Production and quality evaluation of forages
BI1327, 40126.2021

15 Hp
Pace of study = 100%
Education cycle = Advanced

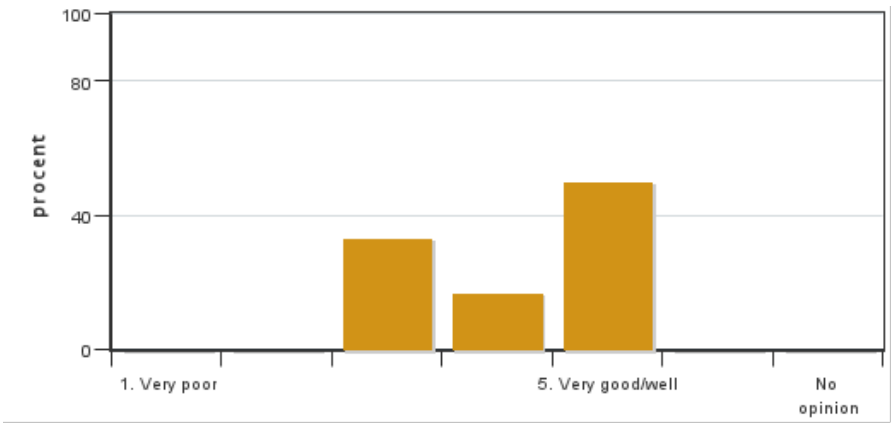
Evaluation report

Evaluation period: 2021-05-30 - 2021-06-25

Answers	6
Number of students	13
Answer frequency	46 %

Mandatory standard questions

1. My overall impression of the course is:

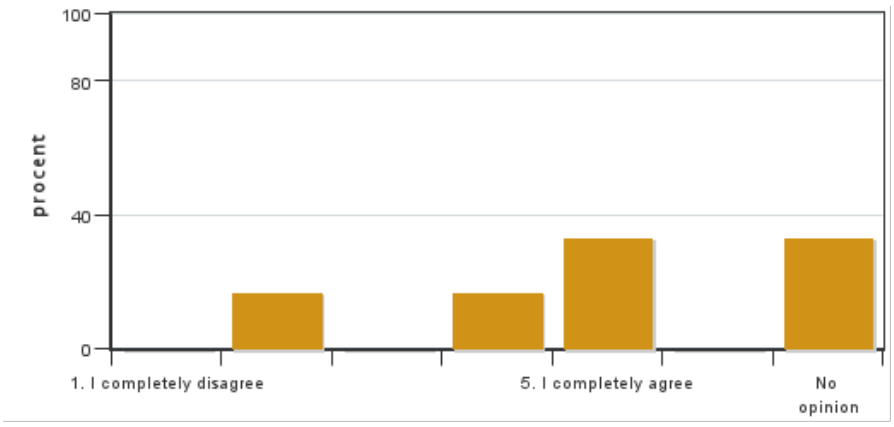


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,2
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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

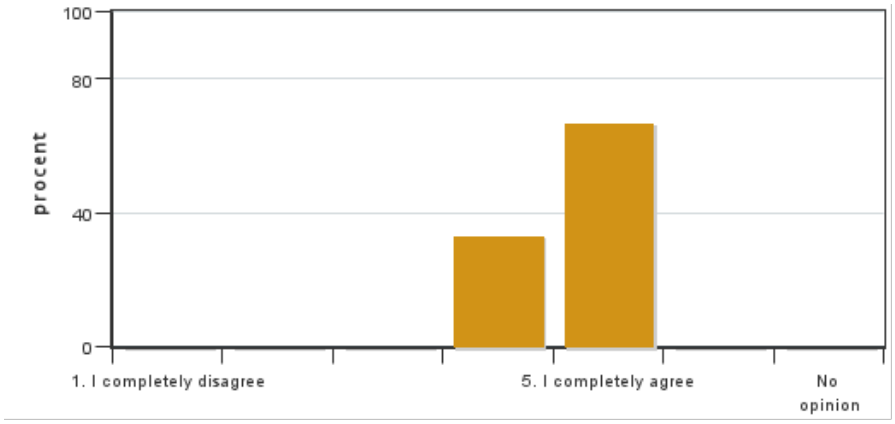


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,0
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 2

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

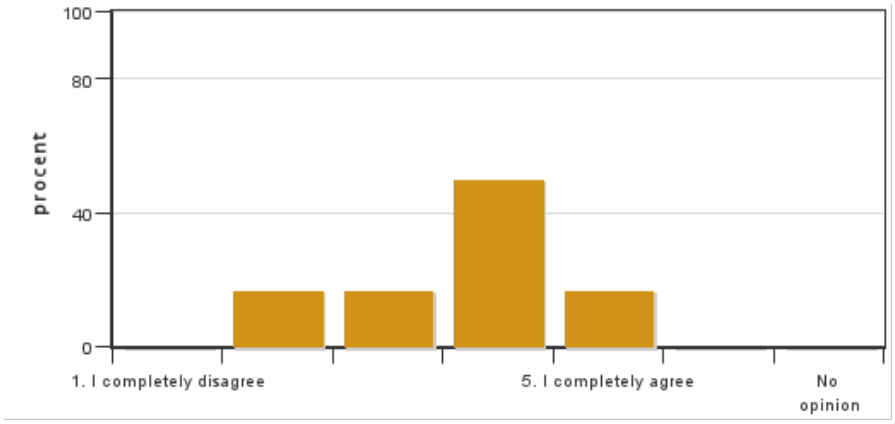


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,7
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 0

4. The information about the course was easily accessible.

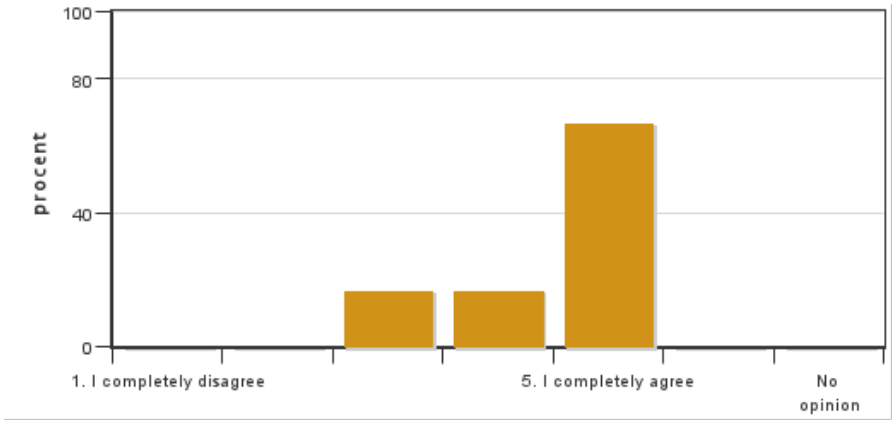


Answers: 6
Medel: 3,7
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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

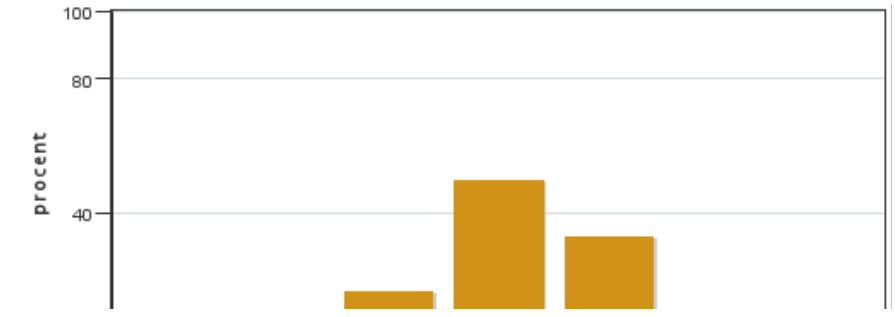


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,5
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 0

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

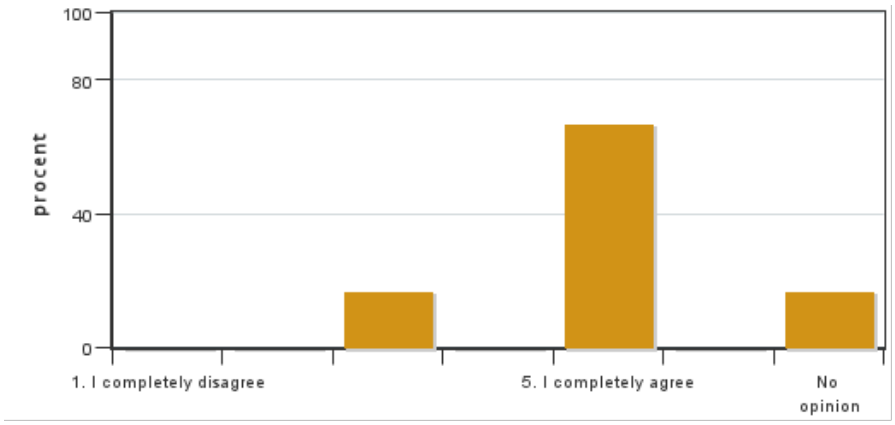


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,2
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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

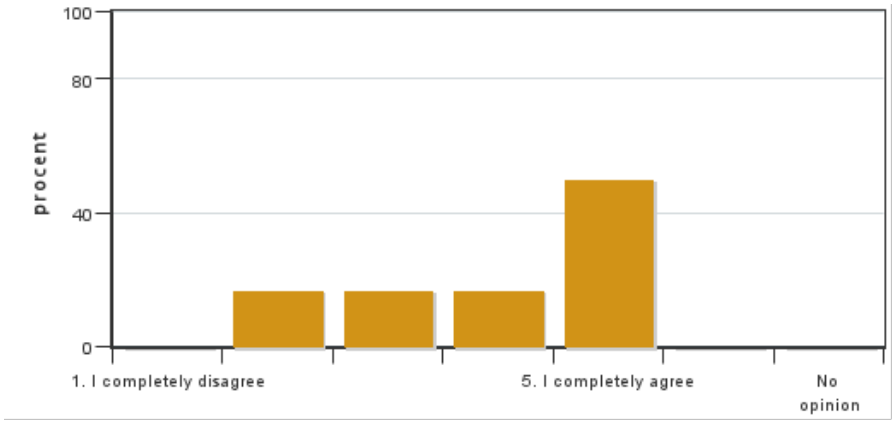


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,6
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 1

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

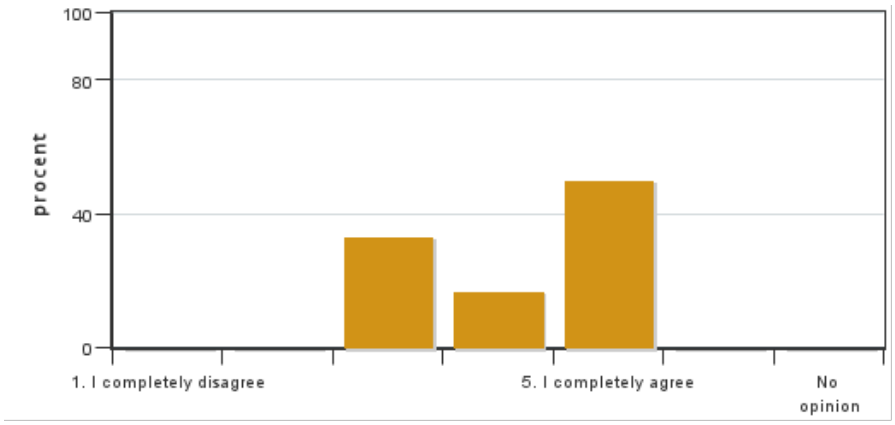


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,0
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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

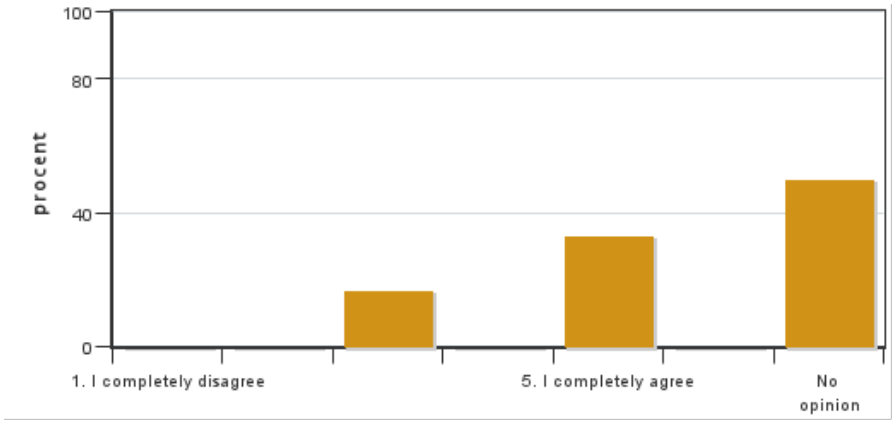


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,2
Median: 4

1: 0
2: 0
3: 2
4: 1
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).

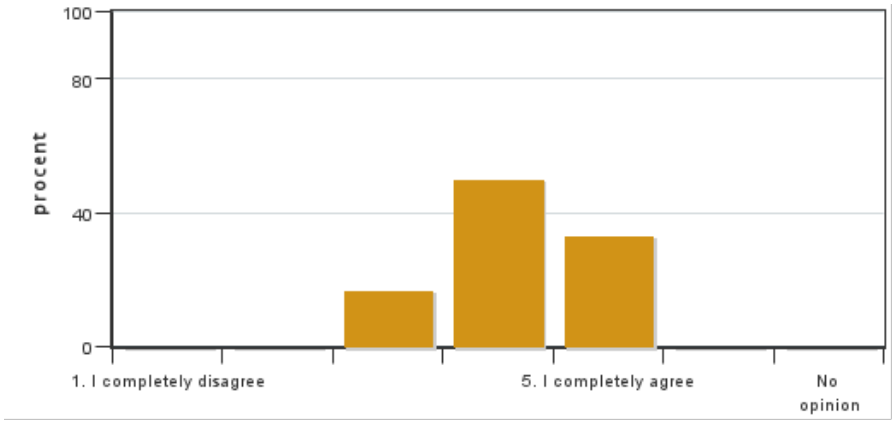


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,3
Median: 5

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

No opinion: 3

11. The course covered international perspectives.

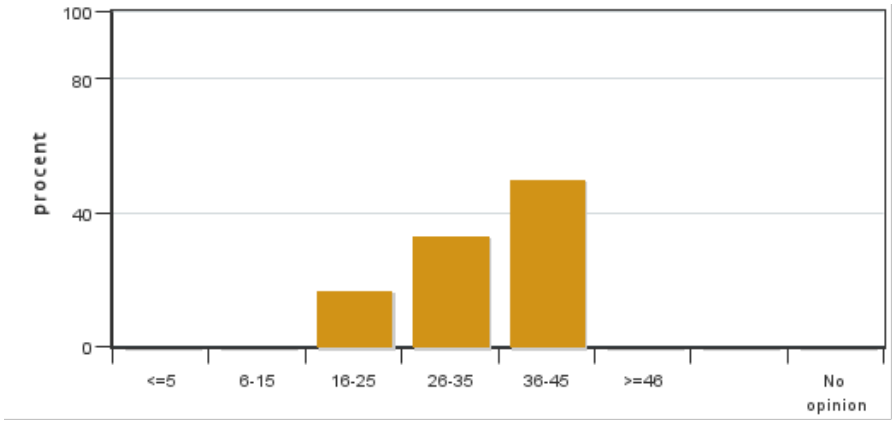


Answers: 6
Medel: 4,2
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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

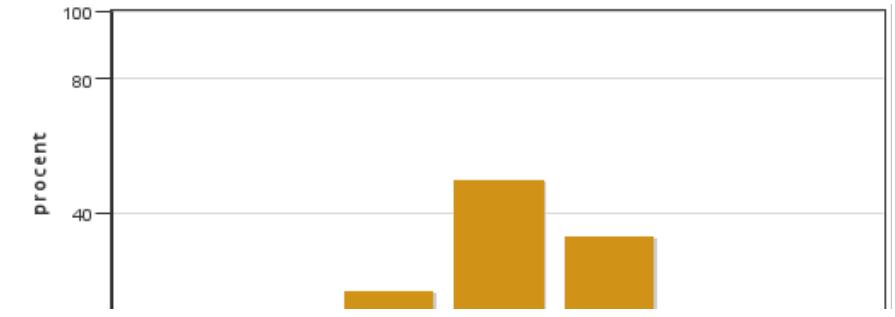


Answers: 6
Medel: 33,3
Median: 26-35

≤5: 0
6-15: 0
16-25: 1
26-35: 2
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: 6
Medel: 4,2
Median: 4

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

No opinion: 0

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

The course was given for the second time as a 15 credits course. Twelve students have participated, but unfortunately, only six have answered the course evaluation (50 % compared to 100 % in 2020). The overall impression was 4.2 out of 5.0. Due to unfortunate crashes in the frame programme for the crop & soil students, these students had to make special arrangements to have the possibility to follow this course. The participating students, including two students from the animal programme, were very motivated to take this course, and apparently they were happy with the outcome.

The mixture of different course components were appreciated, but some modification can be done:

- the Literature will be checked, and the references on Canvas will be named more easy to understand according to the literature list,
- most students liked the Multiple Choice Tests as a good help to start reading the course literature,
- the different background of the students´ animal and crop & soil background, respectively, is an advantage in the Group Assignments,
- the Group Discussions was a good tool for learning, activating self-studies by the students stimulated by the teachers. The preparing questions shall be checked and maybe be reduced in number. Unfortunately, it is a challenge to get everybody involved in a group discussion on Zoom,
- the Field Excursion about semi-natural grassland was interesting, but could be enriched with some information about policy framework, legal aspects and subsidies in the EU as well as some information about animal performance on semi-natural grasslands,
- this year, the Farm Excursion to an organic farm with dairy cows was not possible to implement due to the SLU regulations about COVID-19. As an alternative, an interview with the farmer was recorded and the farmer was available for a discussion on Zoom. This was a good alternative, even if a real physical visit would have been better,
- the scientific writing was an appreciated part of the course according to most of the students and the careful feedback from the supervisors were good. The schedule for the scientific writing could although be adjusted – the time for choosing a theme could be reduced – and the oral report could then be done the week before the written exam,
- it is recommended to have a lesson about basic animal knowledge (Spörndly) in the beginning of the course. The lecture about feed evaluation could be given a little bit later and a lesson about how to interpret feed analyses and how these analyses are connected to management of the ley is desired as well,
- some graphs were made in Swedish and not translated into English, this should be better next time.

About the changes been made due to COVID-19 some lessons are learned:

- Zoom and break-out rooms work well, most students like live lessons better than recorded as it is easier to ask questions live,
- it is hard to get everybody engaged if there is a large group in a Zoom meeting,
- it is very important to have alcogel and loud speakers available and to keep sufficient distance when meeting on excursions etc.,
- the workload for teachers has increased a lot as the number of groups has had to be increased according to SLU's rules,
- it is hardly questioned if Zoom education will be social sustainable in the long run.

The overall impression from the course leader´s perspective is that this course fill an important gap between the animal and crop disciplines, also existing in the advisory service today. It is urgent to continue to give the course, and more strengths has to be done to make it easier to take the course for crop & soil students. Even more efforts will be done to market this course for students from other countries.

Student representatives comments

The course was intense and informative, with some repetitions in regard to previous agriculture courses. The workload of the course was regarded as normal to high by the students. The lectures, multiple choice test and group assignments worked well on distance studying. The scientific paper was good, and the students received sufficient feedback on their writing. The students appreciated the teachers working on the course. The farmer visit would of course have been nicer to have in real life, on the farm.

Improvements to be made are better organization and naming of literature, for some exercises the amount of literature was considered to be too much. The canvas site would therefore need some improvements. Also, since the course is given in English the language and text of lectures and available information should be in English more than it was. The exam was given a grade mostly between 3-5/5. Improvements on the exam could be to have fewer specific questions on regulations in Sweden and more discussion questions. The exam could preferably be placed earlier in the course so that more time and effort could be put into the discussions and exercises. The students experienced that there were quite a lot of different assignments in the course, sometimes making it hard to prioritize and perform well on each part. Lastly, discussions for a big group online are hard to make successful.

Overall, the course has increased the student's knowledge about grassland management and quality of different grassland species, which was appreciated. The course is recommended by the students for someone looking for improving basic knowledge about grass production and animal science.