

Overview: Teaching Evaluations at the University of Bayreuth

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1 Courses Taught

I have taught a total of ten courses at the University of Bayreuth as a primary instructor.

Level	Courses
Master Level	Advanced Introduction to Philosophy (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016)
Bachelor Level	Democracy (2012), Consequentialism (2015), Moral Contractualism (2016), Libertarianism (2016), Collective Welfare (2018), Anarchism (2019)

2 General Information

The University of Bayreuth uses a standardised, 15-question evaluation form for all of its courses. Students choose responses on a five-point scale, which is marked as “++”, “+”, “o”, “-”, and “--”.

The response rate is close to 100%, as evaluation forms are completed on paper in the last class session. Unfortunately, the University does not provide comparative statistics.

3 Overall Evaluation

In question 15, students are asked “how do you evaluate the course overall?”. Around three quarters of all students gave the highest grade in their overall evaluations, which I believe shows excellent overall feedback.

Question 15: Overall, how would you judge the course?							
Course	Year	++	+	o	-	--	Replies
Bachelor Level							
Democracy	2012	8	9	—	—	—	17
Consequentialism	2015	6	9	—	—	—	15
Contractualism	2016	6	6	—	—	—	12
Libertarianism	2016	18	2	—	—	—	20
Collective Welfare	2018	16	1	—	—	—	17
Anarchism	2019	15	3	—	—	—	18
Master Level							
Advanced Introduction	2013	9	—	—	—	—	9
Advanced Introduction	2014	3	2	1	—	—	6
Advanced Introduction	2015	8	—	1	—	—	9
Advanced Introduction	2016	11	3	—	—	—	14
Total		100 (73%)	35 (26%)	2 (1%)	0	0	137

4 Specific Questions

The aggregated results across courses for the other 14 questions are summarised in the table below. In all but one question, the majority of students gave the highest mark. The exception is question 8, where a slight majority of students (51%) give the second-highest grade (“+”) in assessing the quantity of material covered.

Question	Replies	++	+	o	-	--
Questions concerning course						
1. Are concrete aims specified in beginning?	141	58%	40%	1%	—	—
2. Is the course well-structured?	142	79%	18%	3%	—	—
3. Is the content important for your studies?	138	65%	32%	3%	—	—
4. Can you make connections to your other studies?	138	66%	29%	5%	—	—
5. Is difficult content clarified through examples?	139	73%	24%	4%	—	—
6. Are students included well?	141	78%	19%	3%	—	—
7. How much did you personally learn?	138	51%	41%	8%	—	—
8. How was the quantity of material covered?	140	29%	51%	12%	8%	—
Questions concerning lecturer						
9. How academically competent is the lecturer?	140	82%	18%	—	—	—
10. How didactically competent is the lecturer?	140	76%	19%	4%	1%	—
11. Were course materials provided well?	141	82%	17%	1%	—	—
12. Did they present in an understandable way?	141	72%	24%	3%	1%	—
13. How motivated were they?	141	82%	16%	2%	—	—
14. Did they react well to students' concerns?	139	73%	22%	4%	1%	—

5 Improvement over Time

We can split courses into two time periods, those taught in 2012–2015, and those taught in 2016–2018. Doing so, a clear improvement over time can be seen: in the early time period, students give the best mark 61% of the time; this increases to 81% in my later teaching.

Question 15: Overall, how would you judge the course?						
Courses	Replies	++	+	o	-	--
Taught 2012-2015 (5 courses)	56	34 (61%)	20 (36%)	2 (4%)	—	—
Taught 2016-2018 (5 courses)	81	66 (81%)	15 (19%)	—	—	—

For both time periods, I have also computed how often students choose the highest mark (“++”) for each of the other questions. The results can be found in the table below. Overall, I believe these numbers are evidence of (i) a general improvement in my teaching skills, and (ii) successfully tackling specific weaknesses, especially in teaching methods.

Question	Percentage of best mark (++)		Percentage point change
	2012-2015	2016-2019	
Questions concerning course			
1. Concrete aims specified in beginning?	43%	69%	+26
2. Course well-structured?	72%	83%	+11
3. Content important for your studies?	55%	72%	+18
4. Connections to your other studies?	54%	74%	+20
5. Difficult content clarified through examples?	69%	75%	+6
6. Students included well?	74%	81%	+7
7. How much personally learned?	36%	62%	+26
8. Quantity of material covered?	25%	33%	+8
Questions concerning lecturer			
9. Academic competence?	79%	85%	+6
10. Didactic competence?	52%	92%	+40
11. Course materials provided well?	76%	87%	+11
12. Presents in understandable way?	62%	78%	+16
13. How motivated?	67%	92%	+24
14. Reacts well to students' concerns?	70%	76%	+6

6 Further Information

You can find syllabi for all courses I've taught, some sample teaching materials, as well as raw data for student feedback I received at Bayreuth, on my website (www.matthiasbrinkmann.de). Contact me if you have any further questions.