



## Soil biology and biogeochemical cycles BI1322, 30243.2021

15 Hp

Pace of study = 100%

Education cycle = Advanced -

Course leader = Eveline Krab

### Evaluation report

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Evaluation period: 2021-03-16 - 2021-04-06

Answers 14

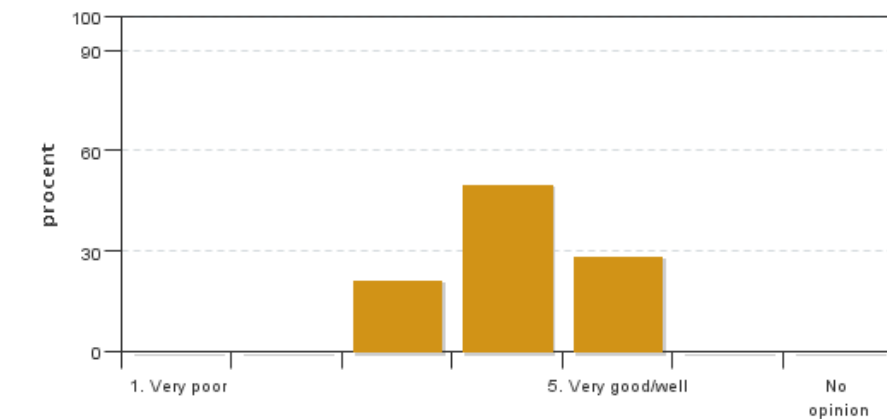
Number of students 36

Answer frequency 38 %

### Mandatory standard questions

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#### 1. My overall impression of the course is:

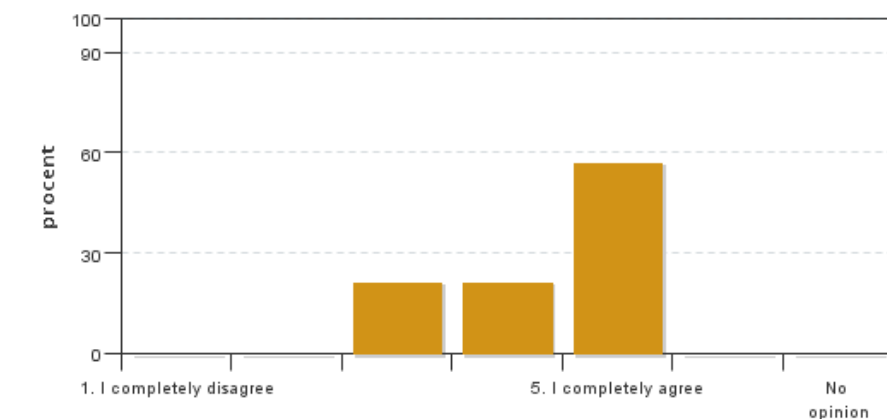


Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,1  
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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

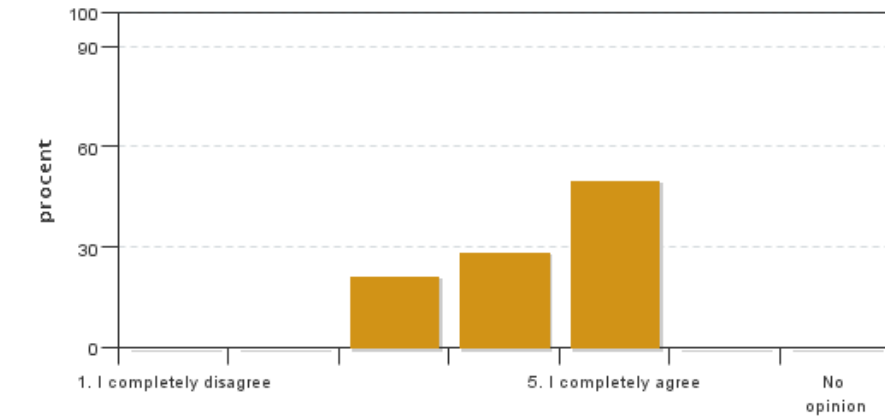


Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,4  
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 0

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

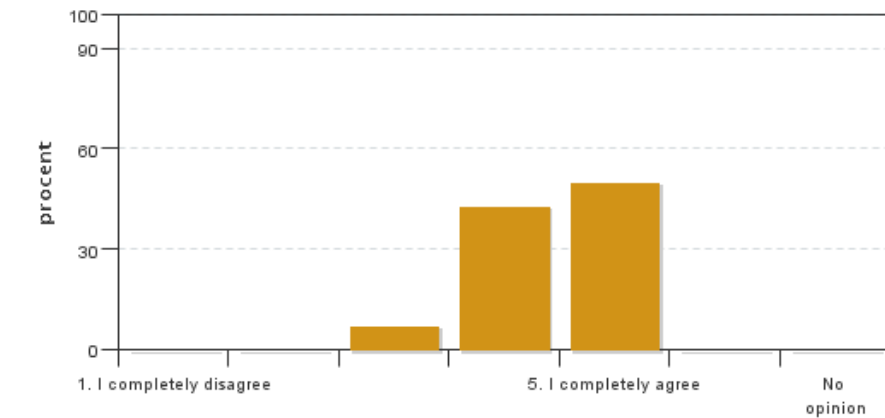


Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,3  
 Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

**4. The information about the course was easily accessible.**

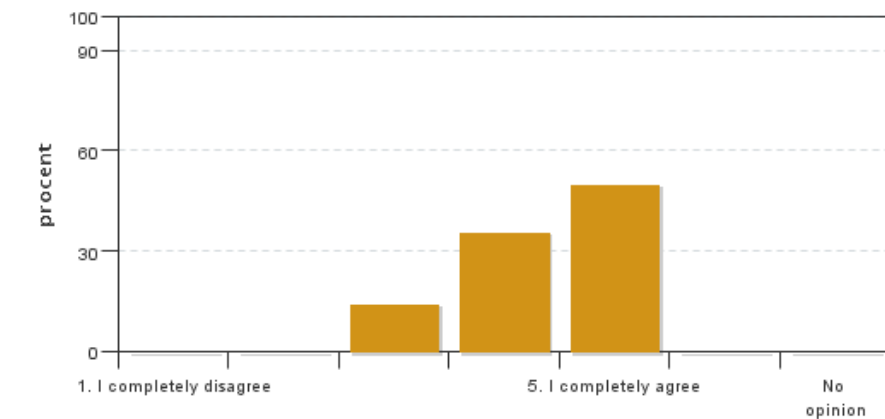


Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,4  
 Median: 4

1: 0  
 2: 0  
 3: 1  
 4: 6  
 5: 7

No opinion: 0

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

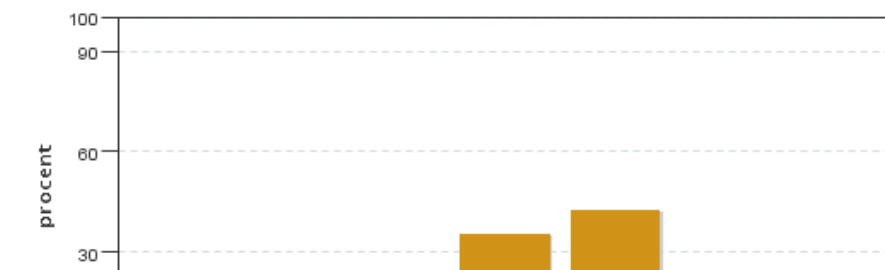


Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,4  
 Median: 4

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

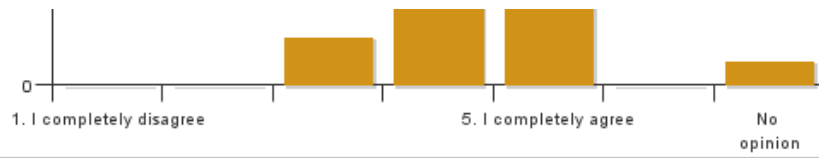
No opinion: 0

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



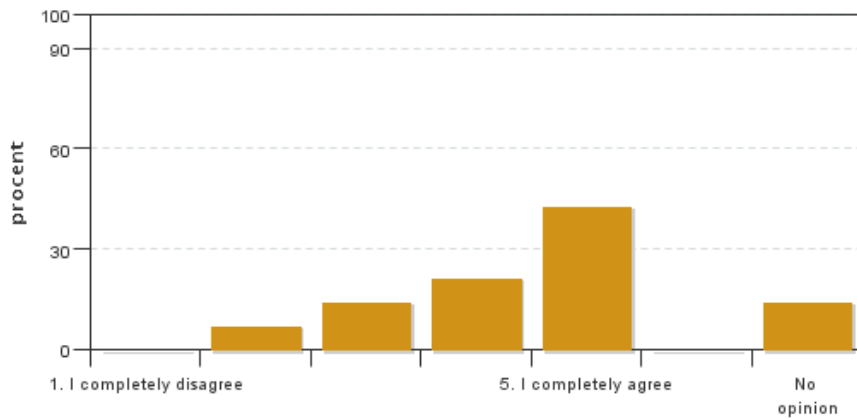
Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,3  
 Median: 4

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



No opinion: 1

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



Answers: 14

Medel: 4,2

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 1

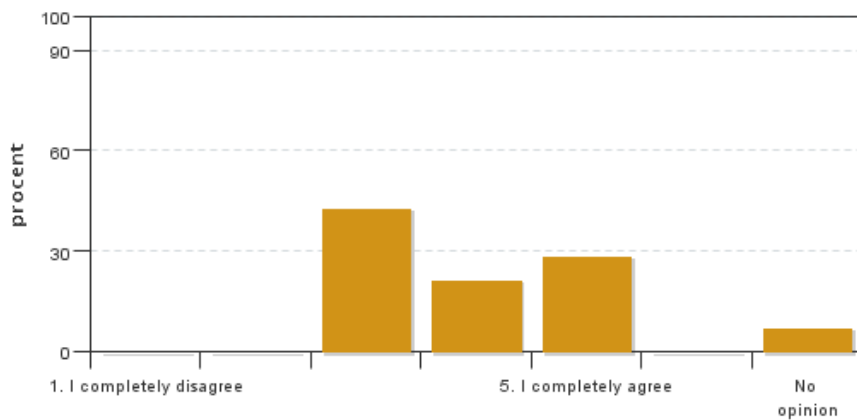
3: 2

4: 3

5: 6

No opinion: 2

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



Answers: 14

Medel: 3,8

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 0

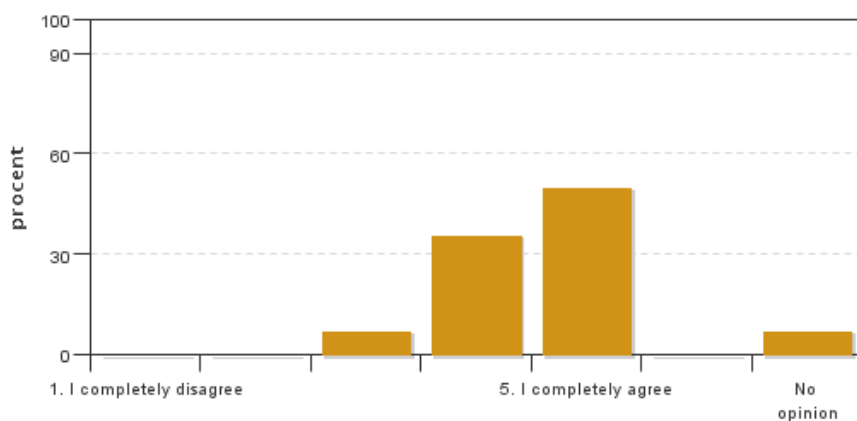
3: 6

4: 3

5: 4

No opinion: 1

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



Answers: 14

Medel: 4,5

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

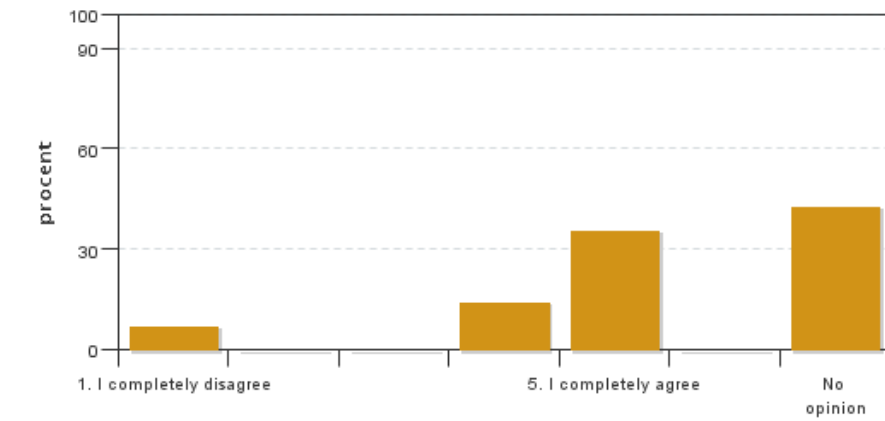
3: 1

4: 5

5: 7

No opinion: 1

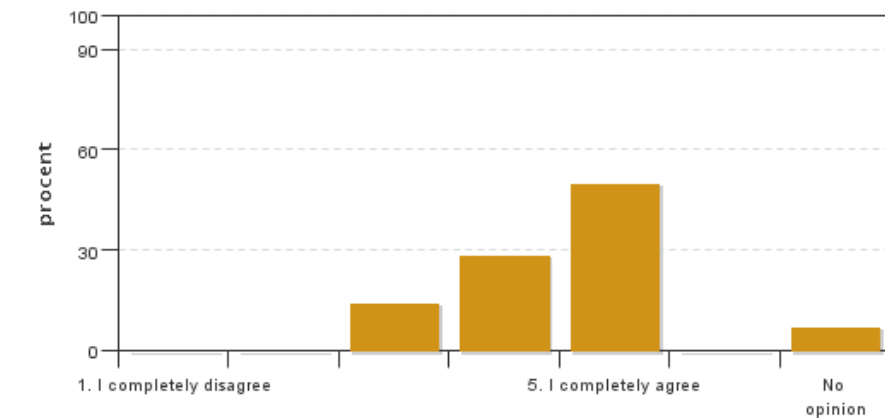
**10. I believe the course has included a gender and equality aspect, regarding content as well as teaching practices (e.g. perspective on the subject, reading list, allocation of speaking time and the use of master suppression techniques).**



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,3  
 Median: 5

1: 1  
 2: 0  
 3: 0  
 4: 2  
 5: 5  
 No opinion: 6

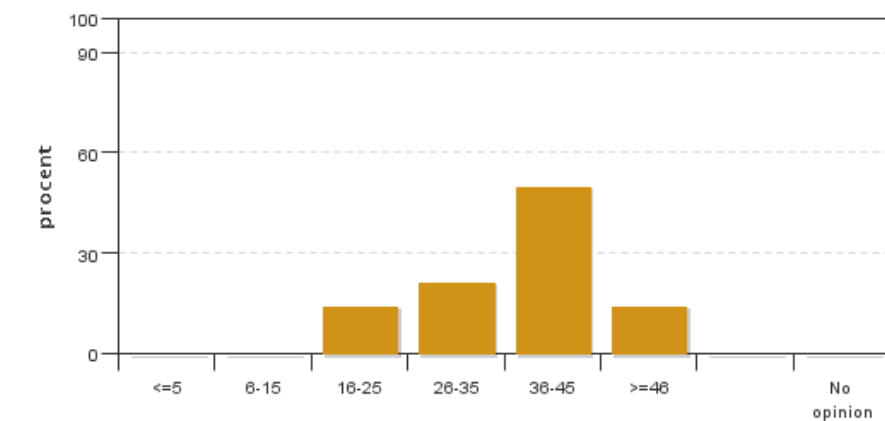
**11. The course covered international perspectives.**



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,4  
 Median: 5

1: 0  
 2: 0  
 3: 2  
 4: 4  
 5: 7  
 No opinion: 1

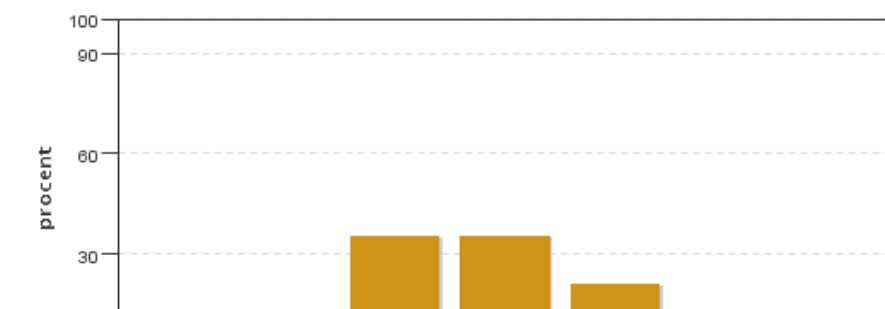
**12. On average, I have spent ... hours/week on the course (including timetabled hours).**



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 35,9  
 Median: 36-45

≤5: 0  
 6-15: 0  
 16-25: 2  
 26-35: 3  
 36-45: 7  
 ≥46: 2  
 No opinion: 0

**13. What is your overall experience of participating in all or part of your course online?**



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 3,7  
 Median: 4

1: 0  
 2: 1  
 3: 5  
 4: 5  
 5: 3  
 No opinion: 0

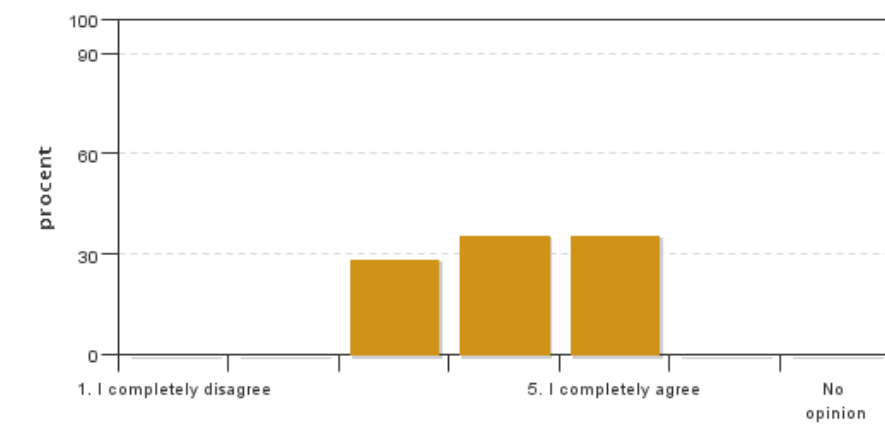


14. Please share what worked well when participating in teaching on distance

15. Please share what worked less well when participating in teaching on distance

## Additional own questions

16. I think that I performed well on this course and reached my own learning goals

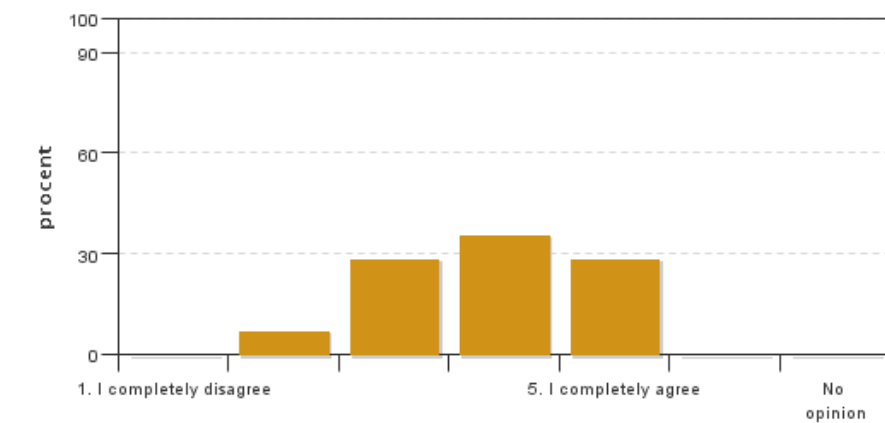


Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,1  
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

17. The course has given me relevant knowledge and practical skills for my further education.

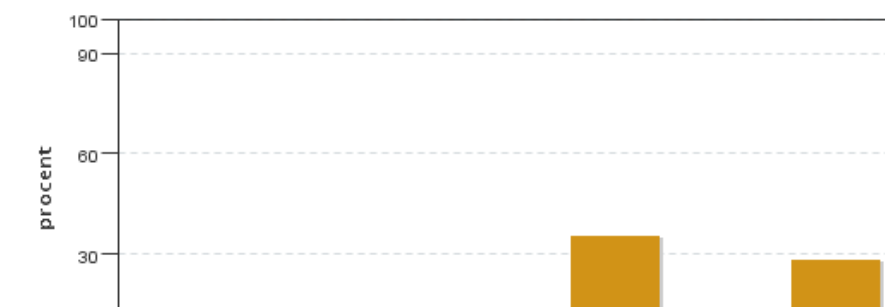


Answers: 14  
Medel: 3,9  
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

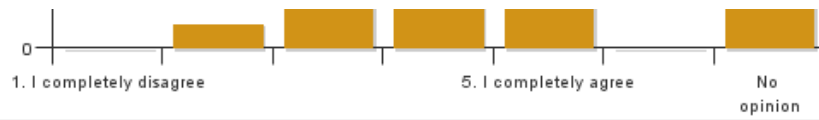
18. The course has developed my skills to formulate and delimit a problem.



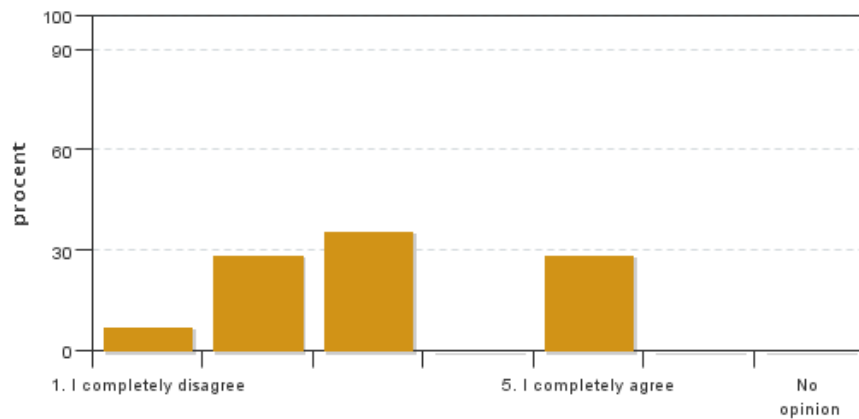
Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,1  
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 4



**19. The course has developed my skills in oral presentation.**

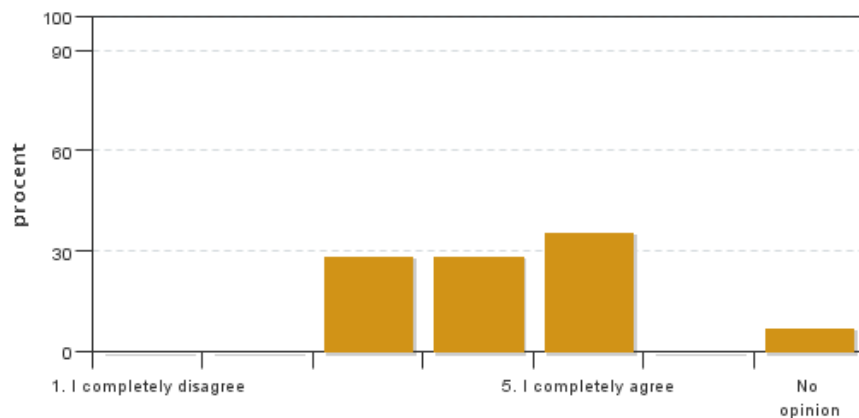


Answers: 14  
Medel: 3,1  
Median: 3

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

No opinion: 0

**20. The course developed my skills in written presentation.**

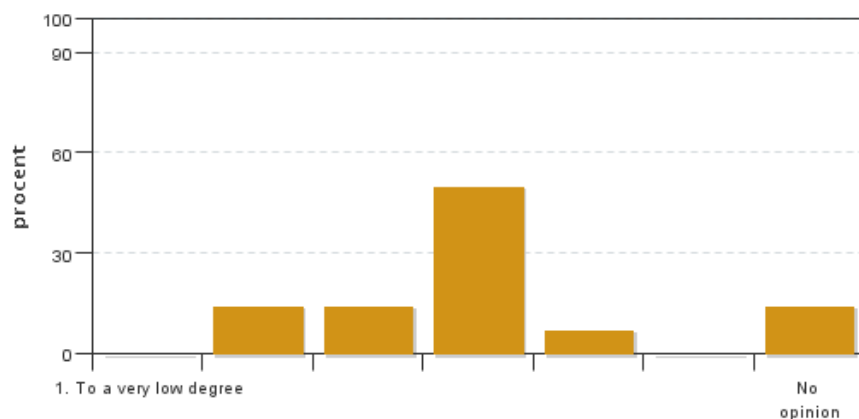


Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,1  
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 1

**21. To which degree did the course develop your skills in critical thinking?**

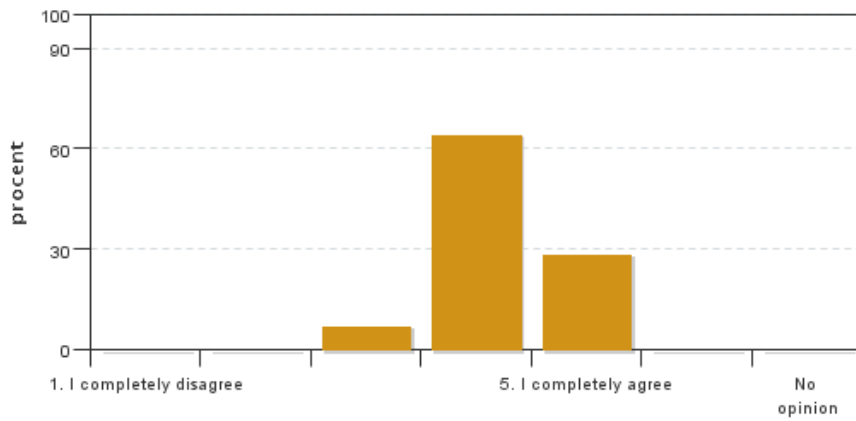


Answers: 14  
Medel: 3,6  
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 2

**22. The teachers have encouraged conversation and discussion around the topics covered.**

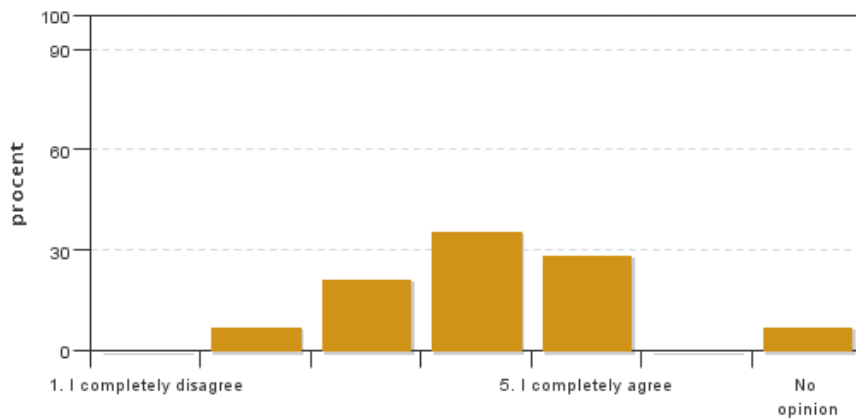


Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,2  
 Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

**23. The lectures inspired and supported individual work.**



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 3,9  
 Median: 4

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

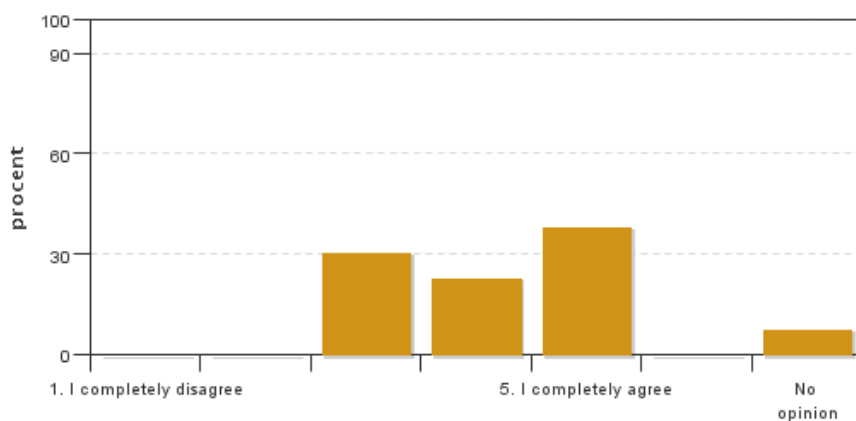
No opinion: 1

**24. Please mention lectures that were particularly helpful or inspiring, or particularly difficult or potentially unnecessary**

**24. Do you think that the more individual 'theoretical project' gave you the possibility to learn something that you did not learn by other parts of the course?**

**24. What did you think about the laboratory practicals?**

**24. The written exam required that you really understood the content of the course.**

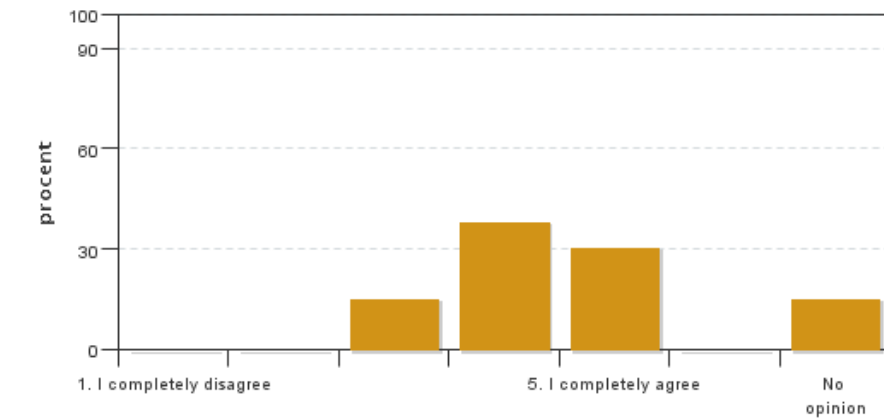


Answers: 13  
 Medel: 4,1  
 Median: 4

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

No opinion: 1

**25. The social environment at the course was good.**



Answers: 13

Medel: 4,2

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 0

3: 2

4: 5

5: 4

No opinion: 2

**26. Did you find any aspect of the course especially good? What?**

**26. The most important change to improve the course is...**

## Course leaders comments

Due to corona-measures, the 2021 version of the Soil biology and biogeochemical cycles course was organized almost completely as an online distance course. However, we still maintained an on-campus lab component to the course, although it was a stripped-off versions in which students could only do part of the lab work and had to be updated about the other parts by their group members. Although the response rate to the Evald evaluation was a bit lower than the previous two years (38%) the overall impression of the course was still very good (4.1) only slightly lower than the previous year, which could be related to the distance teaching aspect. The students considered the course content to be clearly related to the learning objectives and were happy about accessibility to the course information on Canvas (that was completely re-structured after comments from last years evaluation). Students agreed that the distance aspect was lowering their enjoyment in the course somewhat, missing (more) practical experience, excursions and 'real-life' interactions among students and teachers. The only upside mentioned about Zoom lectures was the possibility to have access to recorded lectures. Many students were therefore disappointed that not all teachers wanted to record or share their recorded lectures. The fact that we still included practical lab sessions in the course was greatly appreciated, even though the difficult logistics made it sometimes hard for lab teams to collaborate. Similar to last year the literature project and especially the access to a personal supervisor was appreciated, and the group work was said to work rather well on a distance. One downside to this was that the levels of prior knowledge differed somewhat in the group work, and therefore the contribution to report writing was not always equally distributed. The exam was less well received this year, with many students finding it difficult and stressful to do the exam under time pressure in a Zoom session. Under the circumstances, we had kept the exam style similar to the previous years (instead of an essay style home-assignment) as it was needed as part of a longer-term strategy to improve the examination of this course. We had an unexpected high fail-rate during this years' exam (50%) probably due to less effective knowledge transfer over Zoom. Although students were provided some practice questions beforehand, many considered to be not well prepared enough for the exam. This is something we did not have any remarks about before in previous years but that we will try to improve next year. Grades for lab and literature reports were good (100% pass) and little bit higher than the previous years.

Specific points for improvement are

- Return to campusbased course if possible
- Prepare students for the exam already early in the course by providing e.g. more practice questions
- Have a better solution for 'questions before the exam' (live/zoom) session
- Critical thinking aspect scored relatively low (3.6) compared to overall (mostly above 4). We will have a discussion among teachers on how to improve this.

## Student representatives comments

Here are some main points that were brought up:

+ Lab practicals. It was nice to come to campus and do practical work, even though it was sometimes hard to keep up and understand what was happening when someone else had been in the lab before you.



+ Recorded lectures

+ The group projects. An opportunity to apply the knowledge from the lectures.

+ The lecturers and supporting staff were helpful in the learning experience. The course information was also easily accessible and available

+ We put a lot of work on the lab practicals and the project, therefore it was good that they contributed to final grade along with the exam.

- Not keeping time breaks or recording lectures. It was hard to focus from home and sometimes the internet connection was bad. Doing this makes it easier to focus and enables you to catch up if you had trouble attending the lecture.

- Different levels of knowledge. It was hard to keep up if you had not had the Markvetenskap (soil science) course prior to this course.

- No practice questions, old exams or Q&A session before the exam. Studying with example question is a pedagogical way to understand what is required of you and to process the course content.

- High failing rate of the exam.

*"If more than half of a class with highly motivated student fail an exam, the problem probably does not lie with the students but with the exam".*

*"To my experience ~50% of the class failing is very high and I feel the focus on classes does not seem to match the expected knowledge from students if there is a such high difference. This might also be an indication that you actually have to publish an example exam so that the students are more in understanding of their expected performance, and perhaps more than a week and a half in advance so that it is possible to plan ones studying"*