

Course evaluation ECON4260 Fall 2022

Course responsible: Kjell Arne Brekke, Geir Asheim, Karine Nyborg.

This course was first given in 2006, and for about 10 years it has been given each fall. The course is organized in three parts with four lectures on behavioural decision theory given by Brekke, four lectures on self-control and time preferences given by Geir Asheim and five lectures on social preferences given by Karine Nyborg. The organization of the course has been more or less the same since it was first given, with some minor changes in the curriculum. There is no textbook, and the curriculum is based on scientific papers.

This year about 25 students have attended the lectures. Course responsible (Brekke) made an error in collecting the evaluation form, so the same form has been used by students from two courses (ECON3120 as well). The report is thus not enclosed. But some of the feedback was clearly for ECON4260. These are given below. Note that these comments are given prior to Nyborg's part of the course. In addition to the form, we also collected an evaluation of the course using "Mentimeter", after the first four lectures. Students use a slider to give their evaluation on a scale from 0-5, and the results are given in the figure below.

The feedback we have is consistent with the feedback we have received earlier. Students are satisfied with the lectures. The figure below is only based on Brekke's lectures, but in earlier years they have been even more satisfied with the remaining lectures. They also think the course is highly interesting with score 4.3 on a scale from 0 to 5.

Both the online form and Mentimeter feedback have some critical comments on equations in power point, where there is room for improvements, perhaps with seminar problem that lends themselves more to discussion, especially in the first part. But overall, the students seem very satisfied with the course.

Kjell Arne Brekke, 4/11 2022.

Relevant comments from the online form and results from Mentimeter

“It was nice to do some of the experiments in class. - It would be better if more of the models would be presented at the blackboard. It is difficult to follow when equations are presented on slides - Some of the slides have strange grammar and mistakes that makes it harder to understand them. The design of the slides could also be better. Especially when they are packed with equations it is easier if they are less full.

- I do not always get what the big picture is. There are some failures in rationality, proven by some experiments and some adjustments that we can make to our models. But so what? How do all the different biases work together? Should we change theory and account for it?”

“Would like to see a bit more focus on why behaviour is as it is. Would help to also know the psychology behind choices in addition to the mathematical models we learn.”

On seminars:

“- Too much is presented on slides. - Rarely any discussion and participation. - Time management could be better.”

“Good power point presentations to use when looking at the tasks in advance. But it is pretty hard to follow the derivations on the screen. Kind of feel like the seminars are just another lecture. Wish there was more room for participation and talking in small groups.”

