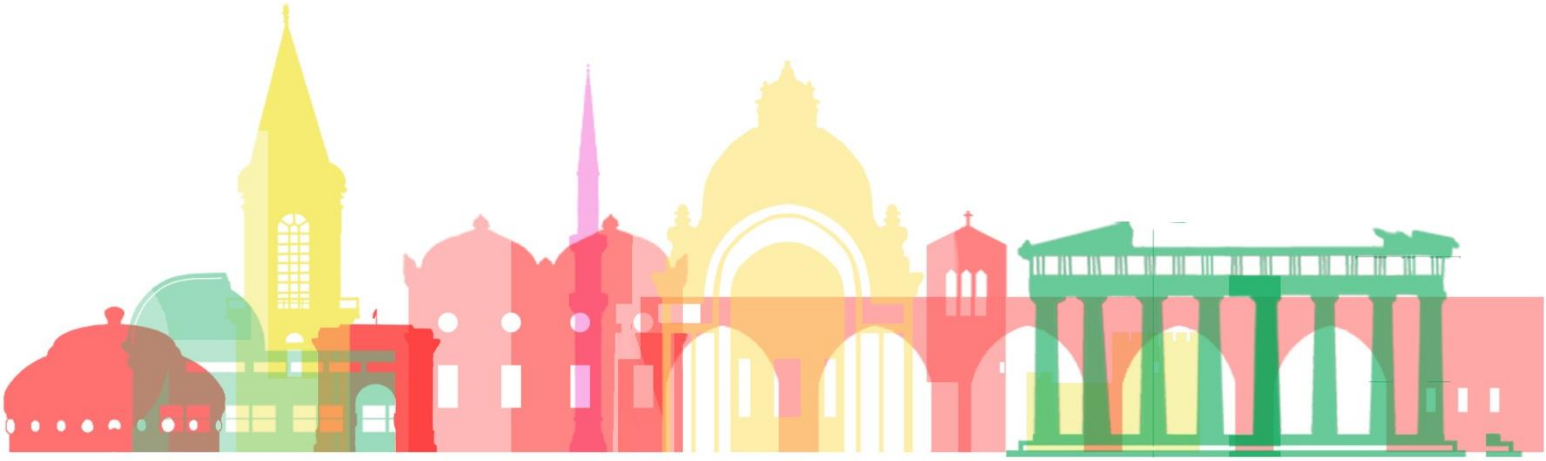
PALIMPSEST CITIES

GAMIFICATION AND STORYTELLING FOR ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE AWARENESS

ÇOK KATMANLI ŞEHIRLER: MIMARLIK TARIHI VE KÜLTÜREL MIRAS FARKINDALIĞI IÇIN OYUNLAŞTIRMA VE HIKÂYE ANLATICILIĞI

Evaluation Report (2)

Written by: Klaudia Allajbej (INNOVED)



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INTRODUCTION

The “Palimpsest Cities: Gamification and Storytelling for Architectural History and Cultural Heritage Awareness” project is a higher education project designed primarily for architectural students, with a broader focus on fostering inclusion and diversity across all educational fields. Many people are unaware of the rich history, layers, values, and stories of the surroundings of their cities. This is particularly true for underrepresented groups such as the disabled, refugees, and those with lower incomes, who often don't get the opportunity to explore and appreciate these aspects. Consequently, some buildings are left abandoned, and the cultural significance remains unknown to many, except for the physical landscape.

To address this issue, the Palimpsest Cities project emphasizes the need for change in our education system and aims to develop a new curriculum/ course for architectural history and cultural heritage awareness. This course involves incorporating innovative and creative approaches, utilizing digital tools extensively, and exploring techniques like gamification and digital storytelling to make learning more engaging and accessible.

The Palimpsest Cities curriculum was developed and followed by the testing of lectures and implementations, along with an evaluation of the impact of this new approach. To facilitate this process, an evaluation booklet was created to guide both online and face-to-face assessments. Initial testing involved the distribution of questionnaires, followed by engaging focus groups with instructors and students actively participating in the course implementation.

METHODOLOGY

The tools employed for testing lectures and implementations, as well as evaluating the impact of the new curriculum. Initially, three questionnaires were devised—one for instructors and two for students. This time, instructors didn't need to complete a pre-test questionnaire because they were the same individuals as before. The first questionnaire (pre-test survey for students) was administered before the initiation of the Palimpsest Cities course, while the second set was completed after the course implementation. This approach allowed us to assess the evolution of knowledge, measure progress, gather feedback on the course experience, and determine overall success.

Following the questionnaire phase, some of the instructors and students participated in focus groups/ interviews after the course implementation and questionnaire completion. This additional step was taken to cross-check responses and obtain more robust insights into the success of the Palimpsest Cities course.

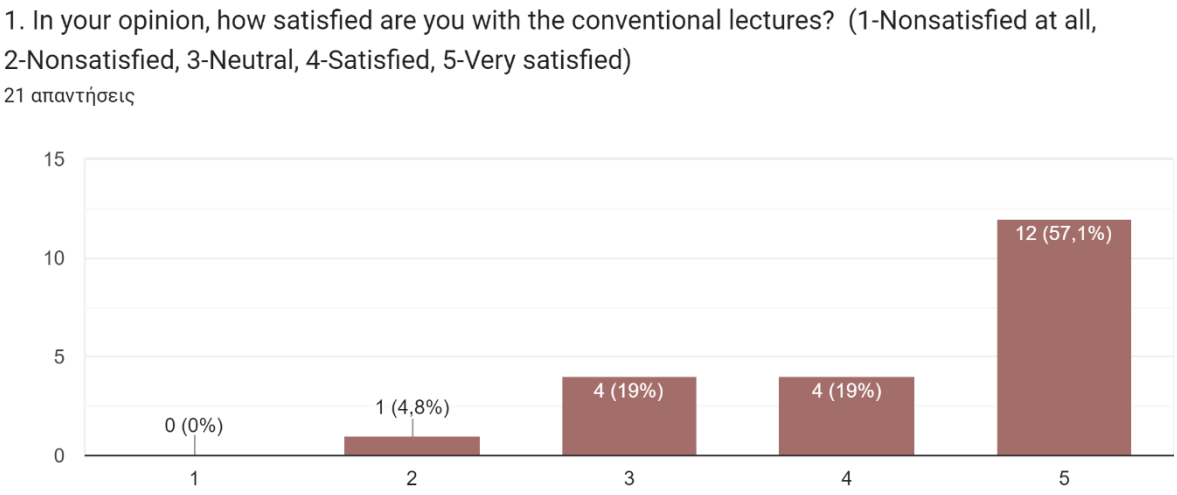
DISCLAIMER

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

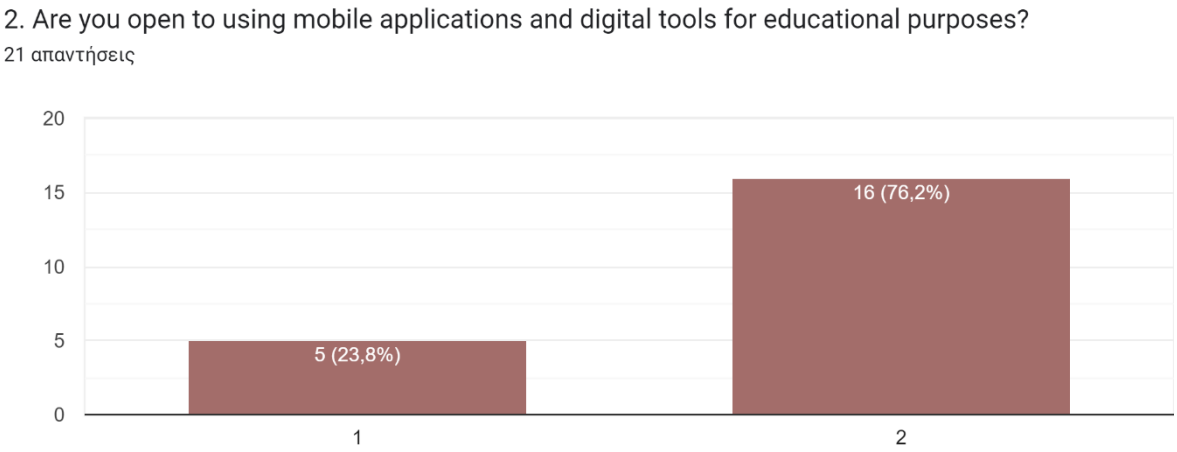
QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

PRE-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE (STUDENTS)

Twenty-one students from AHEP and ITU University answered the questionnaire anonymously.



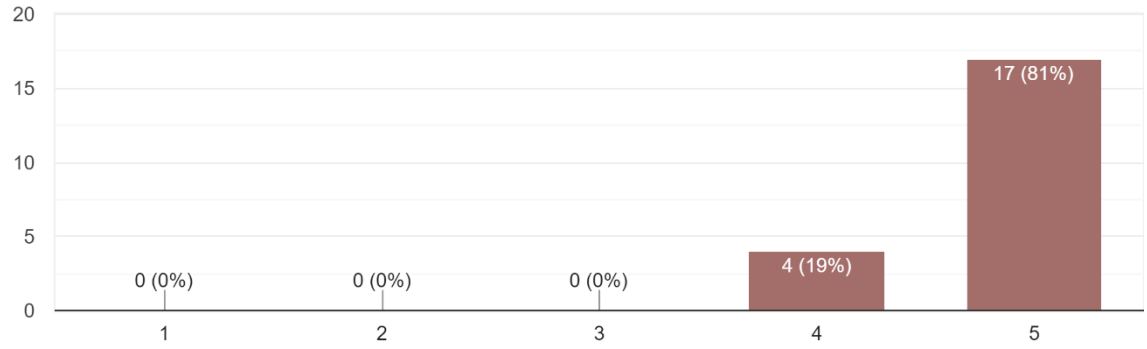
Among the twenty-one students, twelve expressed being very satisfied with conventional lectures, four reported being satisfied, four indicated a neutral stance, and one declared dissatisfaction.



Sixteen students expressed interest in using mobile applications and digital tools for educational purposes, while five students did not express such a preference.

3. How interested are you in exploring the historical buildings and landmarks in the region where the course will be implemented? (1-Not at all, 2-A little, 3-Neutral, 4-Quite, 5-Very)

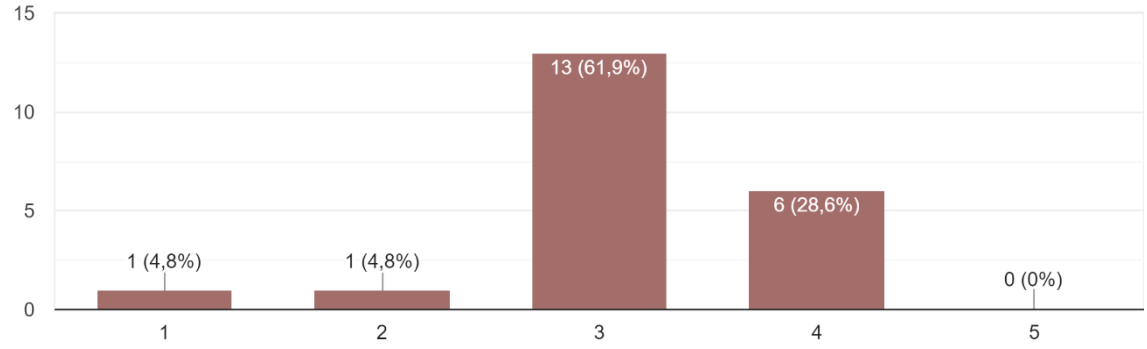
21 απαντήσεις



Seventeen students showed a high level of interest in exploring the historical landmarks in the region where the course will be implemented, while another four expressed a moderate level of interest.

4. What is your current level of knowledge about architectural history and cultural heritage? (1-Very low, 2-Low, 3-Moderate, 4-Good, 5-High)

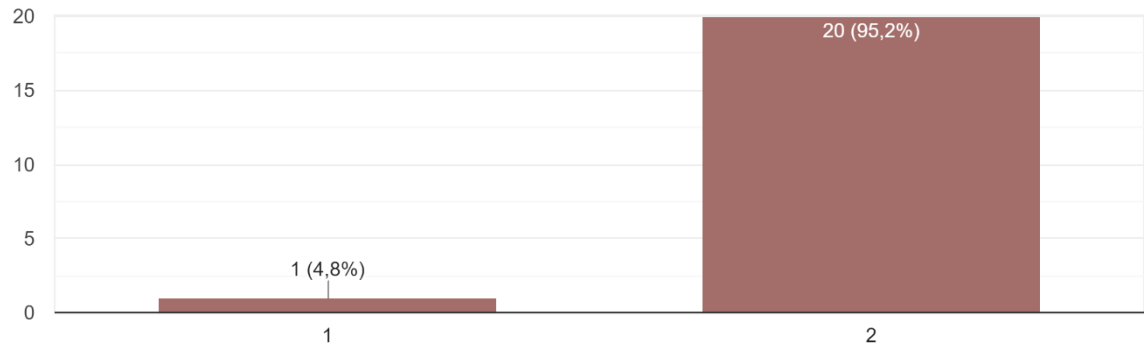
21 απαντήσεις



Six students said that possessed a good level of knowledge in architectural history and cultural heritage, while thirteen had a moderate level, one had a low level, and another one had a very low level.

5. Have you visited any historic sites or cultural heritage locations in the region where your university is located before?

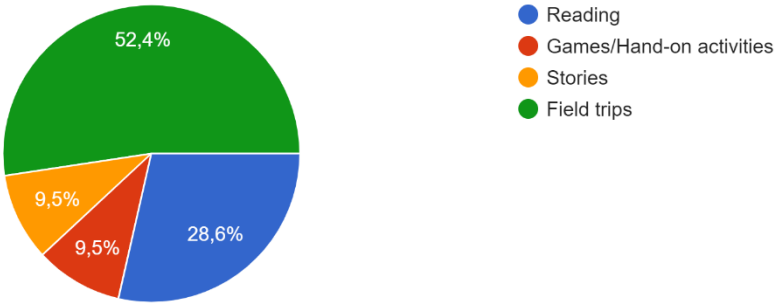
21 απαντήσεις



The majority of students, namely twenty people, have been to historic locations in the region where is located their university while one hasn't.

6. How do you usually prefer to learn new information or concepts? (You can choose more than one option)

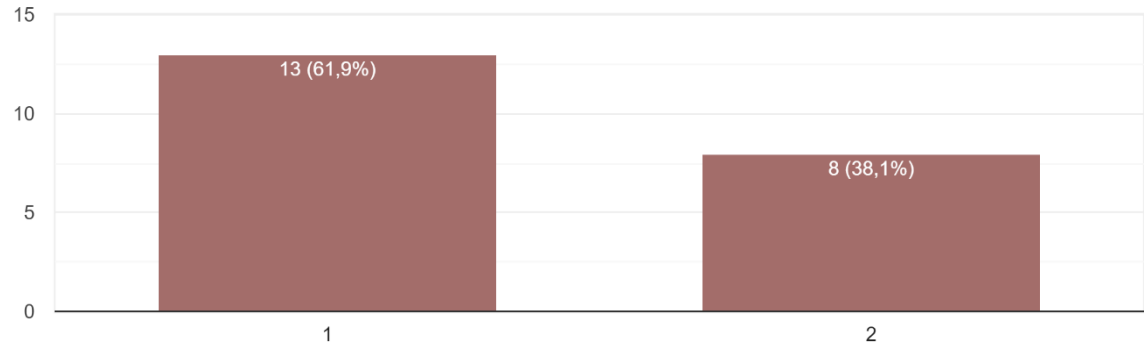
21 απαντήσεις



Among the students, 52.4% expressed a preference for learning through field trips, 9.5% favored stories, another 9.5% preferred games and hands-on activities, and 28.6% leaned towards learning through reading.

7. Do you know what is gamification?

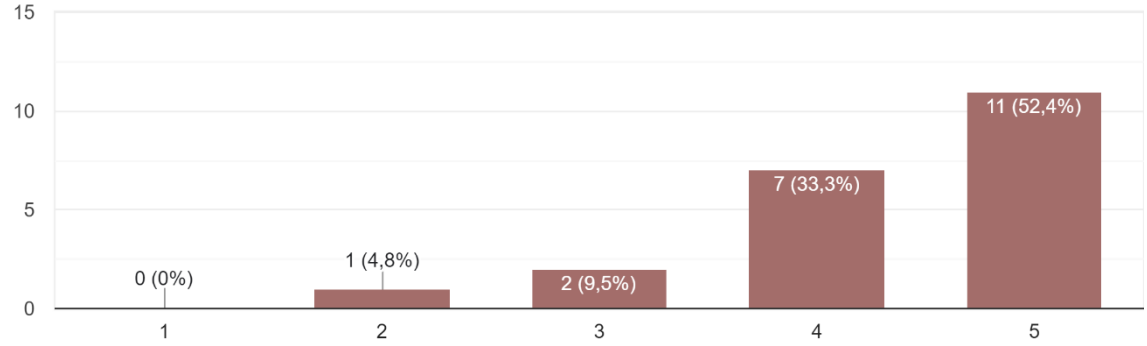
21 απαντήσεις



Eight of the students indicated they were familiar with the concept of gamification, while the rest thirteen stated they were not familiar with it.

8. How interested are you in the idea of playing games as part of your learning experience? (1-Not at all, 2-A little, 3-Neutral, 4-Quite, 5-Very)

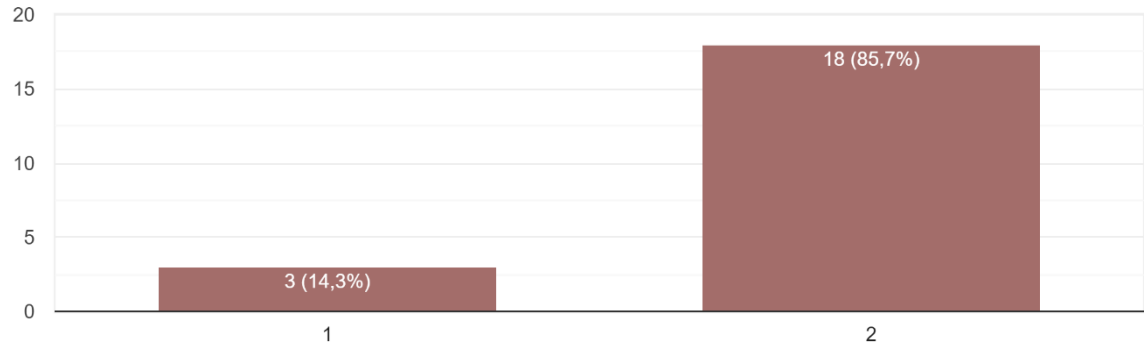
21 απαντήσεις



Regarding the idea of incorporating games into the learning experience, eleven students were very interested, seven were quite interested, two were neutral, and one was slightly interested.

9. Are you aware of the storytelling?

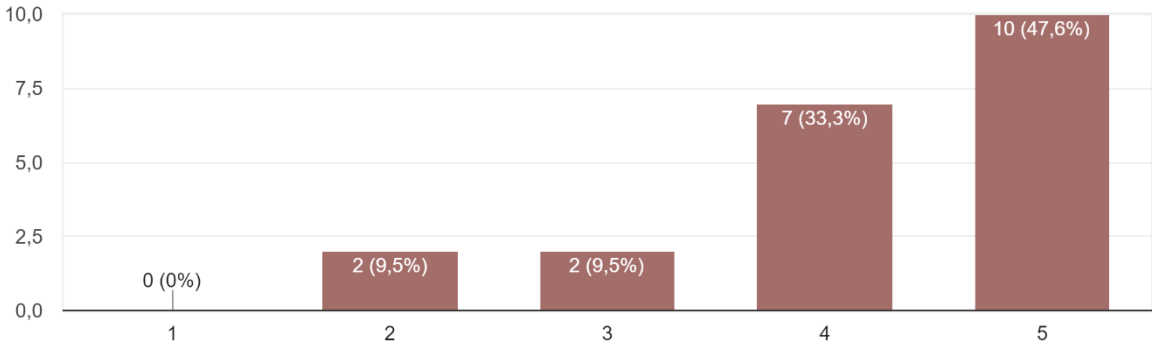
21 απαντήσεις



Eighteen of the students were aware of the storytelling technique and the rest three were not.

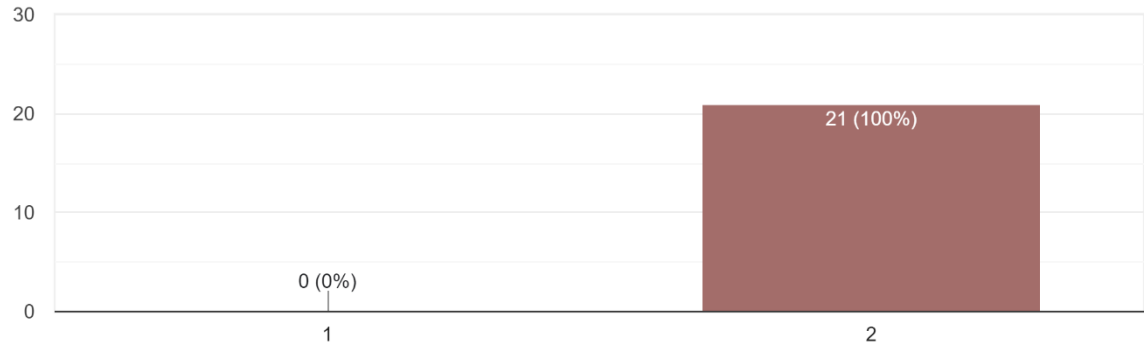
10. How interested are you in the idea of creating a digital story/short film as part of your learning experience? (1-Not at all, 2-A little, 3-Neutral, 4-Quite, 5-Very)

21 απαντήσεις



Ten students were very interested in creating a digital story/film as part of their learning experience, seven were quite interested, two were neutral, and two were slightly interested.

11. Do you expect this course to change your perspective on your city's cultural heritage?
21 απαντήσεις



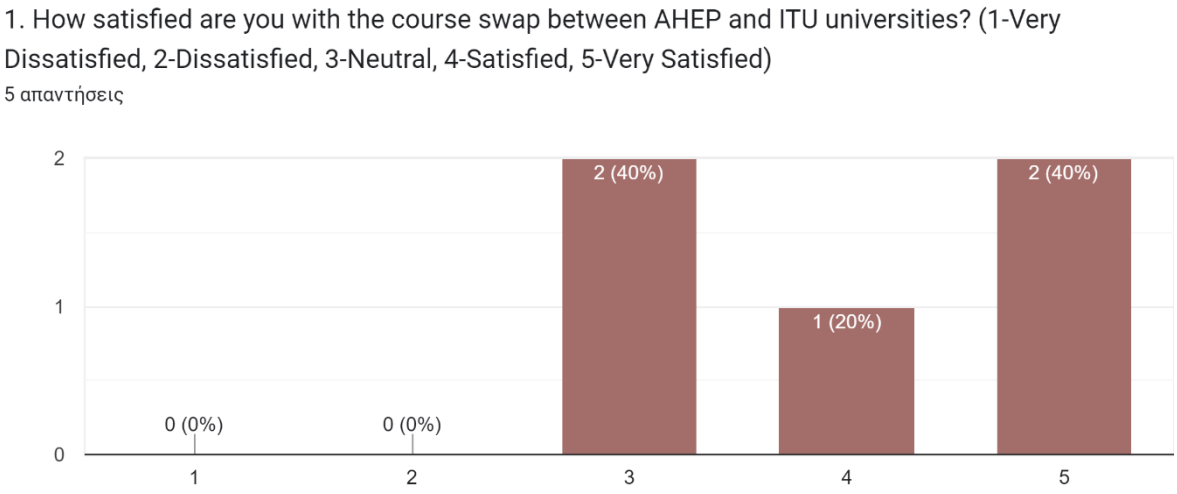
All the students expected that the Palimpsest Cities course would change their perspective on the cultural heritage of the city of implementation.

CONCLUSIONS (PRE-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE)

The pre-test questionnaire analysis of students from AHEP and ITU University reveals a strong preference for interactive and digital learning tools. A majority are satisfied with conventional lectures, and there is significant interest in using mobile applications and digital tools for educational purposes. Students show high interest in exploring historical landmarks, with most having previously visited such locations. While the majority possess moderate knowledge of architectural history and cultural heritage, there is notable interest in incorporating games into the learning experience despite limited familiarity with gamification. Additionally, there is substantial enthusiasm for creating digital stories or films as part of their learning process. All students expect the Palimpsest Cities course to enhance their understanding of the region's cultural heritage, indicating a positive outlook on the course's impact.

AFTER-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE (INSTRUCTORS)

Five instructors from AHEP and ITU University answered the questionnaire anonymously.



Regarding the course exchange between the two universities, two instructors reported being very satisfied, one instructor was satisfied, and the remaining two were neutral.

2. Provide your feedback on the positives associated with the swapping of the courses. (Short answer)

- Changing the focus area was a good opportunity to see if the teaching methods are applicable on different areas.

- The idea of swapping is fine, the students have to prepare themselves and have to do more reading as the material is not provided on-site anymore.

- Enthusiasm of the students for the field trip to another city.

- It gives a chance to explore and make a research on different city.

- Our students had the chance to visit Istanbul and learn about Byzantine and Ottoman structures in Istanbul better than before.

3. Provide your feedback on the challenges associated with the swapping of the courses. (Short answer)

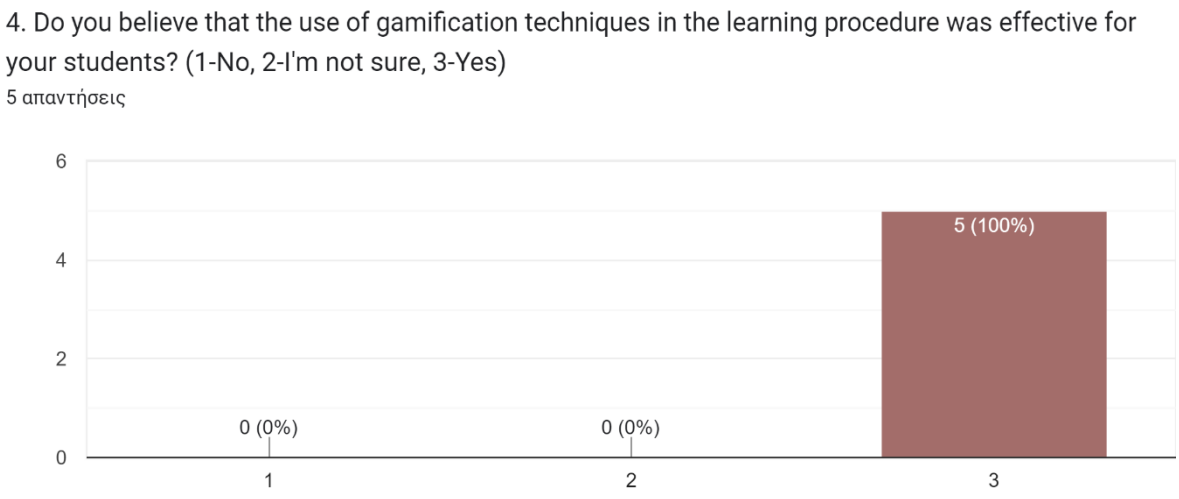
- Since the visit to the focus area was only possible for one week (because of the distance), the research process of students continued without regular visits to the area.

- As said in 2, swapping has the problem that you cannot really experience your hometown. At the same time, timeline travel has already been made extensively by the cities and it gets difficult to find original topics, at the same time android telephones had problems.

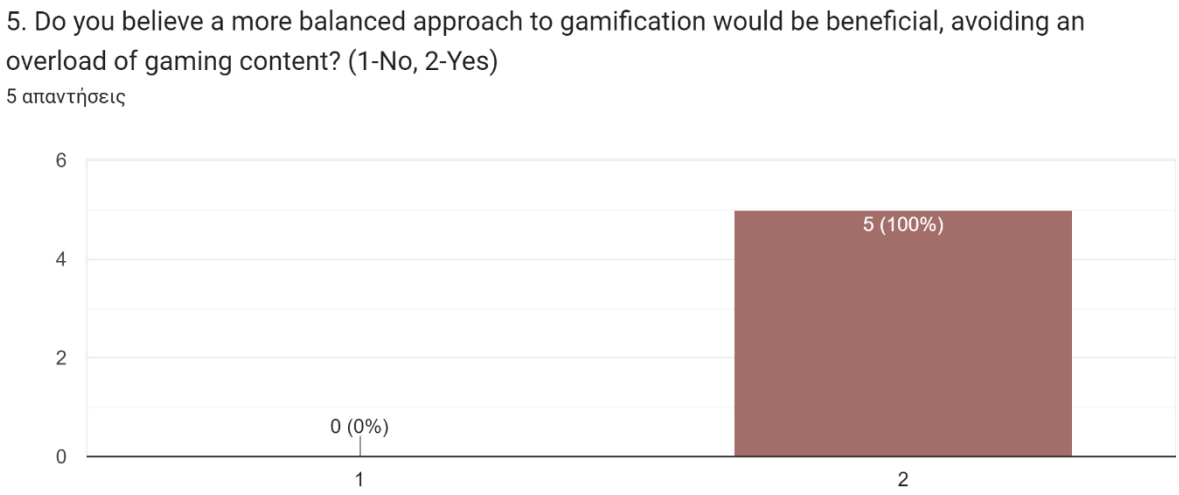
- Students have to be very prepared for all modules at the beginning of the course. Because they have only one chance to visit the city.

- Students don't have a chance to visit the sites for another time.

- Except for the three days dedicated to the field trip in Istanbul, our students were away from Istanbul and this created a challenge while they prepared their digital stories and city models. As a result, they had to use shooting video clips from others or from online resources; and they had to depend on their field trip memories while preparing the city model.



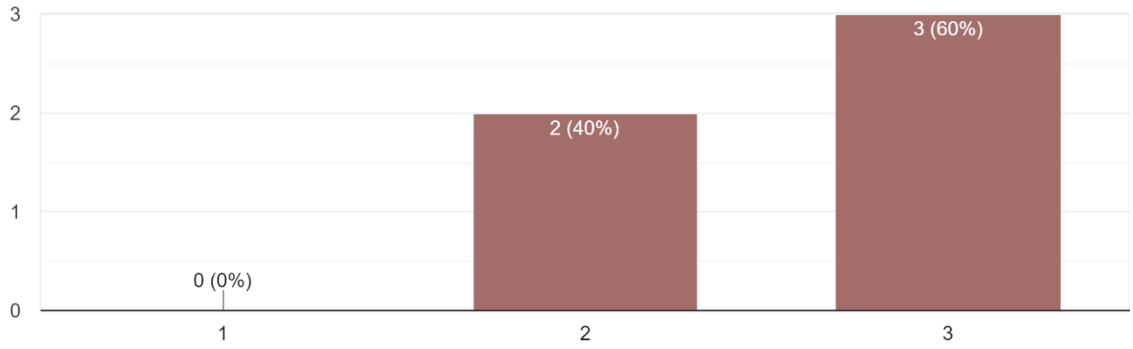
All the instructors believe that the use of gamification techniques, in the learning procedure, was effective for the students.



All the instructors agree a more balanced approach to gamification would be more beneficial, avoiding an overload of gaming content.

6. Do you believe the use of storytelling techniques in the learning procedure was effective for your students? (1-No, 2-I'm not sure, 3-Yes)

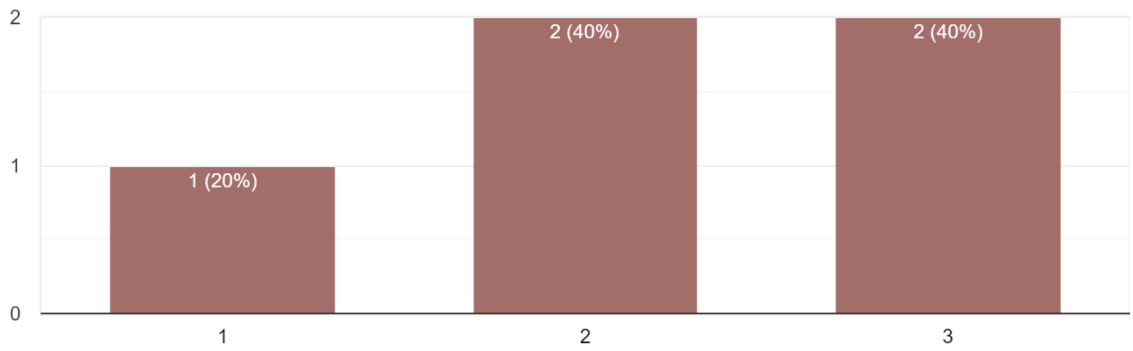
5 απαντήσεις



Three instructors believe that incorporating storytelling into the learning process was effective for students, while two are uncertain.

7. Do you believe the use of "Timeline Travel" was effective for your students? (1-No, 2-I'm not sure, 3-Yes)

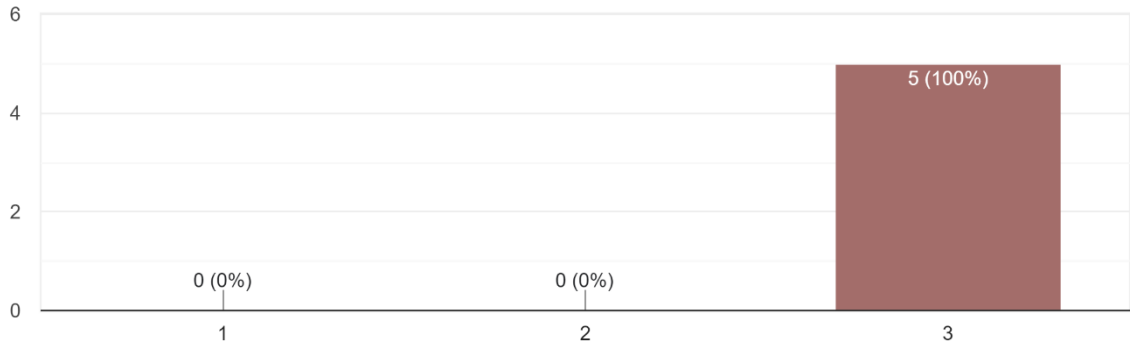
5 απαντήσεις



Out of the six instructors, two believe that the "Timeline Travel" app was effective for the students, two are unsure, and one believes it was ineffective.

8. Do you believe the use of the “City-on-Trial” workshop was effective for your students? (1-No, 2-I'm not sure, 3-Yes)

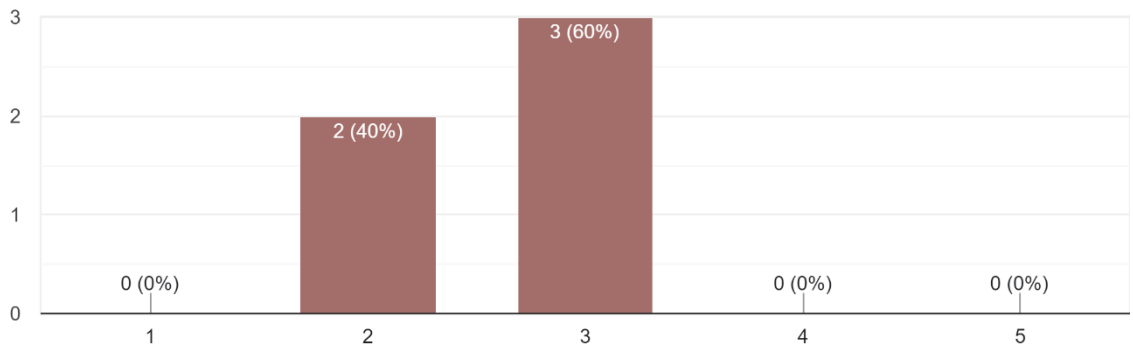
5 απαντήσεις



All the instructors unanimously agreed that the “City-on-Trial” workshop was effective for their students.

9. How effective do you rate the “Model of the Palimpsest City” activity for your future lectures? (1-Not at all, 2-A little, 3-Neutral, 4-Quite, 5-Very effective)

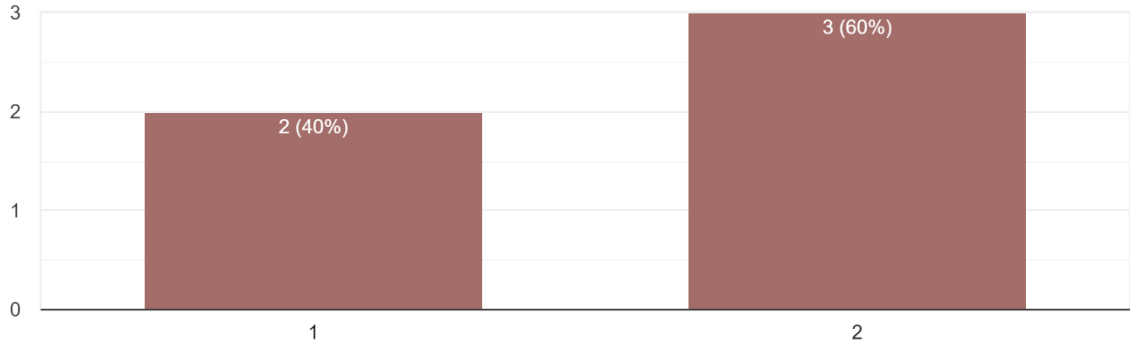
5 απαντήσεις



Three instructors were neutral about the effectiveness of the "Model of Palimpsest City" activity, while the other two found it somewhat effective.

10. Did you find the curriculum to be overly intense? (1-No, 2-Yes)

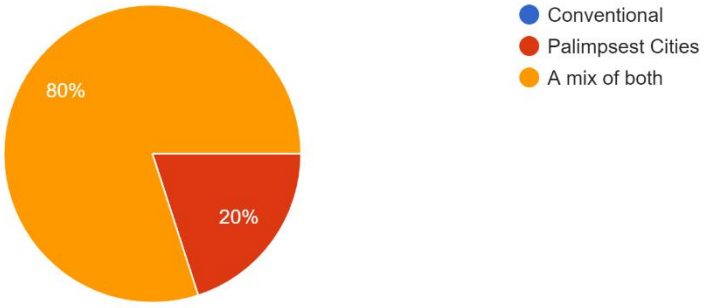
5 απαντήσεις



Three instructors found the curriculum to be overly intense, while the other two did not.

11. Which teaching style do you believe helped your students the most in learning?

5 απαντήσεις



Four instructors agreed that combining traditional methods with the Palimpsest Cities course is the most beneficial for their student's learning, while one instructor believed that the Palimpsest Cities course alone is the most effective teaching style.

12. Write your feedback regarding the whole course (e.g., what you would change, things that could have been done better, etc.). (Short answer)

- With the revised curriculum, the intensity of the course was not a general complaint by students. The Treasurehunt module was very successful in terms of production and outcome. Also, it was favored by the students.

- I tried the course this semester with two courses the Palimpsest Course. With undergraduates in Istanbul AND the swap with MA+phD students, their input is much better of course- but for example in the city of trial the essential group had not prepared and the trial was very weak. The undergraduates were good and very active at all the games and they made their own contributions with gamification, in the timeline travel app it becomes more difficult to find new

topics, difficult with each application, the film, digital stories, might be a collaborative action in the classroom, instead of individual weak contributions. The out of classroom activities-the field trips are the most essential. The problem with the games is that the younger students do concentrate of winning and pay no attention to the buildings or the contents.

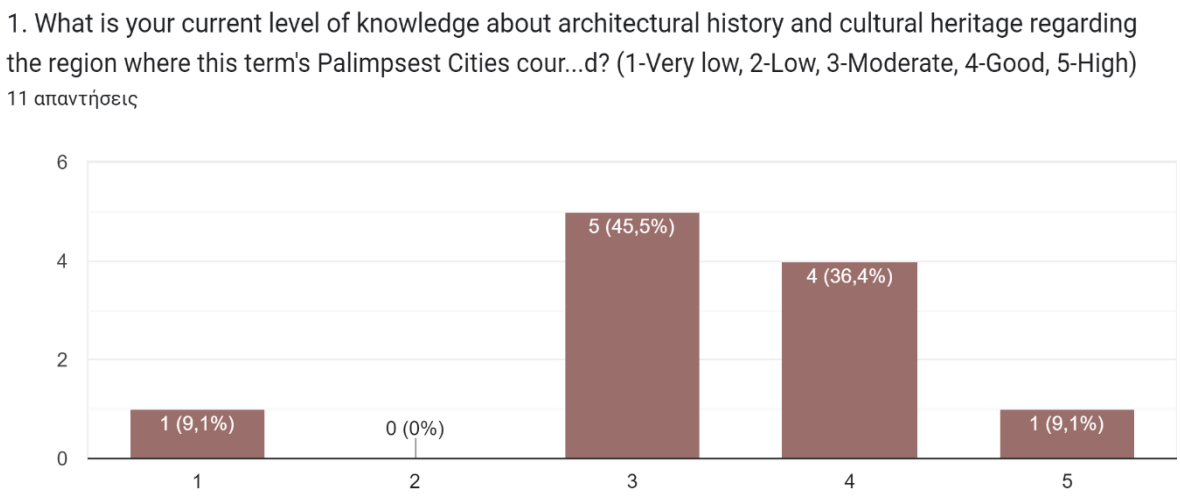
- I could create a library of the cities for the students. Maybe a discussion session on a read paper in the class could be used. Discussion session can be gamified by instructor

- Modules could be implemented interchangeably. The model of the Palimpsest City could be an alternative for Digital Storytelling. or they can use both techniques and produce one final production.

- Swapping the course was not very satisfying, considering that further site visits during digital storytelling and model making activities are considered. The group work on the model was replaced by individual work, which was better. While creating digital stories, our students used other videos from the internet, which was not good.

AFTER-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE (STUDENTS)

Eleven students from AHEP and ITU University answered the questionnaire anonymously.

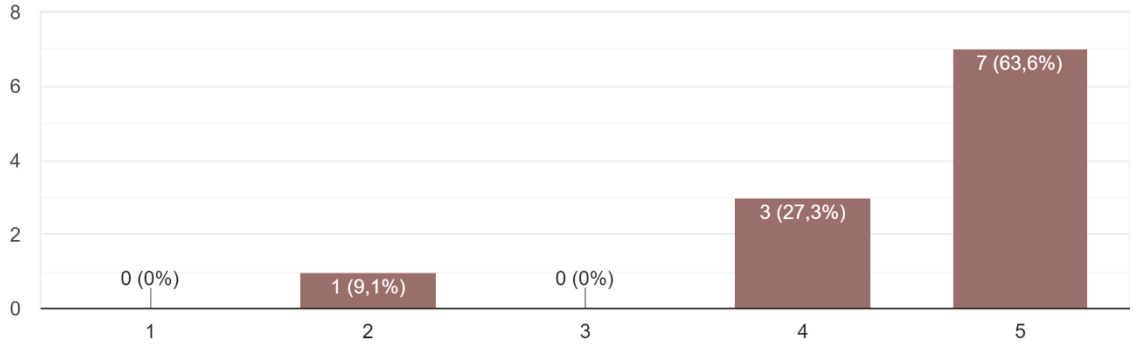


One student reported a high understanding of architectural history and cultural heritage in the region covered by this term's Palimpsest Cities course. Four students indicated a good level of knowledge, five reported a moderate level, and one acknowledged having a very low level of familiarity.

Compared to the pre-test questionnaire, we observed a positive shift in students' understanding levels. The percentage of students with a high understanding increased by 9.1%, those with a good understanding rose by 7.8%, and those with moderate understanding decreased by 16.4%. The proportion of students with a low understanding dropped to zero, while one student remained at a very low level of understanding.

2. Are you satisfied with the introductory lecture? (1-Nonsatisfied at all, 2-Nonsatisfied, 3-Neutral, 4-Satisfied, 5-Very satisfied)

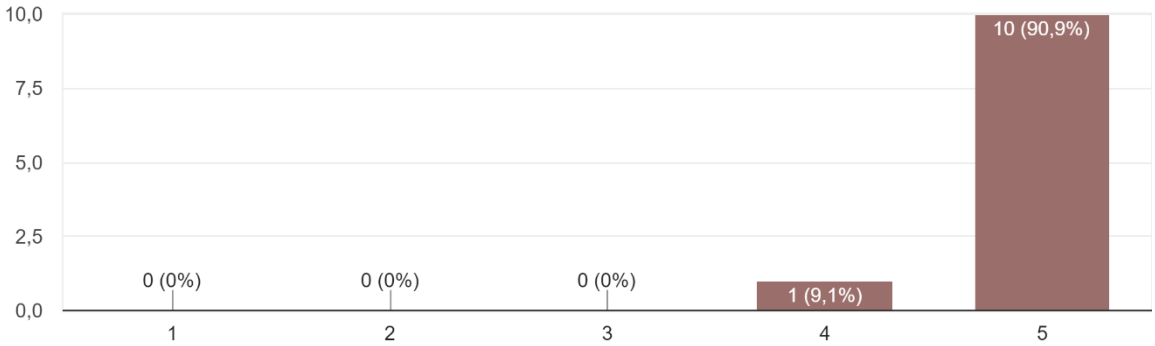
11 απαντήσεις



Seven students expressed high satisfaction with the introductory lecture, three reported being satisfied, and one remained nonsatisfied.

3. Did you understand the aims, methods, and contents of the project and the course? (1-Totally disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Totally agree)

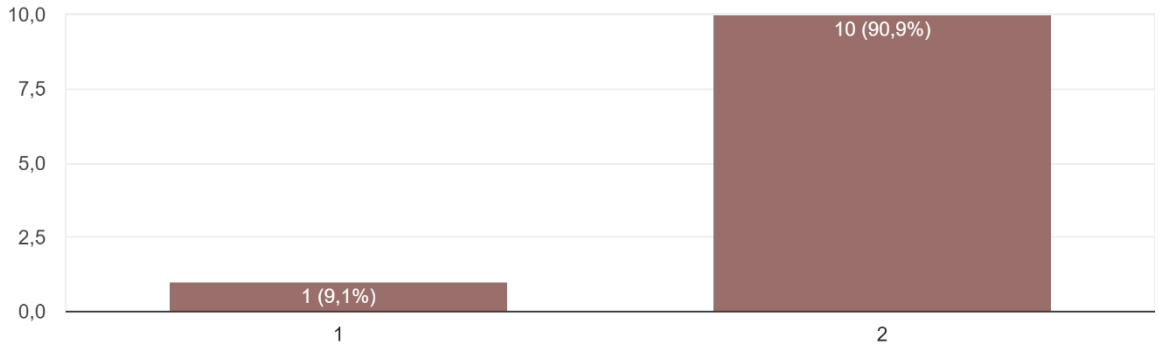
11 απαντήσεις



Ten students said they fully understood the project and course goals, methods, and contents. One just agreed.

4. Do you know what is gamification?

11 απαντήσεις

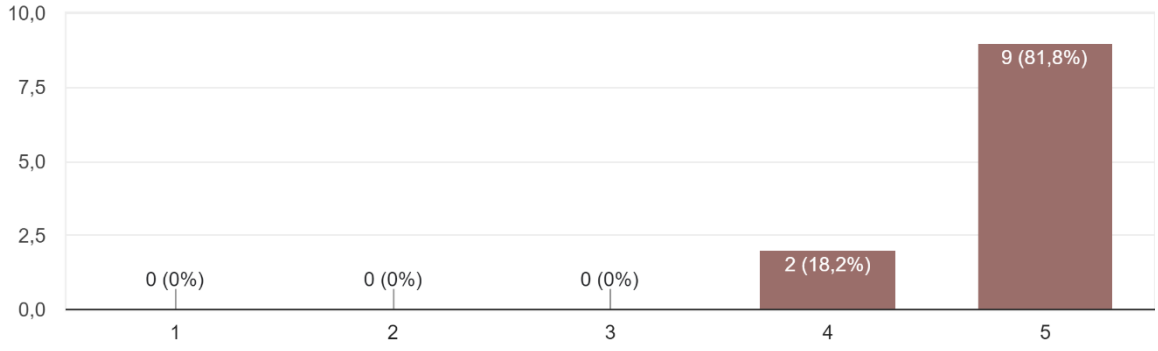


Ten of the students confirmed their familiarity with the concept of gamification, while one did not.

Compared to the pre-test survey, we see a positive change. Before the Palimpsest Cities course, 61.9% of students did not know what gamification was, while only 38.1% were aware.

5. Did the field trips help you understand the importance of the gamification technique? (1-Totally disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Totally agree)

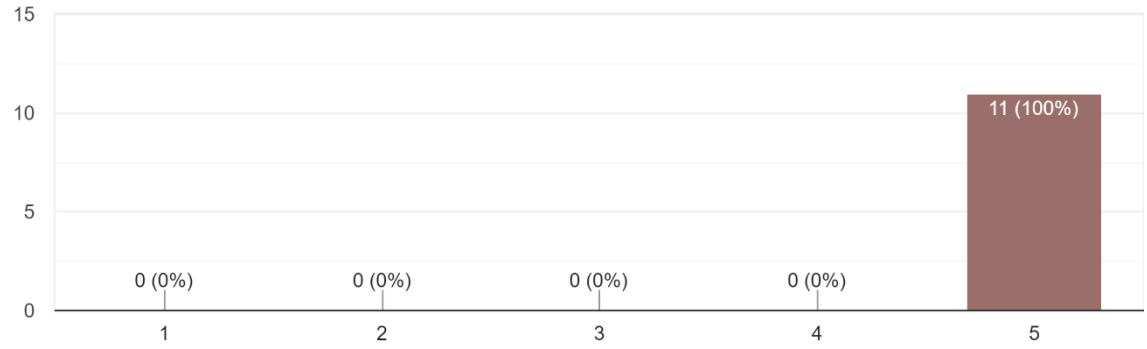
11 απαντήσεις



Nine students strongly agreed that the field trips during the Palimpsest Cities course significantly helped them understand the importance of the gamification technique. And two students simply agreed.

6. Did you enjoy the field trips and also explore and learn new things? (1-Totally disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Totally agree)

11 απαντήσεις



All students expressed complete agreement that they enjoyed the field trips and explored and learned new things.

7. Did you like learning through the Timeline Travel mobile application? If yes what did you like the most, if not what you didn't like?

- Architecture and period.

- Yes, I liked it. My favorite part was the ability to see the architectural heritage within a changing timeline. Also, it is very user-friendly with detailed info about buildings right from the map.

- Yes

- Yes, the visual and chronological representation of information facilitates perception.

- Yes

- The timeline travel mobile application was very enjoyable, and creating your own timeline was great.

- It is a nice option for seeing the buildings in one area on a timeline.

- Yes, I liked to search and find information about buildings and their architects.

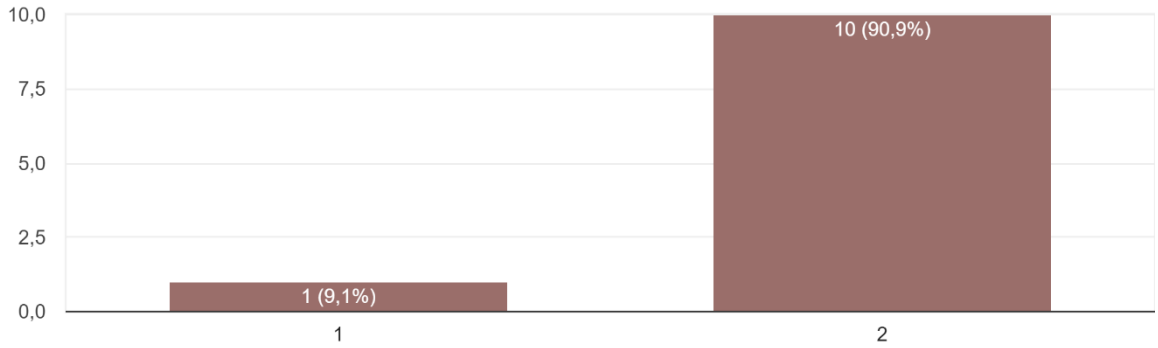
- Yes I like it, to make your own timeline was a great experience.

- I like it.

- Yes

8. Are you aware of the storytelling technique?

11 απαντήσεις

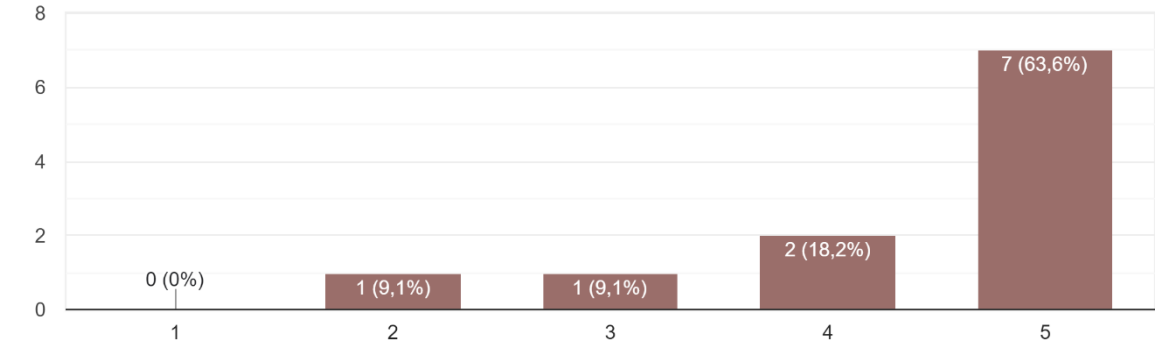


Ten students stated that are aware of the storytelling techniques, while one declared that is not.

In contrast to the pre-test survey, we notice slight changes, as the majority of students were already familiar with the storytelling technique.

9. Did you like creating from scratch your digital story/film? (1-Totally disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4-Agree, 5-Totally agree)

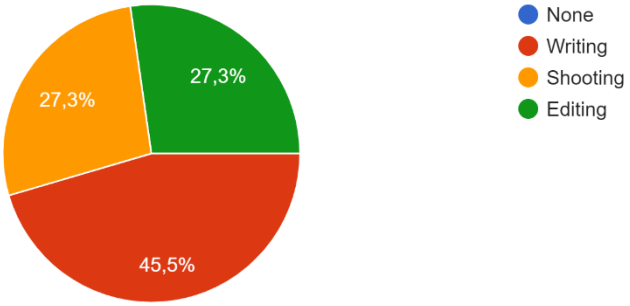
11 απαντήσεις



Seven students thoroughly enjoyed creating their digital story/film from scratch, two agreed, one was neutral, and the last one did not enjoy it.

10. Which part of your digital story creation you liked the most (you can choose more than one option)?

11 απαντήσεις



Nearly half of the students, 45.5%, enjoyed the writing part the most in the creation of the digital story. 27.3% found the editing part most appealing and an equal percentage expressed a preference for the shouting part.

11. Did you enjoy the "City-on-Trial" workshop? If yes what did you like the most, if not what you didn't like?

- Yes

- Yes. It provided a unique platform for exploring various perspectives on our heritage preservation. Discussions deepened my knowledge of the region's history and current situation.

- Yes

- Yes, discussion of different views.

- It was so good.

- Yes, it was a good experience.

- Yes

- It was fun to research things and defend our side.

- Yes, I liked it. It was entertaining and enjoyable

- I liked it.

- Yes

12. Did you enjoy the activity "Model of the Palimpsest City"? If yes what did you like the most, if not what you didn't like?

- Yes

- It was the most enjoyable part of the course. Preparing questions helped me to better understand the content.

- Yes

- Yes, ı understood better layers in the city scale.

- Yes

- Gamification was entertaining.

- Yes

- I actually don't like making models in general, but I really enjoyed it because we made a board game.

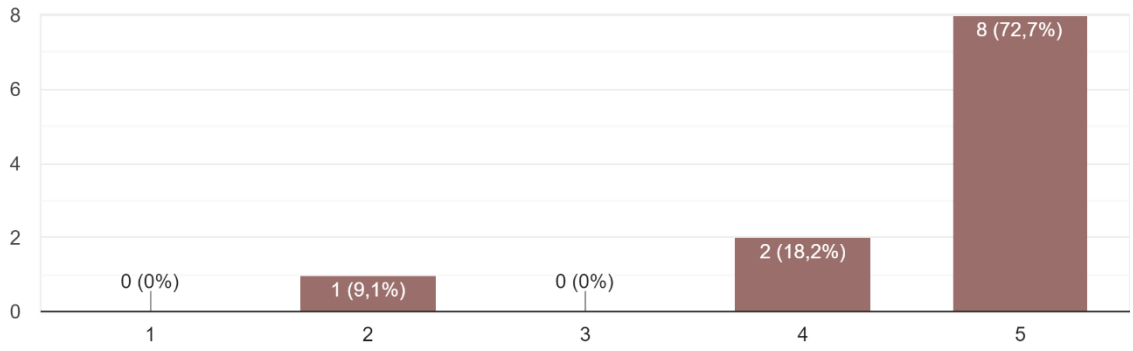
- Yes, we made our models with board games, and it was a new experience.

- I liked the game part.

- Yes

13. Are you satisfied with the closing lecture? (1-Nonsatisfied at all, 2-Nonsatisfied, 3-Neutral, 4-Satisfied, 5-Very satisfied)

11 απαντήσεις



Eight students expressed high satisfaction with the closing lecture, two were just satisfied, and the remaining one was nonsatisfied.

14. Do you prefer the conventional lectures, the "Palimpsest Cities" course, or a mix of both and why?

- Both

- I definitely prefer a mix of both. Because the palimpsest experience was truly memorable and very effective as a learning method. However, because of the density of the architectural education system in Turkey, it might not be the most practical method on its own. Therefore, the mixed approach we used in this class is the best option.

- Mix. Some theoretical lessons before the trip can provide a better understanding.

- This lesson kept us active.

- Only the Palimpsest Cities.

- Mix of both.

- I prefer Palimpsest Cities type courses because it is a course that puts students at the center.

- Only the Palimpsest Cities.

- I prefer palimpsest cities because traditional lessons lost their teaching as they started to get boring.

- I prefer the use of both.

15. Write your feedback regarding the whole course (e.g. what you would change, things that could have been done better, etc.)

- Everything was okay.

- The content itself was well-designed and informative.

- it was a satisfying lecture.

- A joint course can be done with other students who have already taken the course.

- I think this style is more effective than other lessons.

- It was a really nice experience to learn how a living city changes and develops through the years.

- It was really good semester thanks to everyone.

- Everything was good.

- I liked this course.

- I liked everything.

CONCLUSIONS (AFTER-TEST QUESTIONNAIRES)

The post-test questionnaire analysis of instructors from AHEP and ITU University provides valuable insights into the effectiveness and challenges of the second implementation of the Palimpsest Cities course. Overall, the course swap between universities received mixed feedback. The positives included the opportunity to apply teaching methods in different contexts, increased student enthusiasm, and enhanced learning about historical structures in Istanbul. However, challenges included limited on-site visits, preparation difficulties, and reliance on secondary resources for the digital storytelling part. Gamification techniques were seen as effective, though instructors recommended a balanced approach to avoid content overload. Storytelling was generally viewed positively, while opinions on the "Timeline Travel" app varied. The "City-on-Trial" workshop was unanimously effective, but the "Model of

Palimpsest City" activity had mixed reviews. The curriculum was considered overly intense by some, and a combination of traditional methods with the Palimpsest Cities course was preferred by most.

The feedback provided highlights several key points for consideration in course improvement. The revised curriculum received positive feedback, with the intensity of the course no longer a general complaint among students. The Treasure hunt module was particularly successful and favored by students. However, challenges were noted, such as the need for better preparation in certain activities, particularly in the "City-on-Trial" workshop. While undergraduates showed enthusiasm and active participation, difficulties arose in finding new topics for the timeline travel app and maintaining focus on learning objectives during games. Suggestions for improvement included creating a city library for students, gamifying discussion sessions, and implementing modules interchangeably to enhance learning outcomes. Concerns were raised regarding the effectiveness of swapping courses and the need for further site visits during digital storytelling and model-making activities. Despite the challenges, the course was deemed beneficial, with room for enhancements in its implementation and structure.

The post-test questionnaire analysis of students from AHEP and ITU University reveals several positive outcomes from the Palimpsest Cities course. Students showed an overall increase in their understanding of architectural history and cultural heritage, with notable improvements in those reporting high and good levels of knowledge. Satisfaction with the introductory and closing lectures was high, and the majority of students fully understood the course goals and methods. Familiarity with gamification and storytelling techniques improved significantly, and the field trips were unanimously enjoyed, enhancing the understanding of gamification's importance. The Timeline Travel mobile application received positive feedback for its user-friendly interface and educational value. Students also enjoyed creating digital stories and participating in the "City-on-Trial" workshop, which deepened their knowledge and engagement. While opinions on the "Model of the Palimpsest City" activity were mixed, it was generally well-received. A mix of conventional lectures and the Palimpsest Cities course was preferred by most students for its balanced and effective approach.

Overall, the feedback regarding the whole course was positive, with students expressing satisfaction with various aspects. They found the content to be well-designed and informative, and they appreciated the engaging lectures. Some students suggested the possibility of joint courses with other students who have already taken the course, indicating an interest in further collaboration. Many students believed that this teaching style was more effective than others they have experienced, highlighting the value of hands-on learning experiences. They also found it rewarding to learn about the evolution of a city over time. Overall, students expressed gratitude for a good semester and enjoyed the course, with several stating that they liked everything about it.

FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS

SUMMARY FROM THE FOCUS GROUP WITH AHEP INSTRUCTORS

Two instructors from AHEP participated in the focus group.

Based on the conversation among the instructors regarding the second implementation of the Palimpsest Cities course, several key conclusions can be drawn. The course swap between AHEP and ITU universities proved beneficial in exposing students to the architectural history of Istanbul. This opportunity was highly valued as it allowed students to explore these historic sites in person, which was previously not possible during their regular architectural history courses. However, the challenge of being away from Istanbul for most of the course duration, except for field trips, posed difficulties for activities like digital storytelling and model making. Students had to rely heavily on available internet resources rather than firsthand observations, which affected the quality of their work.

Despite these challenges, the implementation of gamification and storytelling techniques in teaching architectural history showed promising results. Students demonstrated increased creativity and engagement when tasked with creating game boards that reflected Istanbul's cultural heritage. This approach not only made learning more enjoyable but also enhanced their ability to connect with historic sites on a deeper level. The instructors noted that integrating storytelling into the teaching of architectural history made the information more memorable and meaningful to students compared to traditional methods focused solely on architectural and historical facts.

Reflecting on the overall intensity of the curriculum, instructors acknowledged the adjustments made from the previous semester to reduce its impact on students. While the course was still demanding, especially compared to theoretical courses, the active engagement required of students was seen as integral to the course's objectives. The suggestion to provide more structured preparatory readings and activities before field trips emerged as a key improvement for future implementations. This would help students better prepare and engage with the material from the outset, potentially enhancing their overall learning experience.

SUMMARY FROM THE FOCUS GROUP WITH ITU INSTRUCTORS

Three instructors from ITU participated in the focus group.

The second implementation of the Palimpsest Cities course by ITU University, which included a course exchange with AHEP University, produced mixed results. The exchange session, conducted in Alanya, involved master's and PhD students, while the basic "Palimpsest Cities" course was implemented in Istanbul with undergraduate students. Discussions among the instructors highlighted several key conclusions.

Firstly, the course exchange between ITU and AHEP University was deemed ineffective. While the field trip to Alanya was enjoyable, the exchange contradicted the project's primary objective of fostering a deep connection with one's own city. The inability to revisit the field limited students' opportunities for thorough engagement with the cultural heritage and sites of Alanya.

This was particularly problematic for production activities, as revisiting local sites for further inquiries and recordings was crucial, especially for creating videos and films.

In terms of teaching methods, gamification and storytelling significantly increased student interest, particularly among undergraduates. The Treasure Hunt game was notably successful, inspiring students to incorporate similar games into their presentations which made them more interesting, reducing the previous issue of boredom and increasing overall peer engagement. However, the instructors emphasized the importance of ensuring that games serve as a medium for learning rather than becoming the primary focus. This semester saw a better balance in gamification. The course content and activities also saw improvements. The "City on Trial" role-play was more effective this semester, with students better prepared and more engaged, leading to active participation and learning.

Regarding curriculum intensity and management, the current semester's structure was manageable, featuring five main modules and well-spaced assignments. Allowing students to choose between creating a film or a model for their final assignment offered flexibility and catered to different strengths. This flexibility also encouraged students to engage more thoughtfully and produce higher quality work throughout the semester, rather than focusing solely on the final assignment towards the end.

The primary challenge identified was the distance to the target field, which limited opportunities for follow-up visits and forced students to rely heavily on initial visual materials and internet resources. To better align with the project's goals, it is advisable to avoid course swaps and focus on activities within the local city. In the event of a swap, collaborative workshops with local citizens or students in Alanya could enhance the course by utilizing local insights and expertise.

For further improvement, instructors suggested refining the timeline travel module, as students did not engage deeply with it. Issues included a lack of effort and technical problems with the app. A more focused approach, perhaps integrating this module into PhD courses, might prove more effective.

SUMMARY FROM THE FOCUS GROUP WITH AHEP STUDENTS

Five students from AHEP participated in the focus group.

The second implementation of the Palimpsest Cities course, featuring architecture students from AHEP University, provided valuable insights into their experiences and the effectiveness of the course structure. The discussions with students revealed several key conclusions about their engagement with historic sites, the use of gamification and storytelling, and the overall course impact.

Firstly, students from Alanya traveled to Istanbul as part of the course exchange. The historic sites in Istanbul offered varied experiences - some students visited for second time iconic locations, while others were experiencing Istanbul for the first time. The students noted the educational value and personal impact of these sites, emphasizing the facilitation of learning through course activities.

The use of gamification and storytelling was unanimously appreciated by the students, who found these methods significantly enhanced their engagement and focus. The interactive

nature of creating and participating in games and storytelling made the learning process more enjoyable and memorable. Students reported that these techniques encouraged them to go deeper into their research and presentations, transforming the educational experience into an active and collaborative process.

The field trip was identified as the most impactful activity of the course, allowing students to experience the historic and cultural context of Istanbul firsthand. The trips was highly valued for the direct exposure that provided, reinforcing the theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom. The students expressed a strong preference for such immersive experiences, indicating that they were among the highlights of the course.

Collaboration and teamwork were integral components of the course, particularly during the "City on Trial" week, where students worked together on various projects. Although digital storytelling projects were often completed individually, the collaborative spirit was evident in group activities and discussions, fostering a sense of community and shared learning.

Regarding suggestions for course improvement, students proposed several enhancements. They suggested having an introductory session about the sites they would visit in Istanbul, preferably a week before the trip, to better prepare and familiarize themselves with the upcoming experiences. Additionally, aligning the course schedule to avoid conflicts with other demanding courses was recommended to ensure students could devote sufficient time and focus to the Palimpsest Cities course.

Challenges faced by the students included managing the time-intensive nature of digital storytelling and model-making activities. Some students found these tasks particularly demanding, leading to fatigue and difficulty in maintaining focus. However, they managed to overcome these challenges by simplifying their approaches and adjusting their work strategies. Scheduling adjustments and more preparatory information could further alleviate these difficulties.

SUMMARY FROM THE FOCUS GROUP WITH ITU STUDENTS

Six students from ITU participated in the focus group.

The second implementation of the Palimpsest Cities course at ITU University provided architecture students with a novel and engaging opportunity to explore Alanya's historical and cultural heritage. Most students had never visited Alanya before the course, and even those who had visited previously experienced the city in a much deeper and more detailed way. This first-hand exposure to the city's historical layers and cultural significance was a highlight for many.

The primary motivations for students enrolling in the course included the chance to participate in an educational field trip, the desire to learn about ancient historical contexts, and an interest in applying gamification in architectural history. The course was also an exciting opportunity for Erasmus students to explore beyond Istanbul and engage in interdisciplinary and experiential learning.

Several memorable experiences stood out for the students during their visits to historical sites in Alanya. These visits offered practical insights into the city's historical layers and architectural heritage, enriched by the guidance of local experts and academicians.

The use of gamification and storytelling techniques significantly enhanced student engagement with the course content. Designing a board game about historical sites and events required students to think critically about historical timelines, actors, and architectural details. This process deepened their understanding and made the learning experience more enjoyable and memorable.

Collaboration and teamwork were strongly promoted throughout the course, which was a notable shift from the students' usual preference for individual academic work. This collaborative approach was particularly appreciated in the context of architectural history, a subject typically studied independently according to the students.

Visiting historical sites in person greatly enhanced the students' ability to retain and understand information about periods and details outside their usual areas of study. The hands-on experience of seeing and exploring historical layers provided a more profound and lasting educational impact compared to traditional classroom learning.

Students suggested several improvements for future iterations of the course. These included facilitating interactions with students who had previously taken the course, involving local academicians or researchers for in-depth presentations, and creating supplementary materials such as podcasts to enhance learning during site visits.

The main challenge encountered was managing the extensive readings required for the City on Trial project, particularly for students unfamiliar with the 19th-century context. Peer support and resource sharing helped mitigate this difficulty, underscoring the value of collaborative learning.

ANNEX

All the questions from online questionnaires and focus group discussions can be found in the "Evaluation Booklet".