

Emneevaluering / course evaluation ISV

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Navn / name *

Navn til emneansvarlig
Øyvind Stiansen

Velg kursnivå *

Masterkurs

Bare for Master: velg blokk

Blokk 1

Emnekode / course code *

STV4222

Emnenavn / Course title

International and Comparative Judicial Politics

Semester *

Spring 2024

Emnerapport / course report *

Evaluation-form

Course-code: STV4222

Course title: International and Comparative Judicial Politics

Language: English

Course convener's evaluation of the course:

Overall, the course went well. Compared to 2023, the most important change was that we have four written assignments and one presentation instead of five written assignments. To reduce workload concerns raised by the student contact, the final written assignment was connected to the student presentation. However, students still seemed more stressed about the workload in 2024 compared to 2024 and we also had to reduce some of the content we could cover in the lectures to give space for the presentations. All things considered, it might be better to move back to five written assignment and remove the student presentations (on the other hand, students have very little experience in giving oral presentations).

In 2023, we also had lectures on Monday and Friday while in 2024 we had lectures on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Having less time to work on the assignments between the lectures (and outside the weekends) may have contributed to the concerns about workload.

Summary of feedback from student contact-point:

- All students that the student contact had talked to seemed to be happy with the course.
- The portfolio exam format with assignments each week is highly appreciated among the students. Having a portfolio exam helps ensuring that students work throughout the course. However, this format also means that the workload is relatively high compared to other courses.
- The course uses peer review for the weekly submission. One problem was that the quality of the feedback varies too much depending on how efforts different students put into this [Note from course convenors: We see this problem and we try to mitigate it by having each student review two different assignments, but it is a tricky issue to completely resolve].
- Many students were unhappy about having to use R and quantitative methods for one the assignment [Note from course convenors: an important motivation in the course is that students should get more hands-on experience using different social science methods and skills as they tackle the substantive questions in the course. Using R and quantitative data was highlighted as a benefit of the course in the 2023 evaluation, so views are clearly mixed among the students. It will of course vary which methods each student is most comfortable with, but we are very hesitant to not include at least some quantitative assignments. Only one the assignments is quantitative, with the other being qualitative or focused on identifying gaps in existing literature].
- For the first assignment, students had to read a judgment and attached dissenting opinions. Some students find it hard to read the legal language [Note from course convenors: Next year, we might make a guide for social scientists on how read a court decision to make it a bit easier to get started].
- The lectures worked well. It is nice to have a relatively small groups and that the lectures are interactive.
- It would be useful with even more summaries of the main points of different theories/arguments covered [Note from course convenors: the student contact raised a very good point here and we added more of these summaries in the second half of the course. We will keep this in mind as we revise the materials for next year.]
- There was a lot to read, but all the readings were relevant and useful for the assignments. The main challenge is to find time to read prior to starting the assignment, but there is not a need to change the readings.

Emneevalueringen bør inneholde:

1. Vurdering av emnet
 - Læringsutbytte i emnet
 - Undervisningsformer og organisering
 - Andre relevante temaer som læringsmiljø, studentenes arbeidsinnsats og eventuelt vurderingsformer
2. Studentens tilbakemelding
 - Oppsummering av studentenes viktigste tilbakemeldinger
3. Helhetlig vurdering og videreutvikling
 - En samlet vurdering av kvaliteten på emnet
 - Justeringer som er foretatt som følge av evalueringen.
 - Muligheter for videreutvikling av emnet

The course evaluation should include:

1. Assessment of the course
 - Learning outcomes in the course
 - Teaching methods and organization
 - Other relevant topics such as the learning environment, students' effort and possibly forms of assessment
2. Student's feedback
 - Summary of students' most important feedback
3. Overall assessment and further development
 - An overall assessment of the quality of the course
 - Adjustments made as a result of the evaluation.
 - Opportunities for further development of the course