Course Report

Course(s)

- Personnel Economics, SO7451-38307 7.5 hp
- Personnel Economics, SO7450-OM628 7.5 hp

Semester
Spring 2021

Course Site Name in Athena
Personnel Economics -VT21 (6215)

Department
Department of Sociology

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Number of respondents
32

Number of answers
14

Compilation
Compilation_SO7451_SO7450_VT21.pdf

Description of changes since the last course and decisions already made since last course date (if any was made)

To a large extent I followed the course material from the previous years but cut down some of the lecture material to better fit the time frame of the course. Additionally, two more cases for the team work were created as the number of students in this year's course was more than doubled in comparison to previous years. It was also the first time that the course was thought online.

The strengths of the course's according to the students
(summary based on quantitative results, text responses from the survey and any other evaluation during the course)

Many of the students appreciated the clear structure of the course and felt that the teacher was reachable when needed. The course had a clear weekly rythm with pre-recorded lectures, online seminars via Zoom and hand-in assignments. The group work was very much enjoyed by the students and possibly even more so during these times of the pandemic when we do not meet in the usual lecture halls. Students also learned a lot deeper some of the material of the course by doing these real-life inspired case reports. Many students also appreciated the possibility to watch the lectures at a time convinent for them and to be able to re-watch them and pause when needed.
The weaknesses of the course according to the students
(summary based on quantitative results, text responses from the survey and any other evaluation during the course)

Some of the students found that there should have been more guiding for the assignment exercises, especially when they involved some calculations. Additionally, couple of the assignment questions were hard to understand and there was a typo in one which of course added unnecessary confusion.

The teachers’ analysis of the course’s implementation and results

Despite students indicating that part of the course material was difficult, especially when involving calculations, it is clear from the responses that the students feel that they have learned a lot useful knowledge during the course and feel that the content of the course was relevant for them for achieving the intended learning outcomes. It was the first time that the course was taught online which brought some additional challenges but with the clear weekly structure and weekly online meetings it went relatively smoothly. The online setup even brought some advantages as discussions in groups were easier to organize than within a lecture hall.

Conclusions and suggestions for possible changes in order to develop the course and any decisions already made to develop the course before future course dates.

Clear weekly schedule is making the learning easier for the students and it is important to have live meetings regularly with the students so this is something to continue with in the next rounds to come. The group work should be kept in the course as this part received a lot of positive feedback but guidelines should be made clearer for the case work so that students know better how to divide their study time during the course. For the weekly assignments an alternative grading system could be considered so that there is an incentive to participate in all seminars. It is also good to give some hints for some of the harder assignments so that students do not get stuck with them when starting to solve. Overall the structure of the course is good but some parts can be clarified further and adjusted better for the fact that most are not familiar with the basic concepts of Economics and unaccustomed to do some algebra.

Other comments

It was a year with a lot of enthusiastic and high-achieving students which made the teaching a lot of fun despite the distance-teaching.