Soil water processes in agroecosystems
MV0216, 10207.1920

15 Hp
Pace of study = 100%
Education cycle = Advanced
Course leader = Elsa Coucheney

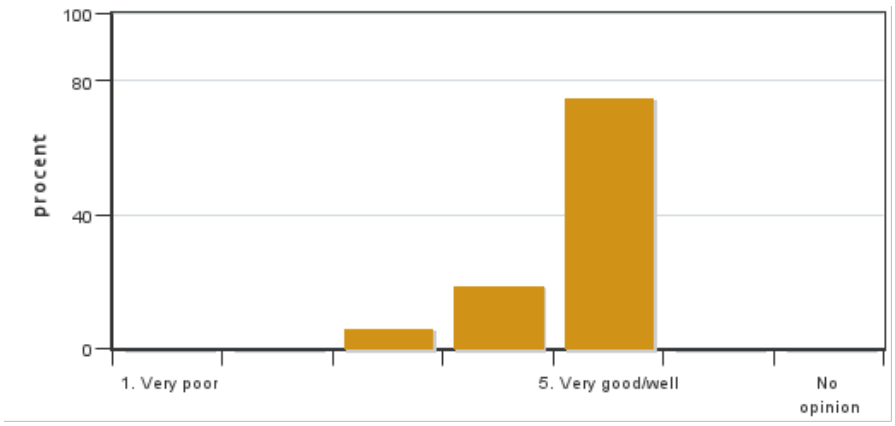
Evaluation report

Evaluation period: 2019-10-24 - 2019-11-14

Answers	16
Number of students	18
Answer frequency	88 %

Mandatory standard questions

1. My overall impression of the course is:

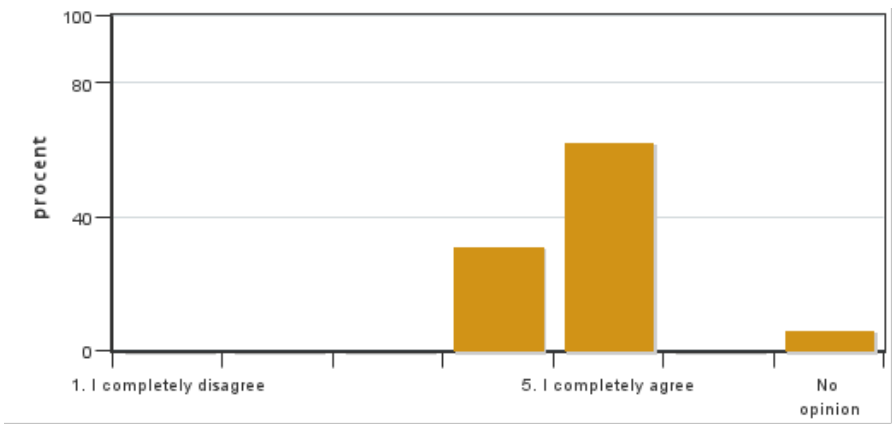


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,7
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 1
4: 3
5: 12

No opinion: 0

2. I found the course content to have clear links to the learning objectives of the course.

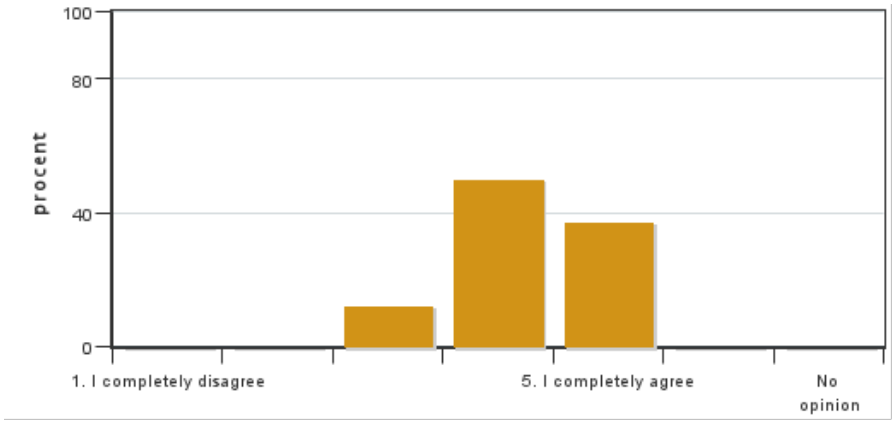


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,7
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 0
4: 5
5: 10

No opinion: 1

3. My prior knowledge was sufficient for me to benefit from the course.

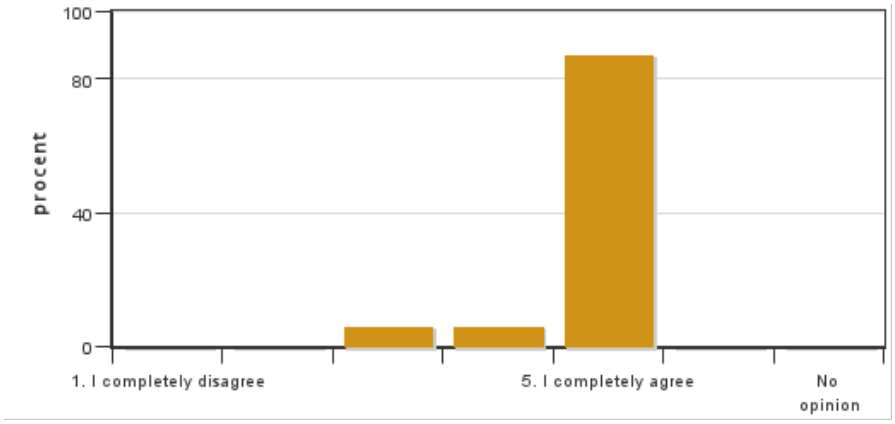


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,3
Median: 4

1: 0
2: 0
3: 2
4: 8
5: 6

No opinion: 0

4. The information about the course was easily accessible.

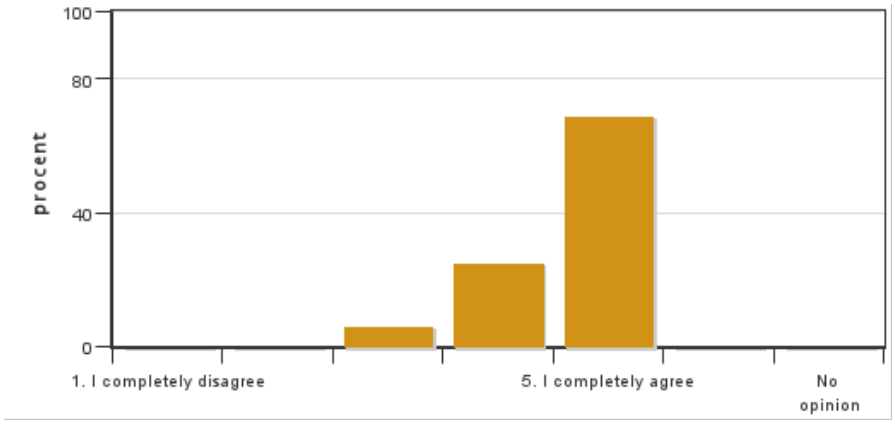


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,8
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 1
4: 1
5: 14

No opinion: 0

5. The various course components (lectures, course literature, exercises etc.) have supported my learning.

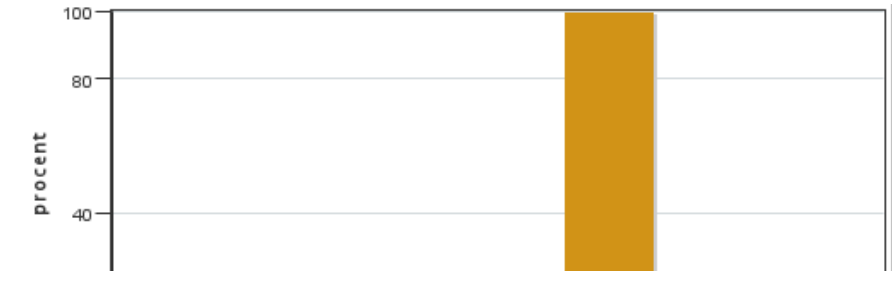


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,6
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 1
4: 4
5: 11

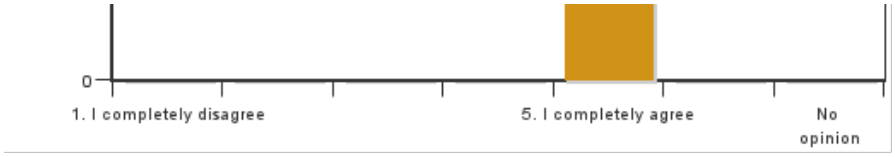
No opinion: 0

6. The social learning environment has been inclusive, respecting differences of opinion.



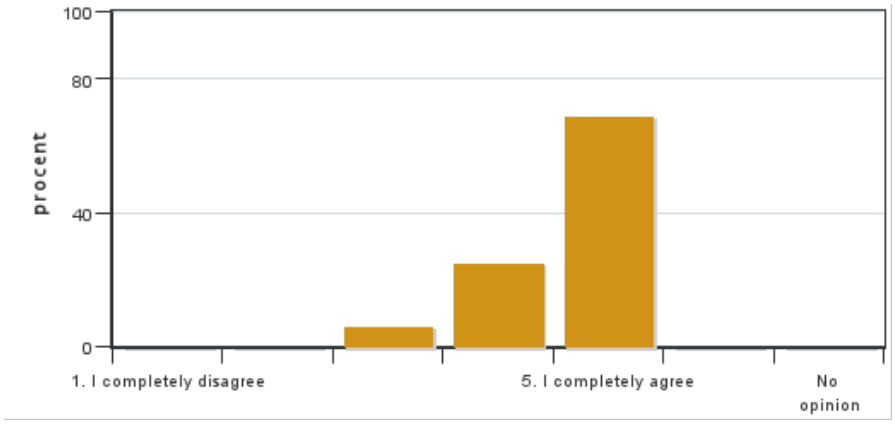
Answers: 16
Medel: 5,0
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 0
4: 0
5: 16



No opinion: 0

7. The physical learning environment (facilities, equipment etc.) has been satisfactory.

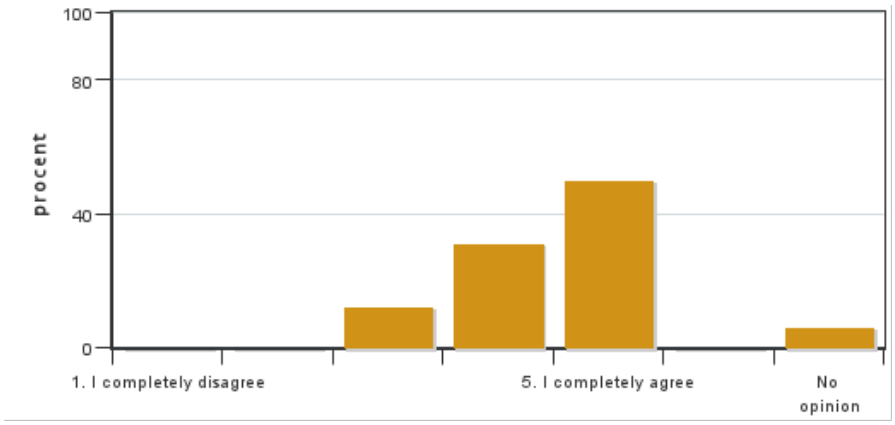


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,6
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 1
4: 4
5: 11

No opinion: 0

8. The examination(s) provided opportunity to demonstrate what I had learnt during the course (see the learning objectives).

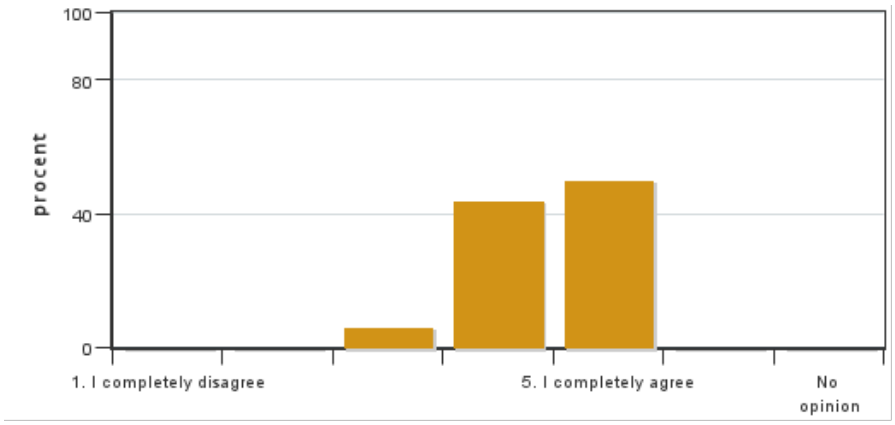


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,4
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 2
4: 5
5: 8

No opinion: 1

9. The course covered the sustainable development aspect (environmental, social and/or financial sustainability).

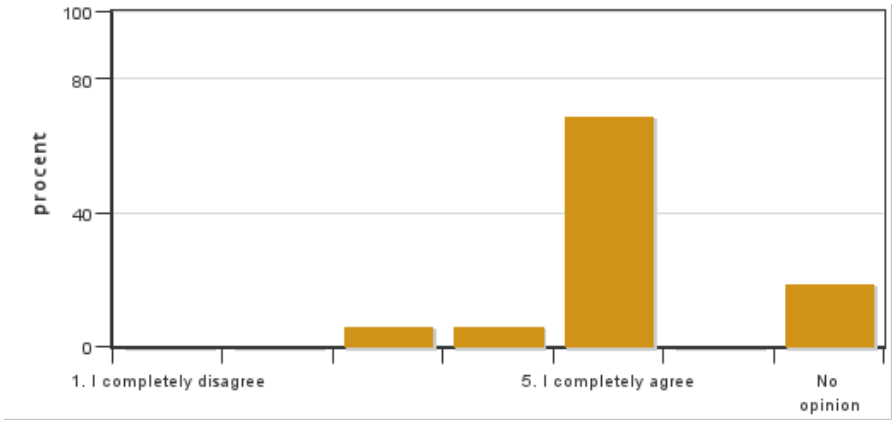


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,4
Median: 4

1: 0
2: 0
3: 1
4: 7
5: 8

No opinion: 0

10. I believe the course has included a gender and equality aspect, regarding content as well as teaching practices (e.g. perspective on the subject, reading list, allocation of speaking time and the use of master suppression techniques).

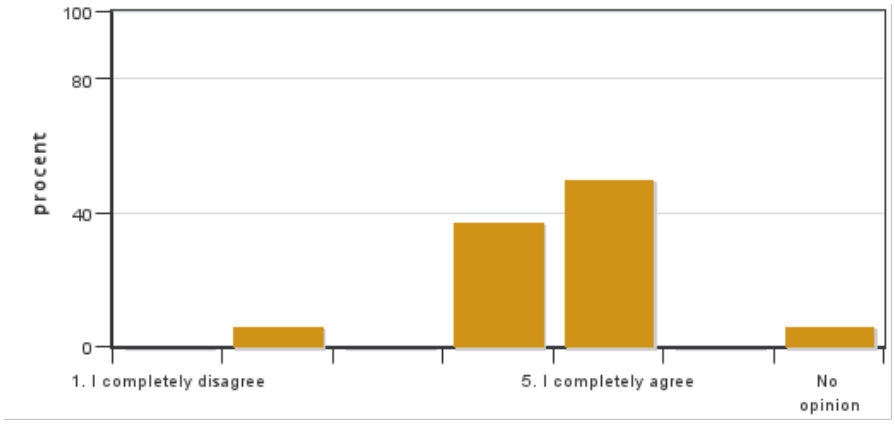


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,8
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 1
4: 1
5: 11

No opinion: 3

11. The course covered international perspectives.

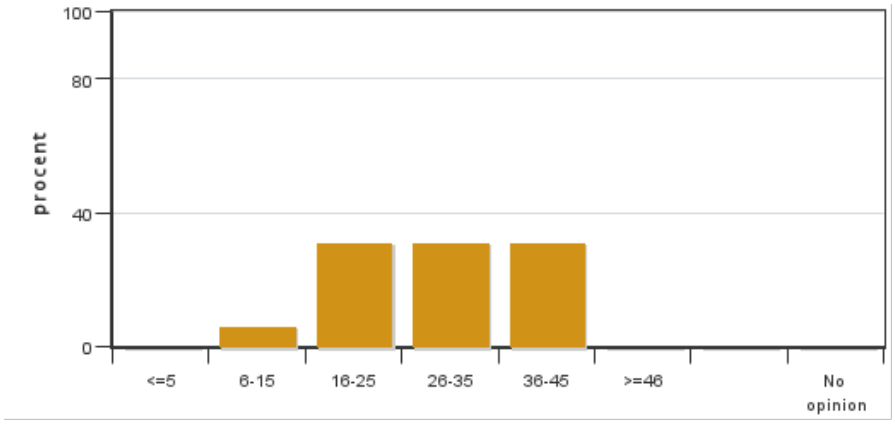


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,4
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 1
3: 0
4: 6
5: 8

No opinion: 1

12. On average, I have spent … hours/week on the course (including timetabled hours).



Answers: 16
Medel: 28,8
Median: 26-35

≤5: 0
6-15: 1
16-25: 5
26-35: 5
36-45: 5
≥46: 0

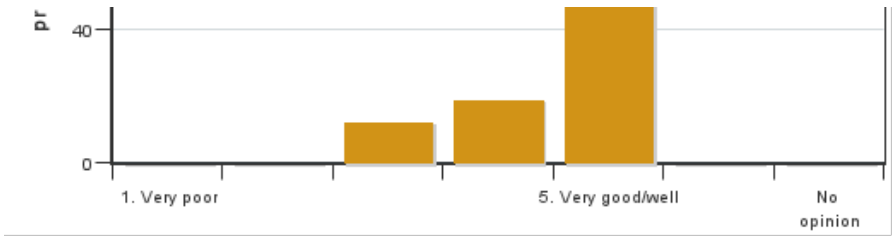
No opinion: 0

Additional own questions

13. STELLA exercises: how well did the computer exercises complement the lectures to enhance your understanding of soil-water processes?

Answers: 16
Medel: 4,6
Median: 5

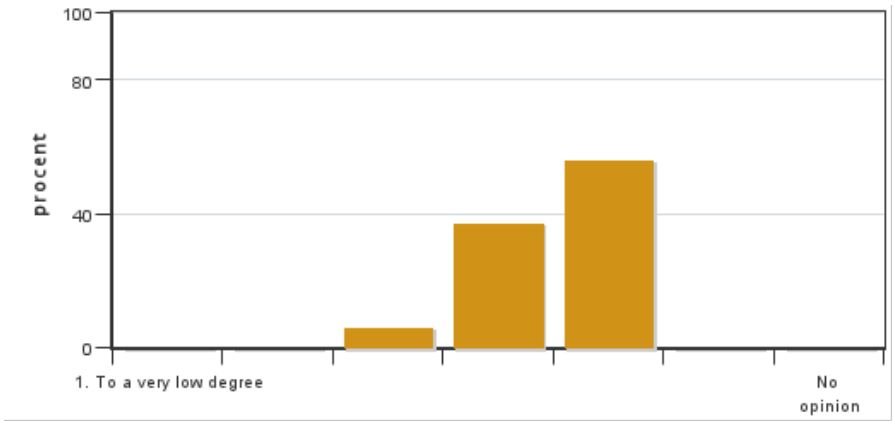
1: 0
2: 0



3: 2
4: 3
5: 11

No opinion: 0

14. STELLA exercises: how useful was the teachers run through to understand more deeply the computer exercises?

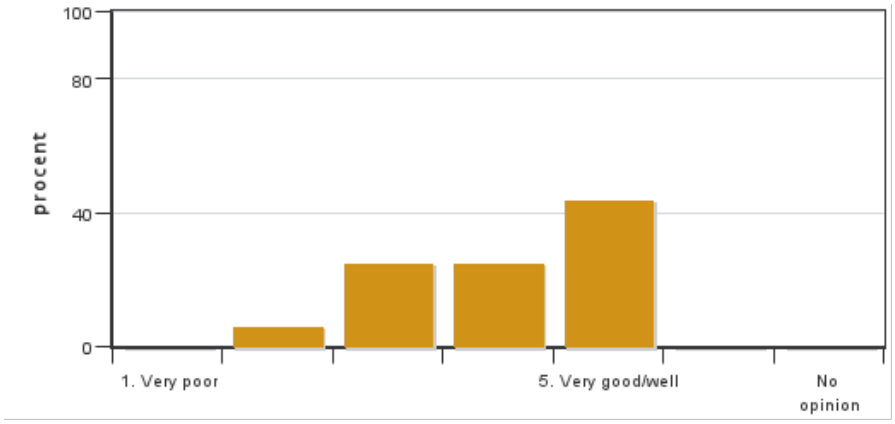


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,5
Median: 5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 1
4: 6
5: 9

No opinion: 0

15. STELLA exercises: how useful were the written reports and the group feedback in training the ability to describe soil water processes and solute transport in a written and oral form?

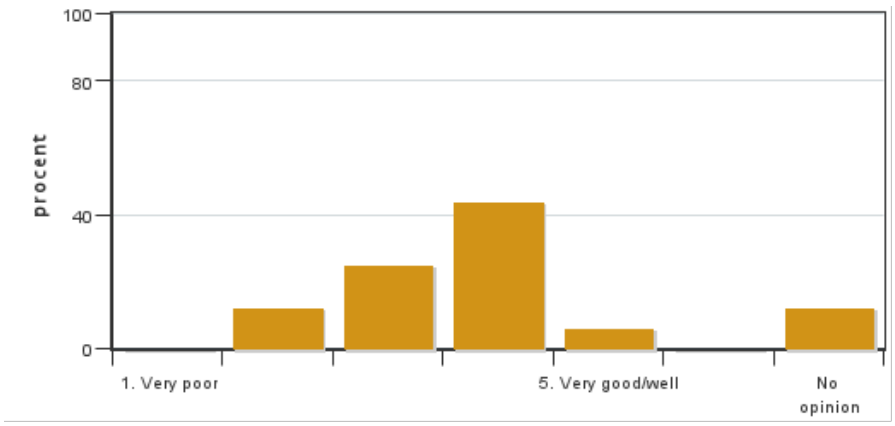


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,1
Median: 4

1: 0
2: 1
3: 4
4: 4
5: 7

No opinion: 0

16. Mini-workshop: how well did the keynote lectures helped you reflect on your article?

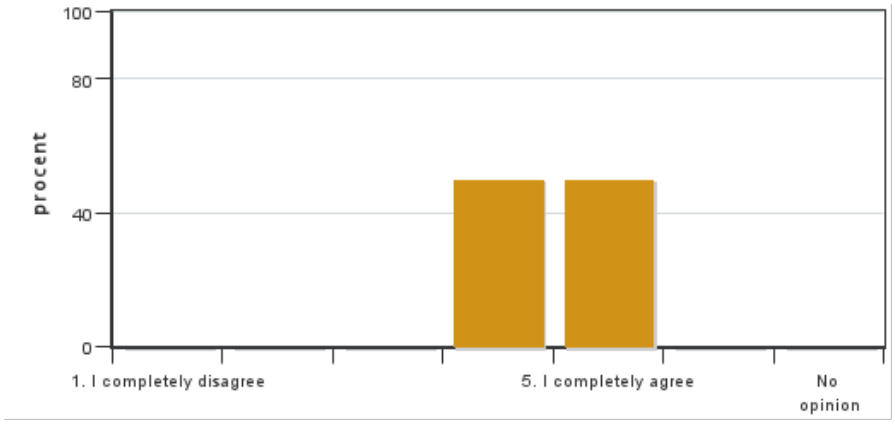


Answers: 16
Medel: 3,5
Median: 4

1: 0
2: 2
3: 4
4: 7
5: 1

No opinion: 2

17. Mini-workshop: covered important environmental issues connected to the course content?

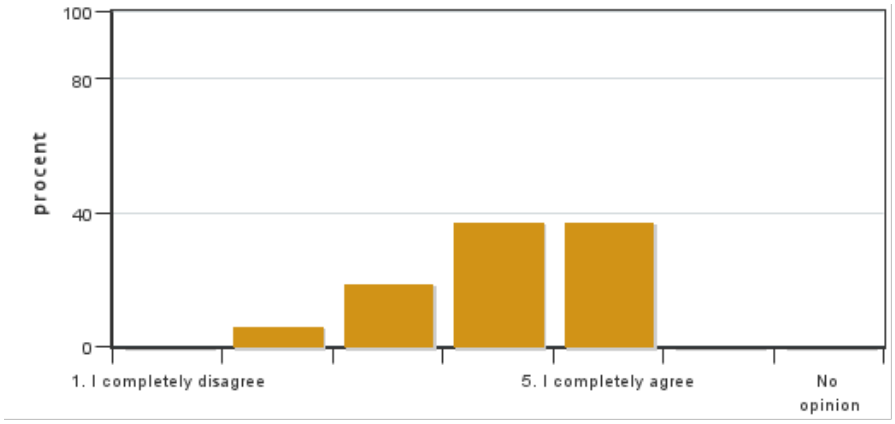


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,5
Median: 4.5

1: 0
2: 0
3: 0
4: 8
5: 8

No opinion: 0

18. Mini-workshop: has provided you with the opportunity to express and defend ideas

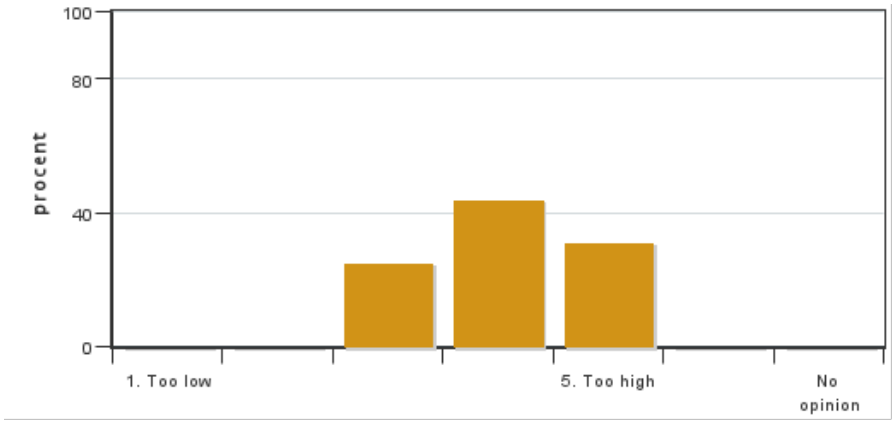


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,1
Median: 4

1: 0
2: 1
3: 3
4: 6
5: 6

No opinion: 0

19. Mini-Project: did you get enough guidelines to run your Project?

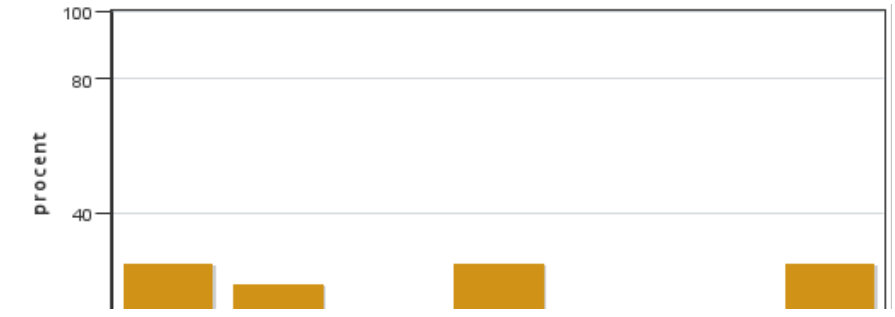


Answers: 16
Medel: 4,1
Median: 4

1: 0
2: 0
3: 4
4: 7
5: 5

No opinion: 0

20. Mini-Project: you would have liked to get more help / guidelines on how to work in a group?



Answers: 16
Medel: 2,4
Median: 2

1: 4
2: 3
3: 1
4: 4
5: 0

No opinion: 4

Course leaders comments

The course leader wants to thank all students and the student representative for their constructive feedback and many ideas and suggestions given in the course evaluation. The evaluation was fulfilled by 16 out of 19 students (of which one could not participate in the course at all). The teaching team also shares the enthusiasm expressed by many students to work with the class thorough the course development. The teaching team also agrees with many points raised by the student evaluation and feedback.

Lectures, guest lecturers and home study during the two first weeks

The lectures at the beginning have already been condensed and the time released will be used to develop one lab visit and maybe a few small experiments about soil physics. Additionally, we propose that the mini-workshop will be extended through a longer period so that its introduction will be done in the first week and articles will be distributed / available at course start. The associated keynote lectures will also take place in the first two weeks and may include additional views (guest lecturers from other universities or institutes may be considered). That way, we hope to free more time for mini-projects and exam preparation at the end of the course.

Additionally, students will be reminded at course start that they have a book to read (course literature) and that they are highly encourage to do so during the home study, especially in the first two weeks. Some are still missing the theoretical bases when starting computer labs (as shown in the quiz answers) which impedes them to clearly and efficiently link course content with computer exercises (which was visible in student reports).

CANVAS questionnaires on lecture content and modeling exercices

To prevent this, the course leader and course examiner plan to develop questions with multiple choices related to each lecture and that will be available on CANVAS. Answers will be published in relation to the next lecture and time for questions to teachers will be accounted in the schedule. A similar system will be established for each computer exercise (Lab) and this would replace the report. The oral feedback session of all computer exercises presented by students in relation to the exam preparation will be kept as it significantly helped some students to prepare to the exam (as suggested by many 4 grades this year and some student comments). This will be however slightly revised: students will be encouraged to describe and define precisely the different models used instead of answering the questions again (this was already the idea / aim but not clearly explained to students). The writing will be instead trained in the mini-workshop assignments and the mini-projects (as it is already done).

Grading

We often get feedback and disappointment about grading being solely based on the final exam. This is not true. Students forget that all assignments during the course (computer exercises, mini-workshop and mini-project) are included in the grading but include only grade 'Passed' or 'failed'. We may consider a bonus system (accounted for in the final exam) based on individual assignments during the course; i.e. excellent assignments may give some additional points to the exam, making it easier to achieve grade 4 or 5 (at the condition that grade 3 is achieved in the exam). Individual assignments would include mini-workshop reviews and answering questions on CANVAS. This should be clearly explain in a revised grading criteria document.

Group work

Teachers will reflect over the development of proposed (non compulsory) guidelines & advices on how to work in a group for the mini-project (as the course is the first in the Master program and welcome students from different backgrounds and experiences about this exercise).

Compendium *will be provided as a PDF file instead of a printed book.*

Course final assignment: oral feedback & opposition of Mini-projects

We (teachers) believe that the oral presentations of the mini-projects is a really good and nice activity to close the course, when the stress of the exam has passed and we therefore propose to keep this activity at the end.

The course leader, together with the teaching team, wish students all the best in their future studies and careers.

Student representatives comments

The overall impression of the course (based upon regular communication with students throughout the course) was generally quite positive. Similar sentiments seemed to be expressed in the evaluations based on the overall scores and many of the comments. Most students felt that the course was organized quite well, and that the lectures, literature, labs, and projects were all relevant. Students came from different backgrounds and had varying degrees of knowledge and experience, so there were different opinions regarding the pace and difficulty of the course— some felt it was difficult, while others felt it was easy, but for the most part, students felt it was well balanced. Students enjoyed getting to work together, and felt that the course provided a supportive and inclusive environment.

Overall the consensus seemed to be that the modeling exercises helped students better understand the equations and processes discussed in the lectures through using interactive media. Most students liked the compendium and felt it was easy to read (there were suggestions to turn it into a pdf to save paper). Additionally, many students enjoyed the model building aspect and would have liked to have more experience building the models themselves versus following step-by-step instructions. Most felt that the review sessions after each exercise were helpful to understand the exercise, as was the writing of the report. Suggestions were made to make a separate report for each exercise, and change the presentations to either an earlier time, or after each exercise.

Students generally seemed to like the mini-workshops as it was a chance to work through issues together and learn from each other, and learn about model applications. A number of students wished, however, that the keynote lectures were before the mini-workshop, as they supplied information that could be useful in understanding the papers. Students also enjoyed the mini-projects and felt that there was sufficient instructions to complete the project. Most felt that no additional guidance on how to work in a group was needed, but some classmates felt they did more work than others during the group projects.

Several students felt that the pace during the first few weeks of lectures was a bit slow, and some suggested that these lectures could have either been condensed into less time or had other material or activities added during that period. Suggestions included: start modeling earlier, adding more exercises, additional guest lectures talking about related issues, more readings or paper reviews, lab experiments.

In terms of grading, most students felt the exam was fair, but many would have liked more time to complete it. Some students also suggested including reports, presentations, or a model exam in the overall grade in order to better represent the breadth of their knowledge.