SLU

Plant pathology
BI1044, 10308.2122

15 Hp
Pace of study = 100%
Education cycle = Advanced
Course leader = Salim Bourras
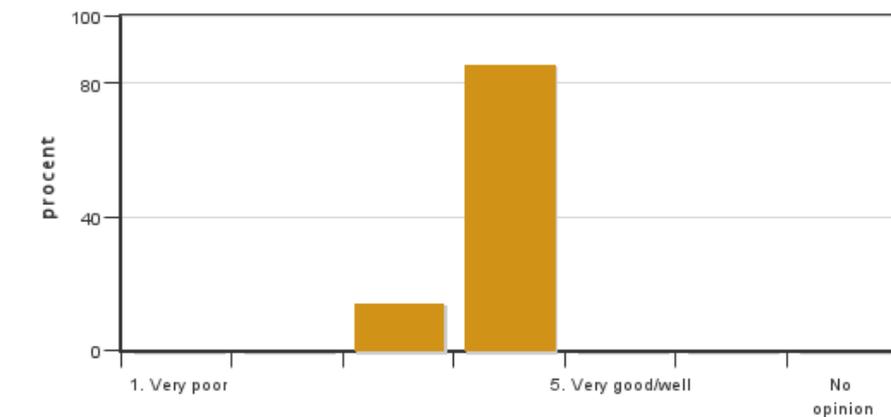
Evaluation report

Evaluation period: 2021-10-25   -   2021-11-15

Answers 7
Number of students 17
Answer frequency 41 %

Mandatory standard questions

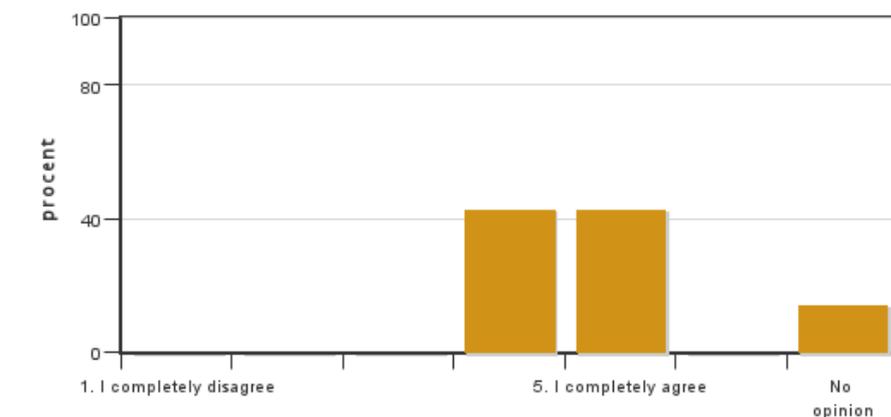**1.   My overall impression of the course is:**

Answers: 7
Medel: 3,9
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

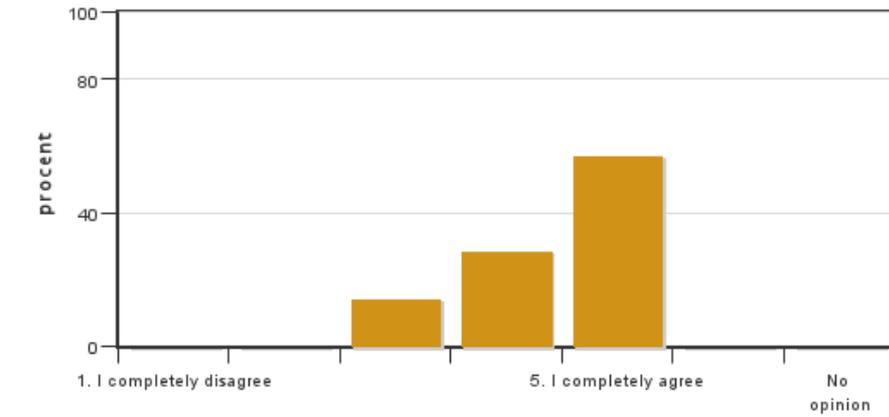**2.   I found the course content to have clear links to the learning objectives of the course.**

Answers: 7
Medel: 4,5
Median: 4

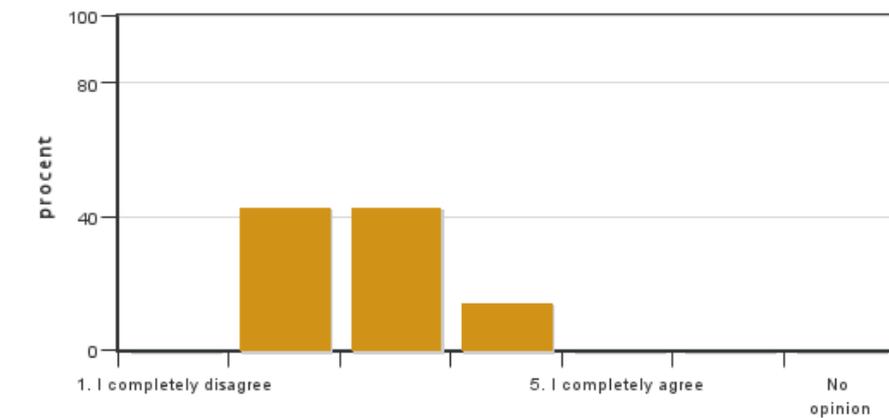1: 0
2: 0
3: 0
4: 3
5: 3

No opinion: 1

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

Answers: 7
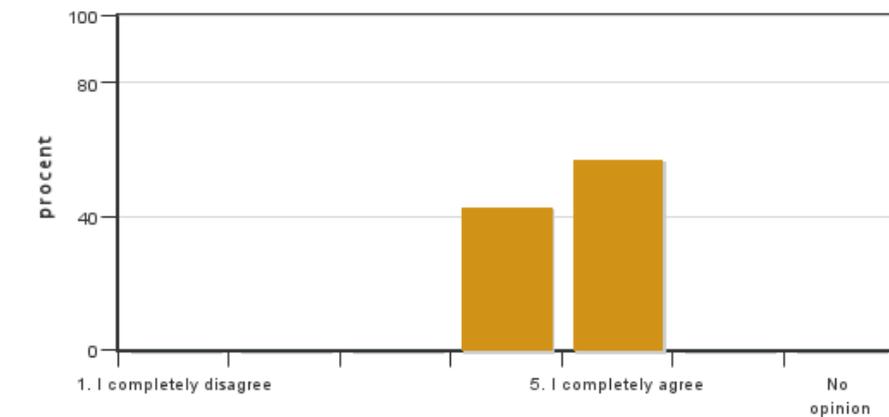Medel: 4,4
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 0

4. The information about the course was easily accessible.

Answers: 7
Medel: 2,7
Median: 3

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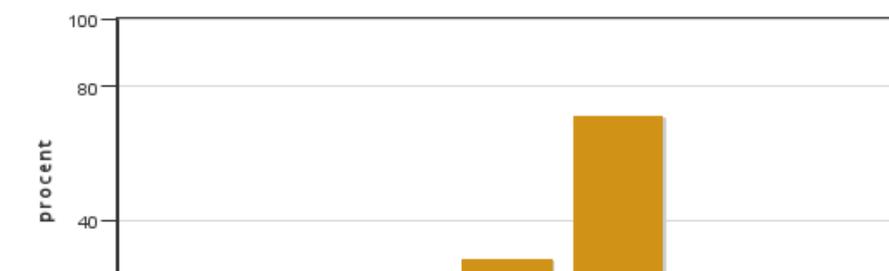4: 1
5: 0

No opinion: 0

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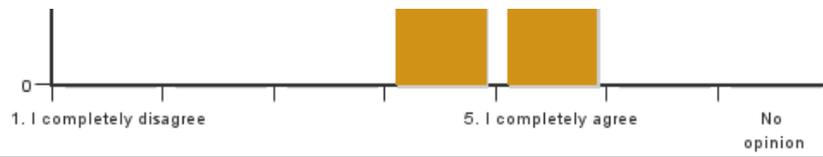

Answers: 7
Medel: 4,6
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 0

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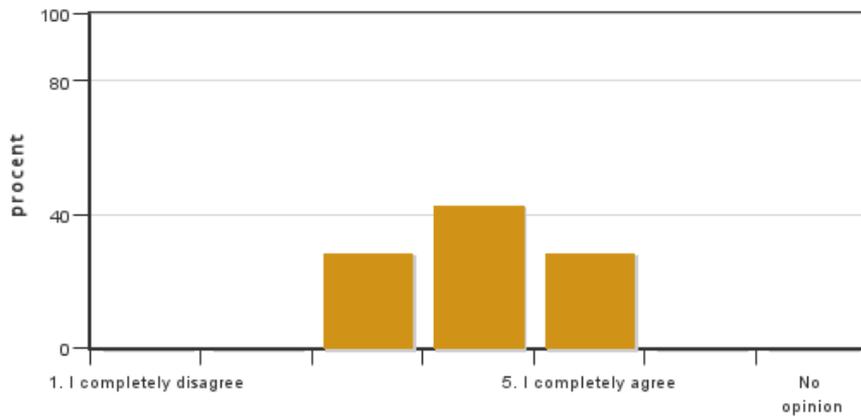

Answers: 7
Medel: 4,7
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 0

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

Answers: 7
Medel: 4,0
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

8. The examination(s) provided opportunity to demonstrate what I had learnt during the course (see the learning objectives).
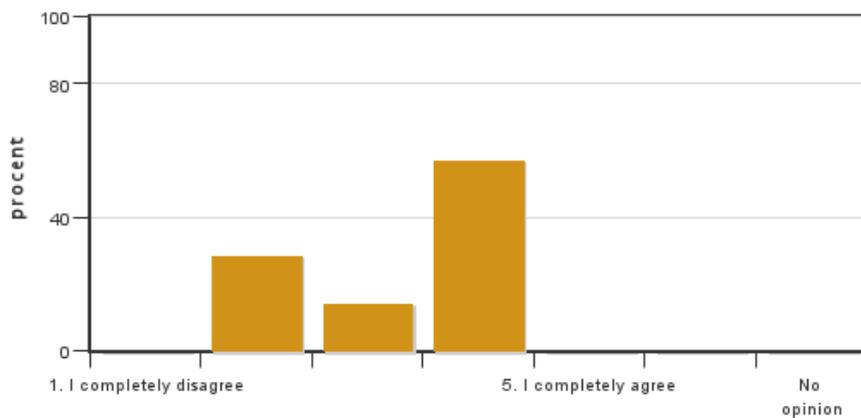
Answers: 7
Medel: 3,3
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

9. The course covered the sustainable development aspect (environmental, social and/or financial sustainability).
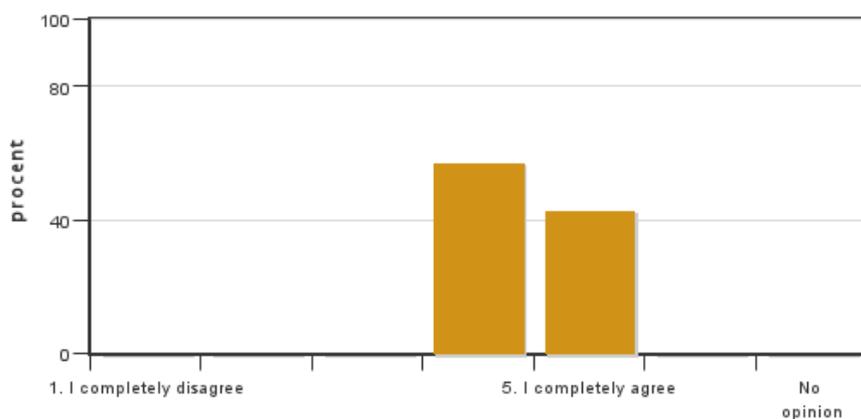
Answers: 7
Medel: 4,4
Median: 4

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

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).
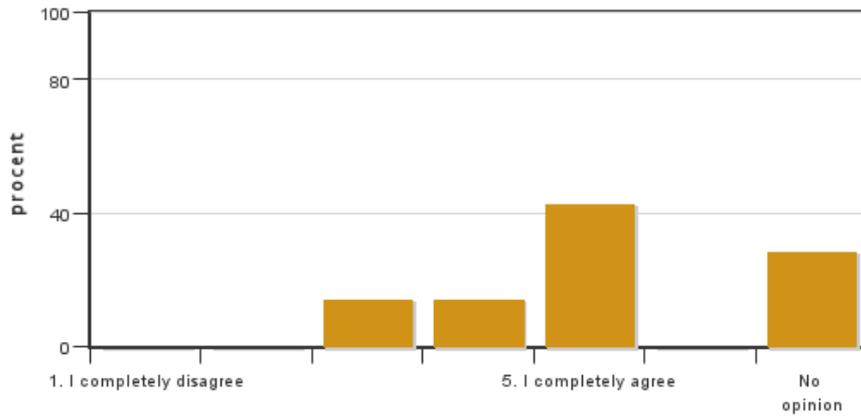
Answers: 7
Medel: 4,4
Median: 5

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

11. The course covered international perspectives.
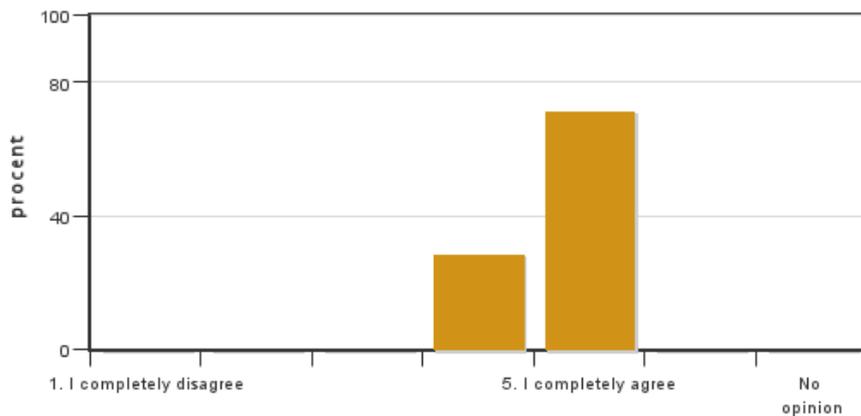
Answers: 7
Medel: 4,7
Median: 5

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

12. On average, I have spent … hours/week on the course (including timetabled hours).
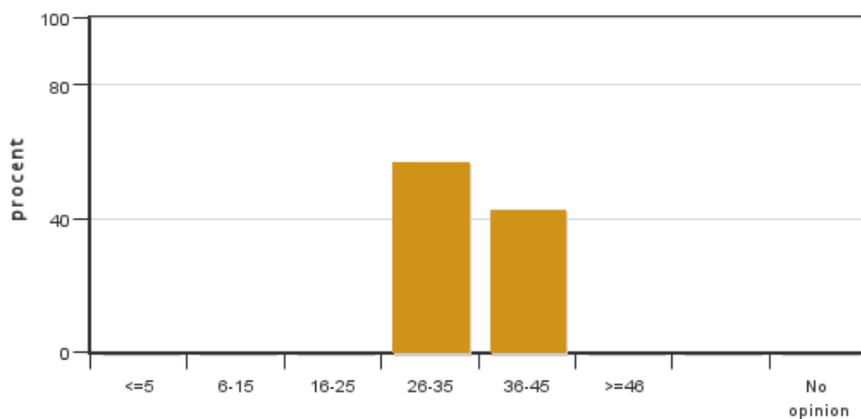
Answers: 7
Medel: 34,3
Median: 26-35

≤5: 0
6-15: 0
16-25: 0
26-35: 4
36-45: 3
≥46: 0
No opinion: 0

13. If relevant, what is your overall experience of participating in all or part of your course online?
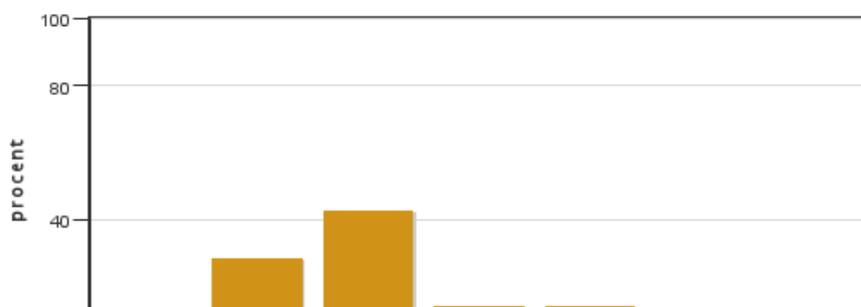
Answers: 7
Medel: 3,1
Median: 3

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

1. Very poor   5. Very good/well   No opinion
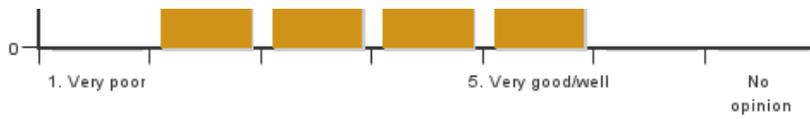
14. If relevant, please share what worked well when participating in teaching on distance

15. If relevant, please share what worked less well when participating in teaching on distance

Additional own questions

16. Please list your top 5 lectures based on the ones you liked and learned the most from.

16. Please list the top 5 non-lecture exercises (lab practicals, field excursions, computer exercise, theoretical exercise) you liked and learned the most from.

16. Motivating the students to think critically will be an increasing focus for the way we teach in this course. Do you feel that the course is stimulating your critical thinking?
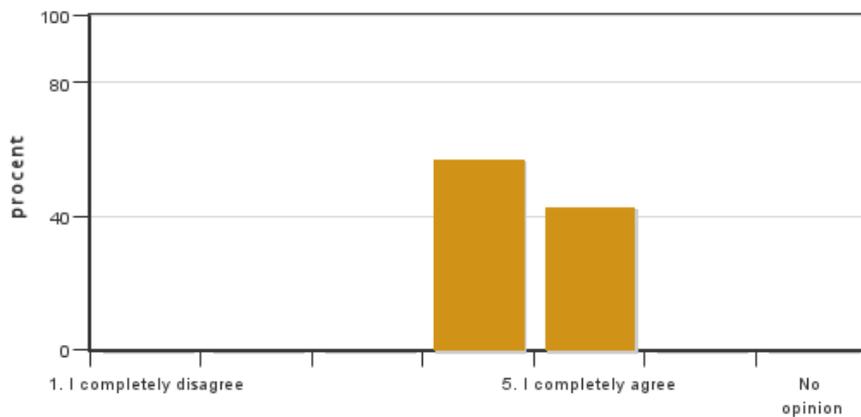
Answers: 7
Medel: 4,4
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

17. To what extent you feel that the IPM workshop and the One Health workshop have broaden your perspective and stimulated your critical thinking?
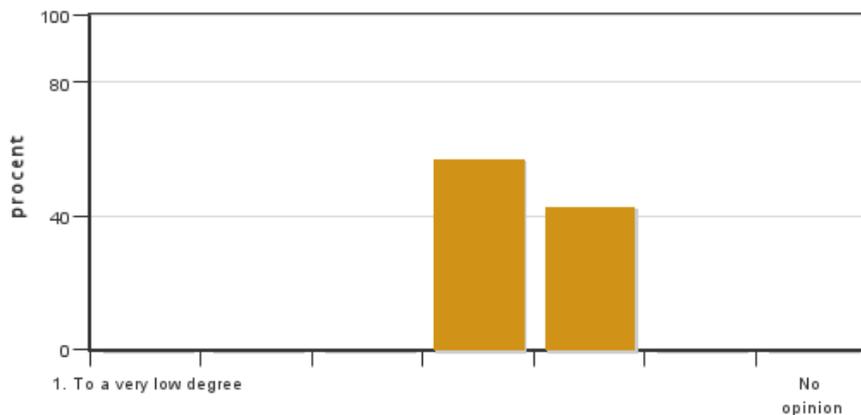
Answers: 7
Medel: 4,4
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

Course leaders comments

The student representative has done a very good job summarizing the student's comments. Of the 17 questions, 15 were about the content, skills, and training, and all had very good scores up to 4.7/5. Only 3 questions about the form seem to have driven down the total score of the course lower this year: Canvas (online course sharing platform), online lectures on ZOOM, and finally the final oral exam.

- Considering the online Zoom experience, we can only agree on all the points the students have made. The Zoom fatigue is shared on both sides, and we hope we can restore most of the teaching on Campus next year. In case we will still have to teach via Zoom, we will revise the course schedule and content accordingly to ease the task for the students and the teachers.

- Regarding Canvas, this year was very challenging since we have originally planned the course essentially online considering the restrictions. Late in the summer, the restrictions were partially lifted, and we learned that we could allow more days of teaching on campus. Therefore, we had to reschedule the whole course (two months), adapt the bookings, the practical exercises, and the workshops, to provide the students with a better learning environment, which has required a lot of work over the summer holidays. This has resulted in some minor issues/bugs on Canvas which have been fixed every time they were spotted. I have consulted the teachers, the PhD students involved in teaching, and SLU's educational development unit (EPU – responsible for training in Canvas), and based on these opinions and the students' comments, I feel that stating that Canvas was 'a mess' with a total score of '2.7' is not justified and discouraging.

- Regarding the oral exam, the question in the evaluation was 'did the exam give you the opportunity to show what you have learned'. First, this should not be interpreted by the students as an opportunity to recite all the knowledge they have accumulated. I have explained that the final exam is about testing their understanding, and their ability to critically think about 'any' question in plant pathology (please note here that the exam is done with 'open documentation' i.e. the students can access all the course material, lectures, books during the exam). I will make sure to emphasize this message next year i.e. they are here to learn to critically think about any issue in plant pathology and not to accumulate knowledge. The exam is also not based on one question as mentioned, it is based on three questions with incremental difficulty (an easy one for 3, then two additional levels of complexity and critical thinking for grade 4 and 5). Actually, most of the discussion is about testing the capacity of the student to connect/use other aspects of the course and compare to other systems. Therefore, I can only disagree here about changing the exam into a classical multi-question/general written exam as suggested by one of the comments, based on the fact that most students did extremely well (several had grade 5), and that the course is focused on practical/critical thinking and problem solving, as demanded by the future employers (academia, government, industry, advisor boards…) with whom we exchange to develop and update the content.

Finally, it is important to highlight that we have implemented several improvements from last year's comments, and we have significantly enriched the course portfolio with more labs, workshops, and new lectures, all of which seems to be appreciated by the students. Actually, apart from the three aforementioned points, the students seem to have had an overall very good (not perfect) learning experience during the course, and it is sad to see that the overall score '3.9' is only reflecting the 3 points of discontent, and not the 15 points of satisfaction. Thus, we regret that the students who replied to the evaluation were not more supportive.

Student representatives comments

Seven of the students answered the course evaluation, which is an answer rate of 41%. The overall impression of the course was good according to the students, with six of the students grading it a four out of five and one student a three out of five.

The two parts that got the most criticism from the students were the canvas page and the examination. This is probably the parts that took down the overall grading of the course.

Canvas: Many students expressed that the information about the course was hard to access. Most of the comments concerned the structure on the canvas page and the students expressed that it was tricky to find zoom links and files since the schedule, files and zoom links were not linked. One student thought that the information about mandatory exercises could be clearer at the start of the course.

Examination: Many students did not think that the oral examination provided opportunity to demonstrate what they had learnt during the course (see the learning objectives). The criticism was mainly aimed at the fact that the oral examination consisted of one question. The students expressed that they did not feel like they could show what they have learned through the whole course with only one question. One student proposed that the teachers could have given an example question before the exam to understand which level the questions would be on. Another student thought that it would be better to have anonymous examinations, and that the percentage of the grading score for each assignment (lab, presentation +poster, review, and exam) was not related to the working load for each task.

The overall impression of the course:

The students thought overall that the various course components (lectures, course literature, exercises etc.)

supported their learning. One student expressed that some lectures were harder to follow because of the power point structure or the language but did not point out which lectures that these were.The students thought that the course content had clear links to the learning objectives and most people thought that their prior knowledge was sufficient to benefit for the course. There was one comment about overlapping from previous courses, whereas another student expressed the problem that we as students were expected to work statistical analysis in R even thought we as agronomy students have not learned it in earlier courses. We were proposed to learn it from google, which was not ideal for learning for a lot of the students.

The social learning environment got an average score of 4.7, but the students that rated it a four did not expressed why the graded it that way. The average score of the physical learning environments was a four. One student expressed that it was nice to have activities at school again but rated the physical learning environment a three. Nobody expressed why they did not give it a full score, so it is hard to determine what was faulty or if the question was misinterpreted.

The students thought that the course covered the sustainable development aspect (score of 4.4), and when the question if the course included a gender and equality aspect got the same score, but with some answering that they did not know. The students thought that the course covered international perspectives (score of 4.7). The students also thought that the course motivated their critically thinking and that the one health workshops broaden their perspectives.

Most students spent 26-35 hours or 36-45 hours per week on the course. One student was concerned with the schedule and said that "we started at 9 but the teachers didn't stop when they were supposed too at 11.45. It would be better to start at 9.15 and end at 12. This also makes it easier for those active with the union since those usually have meetings 12.15-13".

The students had different experiences on zoom, many students don't like to be on zoom in generall and have a hard time concentrating when it is online. The students thought that the group discussions were good and the PowerPoints were generally good and the lectures worked well, as well as zoom is more flexible. Some concerns were brought up as well, such as there should have been more breaks, that a single zoom link would be better, that we shouldn't divide groups ourselves and that some teachers talked too fast.

Top five lectures according to the students:

The most appreciated lectures were from Björn, and five out of six students brought up the lecture 'life cycle and epidemiology of airborne pathogens'. But the fungicide resistance lecture were also mentioned.

The top two lecture were suppressive soils, which three students mentioned.

The other lectures that were mentioned were: plant immunity mechanisms, plant immunity for resistance breeding, how plant pathogens attack, biological disease control, how plants defend against pathogens, Plant pathogens in the tree of life, Systemics of plant fungal kingdom, RNAi technologies for disease control.

The top 5-non lecture exercises by the students:

The labs (particularly biological control of plant diseases), as well as the workshops get the top spot of exercises. The excursions were also appreciated.