



## National and International Forest Policy SG0234, 30160.2223

15 Hp

Pace of study = 100%

Education cycle = Advanced

Course leader = Vilis Brukas

### Evaluation report

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**Evaluation period: 2023-03-20 - 2023-03-21**

Answers 18

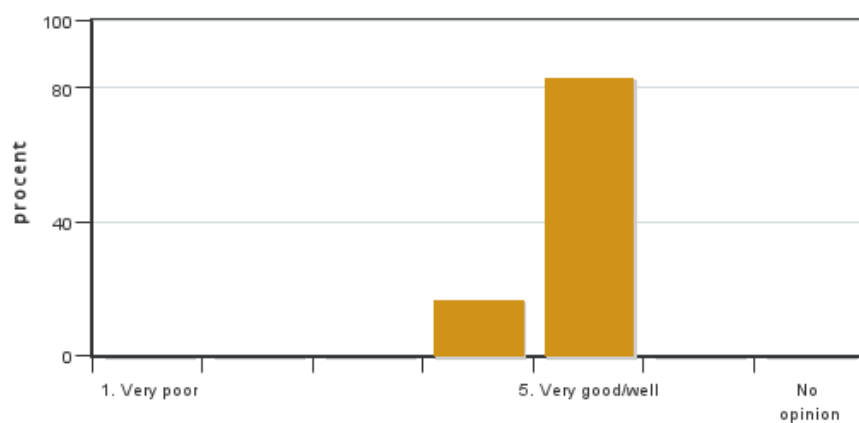
Number of students 20

Answer frequency 90 %

### Mandatory standard questions

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



Answers: 18

Medel: 4,8

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

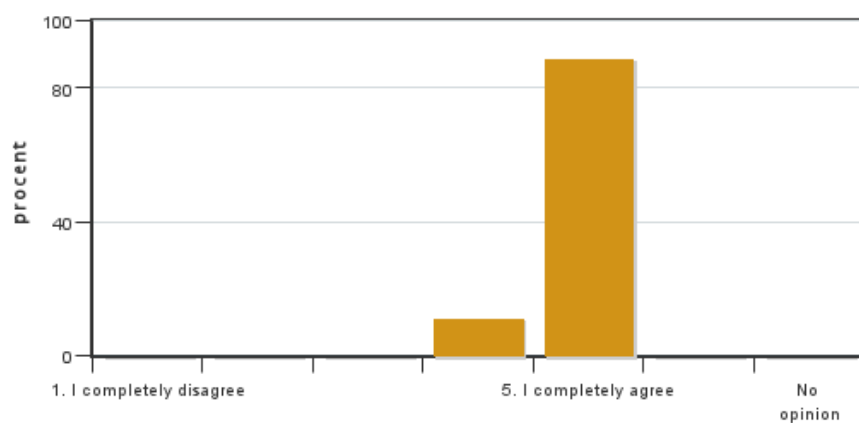
3: 0

4: 3

5: 15

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 18

Medel: 4,9

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

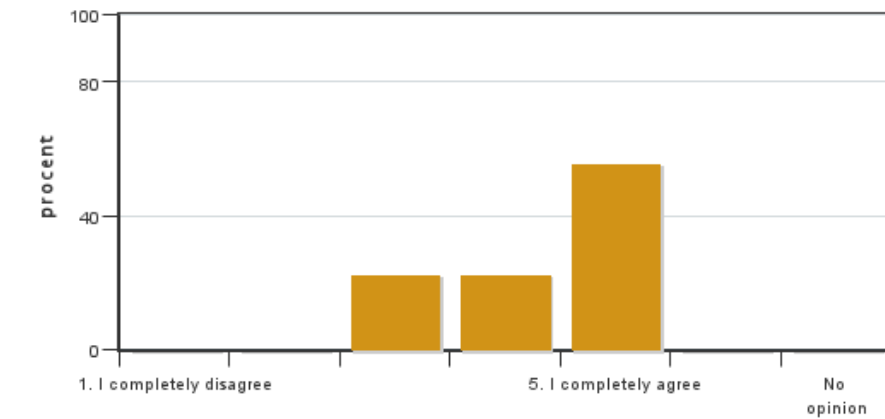
3: 0

4: 2

5: 16

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 18

Medel: 4,3

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

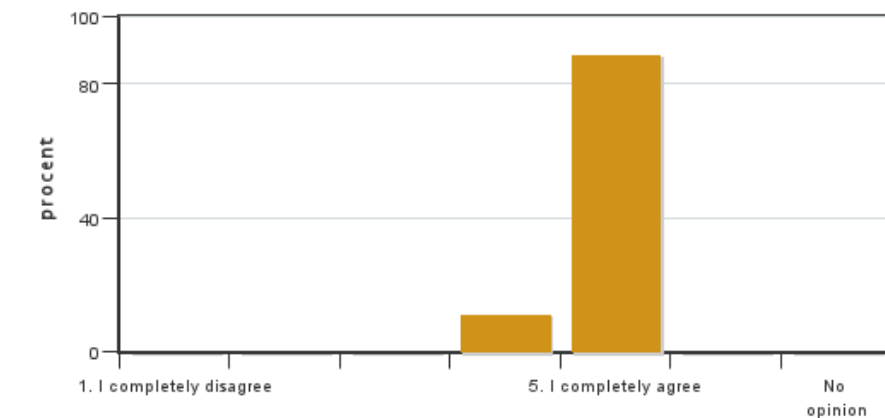
3: 4

4: 4

5: 10

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 18

Medel: 4,9

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

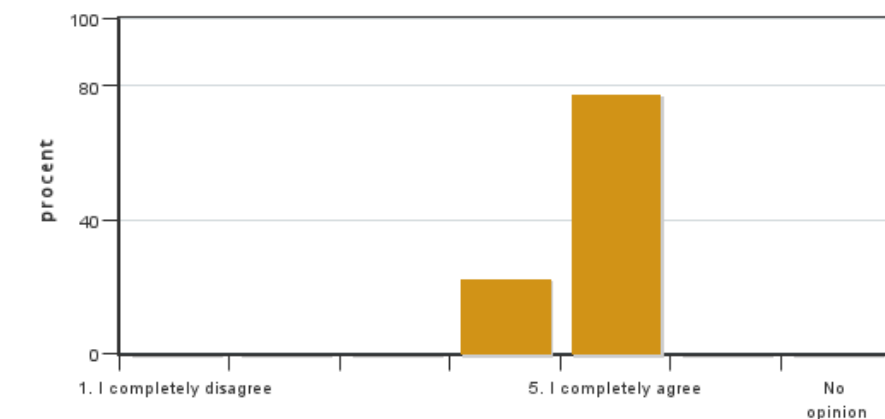
3: 0

4: 2

5: 16

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 18

Medel: 4,8

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

3: 0

4: 4

5: 14

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 18

Medel: 4,9

Median: 5

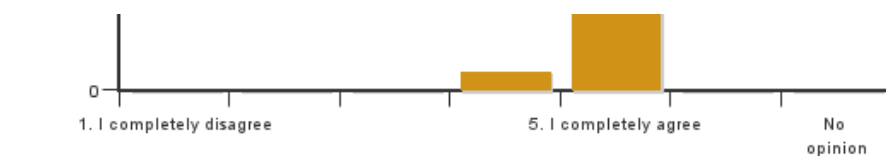
1: 0

2: 0

3: 0

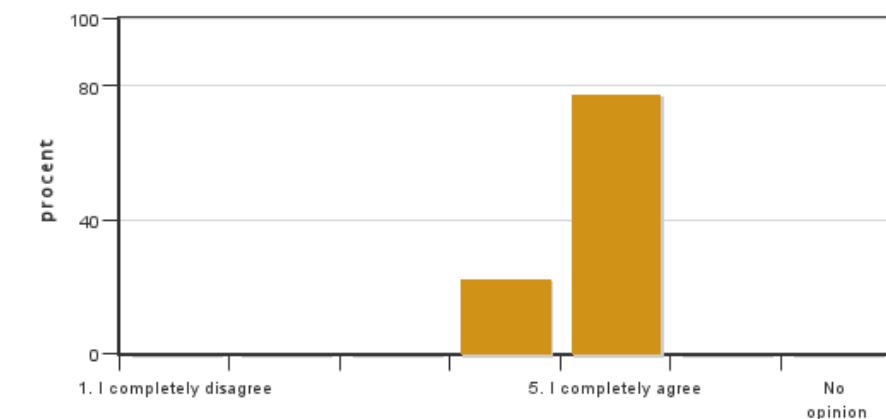
4: 1

5: 17



No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 18

Medel: 4,8

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

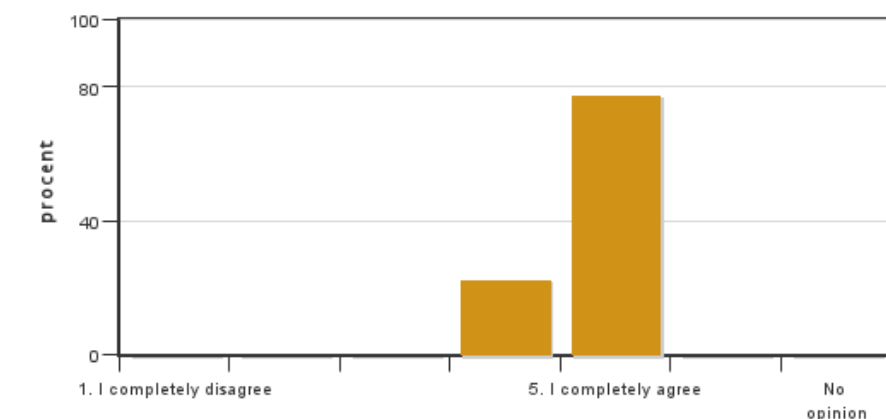
3: 0

4: 4

5: 14

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 18

Medel: 4,8

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

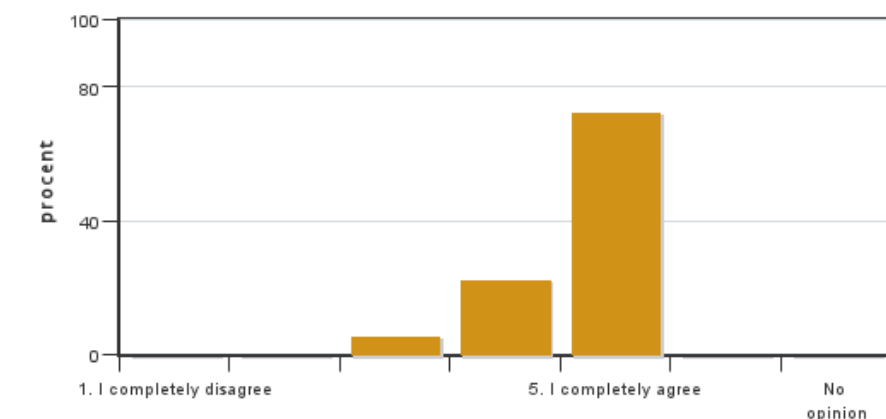
3: 0

4: 4

5: 14

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 18

Medel: 4,7

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

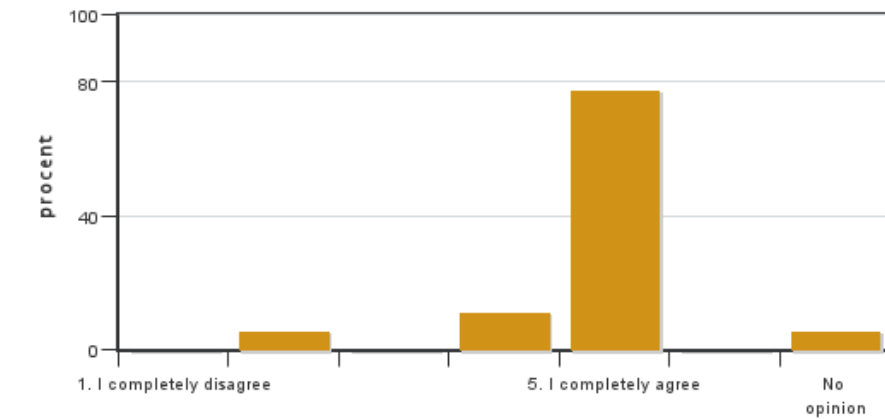
3: 1

4: 4

5: 13

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).**

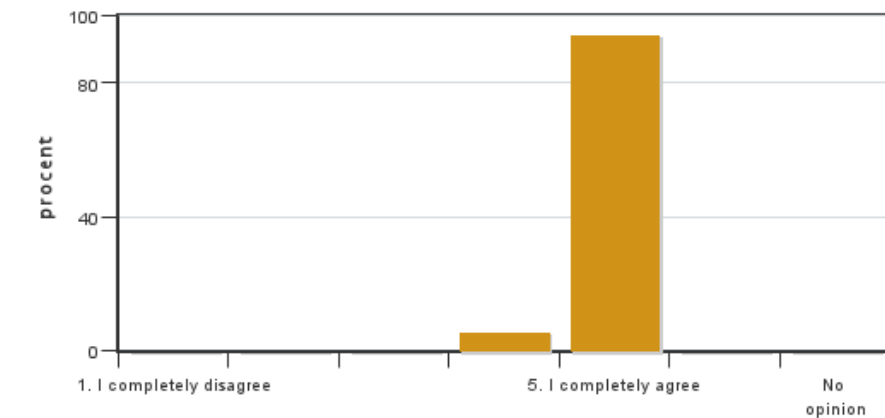


Answers: 18  
Medel: 4,7  
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 1

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

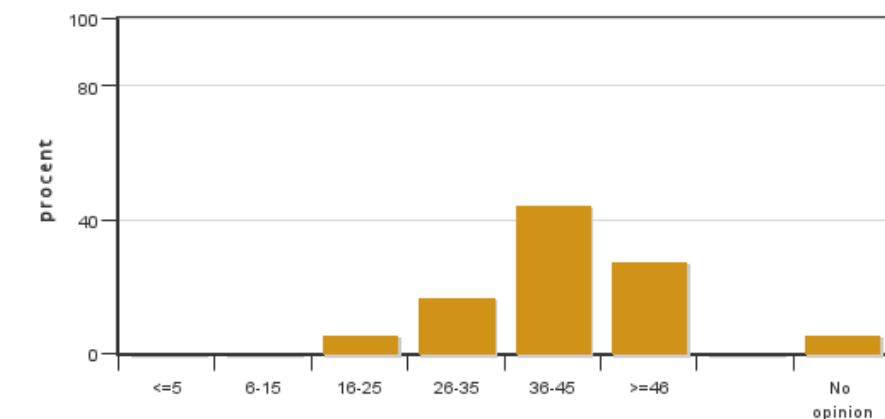


Answers: 18  
Medel: 4,9  
Median: 5

1: 0  
2: 0  
3: 0  
4: 1  
5: 17

No opinion: 0

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

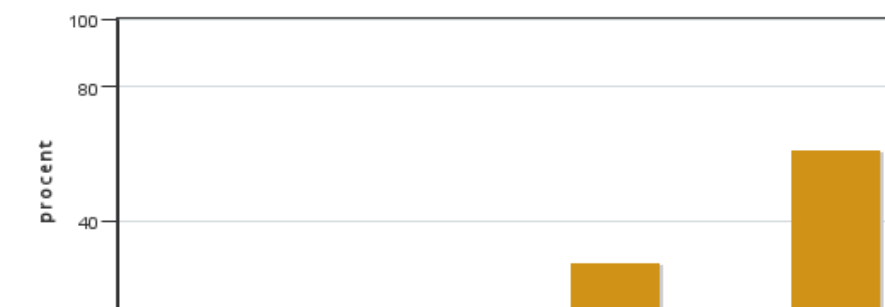


Answers: 18  
Medel: 38,8  
Median: 36-45

≤5: 0  
6-15: 0  
16-25: 1  
26-35: 3  
36-45: 8  
≥46: 5

No opinion: 1

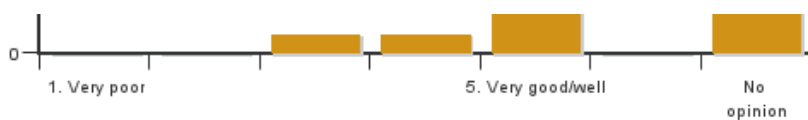
**13. If relevant, what is your overall experience of participating in all or part of your course online?**



Answers: 18  
Medel: 4,6  
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 11



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 on evaluation by the course responsible Vilis Brukas, Alnarp, March 26, 2023.

### Student group

As always, our international class consisted from many nationalities. 20 students represented the following countries:

**Sweden: 4** (2 jägmästare students from Umeå and 2 skogsmästare from Skinnskatteberg)

**Other countries: 16.** Bangladesh 2, Germany (Freiburg) 1, Italy 2 (1 is PhD student from Södertörns högskola) Latvia 1, Lithuania 1, Poland 7, Vietnam 2.

### Evaluation set up and response rate

The evaluation questions were answered by 18 out of 20 students, thus the response rate was 90%. We also had a concluding oral discussion on Zoom that took about 1 hour. When answering on Evald, students were encouraged to write comments, not limiting the answers to quantitative grading; thus providing many additional valuable insights.

### Compulsory questions on SLUNIK

On 1 to 5 scale, the average overall impression is 4.8, indicating high satisfaction with the course. Students gave high scores practically for all general aspects in the SLU standard evaluation form, the scores ranging between 4.7-4.9.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	9 years average	2023
<b>Overall impression</b>	4.4	4.1	4.9	4.6	4.4	4.1	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.4	<b>4.8</b>

Students on average put 39 hours for course work per week with a few outliers. The averages for years 2018-2022 were 46, 36, 33, 35 and 36 hours per week. In the oral discussion of the course evaluation, many students pointed out high course intensity, especially on the first week of the course. However and something surprising, students appreciated the intensity, highlighting that this was conducive to learning the subject.

### Additional remarks

Since 2021, I chose to online evaluate course modules by weeks and not by separate pedagogic approaches. Many of the course weeks scored high, between 4.4-4.8, led by the participatory role play week earning 4.8. As in the most years, the week on international forest policy got the lowest score (3.9), students being somewhat overwhelmed by large amount of information in this module of large thematic scope. Concerning the pedagogic approaches, probably the most satisfying outcome concerns the reflective journals. In previous years the student group used to be very divided, some strongly liking and some strongly disliking this specific approach that demands a lot of writing. This year most students are moderately or strongly positive about the journal, acknowledging its push for creativity, deeper learning and structuring of knowledge. The reasons for such positive attitudinal change are difficult to pinpoint it is probably a combination of preferences of "opinion leaders" in the student group and the great work by first time "journal leaders", Keeli Curtis and Derek Garfield.

### Considerations for the next year

As the course works well overall, there is no need for any radical changes. However, some consideration:

- In the oral discussion, students commended the detailed course syllabus. Several students notified that this served well very well as the main course document. Good to know, as I sometimes considering dropping it
- There were some points to improve on the Lithuanian part of the study trip, already taken up with the organiser in Lithuania Ekaterina. If needed, I could myself approach leadership of the State Forest Enterprise and the State Forest Service is tailored request
- One student make the following note about the final exam: *"A practical thing regarding the exam that I think is very crucial. Is that the exam guards who was claimed to be "professional" wasn't professional at all. I did my exam on a computer and to keep the text short they didn't know how to operate in MS Word for fixing technical issues that occurred during the exam. They also talked with each other in the classroom which disturbed a lot"* This is an important matter to be taken up with examination unit. Also, I need to be careful with printouts and discussing the set up with the assisting teachers. Also, keep in mind the start time of the exam, when making agreement with examination administration.
- For week 1, a student made the following comment: *"A very good balance between the amount of information and time. The language was very very professional, maybe at least the questions on the test could be phrased in simpler language? I lost a couple of points just because I didn't understand a couple of key words. Check this out!"*

## Student representatives comments

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### Summary by course representative

Based on the overall impression it seems like students thought highly of the course. The course was well planned and organized, with clear guidelines, easy access to information and clear links to learning objectives. The students found the course to be intense but rewarding, providing a lot of knowledge and tools to deeply understand the topics. The course was well – designed and provided useful information. The course leader was enthusiastic, understanding, and helpful of each student's situation, and the lecture material was carefully prepared. The excursion was also praised as being very good. And some students felt that this was the best course they had attended at SLU and was very happy with their experience.

When it comes to various course components and if they have supported the students learning it seems like the students appreciated the combination of different components including seminars, lectures, journals, essays, weekly tests, and excursion, which provided them with various tools to better understand the topics. The journal, while useful for critical thinking was not everyone's favourite task. However, most of the students that didn't like it also admitted that it helped them to get a better understanding of the subject and as preparation for the final exam. Overall, the student had a positive experience with the course and felt it was an open and respectful environment for different opinions and discussions which supported their learning.

Overall, it seems like the students thought that they had good opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned during the course through the different examinations. However, some concerns regarding the final exam were brought up. Comments like "it felt a little repetitive" and when discussing further with the class some think the final exam felt a little unnecessary because student previously had done quite extensive work through journals, essays and seminars on the same topics. I would also like to lift the importance of technical assistance and exam guards for those who need it. It's important that the program on the computer works without too much problem and if there would be a problem there is someone that can fix it. This was not the case.

Overall, the students seem happy with all the different guest lectures that came and shared their knowledge. Some negative comments were made regarding this, but these were mostly based on teaching style and does not reflect on the overall feedback from the class. Other comments made was that it was too large amount of information in the presentation especially during week 3. However the students understand that this is a big subject with a lot to cover, but would like to see a thinning in the material. Week 5 was a student favourite with a little slower tempo and a fun pedagogical way of teaching.

The worst thing about the course seems to be the amount of work that needs to be done. Most people I have talked to think this has been a very intensive course but also realise that this can be expected in a masters course. However, week 6 is probably the most stressful of them all, with deadlines and things to do. Maybe there can be something done during this week to ease the pressure a bit. Another thing that comes up in course evaluation is regarding the exam that been mentioned previously as well.

The comment from the course evaluation below. Which in my opinion reflects what many students thought about the exam and gives some good examples for improvement such as providing indicators on how many points you can get on individual questions and the availability of a teacher to answer questions that can arise during the exam.

*"I think the final exam was way too excessive. Firstly, many of the questions had already been discussed exhaustively during the course, and we have had chances to be examined on these concepts in journals, essays and presentations. Secondly, it is the first time I write an exam where there is no indication of how many points a question is worth. This made it very hard to understand the scope of the questions coupled with the fact that the questions were generally open-ended. Generally I am trying to opt for quality over quantity, but some guidance beyond the question is appreciated. Thirdly, normally the course teacher is available for a short window during the exam, that was not the case during this exam and I would suggest that in the future that should be the case! In my experience questions usually arise from the students. I get the idea behind the exam but I think less weight towards*

*the final grade should be based on it.”*

Based on the comments provided, it seems that the students found several aspects of the course to be beneficial and enjoyable. However, there are a few recurring themes that stands out as the best parts of the course. Firstly, the course leader is mentioned as providing care and knowledge to the students especially during the excursion. Secondly, the excursion is praised as one of the best parts of the course, with students highlighting the opportunity to meet different stakeholders, see real – life examples of forest policy and management, and apply their learnings from previous weeks. Finally, the reflective journal is also highlighted as valuable aspects of the course, providing an opportunity for students to express what they have learned and practise critical thinking and writing skills. Overall, the students seem to have appreciated the combination of different learning techniques, the organization of the course and the engagement of the invited lectures and the course leader.

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Kontakta support: [support@slu.se](mailto:support@slu.se) - 018-67 6600