

Emneevaluering / course evaluation ISV

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Navn / name *

Navn til emneansvarlig

Jonathan Kuiper

Semester

Ikke besvart

Velg kursnivå *

Masterkurs

*

Bolk 3

Emnekode / course code *

STV4105

Emnenavn / Course title

Democracy: From Theory to Practice

Emnerapport / course report *

This is the 4th year in a row that this course has been run. This year we have very high enrollment numbers, capping out at 45 (I anticipate that 35+ will complete the course).

Positives:

Overall, the feedback from the two student representatives was very positive. In essence, they liked the general format of the classes. They found it both challenging and stimulating, as the class involves a lot of question-and-answer portions.

They very much enjoyed the two guest lecturers - Hallvard Sandven and Magnus Hoel - and their respective focus on Republicanism and Free Speech in Democracies.

Generally, there was also a strong sense that the themes of the course worked well.

There is a sense that the oral presentations worked well - around two weeks before submission, students need to present their term paper question, theory, method, and potential argument. While time-consuming, this was viewed favourably amongst students.

Negatives:

Here, there were a few issues. First, there was a sense that the quizzes that I use on Mentimeter were distracting, rather than substantively helpful. I sensed this during the course, and after Lecture 4, I dropped the quizzes in favour of a broad plenary discussion on a specific topic. Both representatives said this worked better.

Second, there was a sense that some weeks are closely tied to the syllabus (republicanism, representation, deliberative democracy, and cosmopolitan democracy) and some were not (social contract theory and direct democracy). I agree with this, and it is largely a function of social contract theory and direct democracy coming at the start of the course, where I am attempting to use 'big ideas' to engage students.

Finally, there were some general comments that discussion of how to write a normative paper should come earlier in the course. As it stands, I dedicate 45 minutes of Lecture 6 to this topic.

Amendments:

Two action points are most important, and I will submit them to the first programrådet of 2025.

First, I need to abbreviate the course. It covers slightly too much territory, and some readings are not discussed in-depth. To rectify this, I will remove Lecture 1 on social contract theory, and turn Lecture 2 into a direct/participatory democracy lecture. This will mean everything moves forward: we will start with direct/participatory democracy, then move to republicanism, on to minimal democracy, then representation, deliberative democracy, free speech, and cosmopolitan democracy. This will allow me to add a lecture (Lecture 9) on epistemic democracy, that I think the course is missing. This will allow all lectures more time to discuss readings.

Second, this will have the advantage that Lecture 6 will become Lecture 4. As half of this lecture is dedicated to writing a normative lecture, it will also allow students to begin earlier. If programrådet does not object, I will also invite students to my lecture in 4911 - how to write a normative paper - which occurs in mid-October. This will help students unfamiliar with the method to begin learning new terms and ways to do normative theory.

In total, the course worked well, and requires some reshuffling to fix a couple of issues to do with timing and the related notion of examining course content in detail.

Jonathan

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