



Agroecology and Sustainability of Production Systems LB0109, 20071.2223

15 Hp

Pace of study = 100%

Education cycle = Advanced

Course leader = Dylan Wallman, Raj Chongtham Iman

Evaluation report

Evaluation period: 2023-01-08 - 2023-01-29

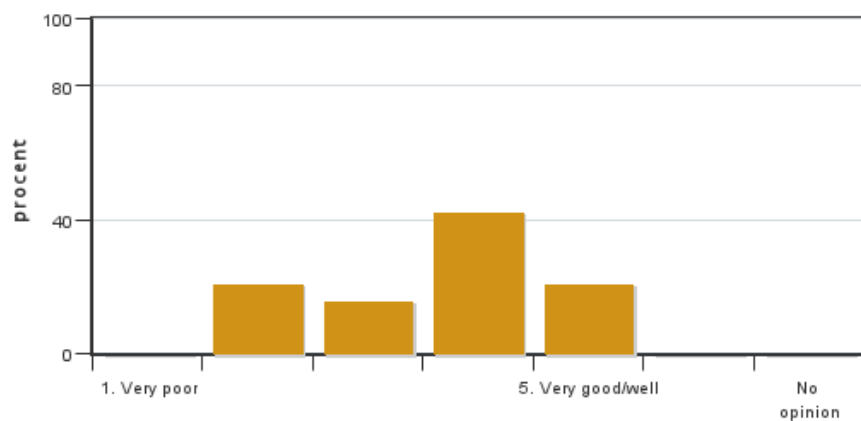
Answers 19

Number of students 28

Answer frequency 67 %

Mandatory standard questions

1. My overall impression of the course is:



Answers: 19

Medel: 3,6

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 4

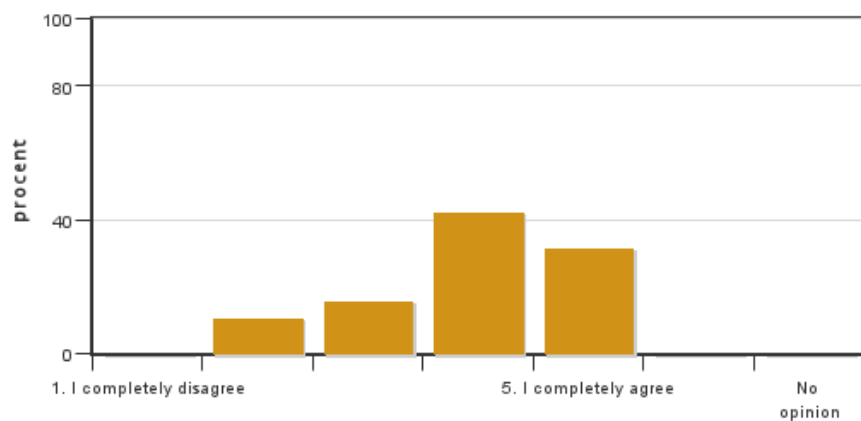
3: 3

4: 8

5: 4

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 19

Medel: 3,9

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 2

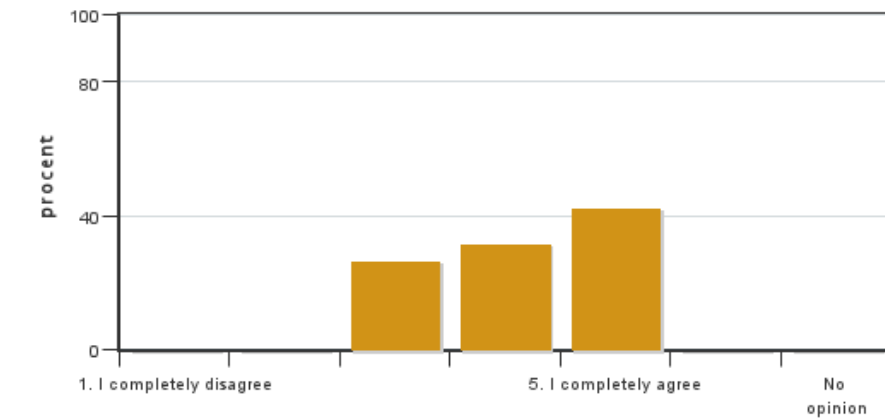
3: 3

4: 8

5: 6

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 19

Medel: 4,2

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 0

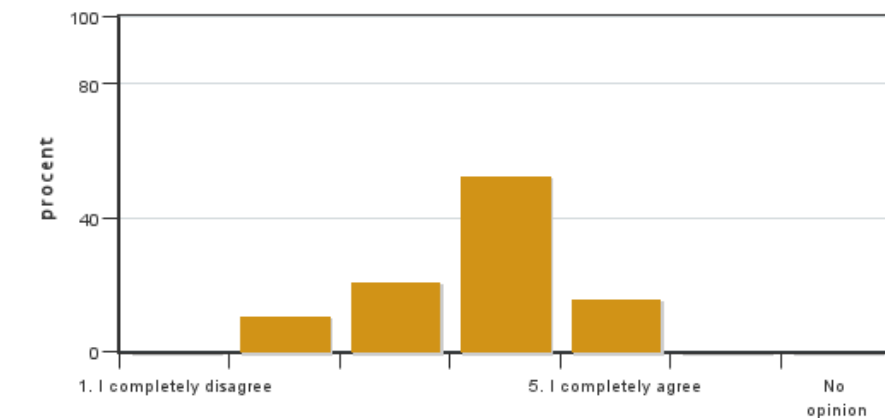
3: 5

4: 6

5: 8

No opinion: 0

4. The information about the course was easily accessible.



Answers: 19

Medel: 3,7

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 2

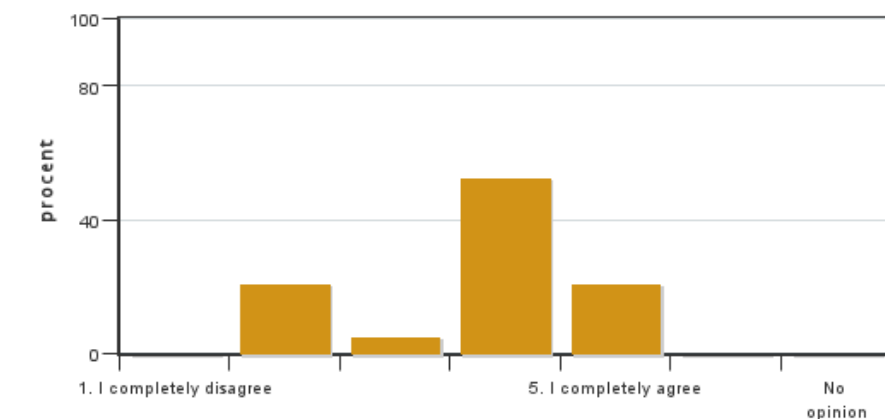
3: 4

4: 10

5: 3

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 19

Medel: 3,7

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 4

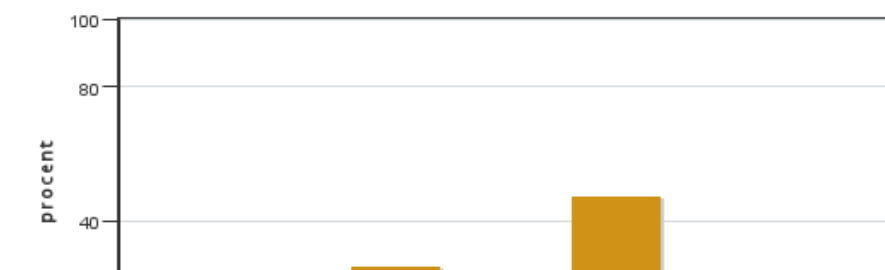
3: 1

4: 10

5: 4

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 19

Medel: 4,0

Median: 4

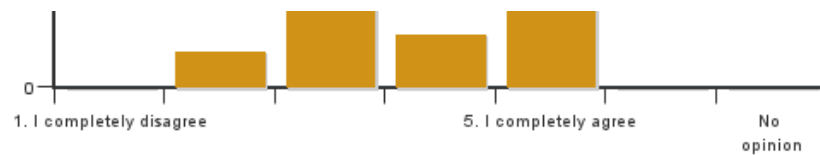
1: 0

2: 2

3: 5

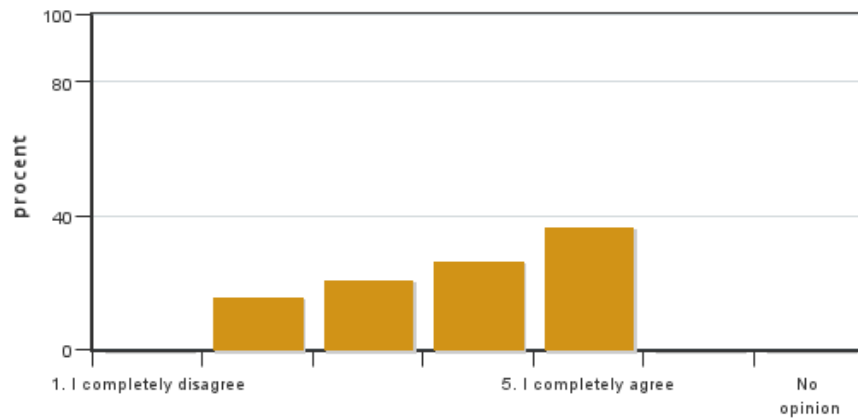
4: 3

5: 9



No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 19

Medel: 3,8

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 3

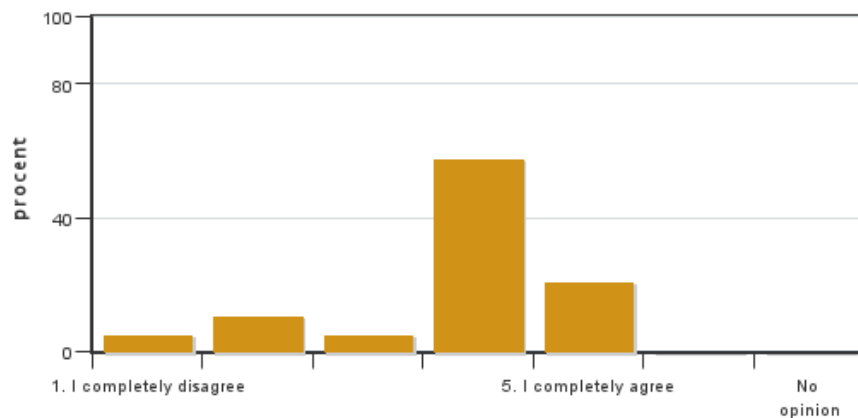
3: 4

4: 5

5: 7

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 19

Medel: 3,8

Median: 4

1: 1

2: 2

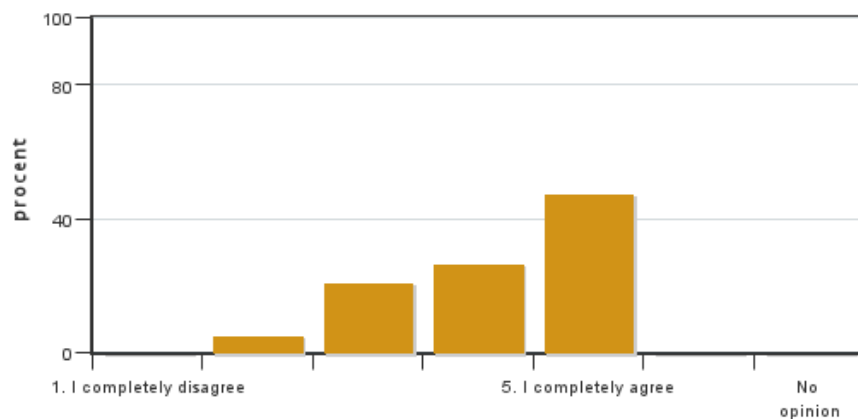
3: 1

4: 11

5: 4

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 19

Medel: 4,2

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 1

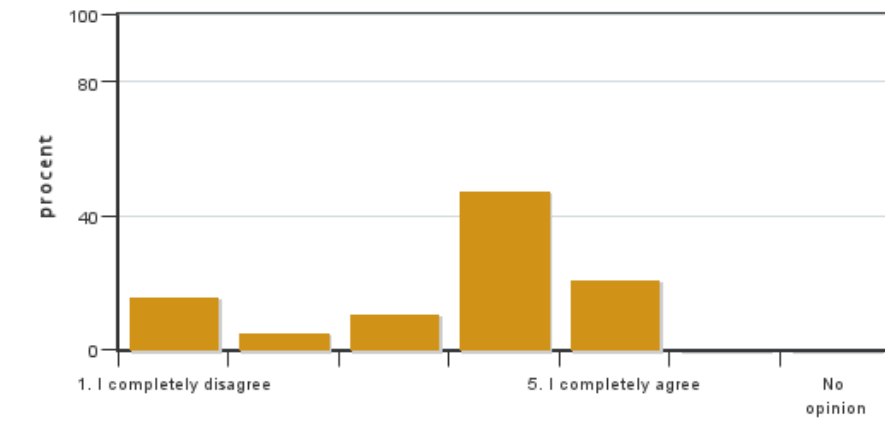
3: 4

4: 5

5: 9

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).

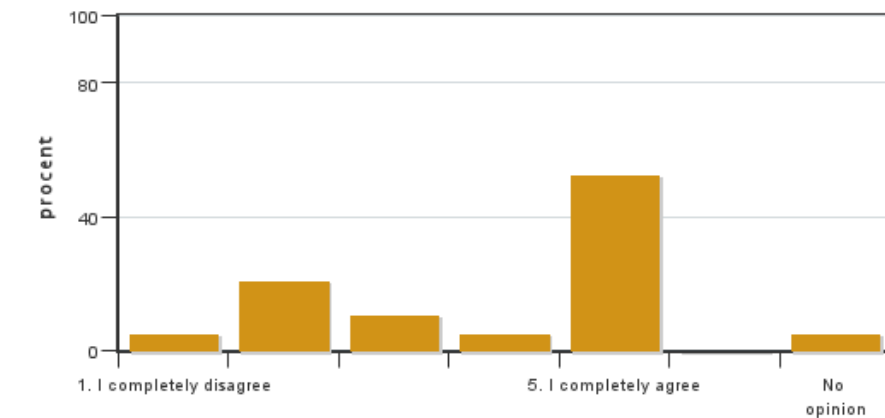


Answers: 19
 Medel: 3,5
 Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

11. The course covered international perspectives.

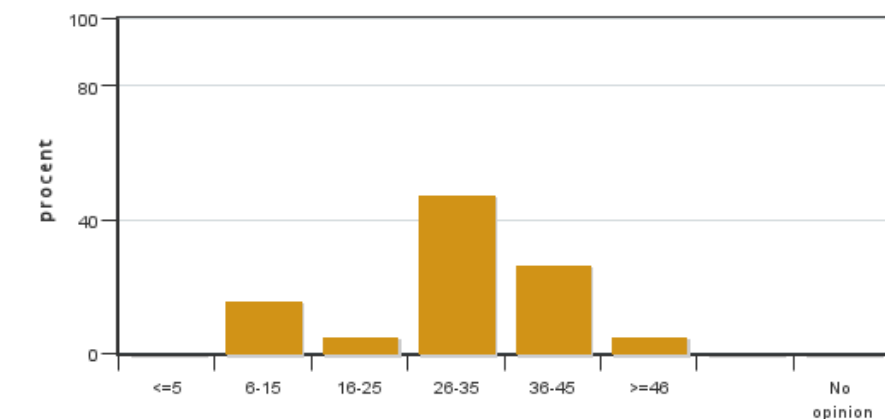


Answers: 19
 Medel: 3,8
 Median: 5

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

No opinion: 1

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

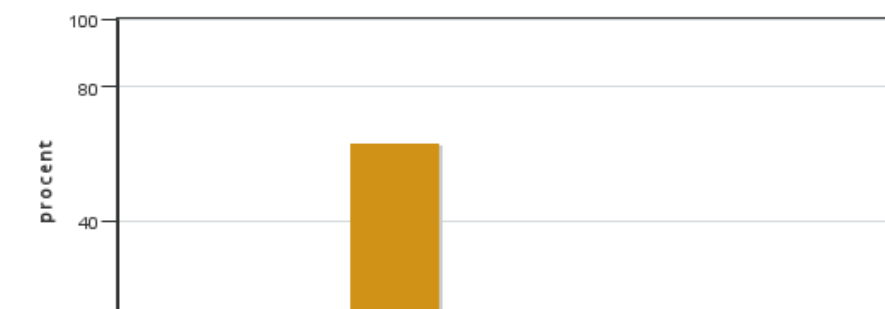


Answers: 19
 Medel: 29,8
 Median: 26-35

≤5: 0
 6-15: 3
 16-25: 1
 26-35: 9
 36-45: 5
 ≥46: 1

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 19
 Medel: 2,7
 Median: 3

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

No opinion: 2



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

Out of the 28 students enrolled in the course, 19 students (67%) took part in the web course evaluation, which is a big increase in students' participation compared to last year (48% only). An extended on-site oral course evaluation took place on the last day of the course (13 January 2023) which was attended by several students, course leader and a teacher/examiner.

From both the oral and web evaluations, a recurring comment from some students (especially from MSc Agroecology Program) was the certain similarities about the lectures and assignments with the previous course, Agroecology Basics (AB). For some years now, the course team has been aligning with the AB course contents and teachers, but it seems that more work is still required to address this issue. Some of the lecture titles seems be quite similar in the two courses, but the teachers and course leaders have been aiming for progression of knowledge within the some subject/topic from the previous course. This can be clarified to the students so that they are not discouraged from attending the lectures.

Students from Food and Landscape Program, seemed to have followed the course better than last year and satisfied with the course contents, despite certain new tools and techniques (e.g. Peanut model and interview techniques) which were used in the course. It is still a big challenge 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 again with the program directors and the course leader to address the challenges and expectations of the students.

I acknowledge to the remarks from the students about the difficulty to come to have online lecture and on-site lecture on the same day due to lack transportation possibilities to Alnarp. This happened because of some teachers felt sick or could not come to Alnarp to give lectures. This also led to changes of lecture schedules, which were sometimes communicated quite lately to the students. I would ask for more involvement and engagement of the course assistant to reduce these inconveniences to the students.

There were also comments from some that the course had too many group works and tasks especially during the last week of the course in January. However, group-tasks have been appreciated in previous years. We think that having group works in zoom (online platforms) especially in the last 2-3 years due to pandemic restrictions and illness among students 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).

Furthermore, one of the example which was used for lecture on ecological intensification was considered as gender insensitive by 1-2 students. The intention was to provide an easy example to understand the process, but yes, this will be changed if some find it inappropriate. The authors of literature used in the course has not favoured any gender and will continue to be based on the relevance and scientific quality of the paper/books.

Certain changes in the students' group work especially on farm assessment will be considered (either group composition or tools to use in this assignment). Peer-based studies, which have been appreciated in other years, seem to be not working very well this year. The complaint was that it was too open and students need concrete instructions for this activity. The idea was to give opportunity to the students decide their subject of interest within the course's thematic areas and study deeper on it as lectures often cannot do it due to time limitation or heterogeneous knowledge level amongst the students. One way to address this could be to combine this with student-organized seminar and arranged the seminar before the Christmas holidays. Introductory lectures about agroecology and some tools and techniques that we use in this course would be useful to provide to the first course of Food and landscape program

Last but not the least, students wanted to have clear information at the start of the course on how the various compulsory tasks will be graded and that the grading criteria was difficult to find in both the canvas and course webpage, despite its availability. This will be addressed in the coming semester.

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

2022-2023 Student representative course evaluation for 'LB0109 Agroecology and Sustainable Production Systems'

Out of the 28 students enrolled in the course, 19 students (67%) took part in the web course evaluation, which is a big increase in students' participation compared to last year (48% only). An extended on-site oral course evaluation took place on the last day of the course (13 January 2023) which was attended by several students, course leader and a teacher/examiner.

A recurring theme in the comments was that the course was repetitive for the students who had studied the agroecology basics (AB) course, this was a big issue for these students, many of which felt that they did not learn a lot. In particular, the main assignment in the course was found to be very similar to the main assignment in the AB course. On the other hand, some Food and Landscape students expressed that the course content was difficult and hard to keep up with. Some students felt that during group work, the students who had studied AB had to do more as they had to teach the food and landscape students concepts and ideas from AB that were not sufficiently covered. In general, the two programs (Agroecology and Food and Landscape) coming together for this course was not appreciated by the majority.

There were some comments that were critical of the organization of the course, in particular last minute schedule changes and issues with the combination of zoom and in person lectures on the same day. In the oral and written evaluation some students expressed that the peer-based learning did not work that well and perhaps the student led seminars towards the end of the course could replace this to lessen the workload in the last few weeks, since these seminars delivered a similar experience as the peer-based learning but with slightly more structure which students found helpful. The social learning environment was seen as inclusive and positive, and the physical environment was good other than the issues with the zoom lectures.

Several students expressed that they would have appreciated a more inclusive reading list where the gender identity of authors was explicitly considered. It was brought up during the evaluation that students would appreciate more careful consideration of attitude and language used in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment.