1:325 Client-based modeling project Student Evaluation

DEPARTMENT:	System Dynamics Group, Department of Geography, UiB
COURSE TITLE:	GEO-SD325 Cliend-based modelling project (Spring 2024)
COURSE INSTRUCTOR:	Birgit Kopainsky & Claudiu Eduard Nedelciu
TEACHING ASSISTANT:	Nada Oubrhou
TOTAL NO. OF RESPONSES:	6

2: Statistics

Signed up for exam: 30

Absence: 2

Grade distribution:

A: 7

B: 9

C: 9

D: 3

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.

As every year, focus was on revisiting the SD modeling process discussing how to adjust the activities in each step to a context where we model with and for clients. We had two clients with projects that addressed issues related to sustainable mobility.

Elements that I emphasized more this year were:

- increased involvement of the client in the entire modeling process, not just the beginning and the end. This was based on feedback on previous versions of the course.
- increased focus on uncertainty and the importance of scenarios (Foresight workshop).

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.

Telling from the submitted modeling projects, teams did a better job this year at addressing the clients' problems and carving out a feasible chunk that was suitable for system dynamics modeling. Overall, this year's projects incorporated the interests and priorities of more stakeholders than in previous years and thus better allowed studying the synergies and trade-offs created by policy interventions.

Many teams also incorporated the Foresight exercise into their projects and formulated interesting scenarios and scenario narratives.

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 mainly try to replicate this year's level of client involvement and the Foresight workshop.
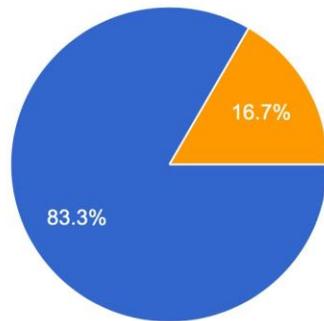
Based on the results of this course evaluation, I will also reconsider how to form teams across the three student groups that we have in the course (SD master students, students from Sorbonne, sustainability students) and work towards more homogenous groups.

Also regarding team work, we will discuss and practice more how to deal with conflict or challenging situations that will arise in a team.

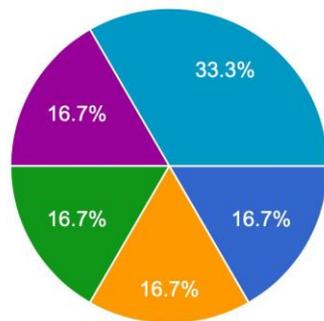4. Results

I took this course as part of:

6 responses

- ● Master's Program in System Dynamics
- ● Exchange Program (Bachelor's level)
- ● Exchange Program (Master's level)
- ● Exchange Program (PhD level)

83.3%

16.7%

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.)
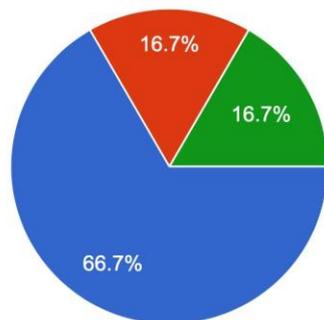
6 responses

- ● less than 5 hours
- ● 5 - 9 hours
- ● 10 - 19 hours
- ● 20 - 29 hours
- ● 30- 39 hours
- ● 40+ hours

33.3%

16.7%

16.7%

16.7%

16.7%

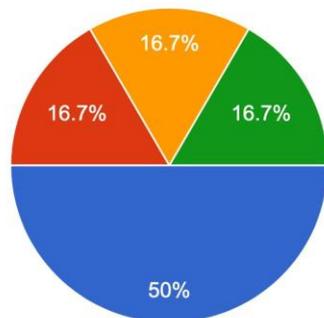## To what extent did you participate in the lectures/labs?

6 responses

- Attended all of the lectures and labs (90%+ attendance)
- Attended most of the lectures and labs (60% -89% attendance)
- Attended some of the lectures and labs (25% - 59% attendance)
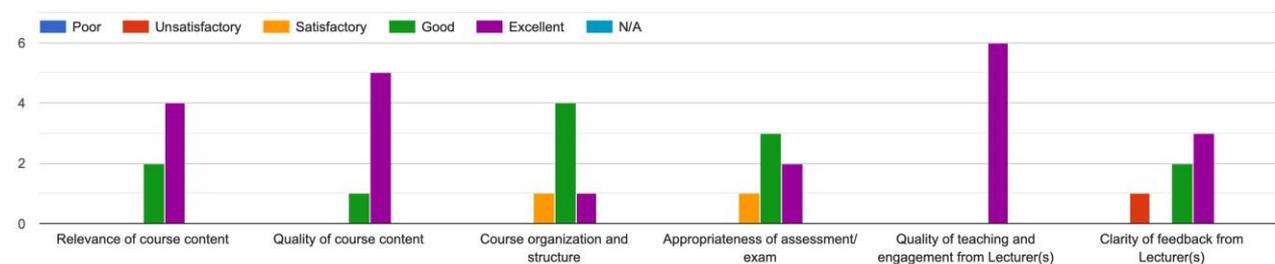- Attended few or none of the lectures or labs (less than 25% attendance)

What grade do you expect to get in this course?

6 responses

- A
- B
- C
- D
- E
- F
- Unknown
- Prefer not to Answer

How do you assess the course content and the lecturer(s)?

What did you like about the main lectures and overall course content?

6 responses

1. The breadth of topics covered and skills taught.
2. I experienced rich lectures in the class both in terms of content relevance and clarity, even though we had fewer lectures but more interactive study.
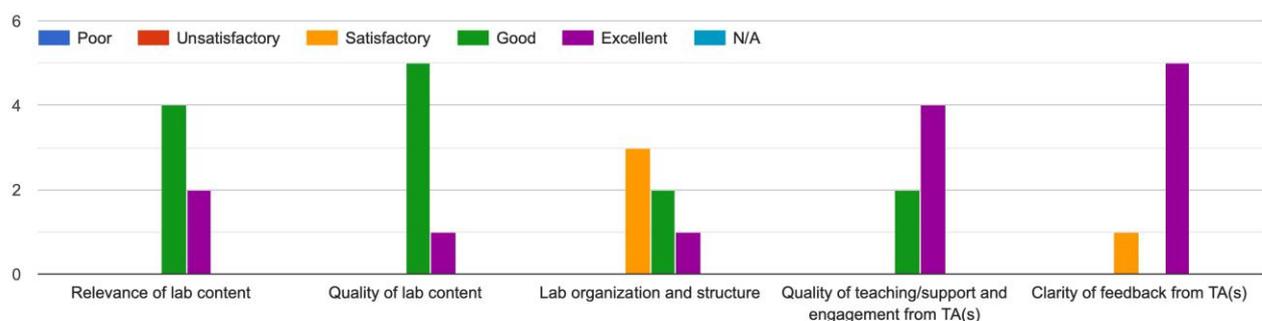3. Variety of contents

4. I generally liked it. I would have loved to see just a bit of soft skill training, like how to meet with the client, how to adjust expectations, how to guide the project to a sensible path for both us and them, how to budget a project, etc. Practical things that might come in handy when talking to a real client, especially when things don't go perfectly.
5. It was nice to get to work with an actual client and experience how that is
6. Everything made sense as we built upon the projects

What improvements would you like to suggest to the Lecturer(s)?

6 responses

1. None.
2. Since the projects we deliver count as our course exams and evaluations, there must be more work done to supervise the teams. We usually start working on a project in teams of four or five but sometimes only one or two people carry out the work. The poor quality of the delivered project because of other team members' lack of attention and interest, affects the grade of other people in the group.
3. N/A
4. I liked the interviews part, the foresight and the real life examples of SD applied, because all were very practical information on how to apply SD to real client projects. Focusing more on that than on the modelling itself I think would be beneficial. But I am not sure, it's just a feeling!
5. Developing skills which are useful when talking to clients: more in depth interview skills, how to have "bad news" conversations, what to do when disagreeing with the client/ group
6. none

How do you assess the labs and the Teaching Assistant(s)?

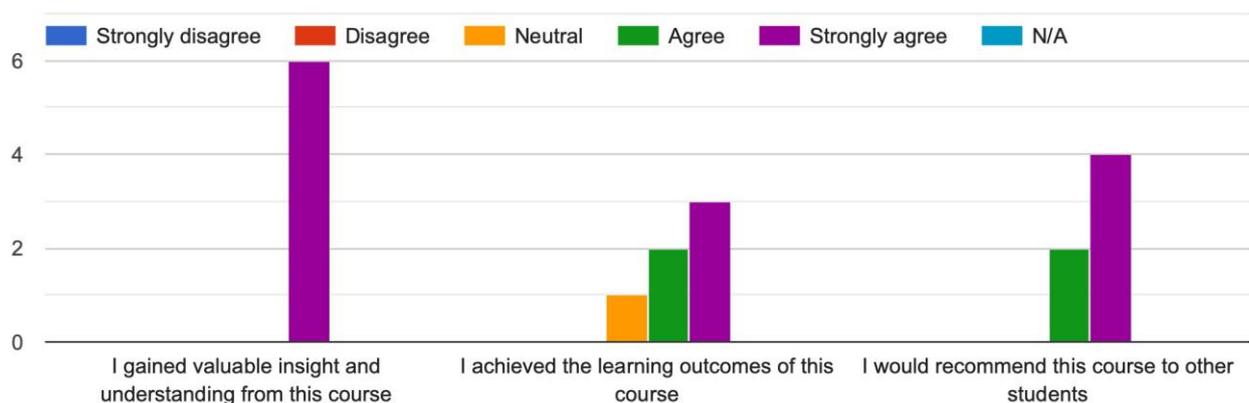**What did you like about the labs or other interactions with the TA(s)?**

6 responses

1. The TAs were approachable.
2. Feedbacks by TA were clear, friendly, and productive in the entire course duration. I like the way our TA wants us to explain the logic behind our stupid assumptions :).
3. The TA is very proactif
4. The TA was always super nice and helpful. Ready to improve the model with us and give honest suggestions. At times she even helped us with things not related to SD, that showed she really cares.
5. The TA is helpful and gives good and clear feedback
6. Making the group contract!

What improvements would you suggest to the TA(s)?

6 responses

1. More to the point comments.
2. N/A
3. Understand student's struggle with patience
4. None at all.
5. -
6. Present differently the exercise regarding successful SD cases - it was just us discussing in groups and sharing findings which was boring.

What is your overall opinion of this course?

What do you feel you have learned by the end of this course?

6 responses

1. To capture qualitative effects in the model.

2. This was my first time experiencing direct interaction with a client to work on a study project. How to communicate with the client, conduct interviews, and how to collect data were the most important things I learned in this course.
3. Satisfaction, will be useful later on
4. Mainly what to expect from a client project. How better to deal with disagreement and how to manage expectations. Modelling something that is not coming from my mind is considerably harder.
5. working in a group, and working for a client. To delivere when there are a lot of deadlines and not enough time
6. How to form good groups that work together. How to handle work with clients.

What do you wish you could have learned more about in this course?

6 responses

1. Conducting more structured interviews.
2. N/A
3. Policy Modeling
4. How to communicate better with the client, so that we can align on the specifics. In this case it was hard because our client was dedicated to various other projects.
5. Not just modelling skills, but also conversation and interview skills you'll need as a consultant
6. Not sure, I learned a lot!

Do you have any additional comments? If so, please discuss here:

4 response

1. None
2. N/A
3. No
4. I do have some doubts whether combining SD students with none SD students with minimum modeling skills works well. It can easily shift towards the SD students having to carry the project and also having to teach the non SD students how to model, which there is just not enough time for

5: Follow-up

Comments on previous evaluations (if any)

See point 3

How do plan to follow-up based on the course report

See point 3