

Course evaluation report

ECON 5106

Fall 2024

Maxwell Kellogg

### **What is working?**

This year's class was unusually small, owing to both a particularly small cohort of PhD students and fewer master's students enrolled in the course. Despite multiple reminders in class and via canvas, I received only 2 responses on my course evaluation out of 12 students. For what it is worth though, the responses I have received are consistent with my conversations with students and with my own impressions. Students are generally happy with the quality of lectures and they find the course to be interesting. Views on seminars are more mixed, and I think this is the next component of the course that I need to substantially adjust. If I continue having a term project, then I think it makes more sense to use the seminars in a more engaging way, rather than reviewing problem sets. I suspect (and at least one student confirmed) that very few students were looking at the problem sets in advance of the seminars. Perhaps we might read and work through recent papers in applied econometrics instead.

### **What can be improved?**

One student made the very good point that I should more carefully pace the lecture and time my breaks. Rather than splitting the lecture into two 45 minute segments, I often lecture for 60 minutes or more before taking a break and I occasionally run over time. This can easily be solved with a little more careful planning of the lectures and better time management (including deferring certain parts of a lecture to the following week when an important and interesting tangent arises in class).

Beyond this, I need to update the lecture material again in order to reflect recent developments in econometrics and to de-emphasize other topics that time has revealed are perhaps less important.

### **What can you do to improve the course?**

The biggest changes I made this year (namely, from grading a sit-down exam to grading a larger term project) were ones that my previous cohort of students viewed very favorably. I do think that the term project may have discouraged some master's students from enrolling in the course. However, my hope is that the pass rate among students who took the course will be much higher, hopefully to the point that more students *in total* pass the course than have passed in previous years. After students have finished their projects, I will need to assess this and consider how to organize the course's exams in the future.