

MAE4050 Course Evaluation 2020

5/10 students answered the questionnaire.

Information and material

All respondents either agree or strongly agree that information was sufficient. This includes the UiO course page, the CANVAS course page, access to teaching materials and information about written/oral assignments.

Structure and time management

All respondents agree or strongly agree that the course progression speed was suitable, workloads and breaks were adequate and lectures adhered to the time plan. One disagrees about consistency across modules; however, another respondent views this as a positive feature of the course:

- “Enjoyed having different teachers with slightly different styles [...]”

Time spent varied widely between 55 and 300 hours (125-150 being the approximate aim for 5 ETCS). This might reflect the difference in reading requirements between sessions, something that should be taken further into account when determining the required reading for future sessions (e.g. stick to 2-3 required papers and a limited set of additional readings).

Content and teaching

All respondent found the course content interesting, motivating and helpful to their learning and development. The teaching methods were appropriate to support students’ learning.

- “Group discussions were very motivating to me”
- “Design was great: all students came prepared due to the assignments, presentations good as picked up details not noticed, group discussions to share information were most of the time helpful (dependent on participants), sharing pros/cons/limitations interesting and helpful towards the exam and critical thinking of topics”
- “discussion” [was especially helpful]

One respondent notes that the group discussions are highly dependent on participation, so lack of participation makes the discussion less helpful/motivating. Aim to ensure participation in future discussions - although this might rely somewhat on students, topic and format (on-site vs. digital).

Overall impression

All respondents enjoyed the course, and would recommend it to others. Especially positive aspects of the course were:

- “The group discussion helped in understanding how things can be interpreted in different ways”
- “Intriguing and very interesting topics. Teaching design. Enjoyed having different teachers with slightly different styles and all seemed interested and motivated”
- “a wide array of topics to think over and discuss”

Suggestions on future course improvements:

- Feedback on the assignments will be more helpful.
- (detailed) feedback after in-class presentations could be very helpful

Should consider spending some time on feedback on the personal statements (if possible to do without increasing the workload on teachers too much), and make sure the students receive the necessary feedback after oral presentations. There were no comments on topics the students would like to see added or removed.

The feedback is overall positive on course content and design. There is a need to look further into the amount of literature assigned, and what feedback the students should be given (and how). Also, from my own experiences, digital sessions may be more demanding in terms of student involvement. If future sessions are given digitally, preparation should involve some special considerations of how to engage students. One potential solution that seemed to work well was to divide into smaller groups as usual, with one group discussing pros, one cons, and one more “neutral”. Then, instead of heading straight into plenary discussions, re-divide into small groups consisting of members from each stance before doing a plenary summary of the small group discussions. This seems to make it easier for everyone to participate.

Other reflections (not from the questionnaire)

The introductory lecture should take place two weeks in advance of the first session to ensure enough time for the presenting student to prepare and get feedback in advance.

The criteria of discussion in the exam presentation must be made absolutely clear to the students (although emphasized already), and its position in the scoring should receive some more thought. Also quite “difficult” to get a low grade, but that might be OK?