



## Soil biology and biogeochemical cycles BI1322, 30391.2324

15 Hp

Pace of study = 100%

Education cycle = Advanced

Course leader = Eveline Krab

### Evaluation report

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Evaluation period: 2024-03-12 - 2024-04-02

Answers 14

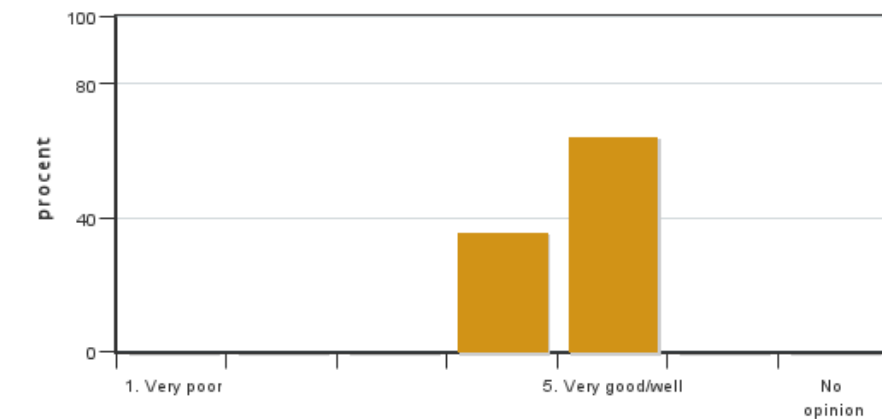
Number of students 22

Answer frequency 63 %

### Mandatory standard questions

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

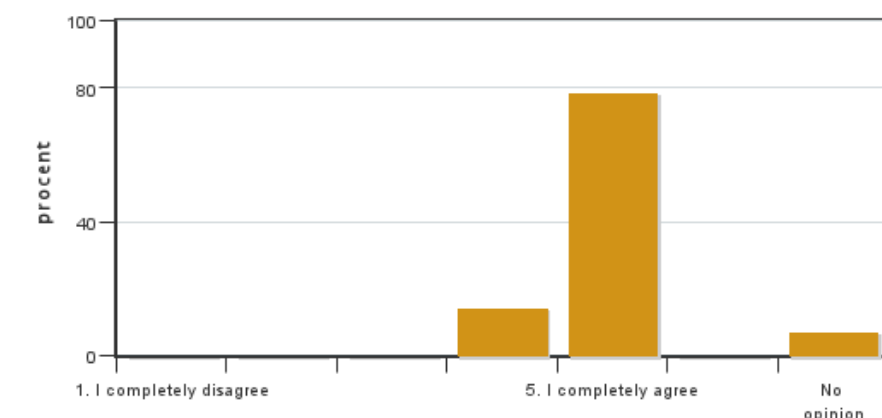


Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,6  
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 0

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

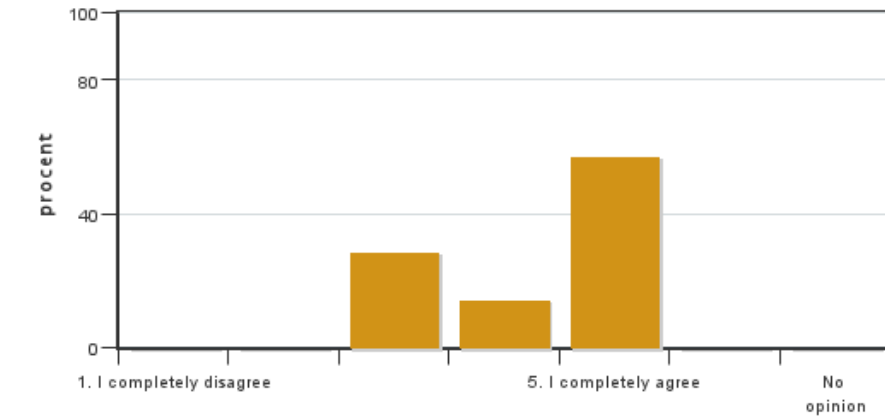


Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,8  
Median: 5

1: 0  
2: 0  
3: 0  
4: 2  
5: 11

No opinion: 1

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

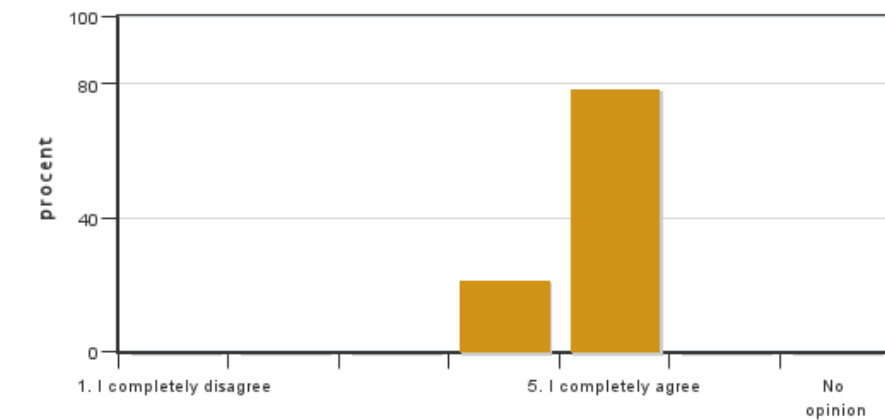


Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,3  
 Median: 5

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

No opinion: 0

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

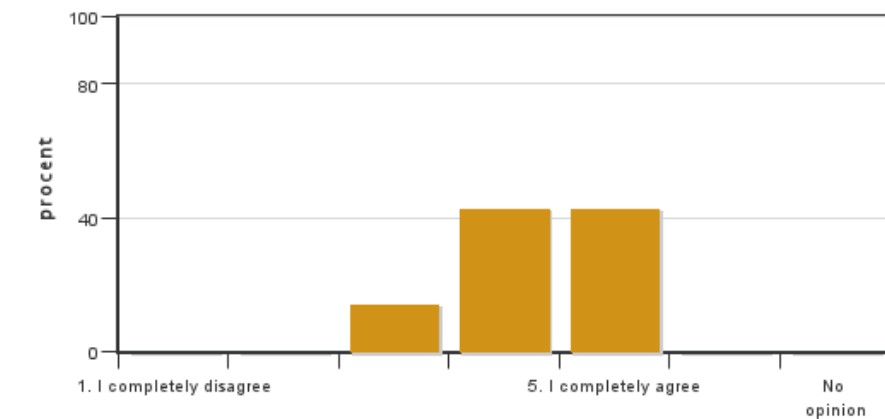


Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,8  
 Median: 5

1: 0  
 2: 0  
 3: 0  
 4: 3  
 5: 11

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,3  
 Median: 4

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

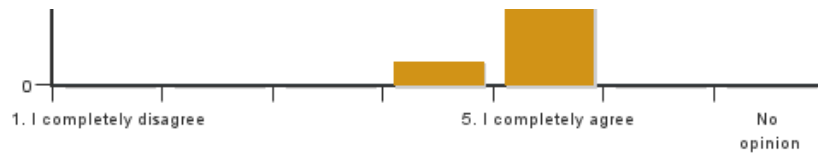
No opinion: 0

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



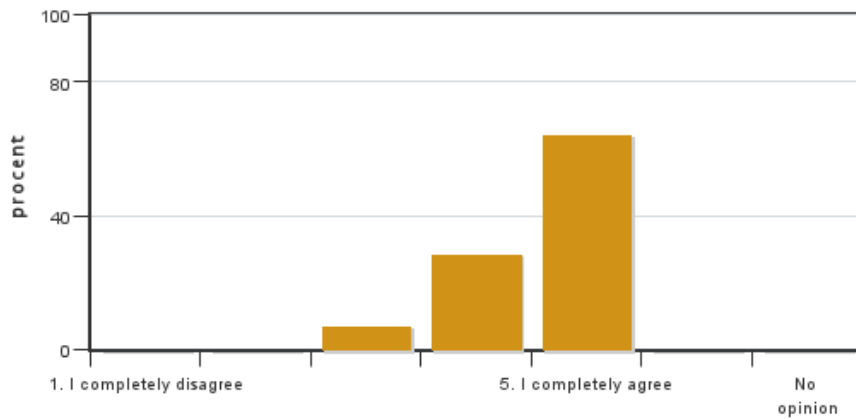
Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,9  
 Median: 5

1: 0  
 2: 0  
 3: 0  
 4: 1  
 5: 13



No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 14

Medel: 4,6

Median: 5

1: 0

2: 0

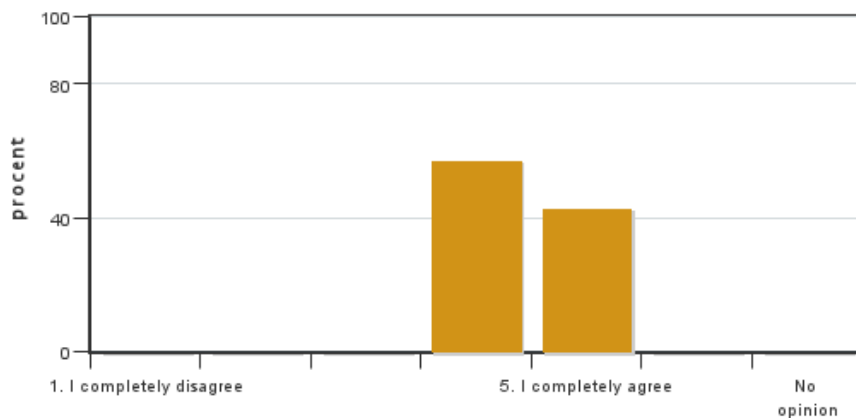
3: 1

4: 4

5: 9

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 14

Medel: 4,4

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 0

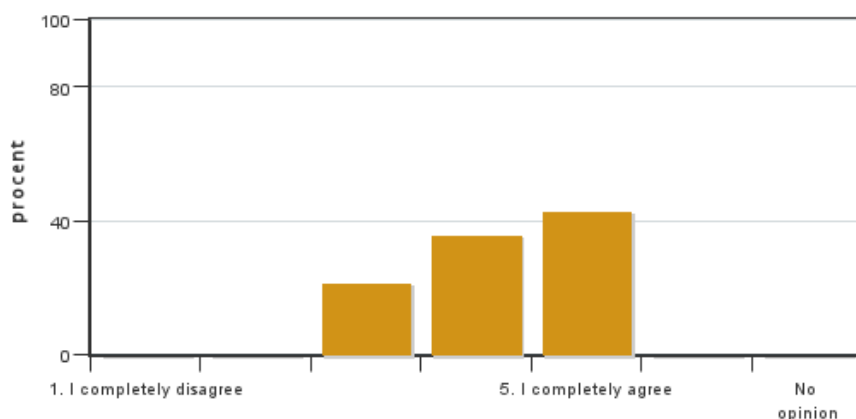
3: 0

4: 8

5: 6

No opinion: 0

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



Answers: 14

Medel: 4,2

Median: 4

1: 0

2: 0

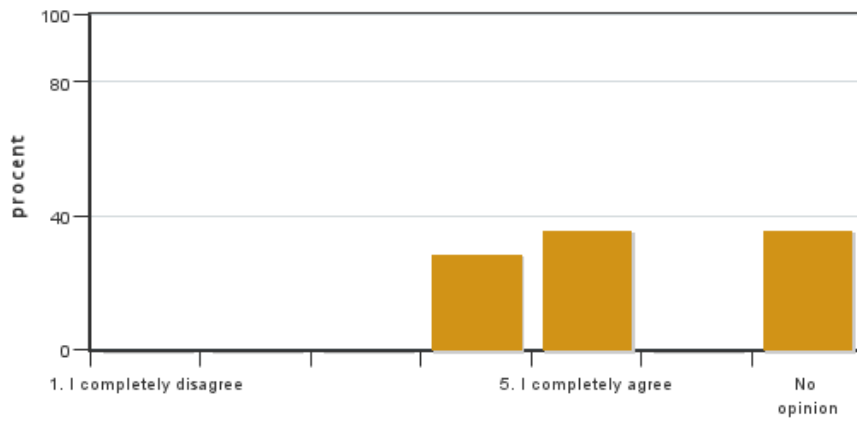
3: 3

4: 5

5: 6

No opinion: 0

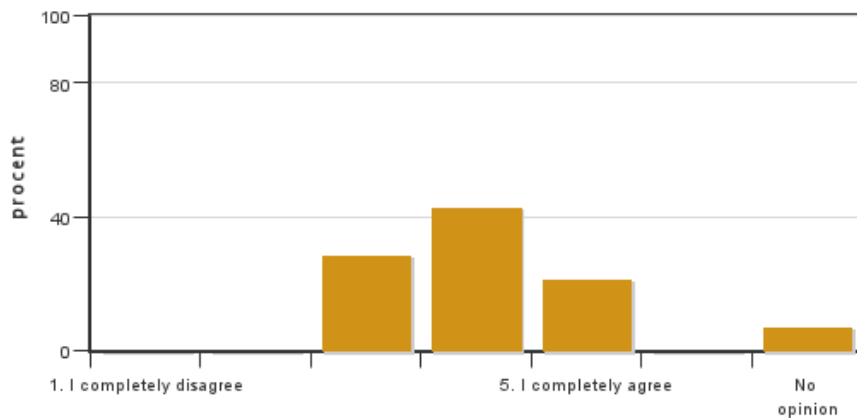
**10. I believe the course has included a gender and equality aspect, regarding content as well as teaching practices (e.g. perspective on the subject, reading list, allocation of speaking time and the use of master suppression techniques).**



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,6  
 Median: 5

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

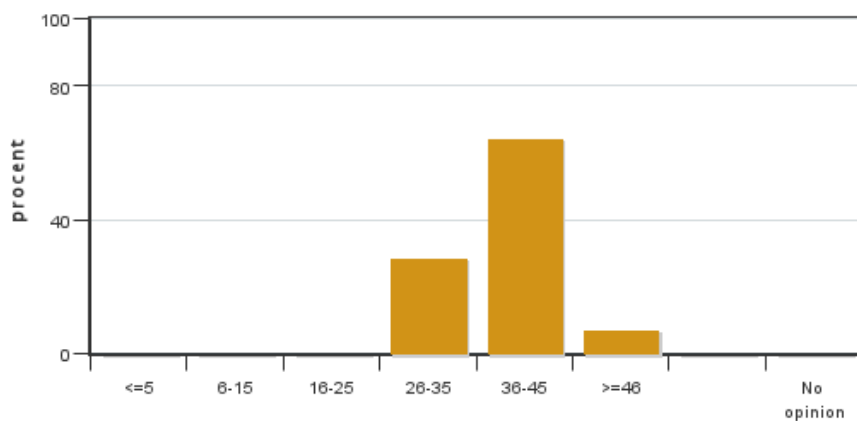
**11. The course covered international perspectives.**



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 3,9  
 Median: 4

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

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



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 37,6  
 Median: 36-45

≤5: 0  
 6-15: 0  
 16-25: 0  
 26-35: 4  
 36-45: 9  
 ≥46: 1  
 No opinion: 0

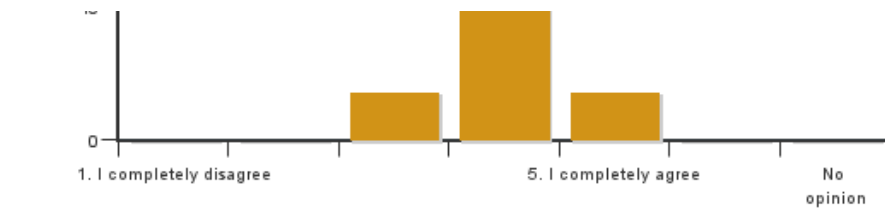
**Additional own questions**

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



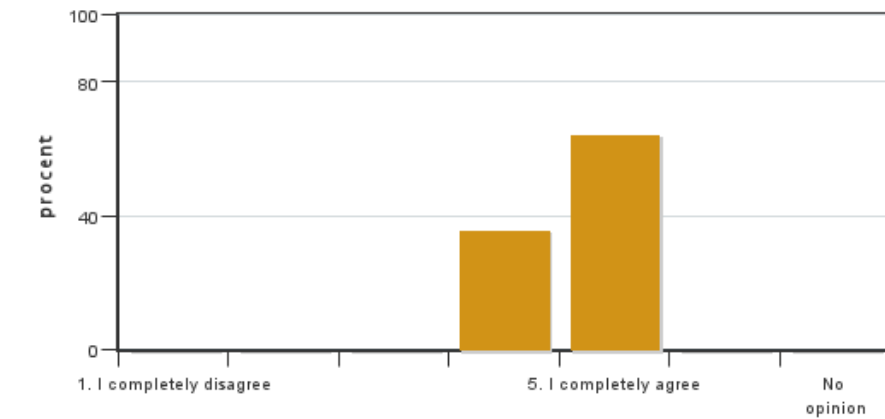
Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,0  
 Median: 4

1: 0  
 2: 0  
 3: 2



4: 10  
5: 2  
No opinion: 0

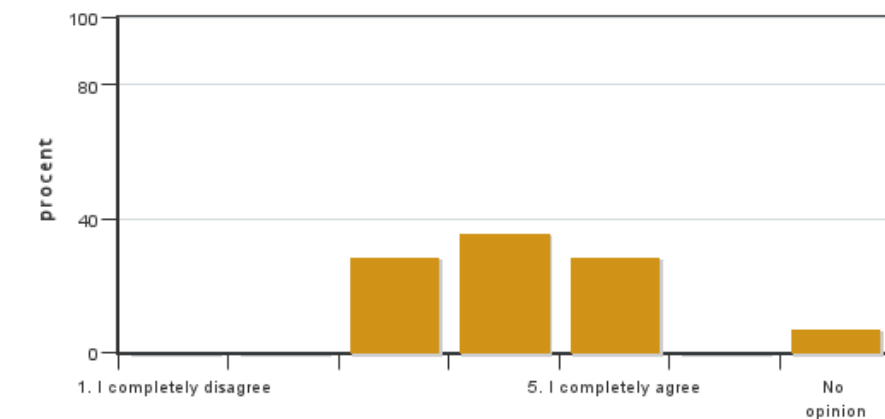
**14. The course has given me relevant knowledge and practical skills for my further education.**



Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,6  
Median: 5

1: 0  
2: 0  
3: 0  
4: 5  
5: 9  
No opinion: 0

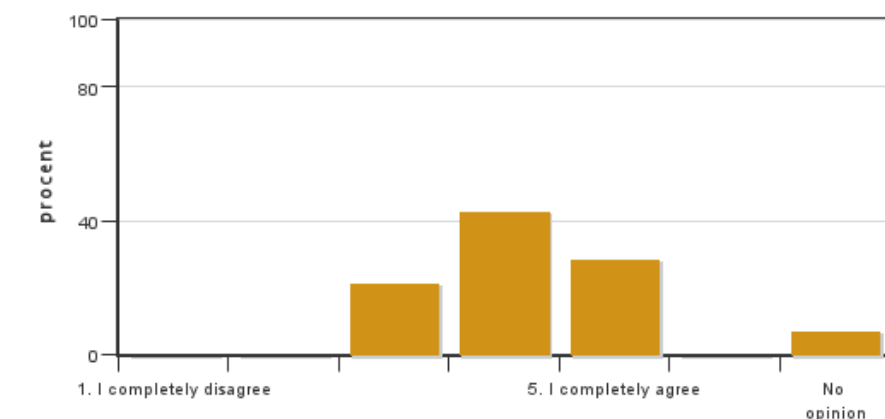
**15. The course has developed my skills to formulate and delimit a problem.**



Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,0  
Median: 4

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

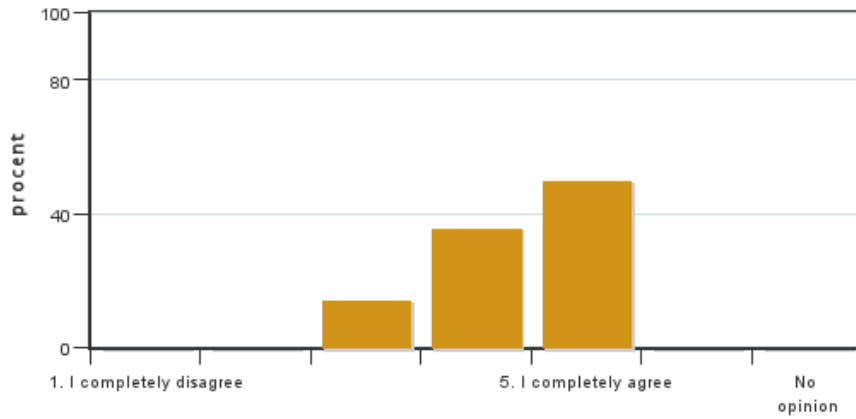
**16. The course has developed my skills in oral presentation.**



Answers: 14  
Medel: 4,1  
Median: 4

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

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

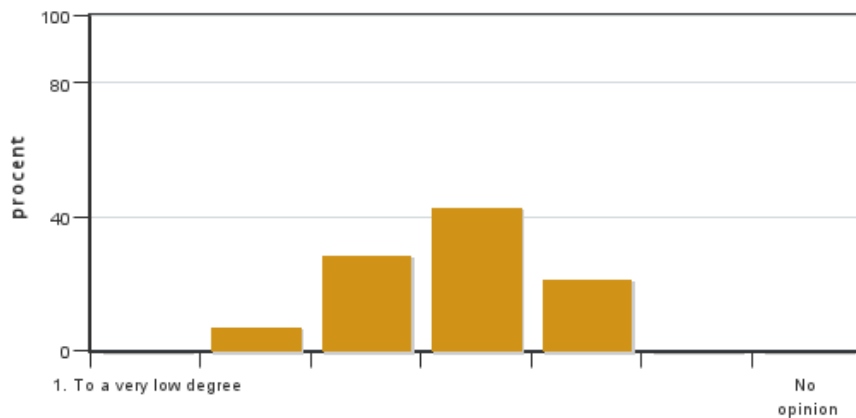


Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,4  
 Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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

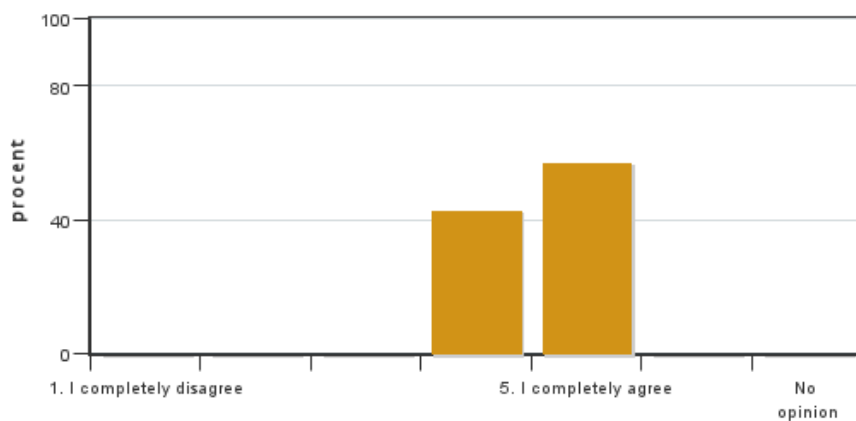


Answers: 14  
 Medel: 3,8  
 Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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

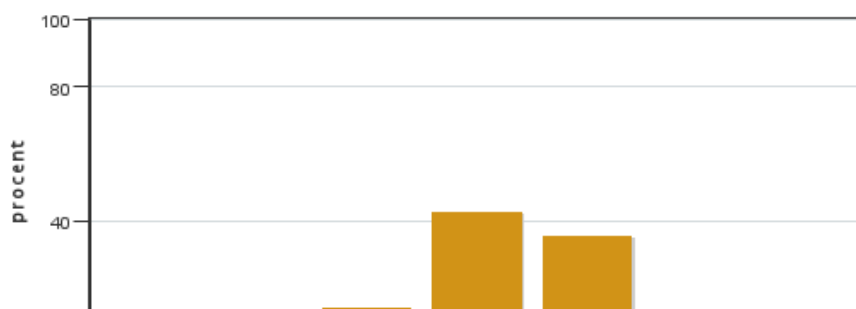


Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,6  
 Median: 5

1: 0  
 2: 0  
 3: 0  
 4: 6  
 5: 8

No opinion: 0

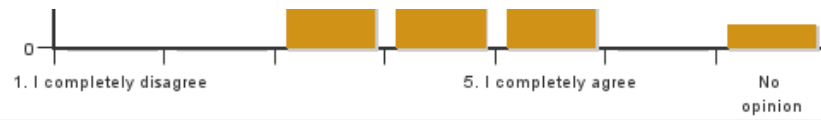
20. The lectures inspired and supported individual work.



Answers: 14  
 Medel: 4,2  
 Median: 4

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

No opinion: 1



## 21. Please mention lectures that were particularly helpful or inspiring, or particularly difficult or potentially unnecessary

### Course leaders comments

#### Course leader comments to evaluation of BI1322 Soil biology and biogeochemical cycles spring term 2024

This year we had 22 students, the course was run fully on campus. Fourteen students (63%) filled in the Evald evaluation questionnaire and a group of 11 students also joined in an in-person evaluation session in the last week of the course. The course was generally very well evaluated scoring a 4.6 for 'overall course impression'. Specifically the link between course content and the learning objectives, accessibility of course information and the social learning environment scored very high grades (all > 4.8). The students found that the course components supported their learning (4.1, but written comments indicated that the project and lab report writing took quite a lot of time).

This year, for the first time, the students received 92 potential A-exam questions already some time before the exam. For the exam a random set of 10 of these questions was selected and these needed to be answered with 75% correct for the pass grade 3. The B-part of the exam consisted of more complex questions that were not provided beforehand. Together with the project and lab reports the students could demonstrate during this exam what they have learned during the course. The student appreciated the way of examining (4.4) but not much more than the previous years (4.3 in 2023/2023) in which the A-exam questions were unknown before examination. In previous course years some students commented that the requirements for a pass of the exam were too strict, while this year a comment was that the exam could have been more challenging. This year 71% of the students passed the A-exam at the first attempt, that was somewhat but not much higher than in the previous (pre-post covid) years (around 60% pass). The average grade for the B-exam was 3.9, which was higher than previous years (e.g 3.1 in 2023) suggesting that the students reached a more complex understanding of the course content.

The students recognized that the course covered aspects of sustainable development (4.2), but also indicated that social and financial development not covered as much. The students recognized that during lectures etc. most examples used by teachers were related to 'local/ Swedish/Boreal' soils and ecosystems, but none of the students that commented on this aspect indicated that lesser focus international perspectives was problematic (3.9)

Most students indicated to have spent around the requested amount of hours 34-45 per week on this course, and most of them think they performed well on the course and reached the learning goals (4.0) indicating that the work load was at a quite good level. The students considered the course to be useful in their further careers (4.6). The students agreed that the course contributed to their problem solving skills (4.0) oral presentation (4.1) and written presentation skills (4.4). But there could be some improvement in the training in developing critical thinking (3.8). One student commented that the discussions during the lectures and the labs contributed to this. The lecturers overall were well-evaluated: the lectures inspired (4.2) and the willingness of teachers to discuss things was well-appreciated (4.6). In contrast to the previous editions, the course excursion was moved to the end of the course. This was a success; the Norunda site that we visited was now in contrast to the previous year's snow-free which allowed us to discuss soil biology, forest management and greenhouse gas emissions in the field.

A teacher meeting was organized shortly after the evaluation results became available to reflect on this years course edition. During this meeting improvements to next years course were suggested to next years course:

- We should make a group picture early in the course and add names for the teachers to familiarize them with the student group
- Talk about learning outcomes at the middle of the course as well as in beginning, potentially including a discussion about what critical thinking is.
- Look over timing of activities in weeks 2-3 of the course, and potentially alter the element seminar somewhat.
- Implement short discussions or exercises in lectures that do not already have this, to allow for more interaction and spontaneous discussion between students and teachers.
- Consider having weekly quizzes for students to recap course content more times after each subject and before the exam.
- Provide more literature for activities not directly linked to course book chapters, eg some lectures and the lab activities.
- Consider whether some of the background material could be given as pre-course literature to get students to the same level already at course start. Alternatively, we could be more clear on lectures parts (eg part of the molecular lecture) that are for students without such a background.
- Add slide numbers in all lectures.

## Student representatives comments

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The students seem to have a positive impression of the course and its teaching.

Lectures and labs were well connected with each other and many appreciated to use their new knowledge from the lectures in practical exercises in lab. However, students mention that the different projects were going on at the same time which was a bit stressful. This made it hard to focus on the separate projects as well as they would have wanted to or to do individual studies.

One student mentions that they would have wanted feedback earlier in the writing process rather than just a general one the first time. And a few mention that the lecture about soil fauna could have been shorter.

Students seem to have an impression of SLU of in general being a pleasant physical learning environment where questions and discussions are appreciated. Many students liked the lectures by Björn Lindahl.

Regarding the exam a suggestion from one student is to convert the written exam into a digital exam. This would support the quality of the answers and being able to answer in a short and concise way. Because the questions in the B-section want you to include knowledge from all of the lectures, a lot of content you remember as you write. It would be easier to be able to add and re-structure the answers on a computer compared to writing by hand. It can get messy and you do not feel satisfied with your answers.

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