

## Course evaluation for MSA830 november-december 2007

35 students followed the course, in the sense that they handed in a mini-project (34 people took the final exam). From these 35 students, I received 26 evaluation forms (2 by mail). Below is a summary of the answers to each of the 12 main questions in the questionnaire:

1. What is your opinion about the textbook?

Comments ranged from "very bad" to "very helpful", with a strong overweight on the negative side. Other comments:

- Too advanced, assumes too much statistical knowledge, contains too much
- Hard to find the central concepts/results
- Too expensive
- Too many errors
- Missing answers to exercises
- Good with concrete examples / too few examples
- A compendium with introductory statistics is needed to complement the book

2. What is your opinion about the contents of the course?

12 students thought the amount of material was too large, 10 that it was ok, and 1 that it was too small. 12 students thought the level of the course was too high, 3 that it was too low, and 9 that it was OK. Some other comments:

- The course should go over longer time.
- A relevant course, for most students.
- Clearly differing opinions depending on the background and subject of the student.
- More examples connected to the students own fields.

3. What is your opinion about the lectures?

Of those who answered directly, 7 said the lectures were at a correct level, 2 said too difficult and 2 said too slow. Other selected comments:

- A bit unstructured.
- Got better over time.
- Should get more handouts, in advance of lectures.

4. What is your opinion about the exercise classes?

Selected comments:

- Too slow.
- More explanation needed.
- Not always efficient use of time.
- The exercise classes have been my lifeline.
- Better communication between Petter and Malin is needed, to coordinate notation etc.
- Earlier announcement of the set of exercises.

5. What is your opinion about the miniprojects?

- Positive comments, generally found useful.
- Some said it was difficult to see the point of the projects.
- The students' planning of the projects should take place later, when they have learned more.

- The feedback from the projects should come earlier.
6. What is your opinion about R?  
The answers about this were mixed, but fairly positive.
- Maybe Excel should be used instead, or in addition to, R.
  - Access to computers / computer room is needed, to make this more useful.
  - There should be an optional computer lab.
7. What do you think about the overall organization of the course?  
The students thought the amount of teaching was too high (8), just right (7), or too low (1). Some selected comments:
- More time on the basic stuff.
  - Exercises about a subject should not come on the same day as the lecture about the subject.
  - It would be better to have classes 8-12 or 3-17 instead of 10-15.
8. How was the communication between teachers and students?  
The communication was OK, good, or very good. Suggestions:
- A webpage for discussions would be good.
  - Easier ways for students to communicate by mail.
  - Better information about signup for exam.
9. How did you feel the course corresponded with the information you had about it from course catalogs, information meetings etc.?  
Some students felt it was more difficult than expected. But generally no discrepancy between pre-course information and course content.
10. How much did you work with this course?  
Three students said they worked more than 40 hours per week on the course, while 15 said they worked less than 40 hours, some considerably less. Thus there might be room to increase the amount of material covered. Some of the students who complained that the course was too difficult also reported working less than 40 hours per week.
11. What is your overall opinion of the course?  
The students described it as bad(3), not so good (1), OK (15), good (4), very good (1). Comments: "needs tuning", "much to improve", "stressful", "disorganized", "interesting".
12. Do you have any other recommendations, suggestions, or comments?
- Extend course over double the time.
  - Change book.
  - More basic stuff.
  - More discussions on contents.
  - Practice with computers.
  - Want: Collection of formulas.
  - Better (more extensive) study material.
  - More chances to discuss with the teacher.
  - Better differentiated teaching between those who have a good background and those who have none.