



Agroecology and Sustainability of Production Systems LB0109, 20051.2122

15 Hp

Pace of study = 100%

Education cycle = Advanced

Course leader = Raj Chongtham Iman

Evaluation report

Evaluation period: 2022-01-09 - 2022-01-30

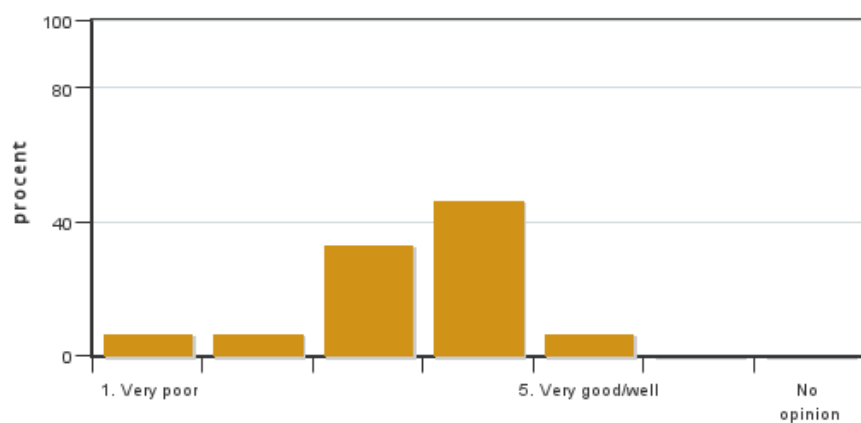
Answers 15

Number of students 33

Answer frequency 45 %

Mandatory standard questions

1. My overall impression of the course is:



Answers: 15

Medel: 3,4

Median: 4

1: 1

2: 1

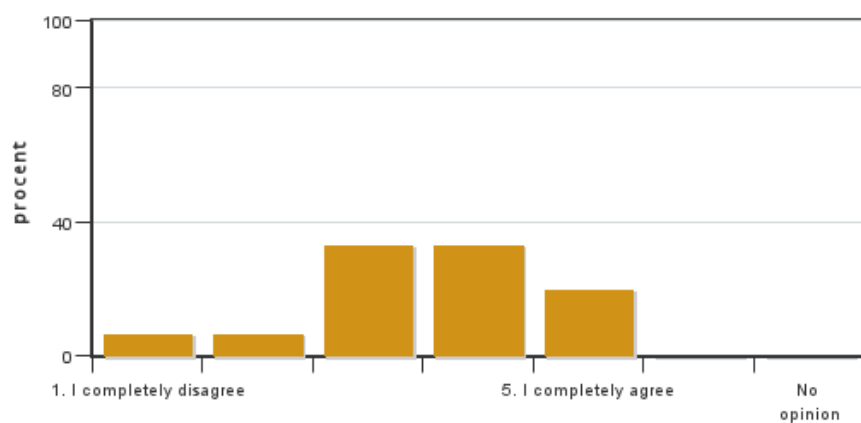
3: 5

4: 7

5: 1

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 15

Medel: 3,5

Median: 4

1: 1

2: 1

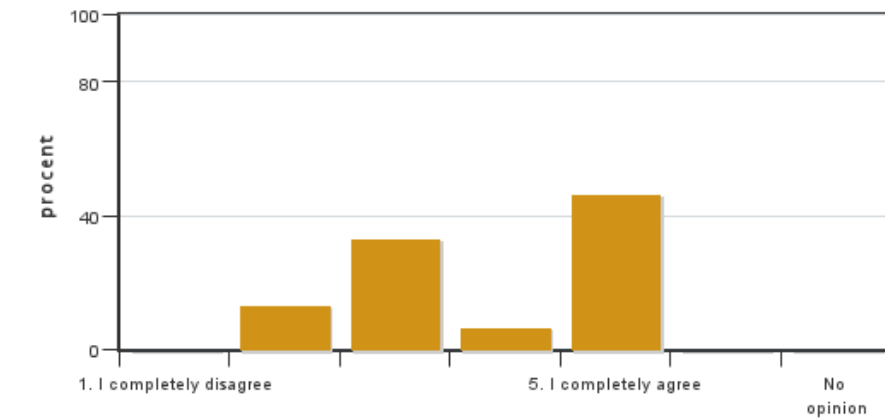
3: 5

4: 5

5: 3

No opinion: 0

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

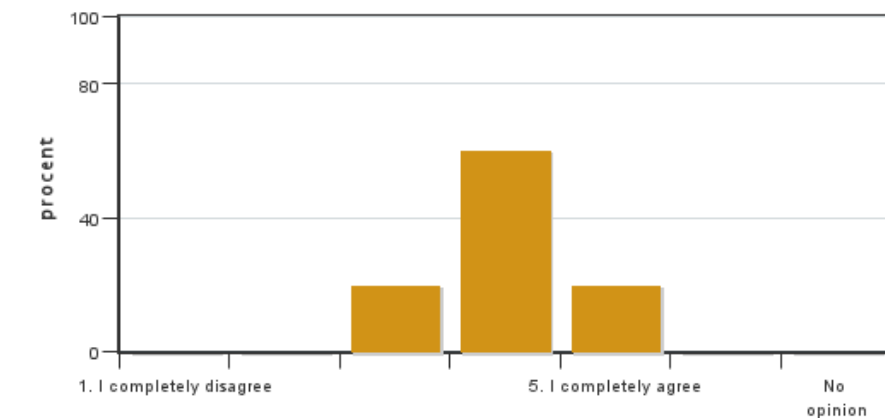


Answers: 15
Medel: 3,9
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

4. The information about the course was easily accessible.

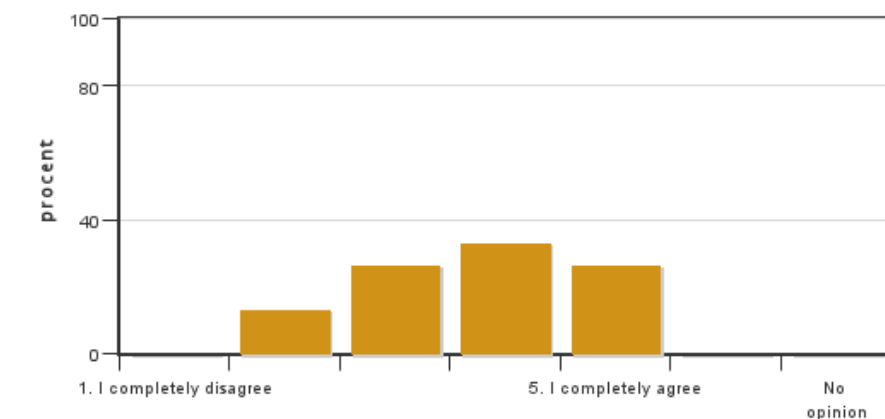


Answers: 15
Medel: 4,0
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 15
Medel: 3,7
Median: 4

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

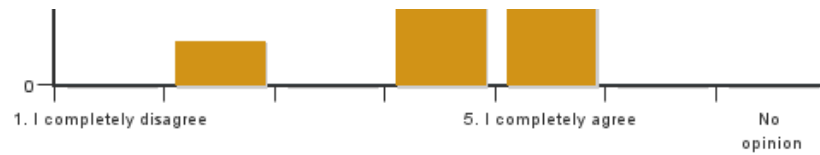
No opinion: 0

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



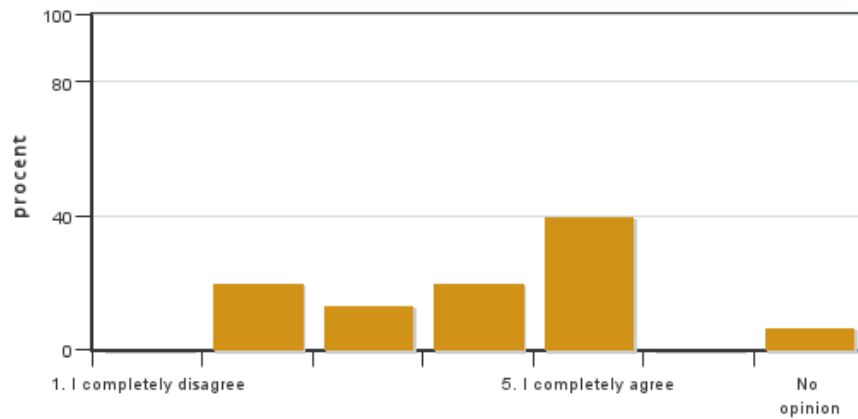
Answers: 15
Medel: 4,3
Median: 5

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



No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 15

Medel: 3,9

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 3

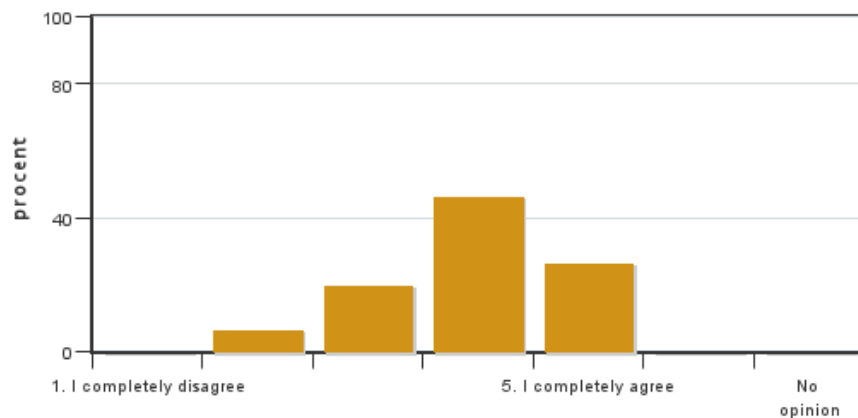
3: 2

4: 3

5: 6

No opinion: 1

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



Answers: 15

Medel: 3,9

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 1

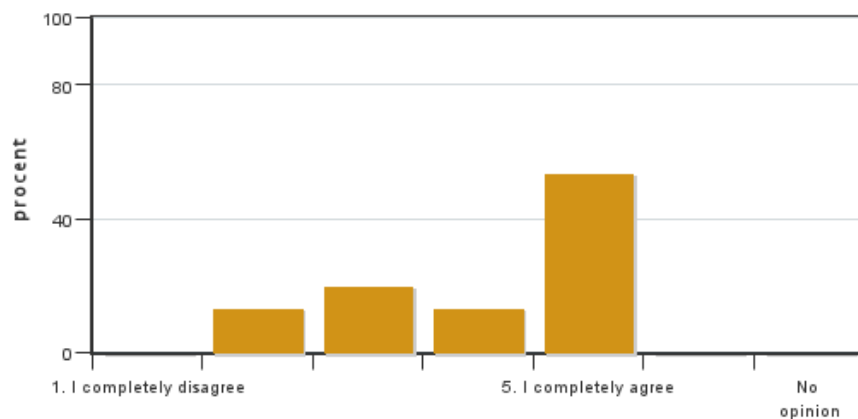
3: 3

4: 7

5: 4

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 15

Medel: 4,1

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 2

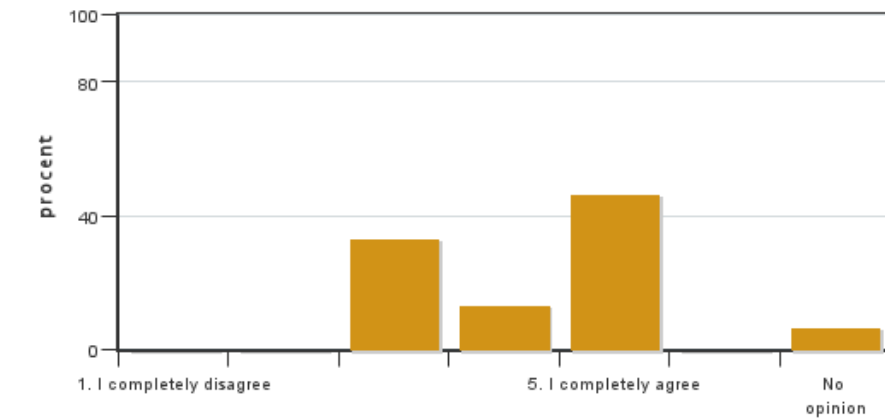
3: 3

4: 2

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).

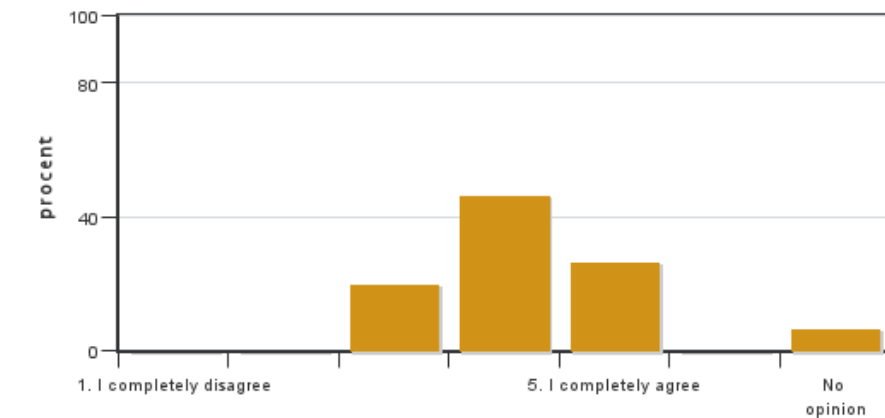


Answers: 15
Medel: 4,1
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 1

11. The course covered international perspectives.

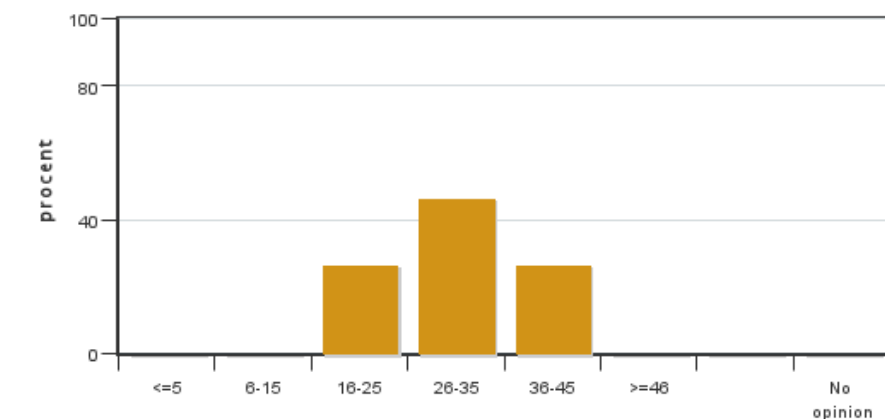


Answers: 15
Medel: 4,1
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 1

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

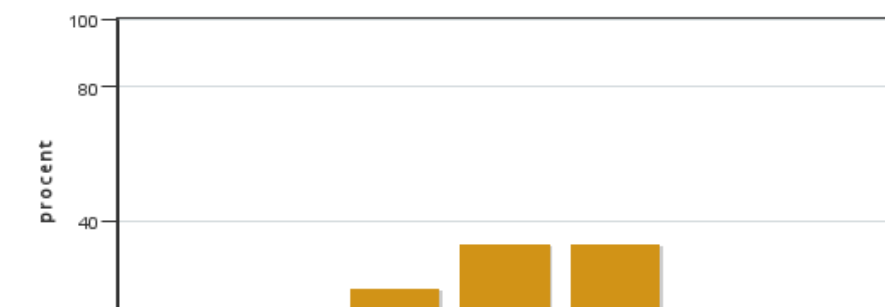


Answers: 15
Medel: 30,0
Median: 26-35

≤5: 0
6-15: 0
16-25: 4
26-35: 7
36-45: 4
≥46: 0

No opinion: 0

13. If relevant, what is your overall experience of participating in all or part of your course online?



Answers: 15
Medel: 4,0
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 1



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

Course leaders comments

Comments from Course leader on the course 'Agroecology and sustainability of production systems (LB0109)' evaluation, 2021-2022

General remarks and reflections

The total number of student enrolled in the course was 33, which was one student less than previous year. Out of these, 15 students took part in the web course evaluation. On the last day of the course (14 January 2022), we had an extended oral course evaluation via zoom which was attended by most students.

From both the oral and web evaluations, some students (especially from MSc Agroecology Program) expressed certain similarities about the lectures and assignments with the previous course (Agroecology Basics). Furthermore, there was a general comment from Agroecology program students that the lectures were not in-depth. On the other hand, students from Food and Landscape Program, initially (at the beginning of course) stated that the lectures and exercises were difficult to follow. However, at the end of course (during course evaluation) it seemed that they followed the course very well and were satisfied with the course contents. It is big challenge now with students from two programs (mainly) with different level of knowledge and experiences regarding agroecology/agriculture are joining this course. This need to be examined in detail together with the program directors and the course leader to address the challenges and expectations of the students.

In addition, in the evaluation some students expressed the need to have more in-depth knowledge on cropping systems in Sweden, such as the logic behind crop rotations in different productions systems, as some of the group exercise required students to understand crop rotations. This subject has been taught to certain extent in the course lectures, but I as course leader will make sure that this component is 'strongly' included in the lecture prior to the exercises. There was a remark from one of the student that the course should not only focus on small holders and local food production systems as large farms can also be sustainable. This is a very relevant comment and we will include assessment and discussion/debates on this aspect.

There were also comments from some that the course had too many group works. However, group-tasks have been appreciated in previous years. We think that having group works in zoom (online platforms) in the last two years due to pandemic restrictions could be a big factor for this comment. We plan to continue to have group works and discussions in the whole class and in smaller groups, to complement each other and are important for more inclusiveness/participation of all students (especially when students from different programs are attending this course).

The use of same e-case and farms as in the Agroecology Basics course was not appreciated and students wanted to understand additional e-cases and farms. The intention has been that the students use the same farms and e-cases to increase the understanding by building on the knowledge and information from previous course. We will try to include additional e-case and farms in the coming semester to check if it improves/fulfills the objectives.

Last but not the least, students wanted to have clear information at the start of the course on how the various compulsory tasks that will be graded. This will be discussed with the examiner and amended for the coming semester.

Additional plans for improvements for the next course

- Detailed lecture on cropping systems and crop diversification e.g. mechanisms in intercropping and crop rotations
- New ecase and visit to additional farms
- Instead of the individual assignment (IA) in the form of scientific report, IA will be in the form of a factsheet
- Less intense workload during the last week of course by placing certain group work before the winter break
- Introductory lectures about agroecology and cropping systems need to be provided to the students in Food and Landscape program in their first course

Course contributions to education for sustainable development and the sustainable use of natural resources

An important aim of this course is to train students about understanding of ecological theories and concepts of sustainability, assess and diagnose the holistic sustainability of agricultural production systems using tools based on the three sustainability pillars (social, economy and environment) and suggest solutions for enhanced sustainability. The course has strong focus on addressing economic, environmental and social issues by understanding lock-ins, identifying transition pathways and using agroecological approaches e.g. ecological intensification, increase production and ecological services with less external inputs, etc for sustainable agricultural development. The course contents are continuously updated taking into considerations the current 'hot' topics and feedback from previous years' students. The course's strong contributions to educating sustainable development is also evident from the numerous students from different programmes and educational backgrounds joining the course.

Student representatives comments

Evaluation 2021-2022 'LB0109 Agroecology and Sustainability of Production Systems'

15 students from the class answered the evaluation, which is higher than the amount of students who responded in the oral evaluation. This year's reviews were mixed but with a majority being above average. In general students seem to have put in an average time a little less than a standard Swedish work week which matches full time studies.

A recurring theme in the feedback is the similarities between this course and the preceding course for the people who are in the agroecology programme. However, as heard during the oral evaluation, this was not the case for the people coming from the food and landscape programme. Thus some kind of way to bridge the gap between the attending students might be good. However, no one reported feeling that they had inadequate background knowledge to benefit from the course.

A strongpoint of the course seems to be information availability, very few complaints, and those only being about occasional late changes but it is clear this was not a point anyone wasn't at least satisfied with. However, regarding assignments and lectures the general sentiment seems to be, good lectures and good assignments. But with too much repetition of both assignments and lecture topics, the criticism here seems centered around the assessment assignment as it has large similarities with several assignments in the agroecology basics course. There were also some complaints about the seminar days being too long, so those might be divided up in two if possible.

Back to a strong point however, the learning environment is definitely seen as very inclusive as the grand majority feel that they can be completely open with their opinions (this was also the point with the absolutely highest points so it should be seen as very a job well done). The learning environment only had one general complaint and that was the wifi at SLU (which is not something that lectures are responsible for but it's good to note). The inclusivity seems to be satisfactory or above and most comments can be summed up as "good enough".

As final remarks, All in all, the majority of the respondents gave a satisfactory or above grade for the course. There was a higher rate of approval of the online teaching than the course overall (which also was the case for every other individual point of metric) with students being happy with how everything worked when it was online with exceptions for some guest lecturers.

The discontent might not be with the course as its own entity as most metrics are very positive but with how it fits in with the general agroecology programme (no complaints from the food and landscape programme regarding this). So whilst some small things could be improved, the general sentiment seem to be a wish for improved coordination the previous course