

1. Student Assessment

The purpose of this assessment was to find out how student's knowledge, skills and competences develop throughout their studies. The assessment includes Master Courses 3 (2015-2017) and 4 (2017-2019). For each course three selected students of different skill levels were included in the assessment. Three papers from three different semesters and subjects were assessed per student. The assessment was based on a rubric where different elements in the fields of knowledge, skills and competences are rated between Deficient, Acceptable, and Proficient and Exemplary. To also perform a quantitative analysis of this assessment the ratings of the used rubric are converted to a numerical scale according to the following assignment: Deficient: 1, Acceptable: 2, Proficient: 3, Exemplary: 4. Those numbers were used to calculate average ratings in the course of the analysis presented below.

1.1. Assessment Course 3: 2015 – 2017

Students: L.M., D.T., V.K.

Assessed Assignments:

- Research Paper from the course Research Methods (T1 = Semester 1)
- Essay from the course Critical Thinking (T2 = Semester 2)
- Internship Report from the course Practical Training (T3 = Semester 4)

Course 3 2015 - 2017	Student L.M.	T1 - Semester 1 (Research Methods)				T2 - Semester 3 (Critical Thinking)				T3 - Semester 5 (Internship Report)			
		1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary
Knowledge	Very specialized knowledge at a contemporary advanced level as basis for original thinking and research			X				X				X	
	Matches the selection of the research design and the corresponding data collection procedures and analyzing methods to the research		X					X				X	
	Comprehensibility, structure of argumentation, target group related, conviction through interesting presentation, clarity of the question	X					X					X	
Skills	The ability to express (communicate) oneself clearly, accurately, and professionally in written form.	X					X					X	
	Critical analysis of theories and approaches in the complex area of management and leadership		X					X			X		
	Specialized skills for problem solving necessary for research and/or innovation to develop new knowledge and procedures as well as integration of knowledge from various courses		X					X				X	
	Handle complex situations, perform operational tasks and solve problems in a goal-oriented, task-appropriate and responsible manner		X				X					X	
Broader Competence	Contributing to knowledge or professional practice and/or reviewing strategic performance of staff/group		X					X			X		
	The ability to engage in professional conduct, integrity, and ethical behavior			X				X				X	

Course 3 2015 - 2017	Student D.T.	T1 - Semester 1 (Research Methods)				T2 - Semester 3 (Critical Thinking)				T3 - Semester 5 (Internship Report)			
		1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary
Knowledge	Very specialized knowledge at a contemporary advanced level as basis for original thinking and research		X			X							
	Matches the selection of the research design and the corresponding data collection procedures and analyzing methods to the research		X				X						
	Comprehensibility, structure of argumentation, target group related, conviction through interesting presentation, clarity of the question	X					X						
Skills	The ability to express (communicate) oneself clearly, accurately, and professionally in written form.	X				X							
	Critical analysis of theories and approaches in the complex area of management and leadership	X					X						
	Specialized skills for problem solving necessary for research and/or innovation to develop new knowledge and procedures as well as integration of knowledge from various courses	X					X						
	Handle complex situations, perform operational tasks and solve problems in a goal-oriented, task-appropriate and responsible manner	X					X						
Broader Competence	Contributing to knowledge or professional practice and/or reviewing strategic performance of staff/group	X					X						
	The ability to engage in professional conduct, integrity, and ethical behavior			X				X					

Course 3 2015 - 2017	Student V.K.	T1 - Semester 1 (Research Methods)				T2 - Semester 3 (Critical Thinking)				T3 - Semester 5 (Internship Report)			
		1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary
Knowledge	Very specialized knowledge at a contemporary advanced level as basis for original thinking and research		X				X						
	Matches the selection of the research design and the corresponding data collection procedures and analyzing methods to the research		X				X						
	Comprehensibility, structure of argumentation, target group related, conviction through interesting presentation, clarity of the question	X					X						
Skills	The ability to express (communicate) oneself clearly, accurately, and professionally in written form.	X				X							
	Critical analysis of theories and approaches in the complex area of management and leadership	X					X						
	Specialized skills for problem solving necessary for research and/or innovation to develop new knowledge and procedures as well as integration of knowledge from various courses	X					X						
	Handle complex situations, perform operational tasks and solve problems in a goal-oriented, task-appropriate and responsible manner	X					X						
Broader Competence	Contributing to knowledge or professional practice and/or reviewing strategic performance of staff/group	X				X							
	The ability to engage in professional conduct, integrity, and ethical behavior			X				X					

Average Rating for each Student in the respective Subjects

Student	Average Rating		
	T1 - Semester 1 (Research Methods)	T2 - Semester 3 (Critical Thinking)	T3 - Semester 5 (Internship Report)
L.M. (blue)	2	2,6	2,7
D.T. (grey)	1,4	1,8	*
V.K. (orange)	1,4	2,4	*

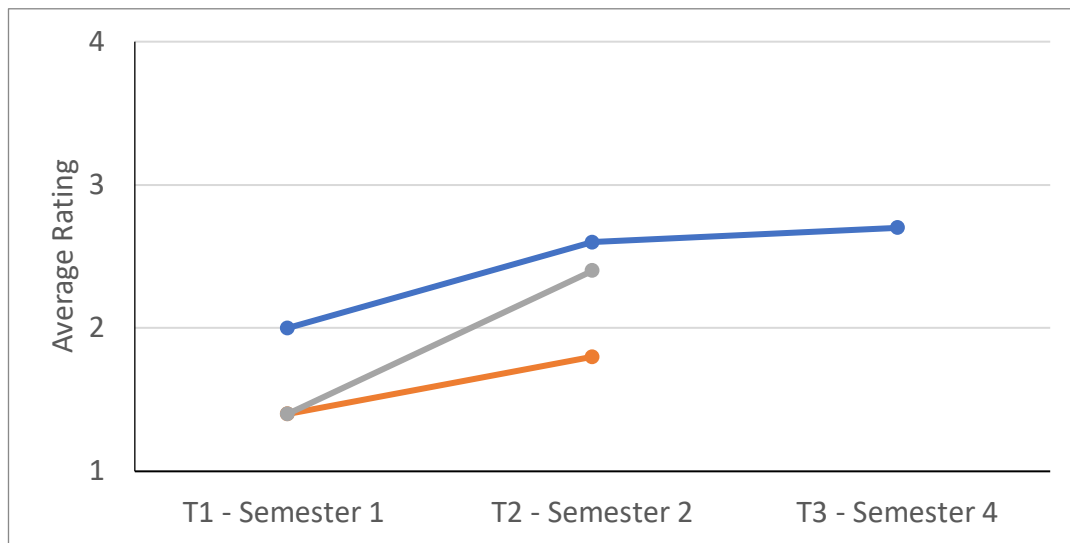


Figure 1: Average Rating for each student in Course 3

Definition of Ratings:

1: Deficient 2: Acceptable 3: Proficient 4: Exemplary

*Comment: Internship Reports were written in Albanian and could therefore not be assessed.

1.2. Assessment Course 4: 2017 – 2019

Students: E.B., G.M., E.S.

Assessed Subjects:

- Research Paper from the course Governance and Organizational Development (Semester 1)
- Essay from the course Strategic Management (Semester 2)
- Exam from the course Organizational Planning and Finance (Semester 4)

Course 4 2017 - 2019	Student E.B.	T1 - Semester 1 (Governance and Organizational Development)				T2 - Semester 2 (Strategic Management)				T3 - Semester 4 (Organizational Planning & Finance)			
		1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary
Knowledge	Very specialized knowledge at a contemporary advanced level as basis for original thinking and research		X					X			X		
	Matches the selection of the research design and the corresponding data collection procedures and analyzing methods to the research			X					X		X		
	Comprehensibility, structure of argumentation, target group related, conviction through interesting presentation, clarity of the question		X				X			X			
Skills	The ability to express (communicate) oneself clearly, accurately, and professionally in written form.		X				X				X		
	Critical analysis of theories and approaches in the complex area of management and leadership		X				X			X			
	Specialized skills for problem solving necessary for research and/or innovation to develop new knowledge and procedures as well as integration of knowledge from various courses		X					X		X			
	Handle complex situations, perform operational tasks and solve problems in a goal-oriented, task-appropriate and responsible manner		X				X				X		
Broader Competence	Contributing to knowledge or professional practice and/or reviewing strategic performance of staff/group		X					X			X		
	The ability to engage in professional conduct, integrity, and ethical behavior				X				X			X	

Course 4 2017 - 2019	Student G.M.	T1 - Semester 1 (Governance and Organizational Development)				T2 - Semester 2 (Strategic Management)				T3 - Semester 4 (Organizational Planning & Finance)			
		1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary
Knowledge	Very specialized knowledge at a contemporary advanced level as basis for original thinking and research				X				X				X
	Matches the selection of the research design and the corresponding data collection procedures and analyzing methods to the research			X				X				X	
	Comprehensibility, structure of argumentation, target group related, conviction through interesting presentation, clarity of the question				X		X					X	
Skills	The ability to express (communicate) oneself clearly, accurately, and professionally in written form.			X			X					X	
	Critical analysis of theories and approaches in the complex area of management and leadership			X				X				X	
	Specialized skills for problem solving necessary for research and/or innovation to develop new knowledge and procedures as well as integration of knowledge from various courses			X				X				X	
	Handle complex situations, perform operational tasks and solve problems in a goal-oriented, task-appropriate and responsible manner			X			X					X	
Broader Competence	Contributing to knowledge or professional practice and/or reviewing strategic performance of staff/group				X			X				X	
	The ability to engage in professional conduct, integrity, and ethical behavior				X				X				X

Course 4 2017 - 2019	Student E.S.	T1 - Semester 1 (Governance and Organizational Development)				T2 - Semester 2 (Strategic Management)				T3 - Semester 4 (Organizational Planning & Finance)			
		1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary	1. Deficient	2. Acceptable	3. Proficient	4. Exemplary
Knowledge	Very specialized knowledge at a contemporary advanced level as basis for original thinking and research		X					X					X
	Matches the selection of the research design and the corresponding data collection procedures and analyzing methods to the research		X					X				X	
	Comprehensibility, structure of argumentation, target group related, conviction through interesting presentation, clarity of the question	X					X					X	
Skills	The ability to express (communicate) oneself clearly, accurately, and professionally in written form.	X					X					X	
	Critical analysis of theories and approaches in the complex area of management and leadership		X					X				X	
	Specialized skills for problem solving necessary for research and/or innovation to develop new knowledge and procedures as well as integration of knowledge from various courses		X				X					X	
	Handle complex situations, perform operational tasks and solve problems in a goal-oriented, task-appropriate and responsible manner		X				X					X	
Broader Competence	Contributing to knowledge or professional practice and/or reviewing strategic performance of staff/group		X				X					X	
	The ability to engage in professional conduct, integrity, and ethical behavior			X				X					X

Average Rating for each Student in the respective Subjects

Student	Average Rating		
	T1 - Semester 1 (Governance and Organizational Development)	T2 - Semester 3 (Strategic Management)	T3 - Semester 5 (Organizational Planning & Finance)
E.B. (blue)	2,3	2,7	1,7
G.M. (orange)	3,4	2,8	3,2
E.S. (grey)	1,8	2,4	3,2

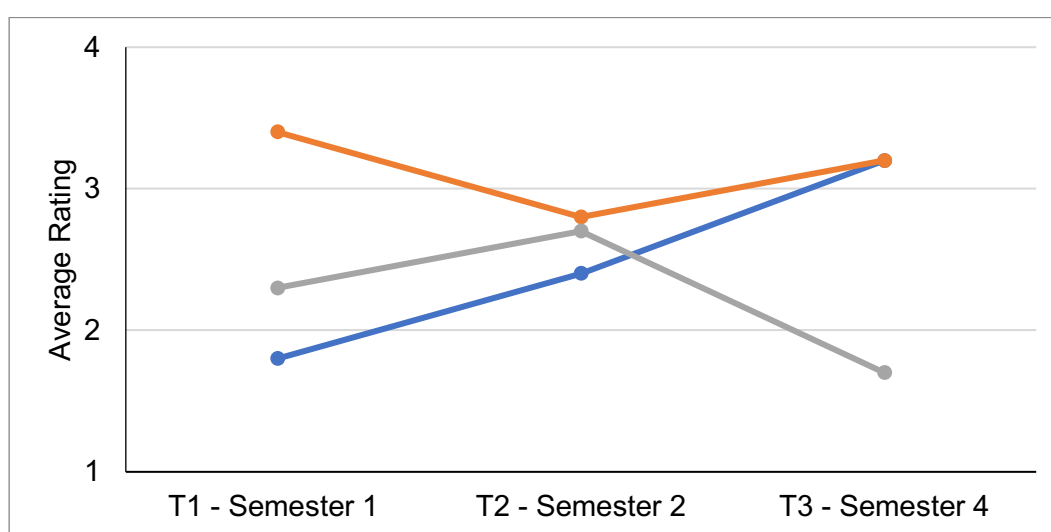


Figure 2: Average Rating for each student in Course 4

Definition of Ratings:

1: Deficient 2: Acceptable 3: Proficient 4: Exemplary

Average Rating for each Course in the respective Subjects

	Average Rating		
	T1 - Semester 1 (Research Methods)	T2 - Semester 3 (Critical Thinking)	T3 - Semester 5 (Internship Report)
Course 3 2015 - 2017	1,6	2,3	2,7
Course 4 2017 - 2019	T1 - Semester 1 (Governance and Organizational Development)	T2 - Semester 2 (Strategic Management)	T3 - Semester 4 (Organizational Planning & Finance)
	2,5	2,6	2,7

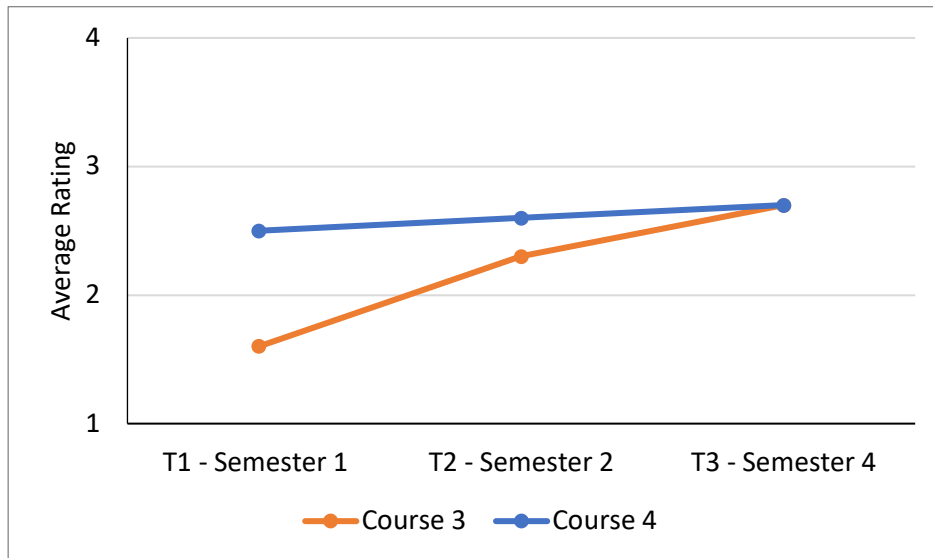


Figure 3: Comparison of Courses 3 and 4

2. Conclusions

Course 3 (2015 - 2017)

At the beginning of their Master's program, all students in Course 3 showed deficiencies in their ability to express themselves clearly and accurately and in their ability to present ideas and arguments in a structured way. As a result, they also struggled in demonstrating other skills such as critical thinking or problem solving, too. However, upon advancing from the first semester to the following ones an improvement of student's knowledge, skills and competences is clearly observable (see Figure 1). Here, the impact of the Master programs content and methods is apparent. This is an indication of a successful achievement of student learning outcomes.

Course 4 (2017-2019)

At the beginning of their Master's studies, students in course 4 show, on average, a fairly good level in the elements assessed. One student (G.M.) stands out by showing proficient or even exemplary knowledge, skills and competences. Course 4 as a whole does not show a clear development towards improved ratings upon advancing through semesters (see Figure 2). However, student E.S. who started her studies with a rather low average rating shows continuous development from one semester to the next. On the other hand, students G.M. and E.B. show fluctuating ratings. One reason for that inconsistency might be different levels of supervision and input from lecturers who were responsible for the assessed student papers. Personal preferences of students for particular subjects might also play a role in inconsistent performances.

Comparison of Courses 3 and 4

Figure 3 shows a comparison of the average ratings for all students in Course 3 and Course 4. Both courses show an increase in the average rating from the first to the third assessed paper. Course 3 shows a strong learning curve while Course 4 shows a rather flat learning curve. However, Course 3 had higher average ratings from the start and therefore the potential for improvement was less compared to Course 4. Two students from Course 4 (G.M. and E.B.) had already completed NGU's Bachelor's program "Business and Economics". The skills and competences for academic writing and critical thinking that those two students have acquired from their previous Bachelor studies were clearly observable in their papers from the start of their Master studies.

Overall, students who started at a rather low level show a strong learning curve throughout their studies. Students who start at a fairly good level tend to show fluctuating performances within the above average skill level.

Validity of the Method

The following factors have impacted the outcome of this assessment method and should be considered for the validity of this method:

Comparability of Assignments

This assessment is based on the rating of student papers from different semesters and lectures. The rated papers included Research Papers, Essays and even answered questions in an exam. The conditions for each assignment are therefore not perfectly consistent. As a result, a comparison of different assignments from different semesters might not always be possible, at least not in every detail. For example, Research Papers are better suited to assess student's abilities to collect data and address a research question, while an essay is better suited to assess student's abilities for critical thinking.

Furthermore, the help and supervision of lecturers for different assignments might vary from lecturer to lecturer. Therefore, good scores on specific assignments may be due to intensive help and encouragement from supervisors and instructors. Meanwhile for other assignments a lack of supervision and proper instructions might cause bad performances.

Because of those limitations in comparability of assignments, the focus of the above presented analysis was on average ratings per subject (assignment) rather than on single elements within the used rubric.

English Language Deficiencies

All students in Course 3 and 4 are Albanian and accordingly not native English speakers. For some of the students, writing in English poses a considerable obstacle in expressing themselves on a professional level. Those students also struggle in demonstrating skills such as critical thinking or problem solving due to a lack of proper writing in English.

Academic Background of the Faculty Member who performed the Assessment

This assessment was performed by the Head of Research Center Dr. Nikolai Bunzmann who does not have an academic background in the field of management. On the one hand, that circumstance might be a limitation in terms of ability to assess student's knowledge. On the other hand, it adds to the objectivity of the assessment. A person without much background knowledge will be able to judge whether complex ideas and theories are properly presented and explained. If pieces of information are missing in student's argumentation a person with proficient background knowledge can easily fill gaps in understanding student's written thoughts whereas somebody without background knowledge will be more sensitive to missing links within a student's chain of argumentation.