

Overview

Autumn 2023 was the first time this course was offered. About 20 students followed the course and took the exam. Five lectures were involved, in addition to the two course organizers. Students had a written mandatory assignment (pass/no pass) in addition to the four-hour school exam which served as the basis for the evaluation (A-F). Overall, we, the course organizers, are very happy both with the coordination and execution of the course, communication with the other lecturers, as well as with the students' activities. In sum, the course seemed to function very well.

Feedback from the student contact

The feedback from the student contact was also mostly positive, highlighting that the course was well structured with several exciting topics and that the mandatory assignment as well as the exam fitted well with the course topics and lectures.

In terms of potential areas for improvement, the student contacted emphasized that the course organizers and lecturers could do even more to highlight the red thread in the course and possible links between the different topics and lectures. In a couple of lectures, the economic aspects (of political economy) were somewhat harder to detect than the political ones. The student contact also suggested that the number of topics is quite high, and that there could be a better balance between breadth and depth (i.e., focusing more on fewer topics). Finally, the student contact suggested that a summary lecture could benefit the course.

Potential changes

We (the course organizers) appreciate these comments from the student contact and find them pertinent. Before the next iteration of the course, we will make sure to go through the topics with various lecturers and further highlight the importance of explicitly showing links between different lectures and to the core introductory topics of the course. We will also consider having a concluding lecture, which would serve the same goal by highlighting and making explicit the core messages and red thread of the course as well as links between the different topics. We will also consider whether it is beneficial to reduce the number of topics by one or two and instead include additional lectures on the remaining topics.