a shared folder in a section of the website with the literature.

Regarding the length of the course, 75% thought that the courses followed a “good timing”. They consider that courses should last between 1h and 2h.

All students underlined they had enough time to ask questions after each course presentation.

They were also unanimous regarding the choice of the visiting experts. The experts were considered as “pertinent” choices for this Elementary Modules.

The 6 students who made requests or comments during the event noted that they were taken into account in the following stages of the meeting.

The following suggestions were made at the end of the questionnaire:

- Someone noted they would appreciate a short abstract of each course.
- If there are more lectures in one day, more breaks are required (each 45 minutes). PPT in advance or at least few day after to have a second look at the taken notes to better reorganize them.
- One student noted that he would like to receive the presentations of the Intermediate meeting (especially the presentations of the Modules).
- No suggestions for the moment. Thanks for the work.
- Lectures of 90 min with 15 min break every 45 min. This student thinks a quick break every 45 min is necessary. Would be good to have the slides right after the modules.
- The organization of the previous training modules was fine, the student does not see any improvement to do from his point of view.
- No more courses longer than 1h30.
- Uploading presentations online would be good.

The following ideas were given as specific subjects that could be covered during the next Advanced Modules:

- Introduction of fracture and adhesion mechanism of classical polymers and reversible polymer networks in molecular level Characterization methods of mechanical properties of polymers.
- Fracture and adhesion from the molecular point of view. Concept of the mechanical properties and parameters involved at the beginning in order to follow better the developments. Reversible vs irreversible: what is different and what is in common. What mechanical properties do we expect from our networks.
- It could be interesting on focusing on basics and experimental part. Because I am not an expert and it could be an idea to combine theoretical part with experimental part as equal it [helps to] understand well and to assimilate all the information.
- Different characterization methods and some hand-on practices if possible.

Following the results of this questionnaire, the following items need to be taken into consideration for the next meeting

- They would like to have access to short abstracts before the courses are given.
- The students would like better access to course material beforehand, if possible.
- If not, they would like to have access to the course quickly after the Modules are given.
- The preference goes for: PowerPoint Presentation in advance and course available online before the presentation.
- They prefer courses that are 1-2h long with frequent breaks.
- They appreciate the time given to “Question and Answers” after each course.
- They would appreciate the opportunity to have “hands-on practices” and “experiments” during the Modules.