

Report - AL2503 - 2022-02-10

Respondents: 1
Answer Count: 1
Answer Frequency: 100.00%

Please note that there is only one respondent to this form: the person that performs the course analysis.

Course analysis carried out by (name, e-mail):

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DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE EVALUATION PROCESS

Describe the course evaluation process. Describe how all students have been given the possibility to give their opinions on the course. Describe how aspects regarding gender, and disabled students are investigated.

The students were encouraged to raise opinions on the course during the seminars and lectures and to contact the course management. In addition, we arranged a weekly drop-in option to ask questions and discuss the course with one of the teachers. Not many students made use of this opportunity. We also had a mid-course evaluation, both orally and through a written form online (21 out of 27 students answered that one). At the end of the course, we made a course evaluation through KTH's online course evaluation system (only 5 out of 27 students answered that one) which is a questionnaire examining the students learning experience in the course and giving them the opportunity to make comments and suggestions for improvement. It is fully anonymous and gender and disability perspectives are brought up here.

DESCRIPTION OF MEETINGS WITH STUDENTS

Describe which meetings that has been arranged with students during the course and after its completion. (The outcomes of these meetings should be reported under 7, below.)

The mid-course evaluation took place at the end of a seminar and was led by the course assistant in order to open up for as many comments as possible regarding the course. 21 (out of 27) students answered the online form. Students pointed out that the seminars were a good way to learn, that they were interesting and well-organized. Examples of statements:

"I love the seminars. The small panels during the conference days are very conducive to good discussion."

"The seminars are well organized, in particular the full day conference"

"I think the seminars works very well. Especially the preparation task with making a mind map, it's motivating rather than stressful, which means I learn more."

However, some students experienced the seminar days as too long.

COURSE DESIGN

Briefly describe the course design (learning activities, examinations) and any changes that have been implemented since the last course offering.

SEM1 is worth 1 credit (out of the course 7.5 credits). In order to pass the examination SEM1, students need to have prepared for and attended all four seminars (two full days of seminars and two half days) according to instructions. However, if they miss ONE of the compulsory seminars, they can catch up by attending an extra seminar. SEM1 is graded with pass/fail (P/F).

TEN1 is worth 3.5 credits. The highest possible grade is A, and F means that the student did not pass the assignment. TEN1 is designed as a home exam which means that students can do it from wherever they want as long as they have internet access.

PRO1 gives the students the possibility to look deeper into a specific case from the course perspectives; environmental justice and social-ecological systems. The idea of the project is to analyse a case from these perspectives and also propose suggestions for how planning and environmental technology can be developed in order to identify, manage and/or prevent injustices with regards to the use of ecological resources. The set-up is designed much by the students, while the teachers act as facilitators and discussants. The work is discussed during project work seminars and supervisions. The project work should result in a popular scientific article. PRO1 also includes an individual reflective text where each student is to reflect on their learning and contribution to the project work. The project work together with the reflective text are worth 3 credits, and are graded on the scale A-Fx.

THE STUDENTS' WORKLOAD

Does the students' workload correspond to the expected level (40 hours/1.5 credits)? If these is a significant deviation from the expected, what can be the reason?

The few students that answered spent 21-13 hours/week (1 student), 18-20 hours/week (2 students) and 9-11 hours/week (2 students). From this small sample, it looks like the course may require a little too little time. But there are too few students who answered the question to be able to say something for sure.

THE STUDENTS' RESULTS

How well have the students succeeded on the course? If there are significant differences compared to previous course offerings, what can be the reason?

3 students received an A
10 students received a B
6 students received a C
6 students received a D
2 students have still not passed the course

The results last year were slightly better (4 A, 14 B, 3 C), but we think this is just a natural variation.

STUDENTS' ANSWERS TO OPEN QUESTIONS

What does students say in response to the open questions?

They felt secure in the classroom, e.g.: "I felt very comfortable in this class and was inspired by the instructors to have a voice and participate frequently. It is a very safe space when you are surrounded by people that are already interested in justice" and "This class was a very welcoming and interesting class that I would highly recommend if studying abroad here due to how organized and clear it was."

The best aspects pointed out were:

"I thought that the best aspect of the course was the many group discussions that we had. Being able to discuss ideas and perspectives with the teachers and other students really helps bring out your own understanding of a topic, and allows you to see other perspectives."

"The best aspect was the mindmaps associated to each seminar. It made me more motivated to read the course literature and I learned more from it. It's a study technique I wish I had come across earlier in my education. The popular science article writing was another good aspect of the course. It was really nice to step away from the more formal scientific writing for a moment and to experience writing with a more personal touch."

"This was one of the most organized classes I've ever taken. It really seemed like the instructors were very prepared and had detailed class instructions and schedules ahead of time. I really enjoyed the beginning of the course because we had the most interesting lectures, assignments, and seminars. It was structured in a way where everyone had to do their own work to succeed. Many of the classes at KTH are group work and work ends up being unevenly distributed so I enjoyed the individual responsibility that everyone had for the seminars."

Suggestions of improvements:

"I thought that the many mandatory seminars in the first few weeks made it a bit difficult to plan and keep up. I think maybe spreading them out a bit more, to at least 1 per week would help as many other things are happening in the beginning of the semester."

"We need more time and a higher page limit for the final article."

"To remove the quiz-making part from the conference day. It was more exhausting rather than an opportunity for learning."

"I know it is a difficult time to teach on Zoom but sometimes the energy from the lecturers was so low it was very hard to feel interested in the subject matter. Overall the topic was interesting enough to hold on but I think teaching online could involve possibly more forced interaction and feedback from the students to make it more lively." (A comment to that is that all seminars were on campus, so it was just the lectures that were online)

Advice to future participants?

"Read the seminar texts carefully and thoroughly since they show up later on and can be used more or less during the whole course."

"Engage with the literature and participate in the seminars."

"To come well prepared for the conference day -you will get more out of it then!"

"This is a great course if you can stay on top of the readings. If not you will get lost and it will be difficult to stay active in the class"

In the project work we did not schedule supervision with individual groups, but instead scheduled a time slot that the groups could drop into when they felt the need for supervision. We included a specific question about this in the course evaluation asking if this voluntary supervision helped or not. The comments were:

"I liked the drop in supervision. I think it made us feel that support is always available, but without the "forcing" aspect which spurs at least mine creativity better."

"We did not use the voluntary supervision."

"I didn't use it because I was in a different time zone by that point and didn't want to wake up at 1:00 in the morning."

"Personally, I think anything voluntary will likely not be utilized because everyone has busy schedules and it is hard to get a group consensus to attend a seminar when it is not required."

SUMMARY OF STUDENTS' OPINIONS

Summarize the outcome of the questionnaire, as well as opinions emerging at meetings with students.

Overall, the students were very satisfied with the course both in terms of content, and layout and feel welcome and safe in the classroom. The voluntary supervision seem to have been good for some and not beneficial to some, and few groups came to supervision.

OVERALL IMPRESSION

Summarize the teachers' overall impressions of the course offering in relation to students' results and their evaluation of the course, as well as in relation to the changes implemented since last course offering.

The students seemed to appreciate the course and appreciated that many elements were on campus after the pandemic's online teaching. As the pandemic was not completely over, however, all elements were also offered online.

ANALYSIS

Is it possible to identify stronger and weaker areas in the learning environment based on the information you have gathered during the evaluation and analysis process? What can the reason for these be? Are there significant difference in experience between:

- students identifying as female and male?
- international and national students?
- students with or without disabilities?

No (the sample is too small to say anything about that).

PRIORITIZED COURSE DEVELOPMENT

What aspects of the course should be developed primarily? How can these aspects be developed in short and long term?

Continue to work on making the seminars stimulating learning elements. Most (perhaps all) students appreciated the seminars a lot, but some felt that the full-day seminars were too long. It is something to think about for the next course round.

For next year the possibility of voluntary supervision might be a question that can be brought up and discussed together with the students at the beginning of the project work.