Introducing an online collaborative learning environment in a security database project

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Active Collab-AC

- AC is an online collaboration learning environment
- It has been used in designing and development of a Security Database TOC-search

- Main goals:

1. to facilitate students in group collaboration,
2. to coordinate and monitor the learning process,
3. to improve students' learning and communication skills,
4. to increase students' motivation, individual accountability, self-appreciation, equality and friendship in team work.

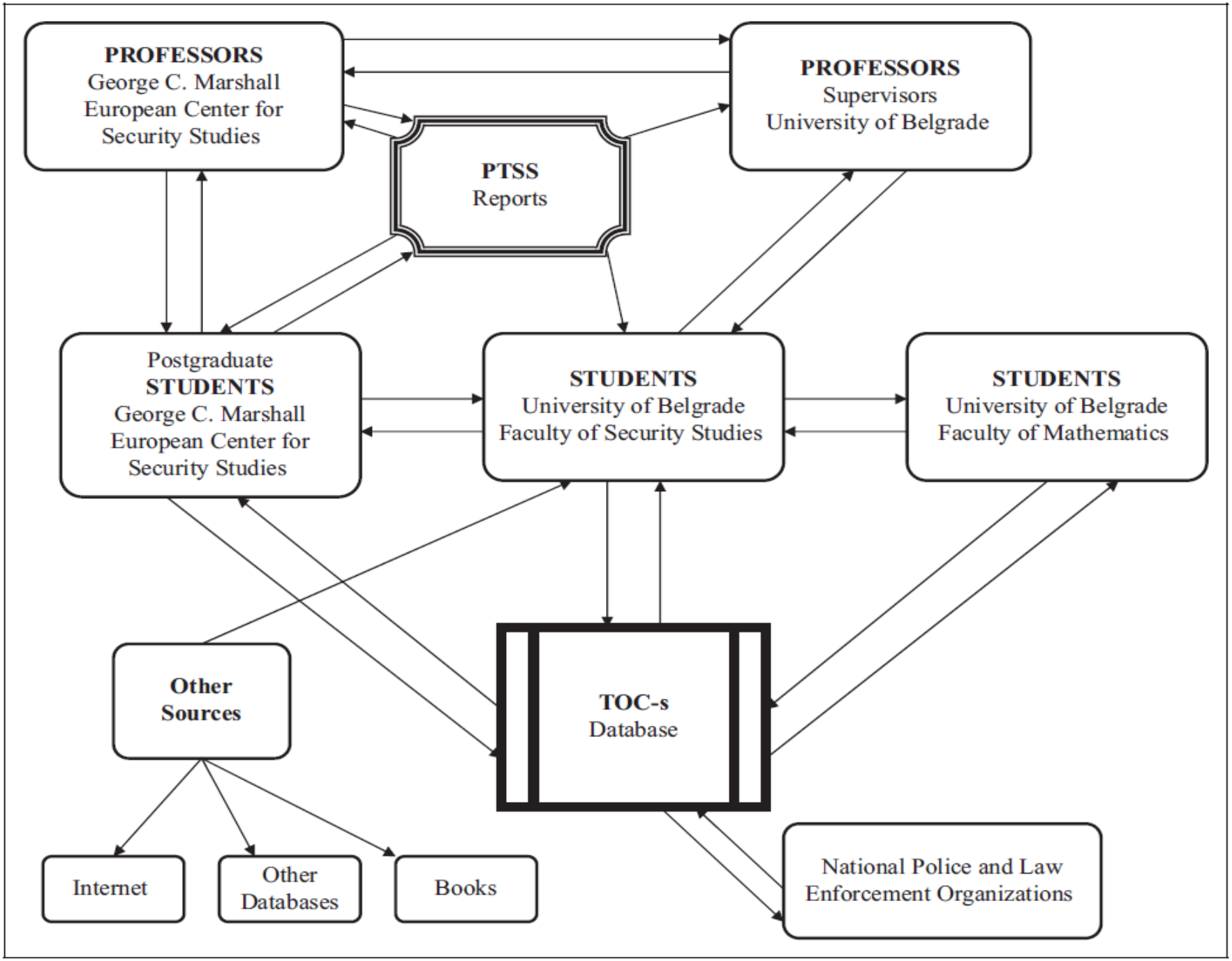
TOC-search database

- Online search engine of information related to terrorism and organized criminal, available at *www.tocsearch.com*

- Interdisciplinary project of Faculty of Mathematics and Faculty of Security studies, Supported by George C. Marshal European Center for Security Studies, Germany

- Provides various search features and analysis in of different categories related to terrorism and organized criminal

- Contains the most exhaustive categorization of the stored data, compared to existing databases.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Security Studies
PROFESSORS
Supervisors
University of Belgrade
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University of Belgrade
Faculty of Security Studies
STUDENTS
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Other
Sources
TOC-s
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Internet
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Databases
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National Police and Law
Enforcement Organizations

Active Collab-AC

- Due to the specific nature of the work on the TOC-search project**,** we have decided to employ an a**synchronous, non-collocated collaborative learning environment**
- AC is a constructive learning applications, which employs a component-based architecture
- Web technology supports the intersubjective learning space
- Reusable components simplify the process of involving different learning environments tailored to the needs of any particular course or activity.

Advantages of the AC environment

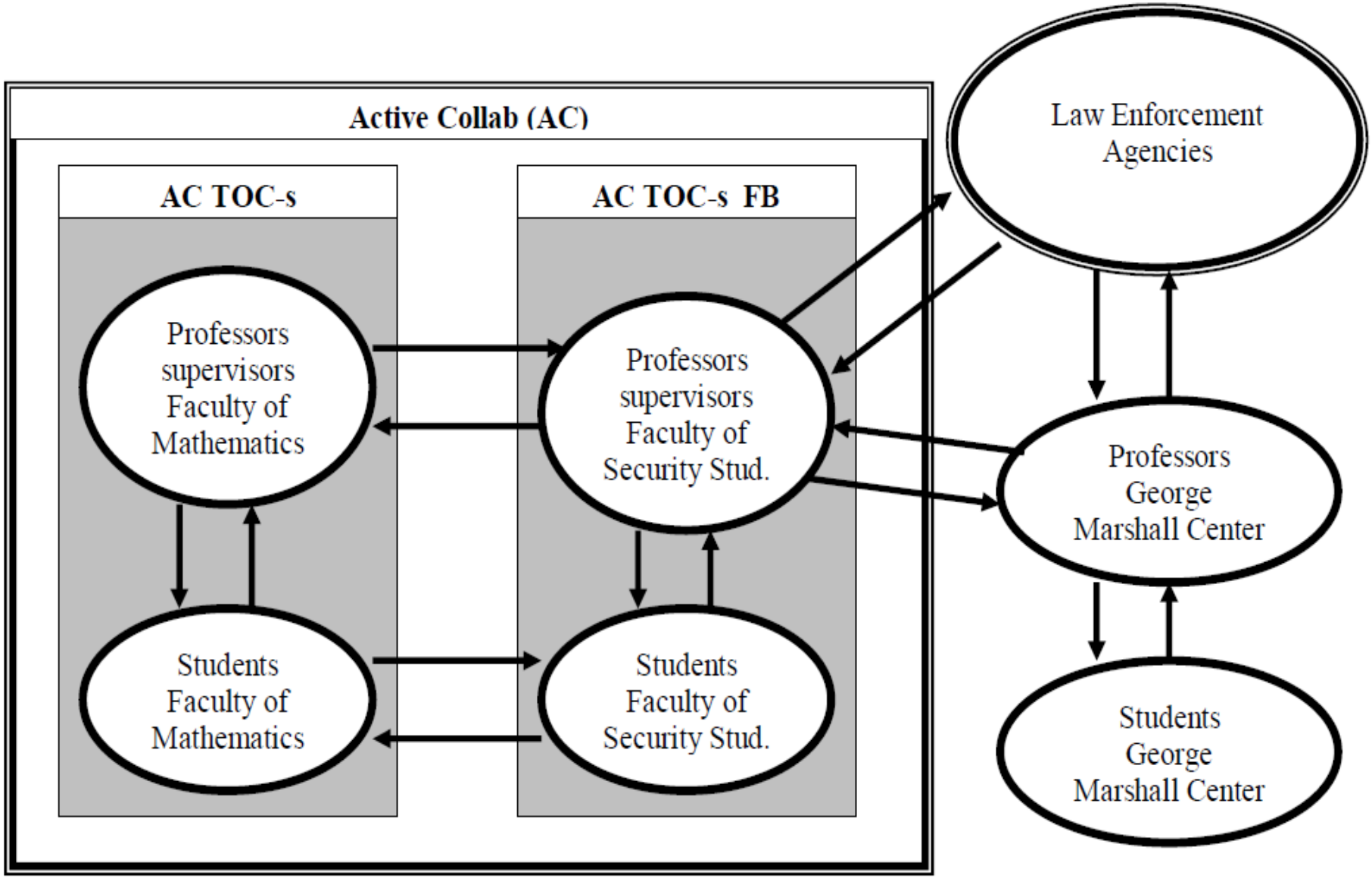
- Compared to other learning environments, the coordinating and monitoring elements are highlighted in AC portal
- The transparency of the work activates self-monitoring component of the learning environment.
- Students take an active role in a learning process through intensive interactions among themselves and with the supervisors
- They can ask for help in any stage of their work and get prompt answers, open discussions, exchange opinions, notify professors-supervisors and the rest of the group when certain task is accomplished, etc.

Active Collab AC

We have defined two AC project groups related to TOC-search database.

- **“TOC search”,** related to construction and development of the database in the technical sense: programming, design, data management, etc. (members are students of Faculty of Mathematics)

- **“TOC search FB”,** gathers TOC-search members who are in charge for data collection, classification and editing forms. (members are students of Faculty of Security Sciences)


Active Collab (AC)
AC TOC-s
AC TOC-s FB
Professors supervisors Faculty of Mathematics
Professors supervisors Faculty of Security Stud.
Students Faculty of Mathematics
Students Faculty of Security Stud.
Law Enforcement Agencies
Professors George Marshall Center
Students George Marshall Center

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Overview

Options

TOC search

Leader: **zoricast@matf.bg.ac.rs**
Group: **Default**
Starts On: **Oct 1. 2009**
Status: **Active**

My Assignments
iCalendar Feed
RSS Feed

Project Progress

3 of 8 tasks completed (38%)

People on This Project

TOCS

- Aleksandar Smiljkovic 1 days ago
- markoub@gmail.com 17 days ago
- zoricast@matf.bg.ac.rs
- galileja@yahoo.com On Jun 12, 2010
- Marko Obradovic -- Unknown --
- Kristina Veljkovic -- Unknown --

Jul 22. 2010

zoricast@matf.bg.ac.rs commented Statistike ticket: 11:19 PM

Ubaci i id-eve i nazive...mislim da ce prva varijanta (preglednija) posluziti.

View Comment · All Comments (4)

Jul 21. 2010

Aleksandar S. commented Statistike ticket: 10:00 PM

Ok, potrudicu se da sto pre to uradim. Za ucesnike u akcijama i lokacije akcija mogu ubaciti id-eve umesto naziva zbog brzine izracunavanja, pa se kasnije moze lako na osnovu id-a dobiti i naziv. A mo...

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Overview

Options

TOC search FB

My Assignments
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The TOC-search (Terrorist and Organized Criminal Search Data Base) is a dynamic data base which offers comprehensive information on global terrorist network and help researchers, analysts, students and others working to prevent terrorism. It is result of a common project realized by the Faculty of Security Studies and Faculty of Mathematics in Belgrade which had started in December 2007.

The TOC-s data baseis designed as online search engine that provides in-depth search and analysis on various terrorist-related categories: terrorist incidents, groups, organizations, members, leaders and supporting individuals and organizations. It also provides extensive information on links and relations between the mentioned terrorist-related categories and enables the corresponding search and predictions as well. The scope of the TOC-s is to integrate data from variety of sources, including foreign and domestic news, professional security journals, reports and databases, academic works. One of the key advantages of the TOC-s is fact that its basic data source is verified information provided by PTSS reports of the George C Marshall European Center for Security Studies. The TOC-s database will have both educational and applicative function, as an additional powerful measure for protecting state borders.

Project Progress

7 of 10 tasks completed (70%)

People on This Project

TOCS

- Aleksandar Smiljkovic 1 days ago
- markoub@gmail.com 17 days ago
- zoricast@matf.bg.ac.rs
- galileja@yahoo.com On Jun 12, 2010
- ivanamitrovic333@gmail.com On Apr 5, 2010
- Stevan Tatalović 5 days ago
- Diana Kujović 22 days ago
- Никола Миловановић On May 22, 2010
- Милан Ражић On Mar 22, 2010
- mali_galeb@yahoo.com 23 days ago

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Active Collab-AC

Some of the most useful and most exploited AC features in the TOC-search project are:

Milestones are used to mark key points in the project so that they can have a bird-eye view over things that needs to be done, when and who is responsible.

Checklist is a list of tasks which need to be done within a project. Every task in a list can have priority, due date, and multiple assignees.

Active Collab-AC

Pages are designed for collaborative writing of articles, to track and compare changes or revert to any past version. Pages can be organized in tree like structure, sorted in categories and associated with milestones.

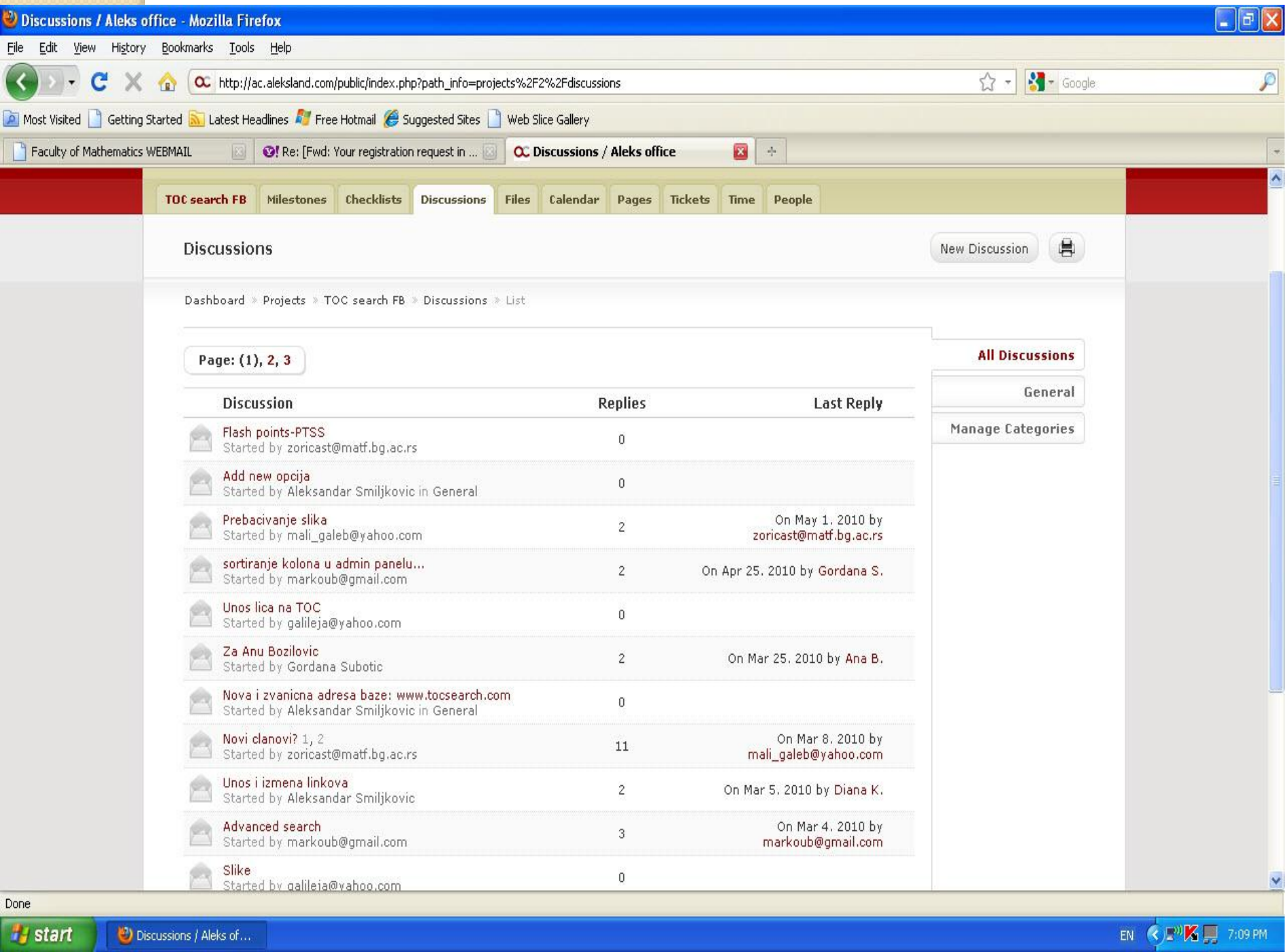
Tickets are essentially tasks, but their rich features enable their use for many different things, depending on the needs. They work well for tasks which take longer to get completed, which evolve through time, or in situations when is necessary to discuss a task with the members of the team.

Active Collab-AC

Discussions on tickets, milestones, or general-type discussions enable both students and professors to refer to a problem in the realization of the milestone, task or subtask.

Files. AC portal has the possibility to share, organize and comment files. Unlimited number of related files may be uploaded, and further viewed, downloaded and discussed. Files are organized into categories and sorted by the time they are uploaded. Professors can restrict the accessibility of the uploaded files from and make them available to certain members of TOC-search team only.

Email Notifications. Participants of the project receive email notifications when tickets or milestones are commented, completed, opened or reopened, when a discussion has been started or commented and a file uploaded.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Started by Aleksandar Smiljkovic in General
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Prebacivanje slika
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On May 1, 2010 by zoricast@matf.bg.ac.rs
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On Apr 25, 2010 by Gordana S.
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Started by galileja@yahoo.com
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On Mar 25, 2010 by Ana B.
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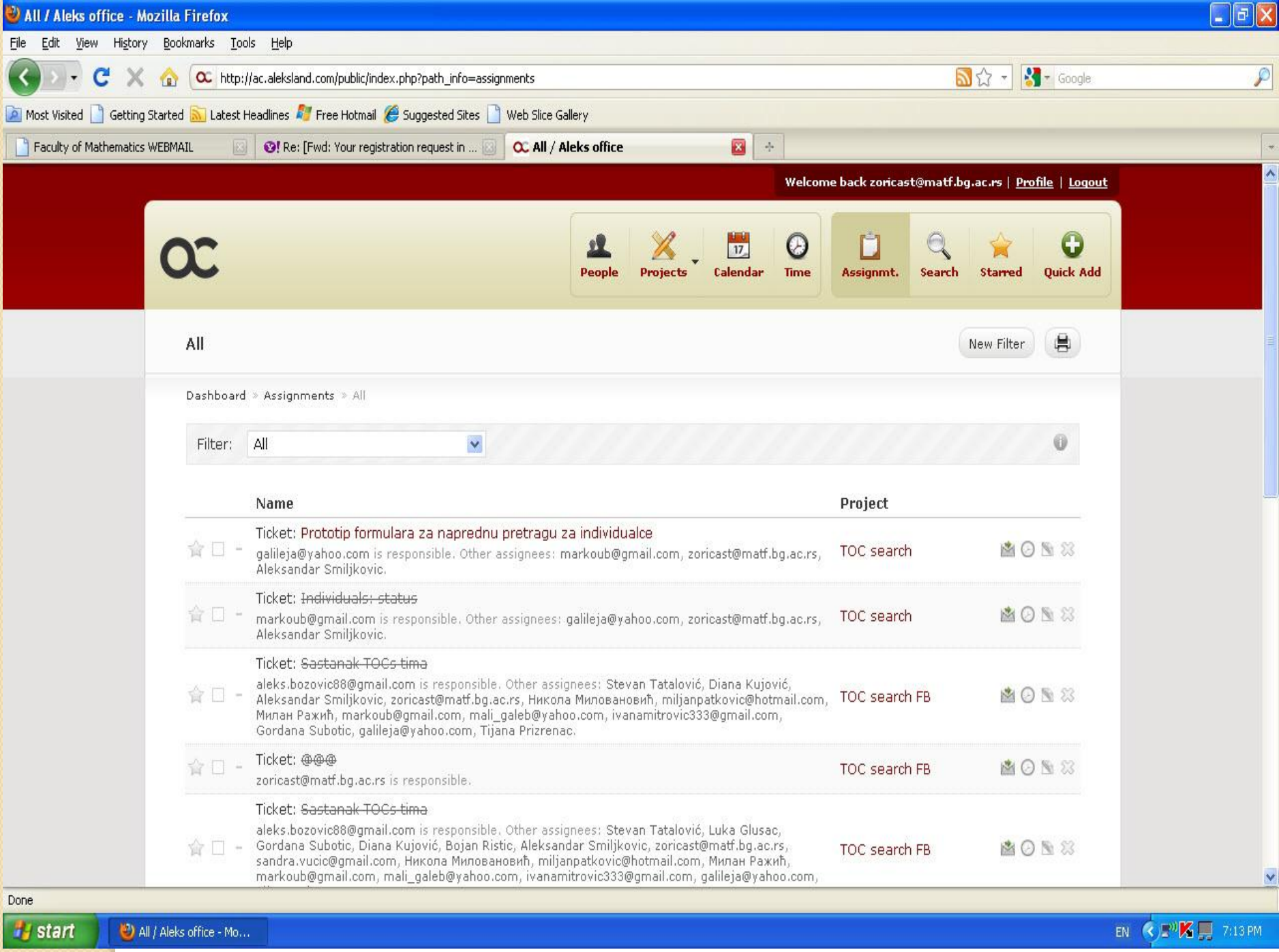
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Case study

- The goal of our case study was to get feedback from students about the impact of the AC environment on their work within the TOC-search project
- Participants in this study were students from Faculty of Security studies involved in the TOC-search project.
- In this study we used two questionnaires administered to all participants.

Case study

Frequency of usage of AC portal	n (%)	*Most frequently used feature*	n (%)
5-7 days a week	19 (50%)	Discussions	26 (68.4%)
3-4 days a week	16 (42.1%)	E-mail Notifications	9 (23.7%)
1-2 days a week	3 (7.9%)	Other	3 (7.9%)

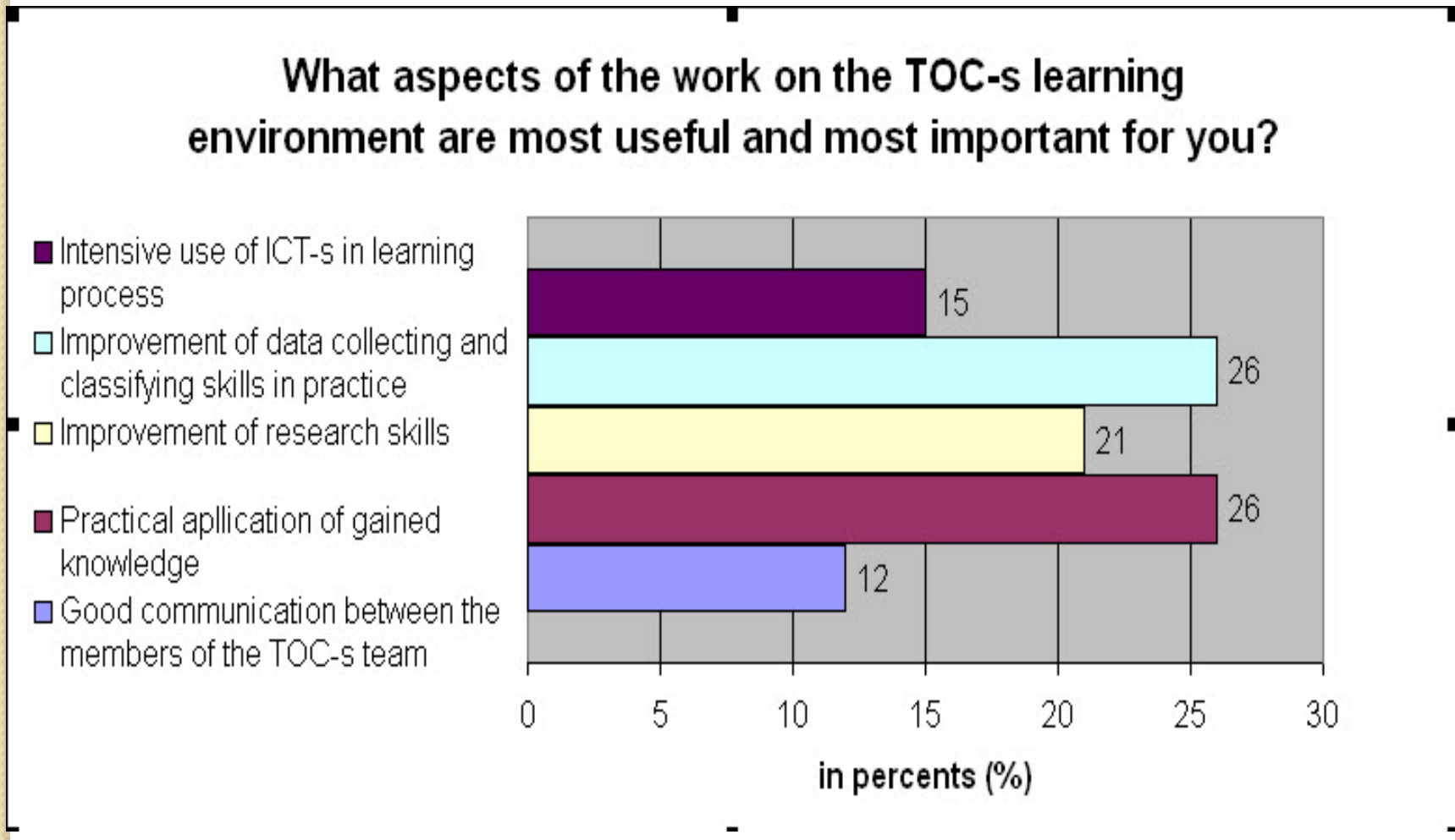
Table 1. Frequency of usage of AC portal and its most frequently used feature

Case study

Category	Improvement (n, %)			
	Improved	*Somewhat improved*	*Little improved*	*Not improved*
Communication	37 (97.4%)	0	1 (2.6%)	0
Research skills	30 (78.9%)	5 (13.2%)	3 (7.9%)	0
Learning skills	26 (68.4%)	7 (18.4%)	5 (13.2%)	0
Motivation	32 (84.2%)	5 (13.2%)	1 (2.6%)	0
Self-appreciation	17 (44.7%)	14 (36.8%)	4 (10.5%)	3 (7.9%)
Monitoring and coordination	29 (76.3%)	8 (21.1%)	1 (2.6%)	0

Table 2. Students' perceptions of improvement

Case study


What aspects of the work on the TOC-s learning environment are most useful and most important for you?
Intensive use of ICT-s in learning process
Improvement of data collecting and classifying skills in practice
Improvement of research skills
Practical apllication of gained knowledge
Good communication between the members of the TOC-s team
15
26
21
26
12
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
in percents (%)

Conclusions

The results of the conducted study indicate that:

- The perspectives of help seeking and information searching have been successfully unified within the AC interactive learning situation.
- AC showed to be a constructive knowledge-building environment that helped in improving students' learning and communication skills.
- Coordination and monitoring aspects of AC portal have positive impact on students' individual accountability, equality and friendship, motivation and self-appreciation.

Thank you for your attention!

Questions? Suggestions? Comments?

email: zoricast@matf.bg.ac.rs