

UPC - BARCELONA TECH
MASTER NUMERICAL METHODS IN ENGINEERING
COMMUNICATION SKILLS I | FALL 2016 | ASSIGNMENT # 3

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Due date: January, 23rd

ONE-PAGE CRITICAL REVIEW
MODELLING FLUVIAL PROCESSES USING FINITE VOLUME METHOD

On November 24th, we attended the seminar named *Modelling fluvial processes using finite volume method* given by Prof. Ernest Bladé from the FLUMEN Research Institute of UPC-CIMNE. Basically, the idea of the seminar was to explain the basic application of the finite volume method to the calculation of not only water flow in rivers but also sediment transport, water quality, turbulence, etc. All this calculations are done with a software developed by the research team.

The slides of the presentation were really concise, with few words but many equations sometimes without an explanation of the terms involved, specially when referring to shallow water equations. Even though Prof. Bladé provided some explanation of key terms, I think it should be better to include them in the presentation as well. I felt like some of the slides of the first part were just a compilation of formulas that were spread out on the presentation. The slides were used with contrasted colors (blue and black over white background) and font sizes were also appropriate, which makes the presentation more appealing, and easy to follow. In the same line, the font was of the type sans-serif, what is less distracting for the audience. In addition to this, graphs were also included in the first more mathematical part of the presentation. I am inclined to think that this was a good point from the presenter. Also, he was generous with blank space specially within equations and graph elements and included some videos for the examples which also makes the presentation clearer.

With respect to Prof. Ernest Bladé himself, I do not consider that he was nervous or timid. His voice was clear and audible and he did not do any nervous movement. He was always keeping eye contact with the audience like trying to get everyone involved in the topic of discussion. I consider this to be a key point when giving presentations or lectures. In fact, he even used the blackboard to provide some insight in the research essential aspects of the finite volume method. When it comes to the presentation rate, he made pauses between slides and key terms and this also helps the audience to easily follow the explanation even though we had to run a little bit and the end because he was running out of time. On the other hand, it is true that Prof. Bladé encountered some problems when explaining the slides in English as it is not his mother tongue, so that sometimes he was thinking to much of a word to say. In the same way, he did not directly interact much with the audience. For instance, he could have used some rhetorical questions to engage the audience in the seminar.

To sum up, the presentation was well structured as it offered first a description of the mathematical foundation, and then went to more detailed aspects and examples. Slides were correct on format, size and font but sometimes too full of non-explained equations. Personally, Prof. Bladé did a good job on keeping eye contact, avoiding nervous movements and making pauses between topics or slides but he did not interact much with the audience. Last part of the presentation was kind of confusing as English was not the mother tongue of the presenter and he had to explain everything fast because he was running out of schedule. Finally, there was almost no citations in the presentation, I guess this is because the job was mainly done by the research time and Prof. Bladé himself.