

# Evaluation report:

## GEO-SD308: Policy Design and Implementation, spring 2021

### **1. Information about the course**

Course: <https://www.uib.no/en/course/GEO-SD308>

Semester: Spring 2021

Course coordinator: Pål Davidsen

Teacher: David Wheat

Forms of assessment: Assessment consists of evaluating a modeling project. The modeling project consists of a simulation model (70% of the final grade), a report (15% of the final grade) and a video-recorded oral presentation (15% of the final grade)

Teaching methods: distance learning course delivered online using digital technologies and facilitated by an on-site teaching assistant. It consists of live-streamed, recorded and stored lectures with active participation by students, computer modeling assignments, in-class 'thought experiments', and case studies requiring a model-based policy analysis, an interactive learning environment, and a presentation.

### **2. Statistics**

Signed up for exam:30

Grade distribution

A=20

B=10

### 3. Self-evaluation

Assessment of the teaching program in relation to the objectives and results

- A. What did you focus on in the teaching plan? Give a short description of the teaching plan in the course, with emphasis on what was new this time.

The basic teaching plan was to divide the lectures between policy modeling principles (2 lectures) and case study applications (7 lectures), and one lecture period reserved questions arising during the final week of preparing the course project for submission. We (Alililu and I) used this specific plan for the first time in 2020, and this year we used a few new case studies that we thought would better illustrate the principles. Also, this year I provided more suggestions for structuring the labs (conducted by Will) than in the past, so that the students would be practicing what had been discussed in the previous week's lectures and/or preparing themselves for the upcoming lectures.

- B. What is your opinion of how well the teaching plan worked? Give a brief description of any evaluations that have been made and give an assessment of the experiences with this year's teaching plan.

More important than my opinion are the opinions of the students. Yet it is always problematic to 'evaluate evaluations by others.' The aggregate course evaluation results are encouraging—the overwhelming majority of students give the course high marks. Managing by exception, however, requires that an instructor pay close attention to the complaints, especially if they contain expressions of "I wish the course had ..." that resonate with the instructor's own teaching goals. And I think the complaints—which seem to come from a small number of articulate students who

used each opportunity in the survey to repeat in slightly different ways what improvements they would like to see—are valid: better, more detailed examples of policy implementation. Each year, our selection of case studies will be reviewed with that learning goal in mind, and we hope to improve in that area. I should underscore, however, that a key take-away from our implementation modeling course is that a policy model will always contain some wishful thinking links at the end of the day. It's not practical to try to model everything—there comes a time to stop modeling and resume talking about the implementation challenges that remain. That is understandably frustrating for technically-proficient students who have little patience for the politics of policy implementation (i.e., the conflict and the resolution methods that result in outcomes that no policy-maker would have preferred).

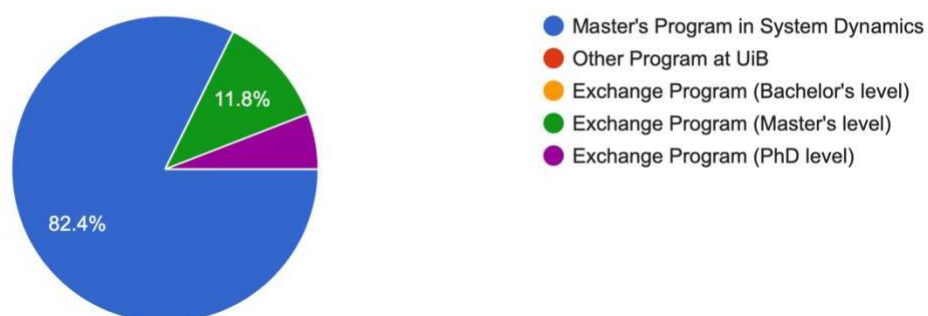
- C. What adjustments will you recommend for the next time the course is offered? Give a brief assessment of which parts of the teaching plan should be continued and what, if any, should be changed.

As stated above, selection and discussion of next year's case studies will be based on a desire to improve the implementation 'lessons learned'. Both the guest lecturer and I can make improvements along those lines, I'm sure. Yet, I still have confidence in the course structure: introductory lectures on policy design principles and historical examples of failed-implementation followed by several cases studies, and that basic teaching plan is not likely to change.

## 4. GEO SD 308 Course Evaluation Results (Spring 2021)

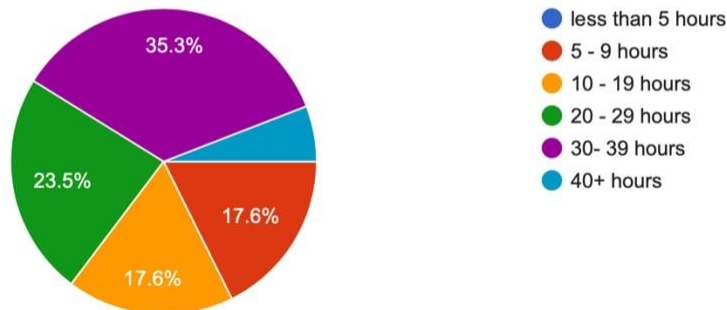
I study GEO-SD 308 as part of:

17 responses



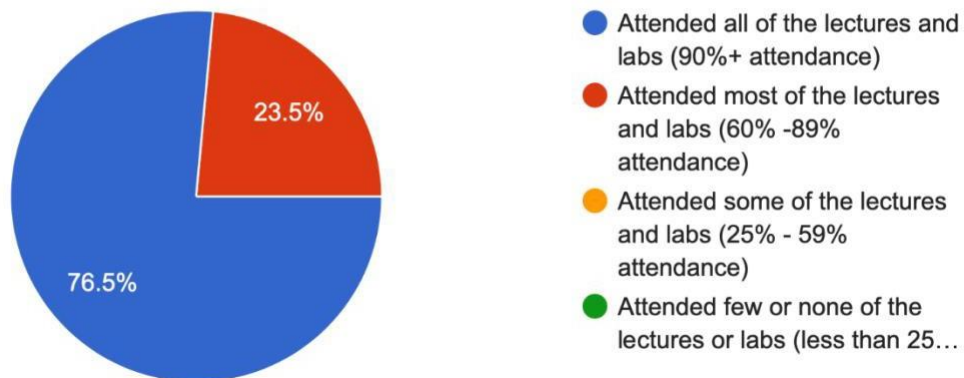
How many hours per week on average did you spend on this course? (include all time spent studying, doing homework, attending lectures and labs, etc.)

17 responses



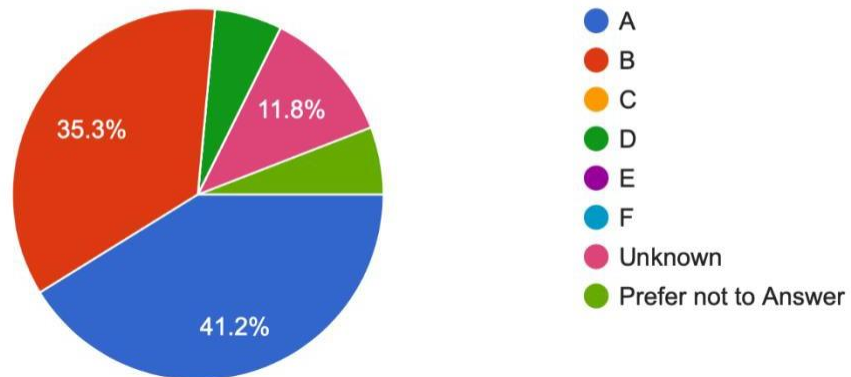
To what extent did you participate in the lectures/labs?

17 responses

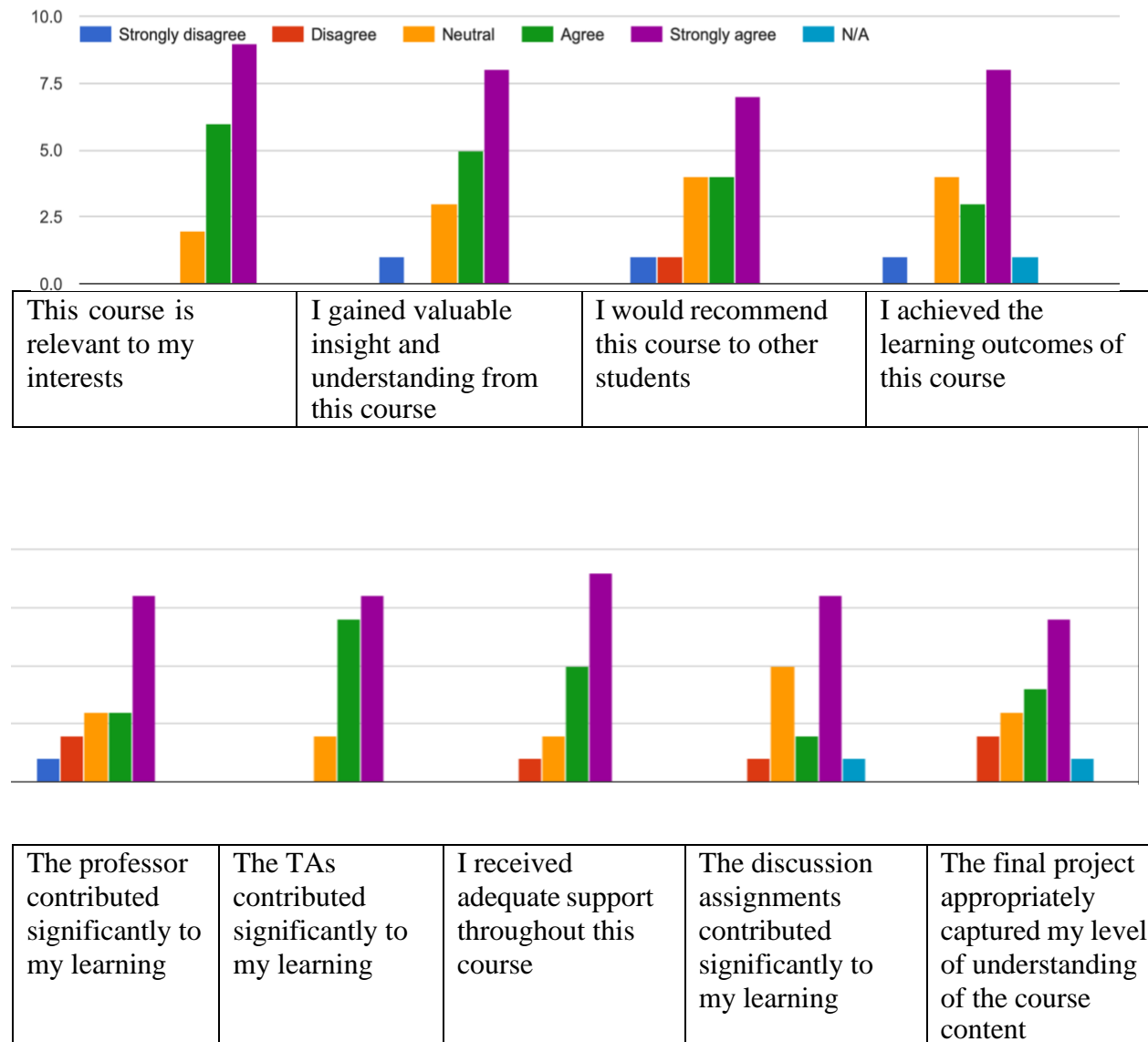


What grade do you expect to get in this course:

17 responses



Please mark how you feel about each of the statements listed below:

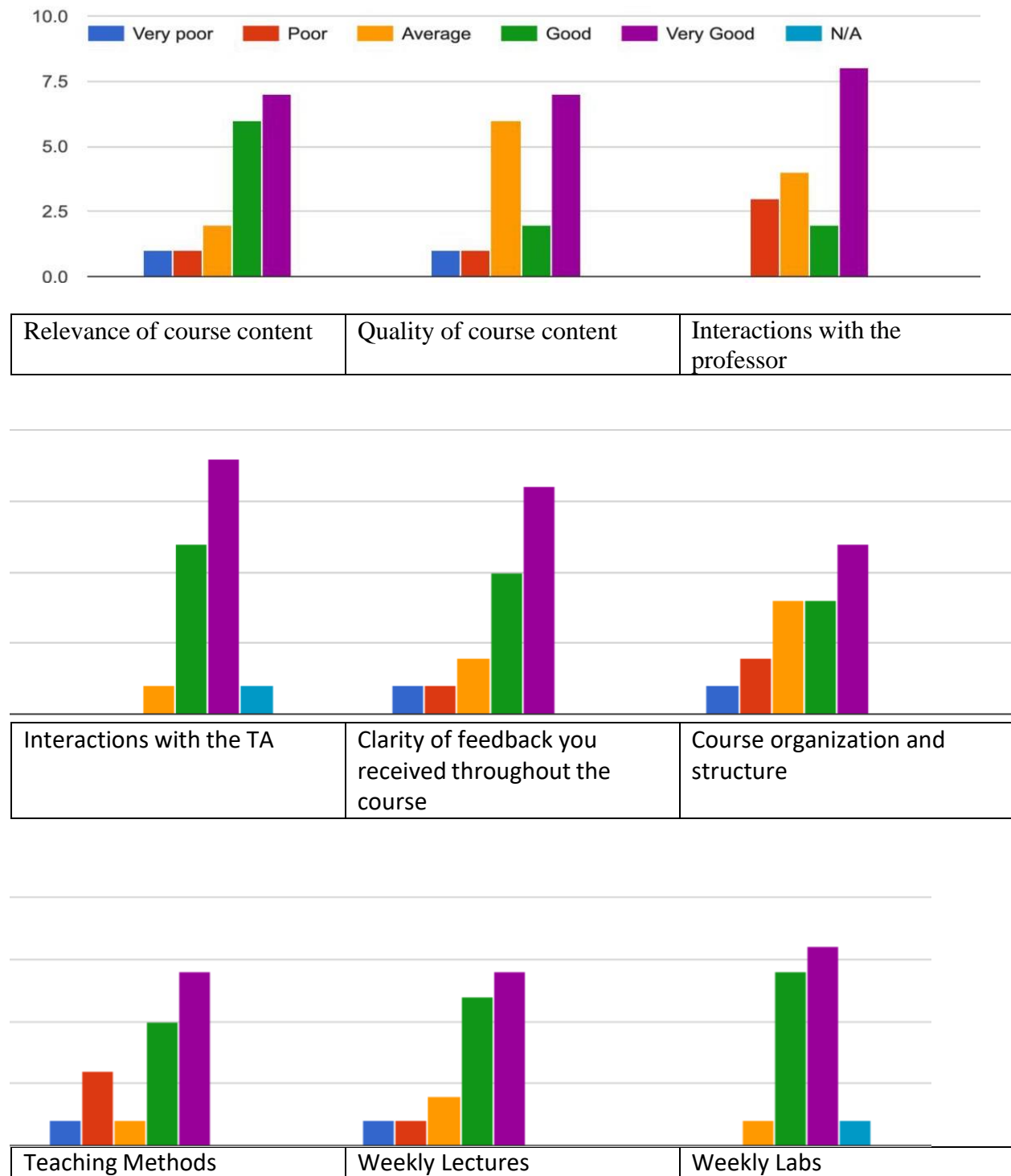








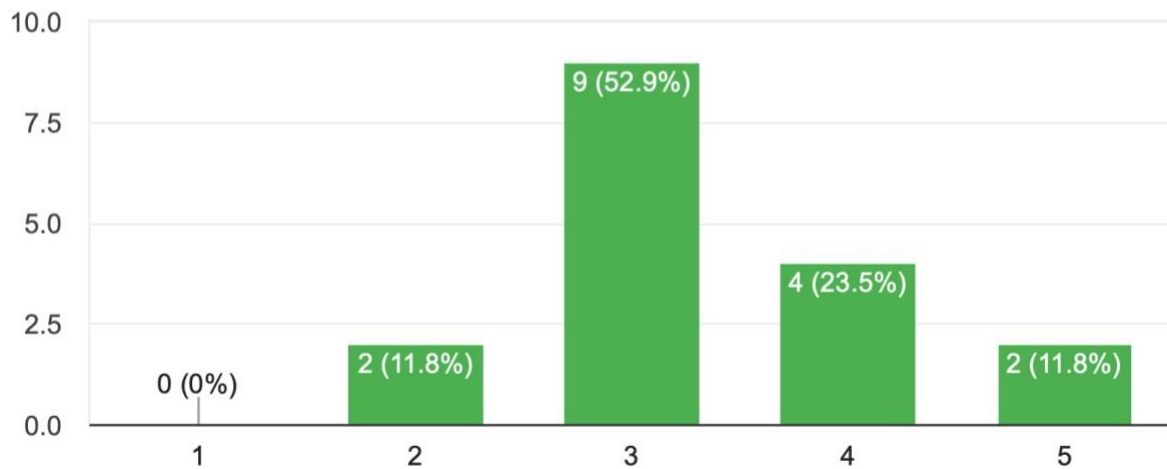
How do you assess different parts of the course:





To what extent did the 'distance learning' style of this course affect your experience with the course and...y to achieve the learning outcomes?

17 responses



## 5. Follow-up

Comments on previous evaluations (if any)

I'm sure I made comments on previous-year evaluations and I have nothing to add to those earlier comments.

How do plan to follow-up on the basis of the course report

I responded to question 3 above after reading the entire student evaluation. Thus, I have already provided an answer regarding 'follow-up' in #3(b) and (c) above



## GEO SD 321 Course Evaluation Results (Spring 2021)

Evaluation report:

# **GEO-SD321: Model-based Socioeconomic Planning**

## **1. Information about the course**

Course: <https://www.uib.no/en/course/GEO-SD321>

Semester: Spring

Course coordinator: Pål Davidsen

Teacher: Matteo Pedercini

Forms of assessment: Project graded (100%)

Teaching methods: Live-streamed, recorded and stored lectures, seminars, and data labs with active participation by students; individual and group assignments as well as project modelling; individual and group support in-person or remotely from teaching assistants and professors.

## **2. Statistics**

Signed up for exam: 54

Absence: 23

Grade distribution:

B: 27

C: 2

D: 2

### 3. Self-evaluation

Assessment of the teaching program in relation to the objectives and results

- A. What did you focus on in the teaching plan? Give a short description of the teaching plan in the course, with emphasis on what was new this time.

The teaching plan has been gradually improved over the last 18 years. This year the major changes were introduced to cope with the new format (distance learning). In particular, more independent work was assigned, to allow students to work at their own pace. Concerning contents, an effort was made to concentrate on more advanced modeling issues, and have the students address basic issues more independently.

- B. What is your opinion of how well the teaching plan worked? Give a brief description of any evaluations that have been made, and give an assessment of the experiences with this year's teaching plan.

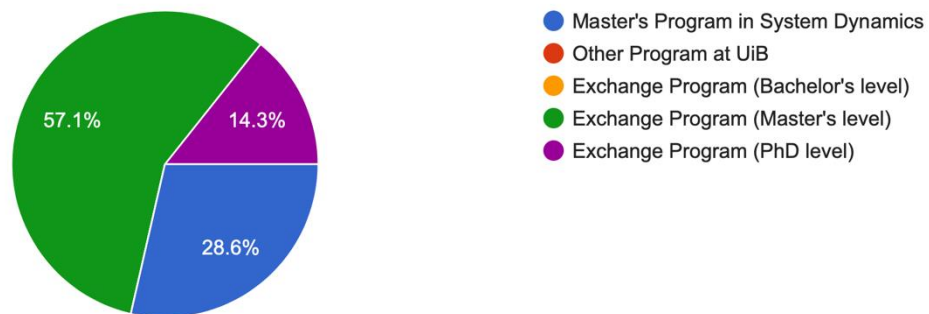
I am overall satisfied of how the changes in the teaching plan worked. Results from the daily exercises indicated a gradual improvement in modeling skills. It was a positive experience, and I will use a similar approach also for next year, whether the course is taught in person or online.

- C. What adjustments will you recommend for the next time the course is offered? Give a brief assessment of which parts of the teaching plan should be continued and what, if any, should be changed.

Introducing a first exam in the middle of the course will help checking more precisely on students' skills before proceeding with the group work. That will also motivate students to keep their concentration throughout the course.

## 4: Results

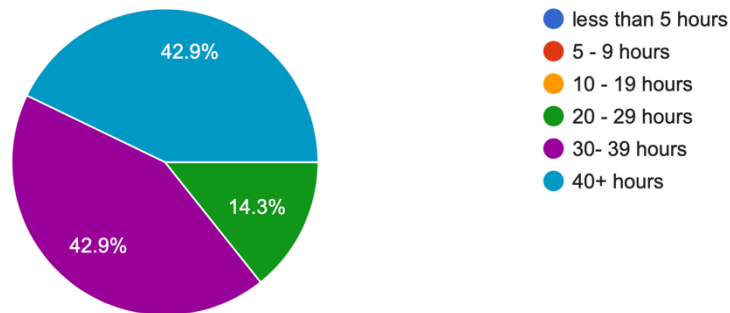
I study GEO-SD 321 as part of:  
7 responses





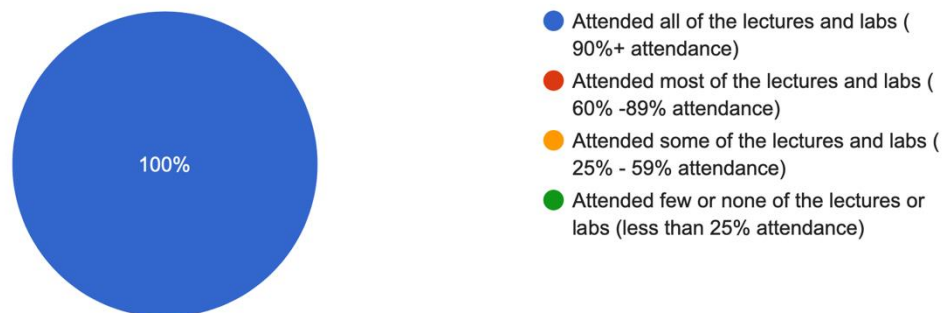
How many hours per week on average did you spend on this course? (include all time spent studying, doing homework, attending lectures and labs, etc.)

7 responses



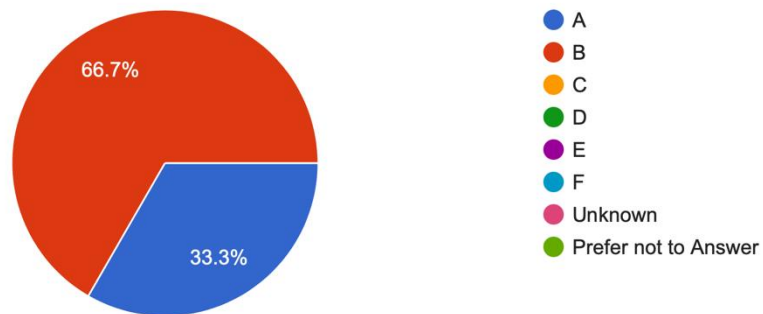
To what extent did you participate in the lectures/labs?

7 responses

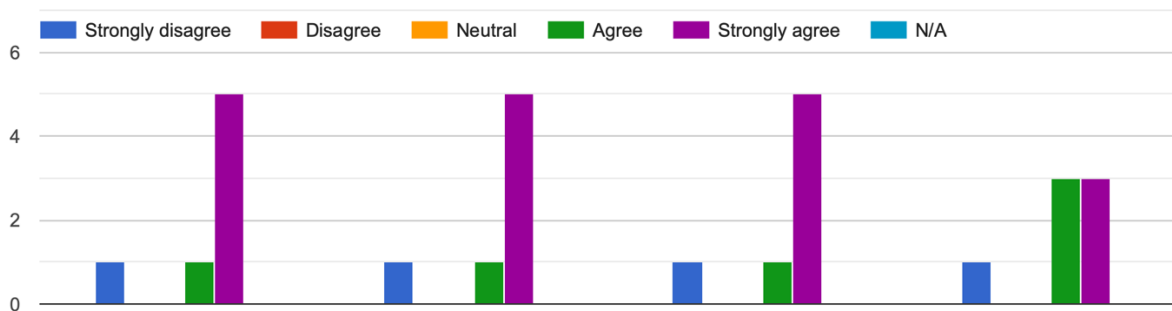


What grade do you expect to get in this course:

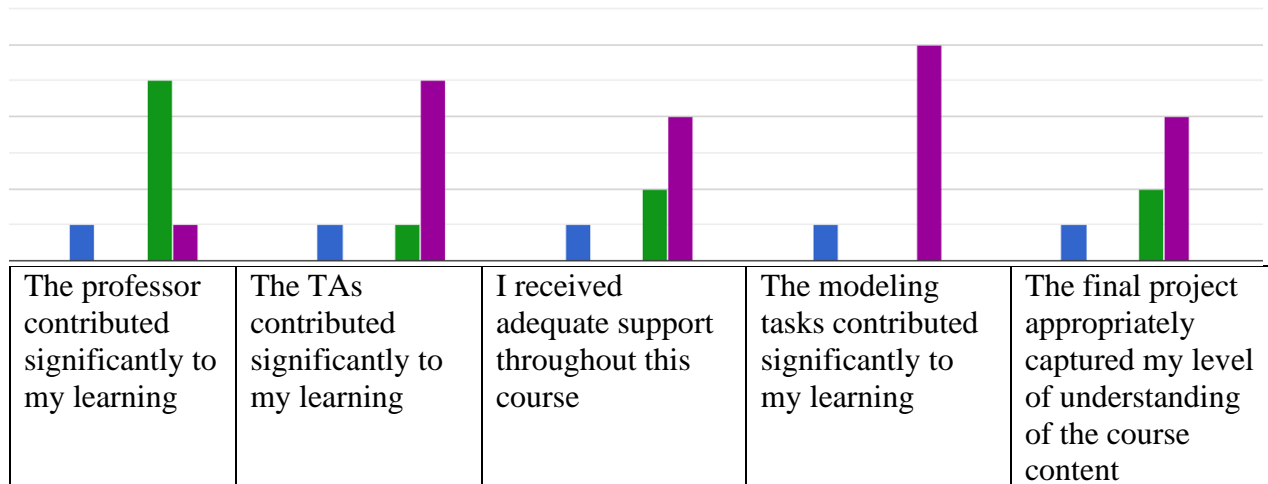
6 responses



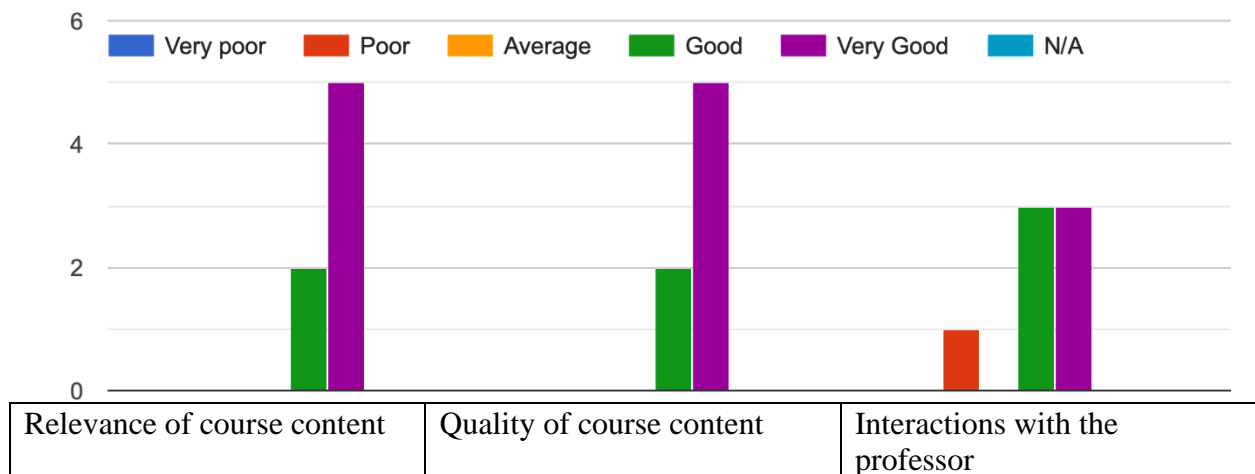
Please mark how you feel about each of the statements listed below:

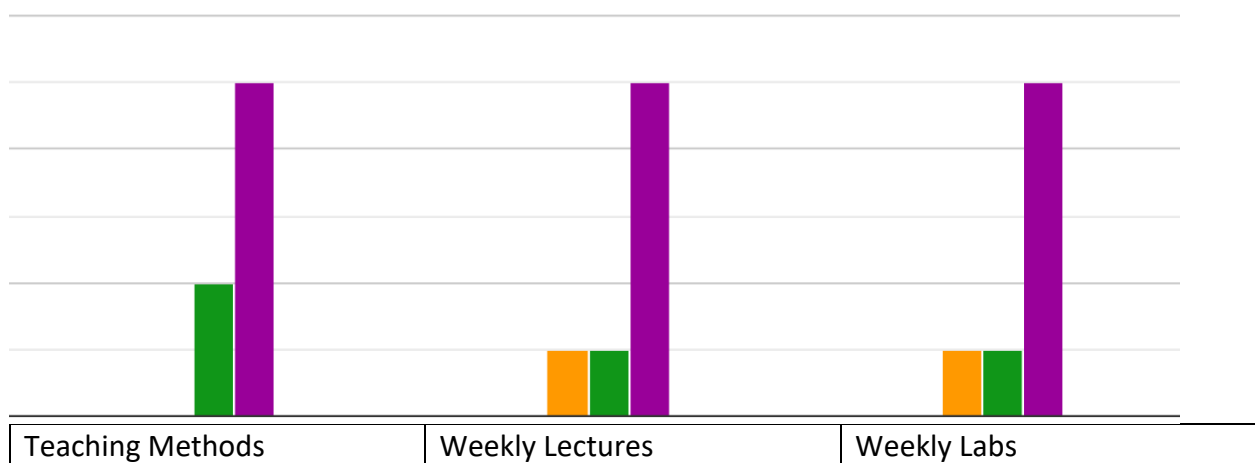
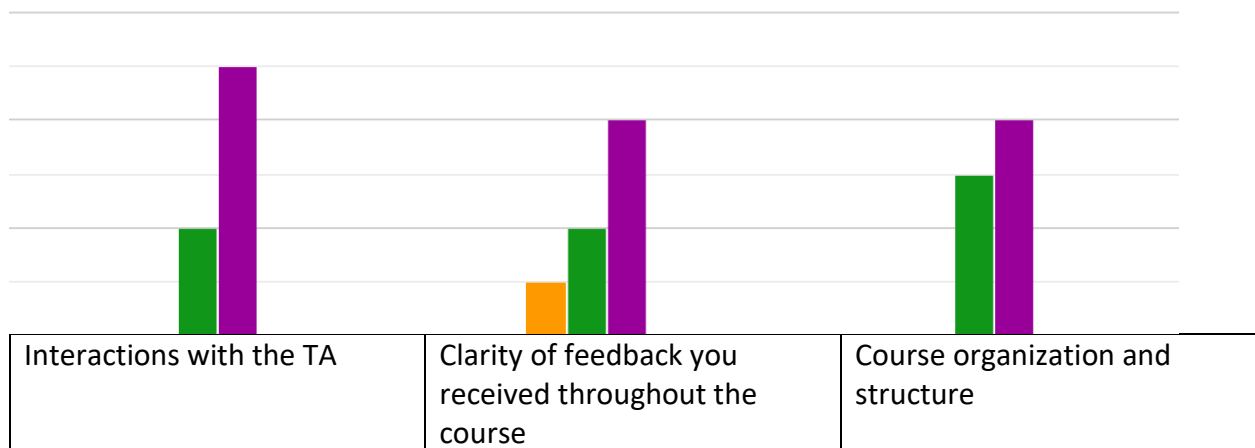


This course is relevant to my interests	I gained valuable insight and understanding from this course	I would recommend this course to other students	I achieved the learning outcomes of this course
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How do you assess different parts of the course:

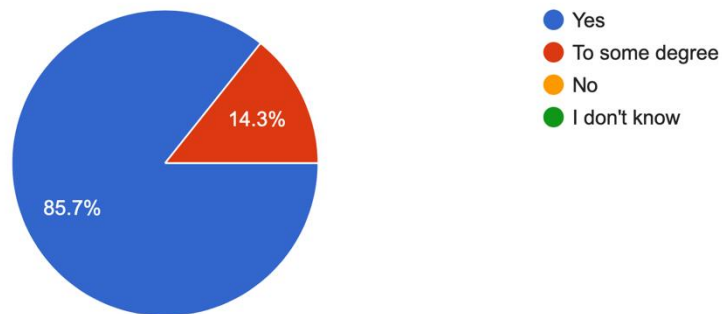




socioeconomic planning
Don't remember, really
How to model
To model high-level projects

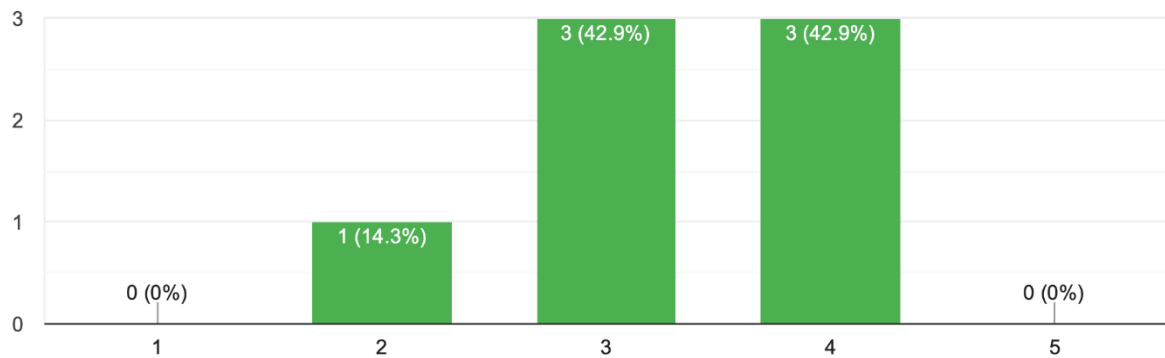
Have you met the learning objectives?

7 responses



To what extent did the online/distance learning style of this course affect your experience with the course and your ability to achieve the learning outcomes?

7 responses



## 5. Follow-up

Comments on previous evaluations (if any)

The results from this evaluation are in line with those from previous instances of this course. The sample of respondents is a bit small, but confirms an overall positive assessment of the course. The work of the TA is tremendously important for the success of this type of course, even more so when taught online.

How do plan to follow-up on the basis of the course report

We will review and update the contents and modeling as every year, based on new research emerging, with an eye of reducing the load in certain areas.

# Evaluation report:

## GEO-SD325: Client-based modeling project

### 1. Information about the course

Course: <https://www.uib.no/en/course/GEO-SD325>

Semester: Fall 2020

Course coordinator: Birgit Kopainsky

Teacher: Birgit Kopainsky

Forms of assessment: Assessment consists of evaluating a modeling project. The modeling project consists of

- A portfolio assessment containing a simulation model and an executive summary describing the implications from the modeling process (50%)
- an oral presentation and response to examiners' questions (50%)

Teaching methods: live-streamed, recorded and stored lectures, seminars, and data labs with active participation by students; individual and group assignments as well as project modelling; individual and group support in-person or remotely from teaching assistants and professors.

Pre-scheduled interactions with the client organizations.

Major project requiring a simulation model, written report and presentation.

## 2. Statistics

Signed up for exam:20

Absence: 0

Fail: 0

Average grade: B

Grade distribution

A=6

B=10

D=4

## 3. Self-evaluation

Assessment of the teaching program in relation to the objectives and results

- A. What did you focus on in the teaching plan? Give a short description of the teaching plan in the course, with emphasis on what was new this time.

In 2020, I organized GEO-SD325 so that it focused much more on the principle of iteration than previous versions of the course. Rather than gradually working through the modeling project, I tried to follow the logic of rapid prototyping and designed the assignment such that students had to submit two draft versions of the final model during the course.

Another important change with respect to previous years was that I introduced what I called “à la carte teaching” where I created a Google Doc in which students could enter those topics that they were most interested in but that had not yet been taught in the course of their studies. Topics ended up being innovation and system dynamics, design thinking and system dynamics, experimental methods and agent-based modeling.

- B. What is your assessment of how well the teaching plan worked? Give a brief description of any evaluations that have been made, and give an assessment of the experiences with this year's teaching plan.



Overall, the new elements seem to have worked well. I will address some avenues for improvement under point C. Covid-19 and the restrictions it imposed on interactions – both among students and with the case owner obviously played an important role this year. This was particularly unfortunate as GEO-SD325 is designed around such interactions.

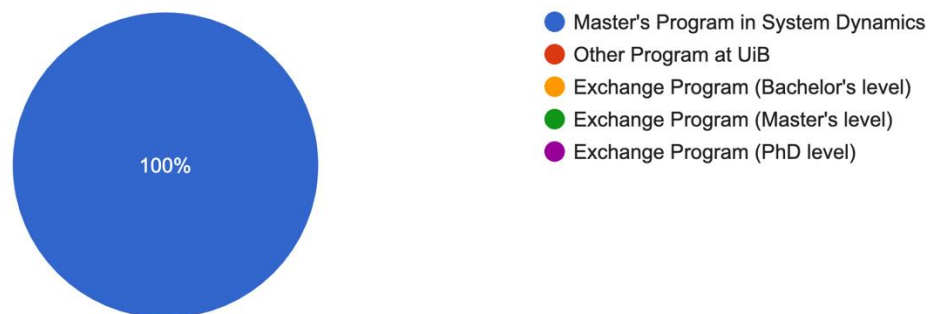
- C. What adjustments will you recommend for the next time the course is offered? Give a brief assessment of which parts of the teaching plan should be continued and what, if any, should be changed.

I will definitely continue with the philosophy of rapid iterations and with the à la carte teaching. Points that I plan on changing are:

- Provide a more explicit overview on how the course activities contribute towards the course objectives
- Organize more client interactions

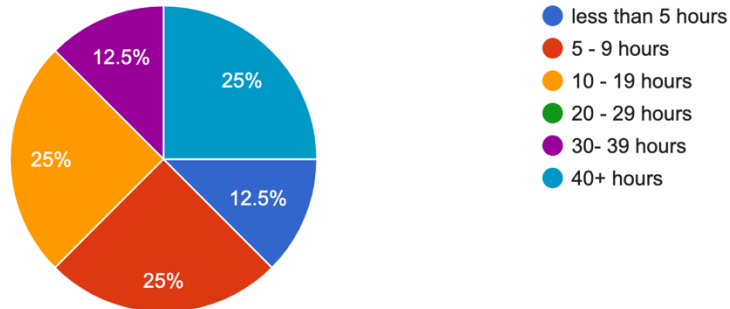
## 4. Results

I study GEO-SD 325 as part of:  
9 responses



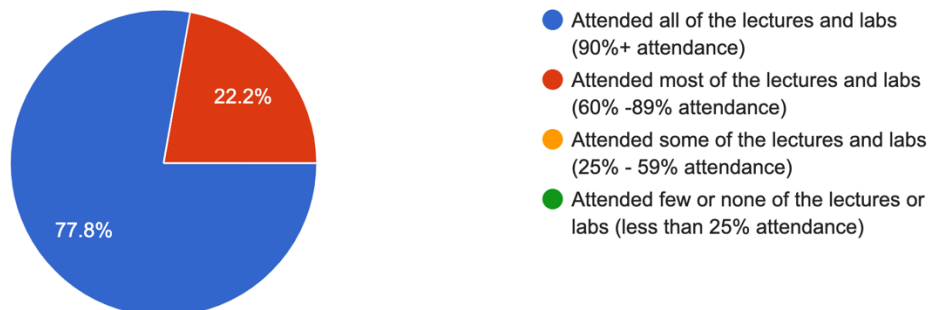
How many hours per week on average did you spend on this course? (include all time spent studying, doing homework, attending lectures and labs, etc.)

8 responses



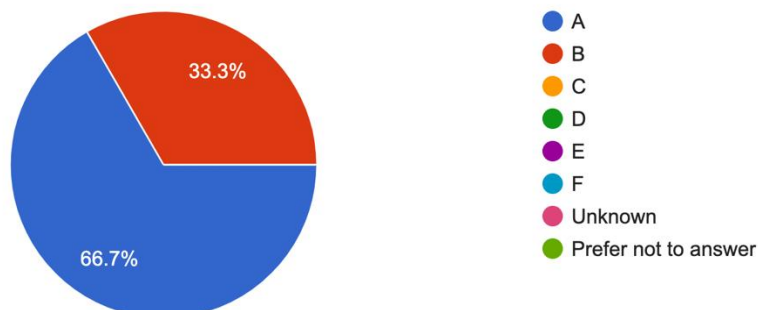
To what extent did you participate in the lectures/labs?

9 responses

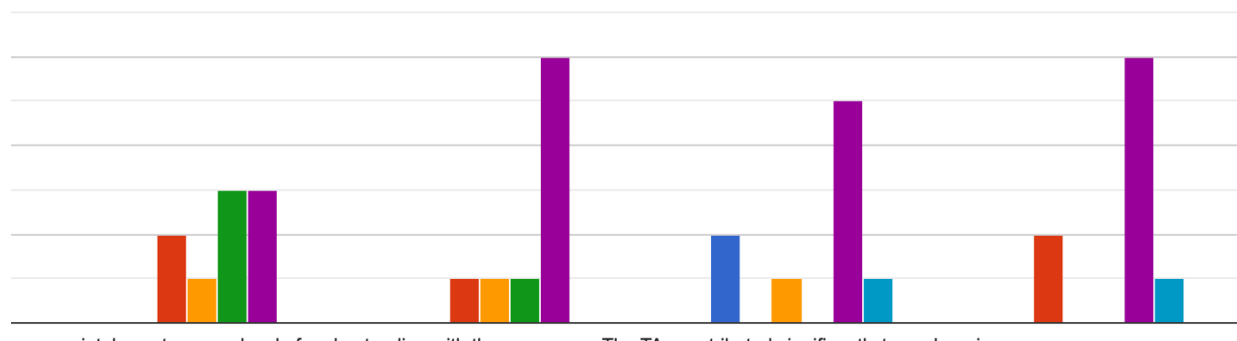
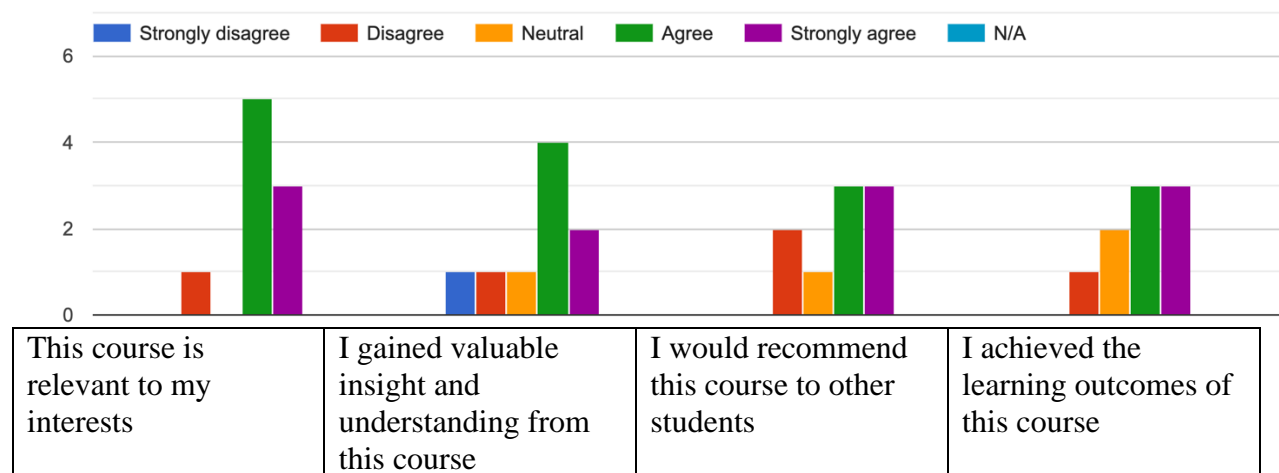


What grade do you expect to get in this course:

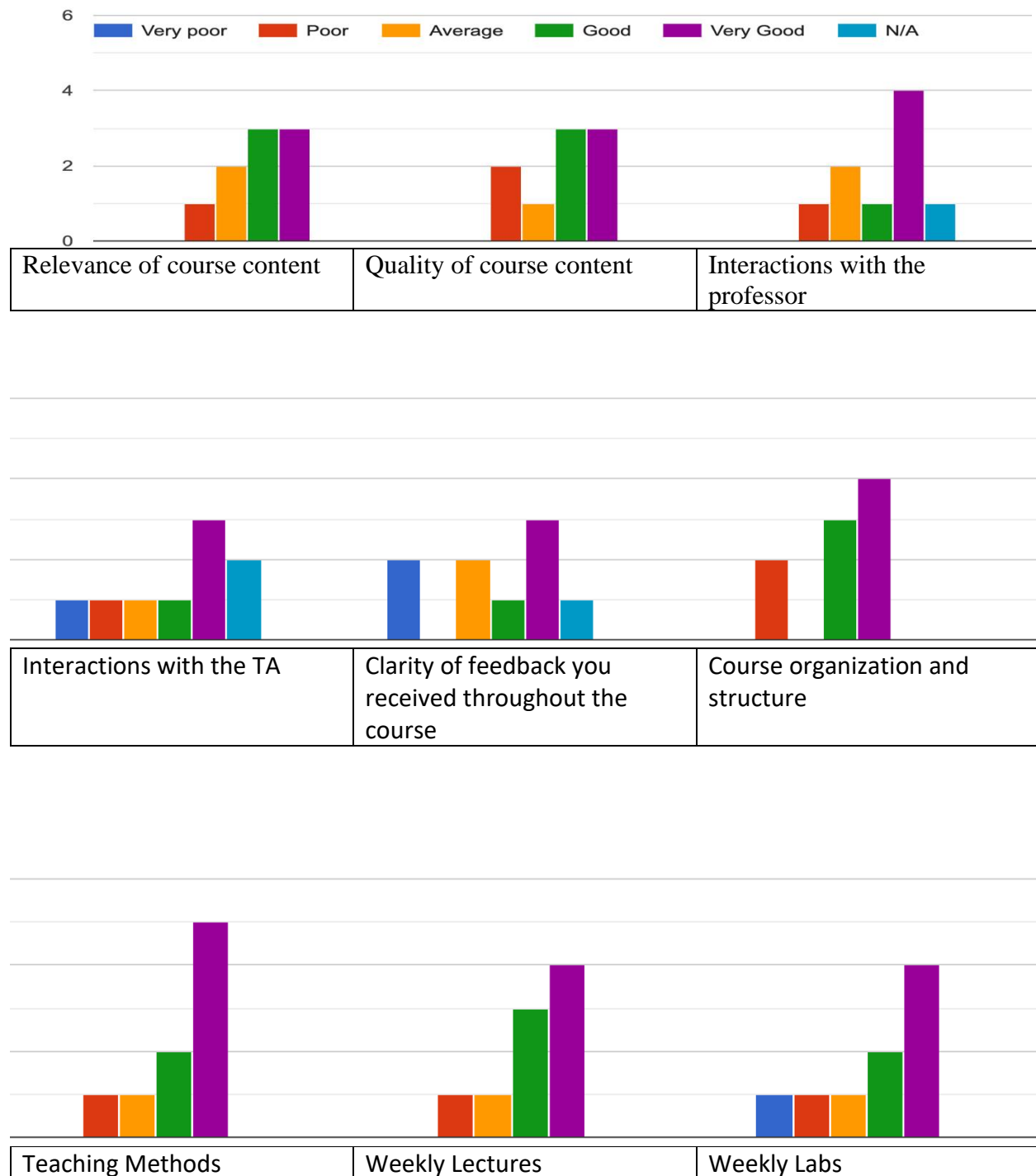
9 responses



Please mark how you feel about each of the statements listed below:

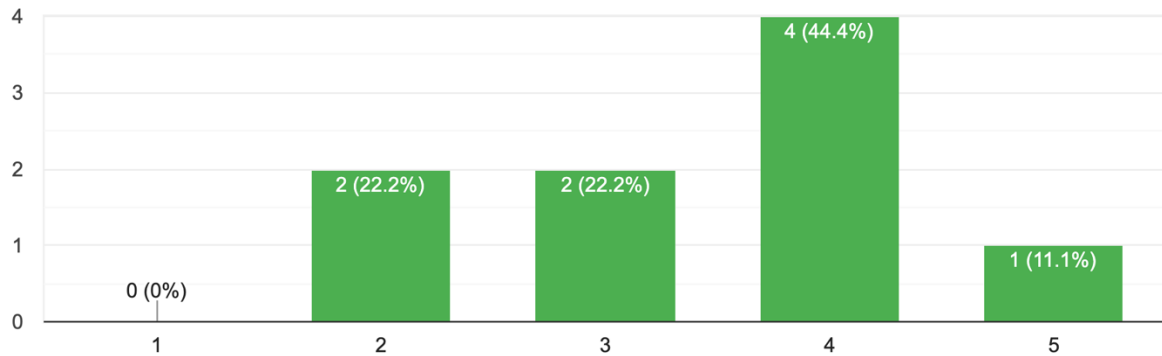


How do you assess different parts of the course:



To what extent did the 'distance learning' style of this course affect your experience with the course and your ability to achieve the learning outcomes?

9 responses



## 5. Follow-up

Comments on previous evaluations (if any)

How do plan to follow-up on the basis of the course report

Cf. point C under 3. Self-evaluation