

Course Evaluation Report: ECON4640 Autumn 2025

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This semester's evaluation of ECON4640 reflects encouraging aspects of the course, alongside areas that clearly require attention. Overall, students who attended the lectures expressed strong satisfaction. All respondents agreed that the lectures were of high quality, with all rating the lectures as either a 4 or 5 in quality and similarly strong scores for ability to convey the material. Written comments were particularly positive, noting the clarity of explanations, the accessibility of difficult material, and the safe and open atmosphere for questions. A caveat is that these results are based on a very small sample.

What is working

Student engagement during lectures has been strong among those who attend. The class size, while very small, creates an environment conducive to meaningful discussion. Several students highlighted that the lectures strike a good balance between theory and real-world examples, and that the material is clearly explained. Learning outcomes were rated highly.

What can be improved

The most persistent challenge is attendance. Despite good participation from those who are present, overall lecture attendance was very weak throughout the semester, something also observed in the seminars. While one student noted that a small class size is enjoyable, it also has drawbacks: preparing full lectures each week is resource-intensive when only 5–10 students attend. A likely contributor is that many students work substantial hours and rely on posted materials, but this limits engagement and reduces opportunities for discussion.

From the seminar teacher (Sam Skoda): "The attendance in seminars was relatively weak, ranging from 2 to 3 students during the whole semester and students were typically not eager to actively participate in solving or explaining the problem sets despite the low threshold for a discussion in the classroom. Some expressed positive feedback regarding the provided explanations, some feedback was more negative as they did not consider that detailed solutions with additional intuition given in class provide additional value compared to the solutions posted on Canvas after the seminar. I think the lack of preparedness can be mostly attributed to low stakes as the seminar does not matter for the course grade. I would suggest for the future that either a small part of the grade should be based on active participation or the course should require submitting (non-graded) solutions before the seminar to boost active participation."

Finally, classroom layout issues—particularly the inability to use the whiteboard when the projector is on—limit flexibility in teaching and reduce opportunities for step-by-step problem-solving.

What I can do to improve the course

This year I have already implemented several improvements: redesigned lecture slides, clearer structure, more examples from Norwegian politics, and interactive activities to make the material more engaging. For next year, I intend to:

1. Deepen the relevance by integrating additional Norway-specific readings and examples.
2. Develop new forms of participation, such as short in-class exercises or polling, to encourage engagement even with small groups.
3. Work with the department to explore adjustments to seminar structure, potentially adopting Sam's recommendation of requiring pre-submitted problem set attempts.
4. Update parts of the syllabus to include newer and more applied papers.
5. Investigate classroom alternatives that allow simultaneous projection and whiteboard use.

Despite the challenges, student feedback indicates that the core components of the course—lecture quality, clarity, topic relevance—are strong. With targeted adjustments to participation incentives, seminar structure, and classroom logistics, I believe the course can become even more effective in the coming years.

Course evaluation report

ECON4640 Fall 2025

Department of Economics, University of Oslo

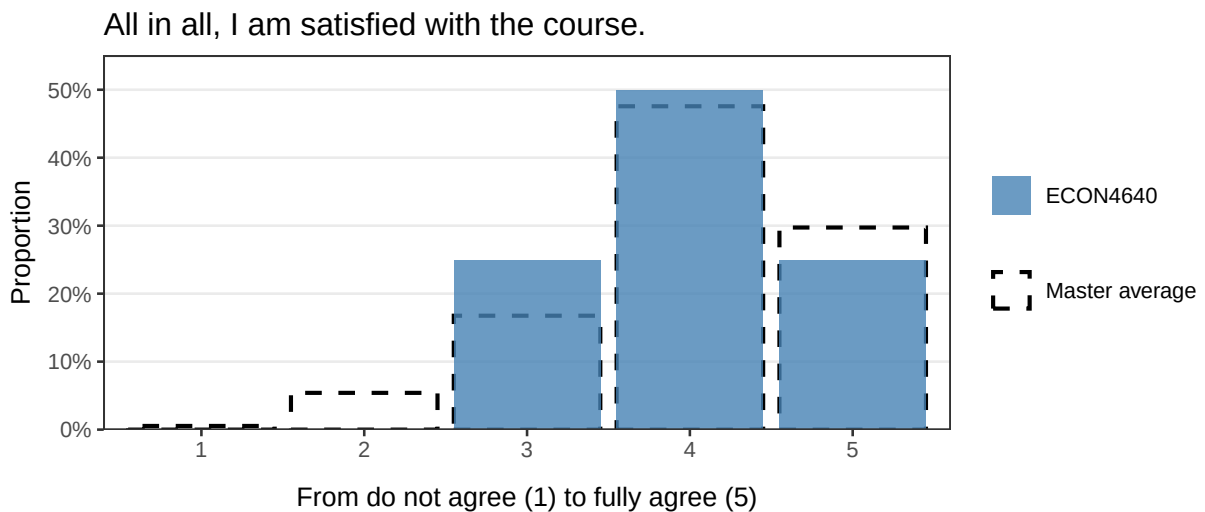
Course Overview

Course level: Master

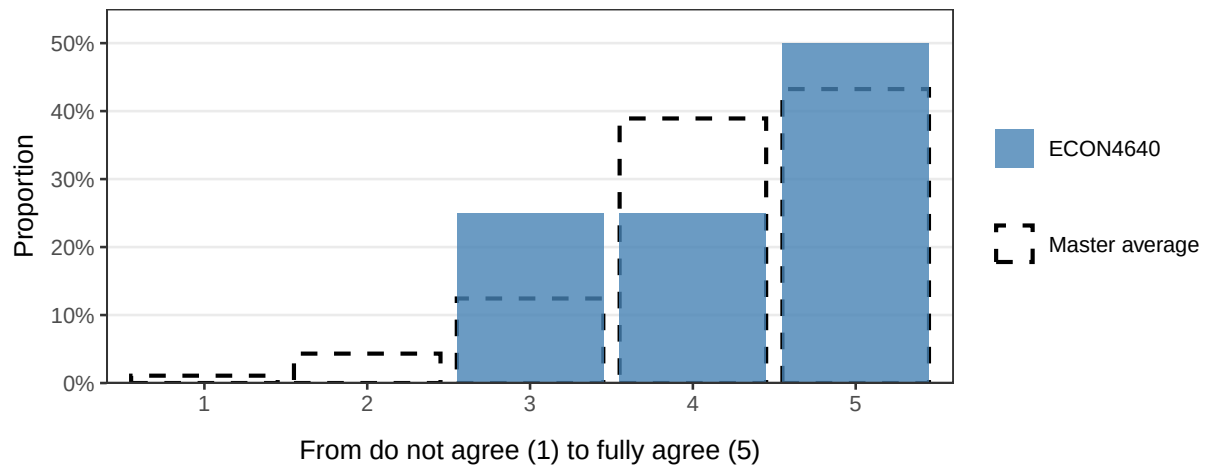
Total responses: 4 out of 24 invitations (16.7% response rate)

The charts compare ECON4640 responses to the average across all master courses in the same semester, shown with dashed outline.

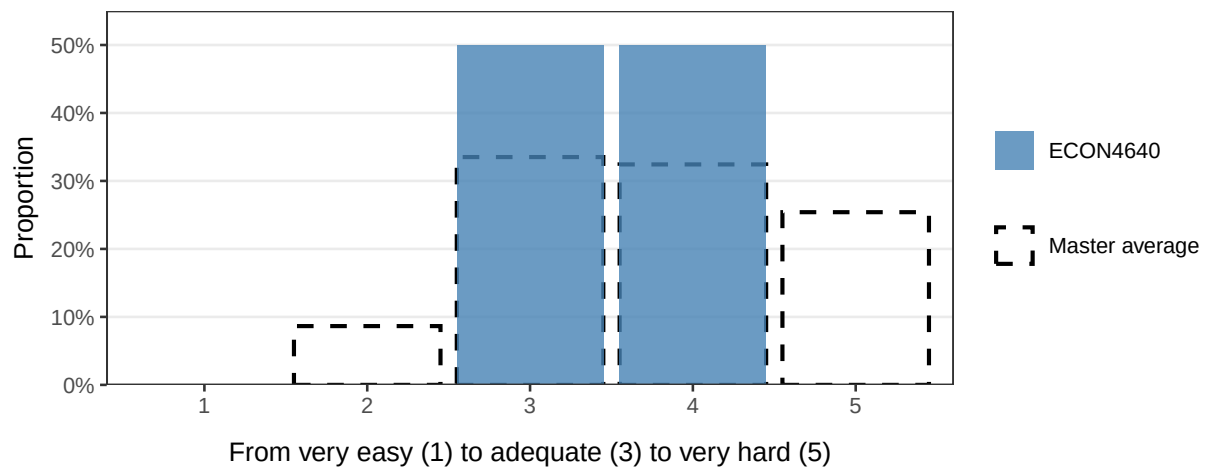
Overall evaluation of the course



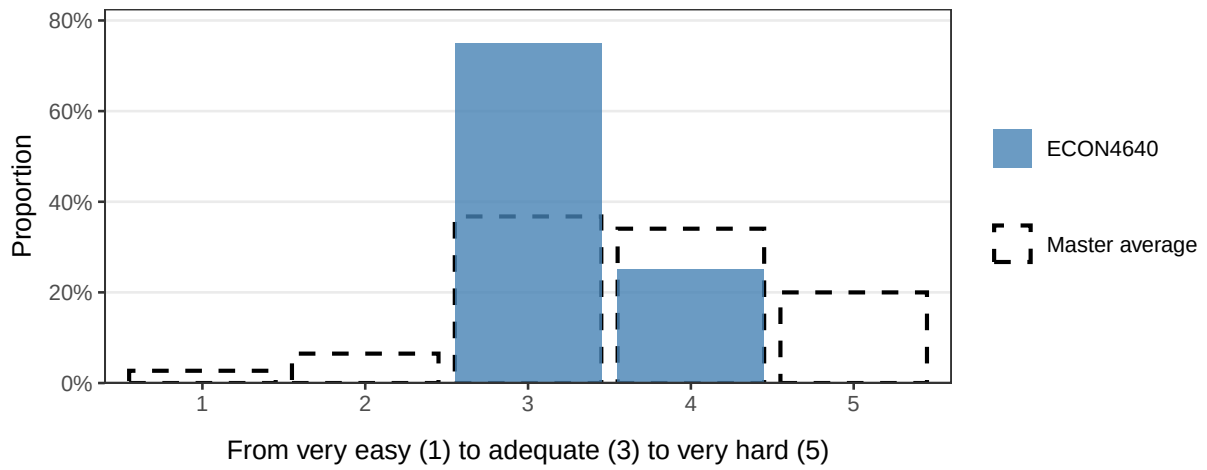
I find the course to be interesting.



How difficult / demanding do you find the course to be?

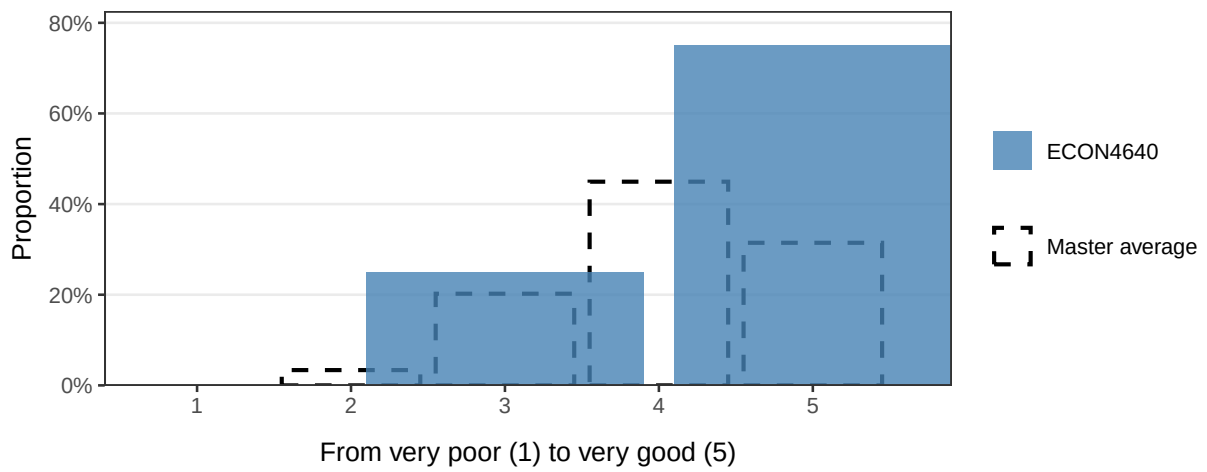


How is the workload on this course?

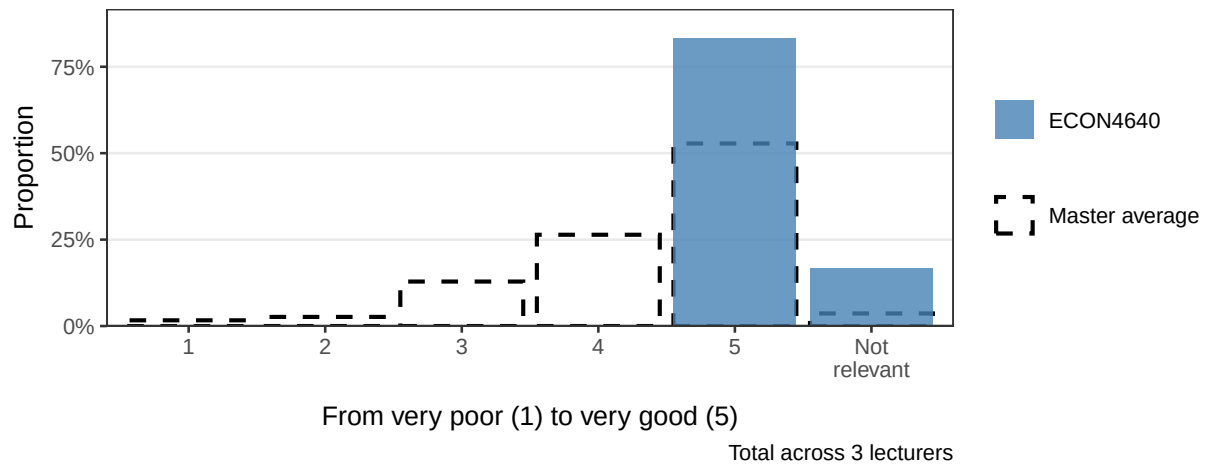


Teaching

How was your learning outcome?



What do you think about the quality of the lectures?



What do you think about the lecturer's ability to convey the material?

