Student Mentors' system in the Higher European Education

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For several years the Spanish University has been experiencing changes that affect not only the educational area but also innovation and investigation in the classroom. Even the use of so-called New Technologies has been focus of much attention in the Higher Educational System, student mentoring has been revealed as an important factor in the first university courses. In this sense, we carried out a first step in a senior student mentor project in order to facilitate adaptation of the new students, providing information, advice and guidance on different academic and social aspects. Here, we understand mentoring as a relationship between a more senior student (mentor) and a few junior lesser experienced students (mentees). Mentoring is intended to develop and grow the skills, knowledge, confidence, and cultural understanding of the mentees aiming to help them succeed.

Consequently, this work arises from our concern about students need. A test has been designed to assess students interest in the three fundamental aspects of mentoring: academic, social and administrative orientation. The test involved 16 questions related to these three different aspects on mentoring, evaluating each question from 1 (none) to 4 (totally). Surveys have been conducted on this topic at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM) with students on different levels and modules of degrees in Agricultural Engineering. The same activity has been applied to the new degrees that have started at 2010-11 course in the Bologna Plan's requirements and are replacing the precedents progressively.

We have analysed the answers performing a multifactor analysis of variance for each question. It constructs various tests and graphs to determine which questions have statistically significant interactions, given sufficient data. The F-tests in the ANOVA table allowed identifying the significant ones. For each significant factor, the Multiple Range Tests (MRT) tells which means are significantly different from which others. We have applied it to Bologna Plan and Plan 96 separately. The results are discussed.