

PP - Public Policy
Growth Diagnostics in Development: Theory and Practice PP413_LT23

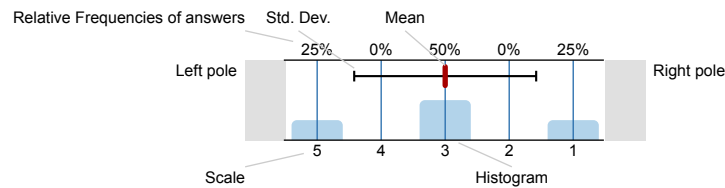


Santos

No. of responses = 45 Response rate =90%

Legend

Question text

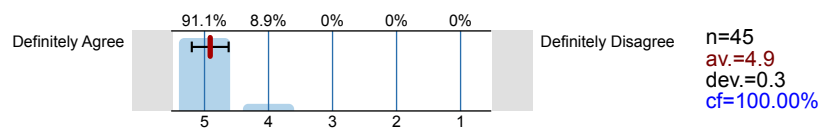


n=No. of responses
av.=Mean
dev.=Std. Dev.
ab.=Abstention
cf=Cumulative Frequency

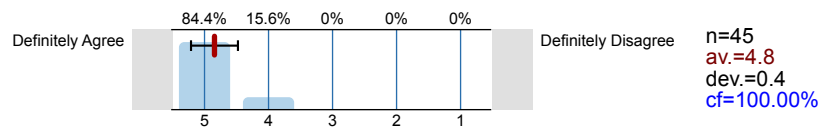
1. Section 1 - Course Questions

To ensure that any feedback you provide is constructive, it is important to be specific (rather than generalise) when submitting survey comments. This will help the department make appropriate course enhancements and adjustments going forwards. Likewise, when evaluating your course teachers, it is important that you focus **only** on the quality of their teaching, as opposed to reflecting on their personal protected characteristics. This is to ensure that the course is reviewed fairly and to prevent discrimination. Please note, the use of discriminatory or expletive language in any comments you submit will not be tolerated.

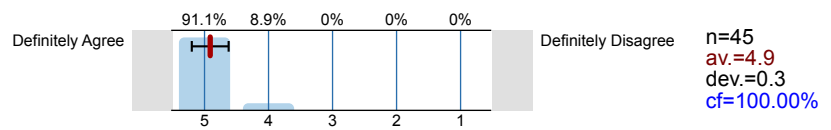
1.1) This course is intellectually stimulating.



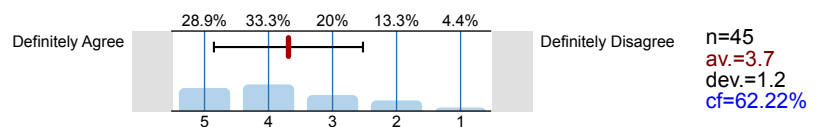
1.2) I found course information and activities accessed through Moodle useful for my studies on this course.



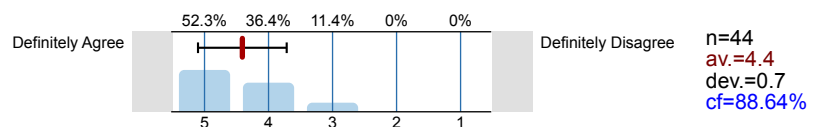
1.3) I have been able to contact teaching staff about this course when I needed to.



1.4) The criteria used in marking have been available in advance.



1.5) I contributed to class discussions and/or other learning activities.



1.6) Please comment on aspects of this course you think were particularly positive.

- - High expectations of students from teachers
- Selection of very applicable and relevant content, constantly showing how useful it is by recalling professional experiences and by applying it to the group projects
- Data seminars
- - use of examples.
- seminars which support the data analysis
- I liked that this course was very applied. Everything I learned has been used in the past to inform policy recommendations in the developing world and I believe that I can continue using these concepts further in my work. It is well structured and the **guest lectures added value to what I learned**. The course also tries to build on local contexts of the countries that it uses as case studies which I think is extremely valuable for a diverse class.
- I thought that there was a lot of useful and practical information available in this course that I think will help me in my career, even if I do not choose to go into development. **I also liked the layout of the guiding framework slide which showed where we were at and where we were going. Also loved that the class felt like it concluded.**
- Intellectual rigour and the practicality of it

- **It is the best course that I have had at LSE, and Miguel is the best professor.** The commitment, passion, and energy that Miguel, Camila, and Sheyla put into the course was a really great experience for me. I was constantly motivated, and every class was exceptional and different from the other. I deeply value all the knowledge acquired in this course, and I believe that what I learned will be very useful for my professional career. Even though was a very high time-consuming course, I enjoyed almost every minute that I worked on my growth diagnostic project.
- It was a dynamic course, intellectually stimulating, with lot's of participation and feedback from the teaching group
- **Miguel is one of the best professors I have ever had.**
- **Miguel is simply fantastic. It has been a pleasure to be taught by someone so passionate, knowledgeable and pragmatic about economic development. Miguel clearly cares a lot about pedagogy and generously shared his real-world experience with the class. I feel very lucky.**
- **Miguel's teaching style is stimulating and pushes you to want to learn more. Always wanting to be as inclusive as he can be.**
- Miguel's teaching style is great
Lots of content to get through but the readings are prioritised. They are very fun and intellectually stimulating. The seminars to run through STATA was helpful.
- **One of the best classes I have ever taken! Incredibly well-taught, incredibly rich and rewarding.**
- **One of the most interesting and transformative courses I have taken at LSE, if also the most challenging and also dominating the term.** It provides hands on tools to apply to economic analysis of countries which is really empowering and tangible.
- **Overall the course is super stimulating, the class is engaging and all topics of interest and importance for policy making. The teacher was amazing.**
- **Strong focus on applied solutions to pressing policy issues, anchored on a strong technical**
- The approach used in the lectures where each concept learned was discussed at great length using a case study that the professor worked on and pegging it back to the theory rather than letting theory take precedence.
- **The class was amazing! Probably the best class of the program.**
- The course conveys a great analytical tool. The use of focusing on the most binding constraints is incredible helpful and transferable to other policy areas besides growth/development economics. The course content is really interesting and despite being a lot, it is easily digestible as it is intellectually not too challenging while still being informative. Overall, a great introduction to applied development economics and growth diagnostics. Further, **Miguel is an engaging and likeable lecturer who truly cares about the students and puts in a lot of effort.** Lastly, the sole focus on growth for welfare enhancement is debatable but it is hard to refute that, especially in least developed countries, growth plays a pivotal role in poverty reduction which makes the concepts highly relevant and applicable in the development context.
- The course does an excellent job of teaching and applying policies in the development world, exposing how incredibly complex it is. Very engaging course.
- **The course helped me change my thought process.**
- **The course is brilliant. It is a great opportunity for students.**
- The course was taught in a very engaging way, and the depth of materials covered was adequate for a Master's level course. The reading materials were adequate. **It is one of the best courses I have taken at the LSE.**
- **The guest lectures were very effective additions to the class material. Most of the readings were helpful but did not always connect directly or were difficult to understand before the lecture.**
- The lecturer and the materials were great, really happy I took this class and I learned a lot.
- The methodology and how the course was structured
- The structure of the course was very helpful to build each block that eventually becomes an entire framework. The application based structure was useful in implementing what we learned each week instead of just gaining the knowledge.
- The teaching was great, the content was stimulating, and I enjoyed the way it was structured.
- This class has been amazing and **I wish I could have taken more classes with Professor Santos.** He is a great instructor and he and the TAs put a lot of effort into making this a great course. Thank you.
- This course is what I expected from my master's degree.
It is very intense and has a lot of material for little time, but staff are more than willing to guide.
It provides a complete framework to do a thorough analysis that can be applied to any context.
- This course was highly intellectually stimulating, with content that keeps students at the edge of their learning. The roadmap for the course content was clear from the outset and **the level of communication from the course instructors was second-to-none. Miguel is highly experienced in the development field and draws on his own professional experience very effectively. This, coupled with the course design, means I am happy that I am leaving this course equipped with concrete skills I did not possess before.**
- This course was **the most mentally and professionally challenging that I ever had in my career. Not just highly technical quality, but also it mixes political economy of thinking out of the box in any different scenarios in economic development. Not all sad families look**

the same, so Miguel taught us different tools to face policy recommendations in those context.

1.7) Please comment on aspects of this course you think could be improved.

- - Content flowed naturally until the policy solution, which encompassed too many content in too few classes, when everyone was already thinking about the projects and (I think) was struggling to know what was most important from all the content covered - Give equal or similar weight to all potential binding constraints (include infrastructure, micro-risks, coordination problems...in the lectures)
 - A little more time to work on the projects and deadlines in the month of April would really help with getting better work done.
 - A one unit course would make sense in future. The TAs could be more responsive and clear when clearing doubts.
 - Every lecture and seminar is packed with in depth and technical information and at times it was difficult to follow the fast pace of the class and absorb all the information.
 - Having some kind of pre-work that would be a crash course on relevant economic concepts, just like even some readings ahead of time.
 - I felt I could have get a better grade in both problem sets but what was expected from them was not clear. There was a feeling that grades were rather random. I think a clear information on what is expected in the problems sets is needed because many students put a lot of hard work that was not focused in the right direction. The lack of these clear instructions also generate a feeling of frustration and being lost in what the TA are expecting. Also, there is ni feedback in PS1.
 - I thought some of the finance parts went too quickly for me and I got lost quickly.
 - I would have preferred a slightly longer seminar with a little more time to work on Stata technical exercises together. However, I appreciate how the seminars were presented currently
 - I would like to have workshops, and slots of hours where we could work and the teacher assistants are there to answer questions or guide us. The office hours where 10 min and only give the chance to ask specific questions.
 - It could be longer – I would make it a year long and go deeper into all aspects.
 - It was not clear what format you wanted the memos -- the questions were helpful to guide what information you needed but the memo "framework" was not clear...every professor at LSE wants a slightly different memo format and it was hard to guess exactly what you wanted for the first two problem sets. Releasing examples ahead of time would be helpful just like the final presentation examples on Moodle.
 - It was really hectic but it was also enjoyable. The class we were in always had technical difficulties. I wish the parts of the course that were not so sensitive could still be recorded.
 - It would be nice to transform it into a 1 unit course.
 - Making it a year long course
 - N/A
 - Office hours could be made longer, I understand the class had 50 students and everyone wanted to book office hours slots. However, 15 minutes never seemed enough given the intensity of the course and the material given to learn.
 - One key point that I would like to highlight is about the grading system. To me, it seems that the maximum mark that one could get in this course is 70. And if this is the case, I would not be able to get distinction. Most courses that I have taken at LSE give 75 points.
- I received 70 points for my first problem set and this mark makes me thing about the system. In fact, I received emails from the lecturer congratulating me for the work done, and even asking whether my work can be post as an example for the rest of the class. If that is the case, I am wondering why 70?
- For the second problem set, I received 65. I have some reservations about this mark, as one feedback point, among other points, was to analyze material from week 7 when the task was submitted in week 6.
- There is one more assignment to handle and considering that 70 would be the maximum score in the subject, it would be impossible to get distinction for this class. This is deeply disappointing given the time and effort that I have dedicated to this subject and makes me think, from an optimizing point of view, that it is better to focus on other subjects that gives more marks and not to put more effort in the final assignment for this course.
- Providing rubric for marking beforehand and feedback ahead of the next problem set. More spaced out course (1 unit)
 - The class could be longer, or at least, make the term longer (at least until April), so there is more time to process everything.
 - The course covers a lot of material so it would be useful to have some more time to go through all instead of having to present right away at the end of term
 - The only thing I would improve is the assesment structure. Although very relevant for the final assignment, it would be good if individual assesments built more on one another.
 - The report and presentation are a bit rushed - it would be better to have some time to digest the course materials, and for the report and presentation to be due in the summer term.

- The workload in this course is very large and should be distributed throughout the semester instead of all being concentrated towards the end. There should be more opportunities to discuss and learn from the feedback given on problem sets so that students know what is expected of them.
- There are several aspects of the course I did not enjoy.

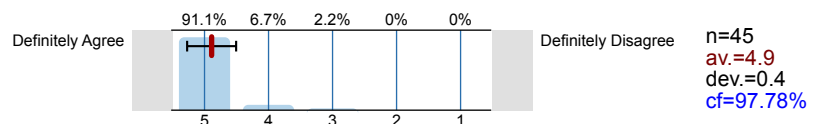
First, while I understand that not all evidence supports the story and that it can be mixed, especially in the context of poor data collection and provision in least developed nations, **it often seemed like the narrative was more important than facts**. Particularly, the same findings were sometimes used for differing conclusions which also strengthens my first point about narrative being more important than findings and being selective about the latter.

Second, **feedback and support were factually not as good as expected and announced**. While Miguel offered great insights, the TAs usually referred to him for more complex questions we needed support on (basic questions we are able to figure out ourselves). We did not receive any feedback on PS1 and only got the grade for it like 20 hours before submission of PS2 with little to no time to learn from our grades (especially due to a lack of feedback). The expectations what comprises a good PS were not that clear in advance either which also leads me to my next critique.

Third, grading seemed unreasonable and partial (especially as there was no feedback provided for PS1). My grade for a memo describing graphs (!) and providing tentative explanations was more than 15 points worse than the second worst grade I have ever received for any kind of memo (analytical or political/sociological/philosophical). Every comparable analytical memo (not political/sociological/philosophical ones) I have written usually resulted in high distinction grades without even putting in much effort. As PS1 was not conceptually demanding **I do not understand how this very simple memo was graded at all**. Also, objectively, my PS1 was not lacking background information or tentative explanations for observed phenomena compared to the best memos uploaded on Moodle (language could have been polished more but that barely justifies a almost 20 point differential). **Grades seemed very partial which is disappointing**. In feedback for PS2 a certain Latin America bias of the TAs became apparent as results for African countries (which showed much higher education premiums) were deemed unrealistic despite them stemming from a perfectly well specified regression model and several robustness checks. Feedback instead rigidly referred the exact specification covered in the seminar which was used in Honduras which did not make sense in our case as 70% of the population has got no schooling at all and primary completion is 20% (hence we used a slightly different experience measure and were critiqued for that).

Fourth and lastly, I believe **attendance/participation is obsolete after increasing the class size**. While the atmosphere in the lectures was still largely pleasant and open, the class size was just too big for everyone to comfortably contribute advantaging extroverts (even when their inputs were not helpful). I get that a public policy class may want to take into account the ability to engage in discussions, however, I think the concept is better suited in a smaller class size.
- There is a lot of material to cover, the way it's being taught in class makes it simple and easier to understand, however the classes are not recorded. I would have loved to go back to some of the classes and review the topics.
- This course has a particularly heavy workload (comparably more than other half-unit courses). The timing of the final submissions (final presentation and report) could be scheduled to come after the teaching term to provide students some time to engage further with the material and absorb this for the purposes of improving their report.
- Time, too many topics for only half unit course.
- Timing with regards to capstone submission deadline. Already discussed in the last lecture + raised by the professor as aspect to improve next year.
- Unfortunately, the course has been let down by the quality of the seminars and the teaching assistants. The seminars, for the most part, provided little value on top of the lectures. The teaching assistants struggled to explain course content and stata programming in a coherent and accurate manner. For example, balance of payments concepts were explained incorrectly, which further confused rather than clarified the concepts for students. Moreover, the teaching assistants did not clearly communicate ex ante their expectations for the course assignments. In fact, conflicting advice was often given. For example, the class was told on some occasions ex acne to not go beyond the graphs generated by the code provided for assignment 1 and to focus on the data, but was told ex post that students needed to go beyond the data and the course content and to do extra research. More generally, the feedback received on the assessments often felt arbitrary and unhelpful. While this often happens in real world work places, it is not conducive to a good and fair learning environment. It has meant that marks too have felt arbitrarily and inconsistently given, which has detracted from the overall experience. **My suggestion is to get rid of the seminars and replace them with fortnightly check ins with each of the groups to track progress on their growth diagnostics. I also suggest that greater efforts are taken to standardise marking and provide a lot more clarity ex ante on the expectations around assessments**. The teaching assistants would benefit from pedagogy training.
- Work load could be regulated, as the content is very interesting but I got lost in the amount of work needed to be submitted
- more time for seminars

1.8) Overall, I am satisfied with the quality of this course.

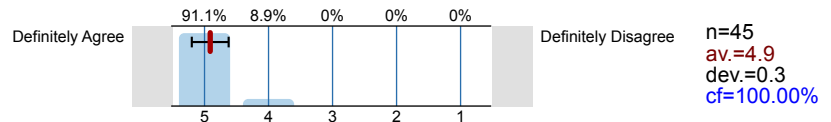


3. Miguel Santos - was my teacher

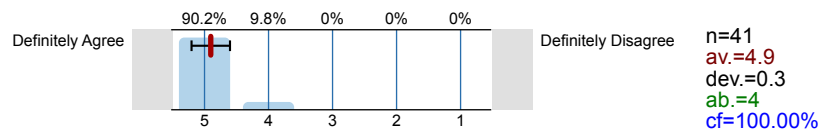
3.1)



3.2) The teacher communicated ideas and concepts effectively.



3.3) The feedback I received from this teacher has helped my learning and performance (select N/A if another teacher was responsible for providing you with feedback for this course)



3.4) Please comment on aspects of this teacher's teaching you think were particularly good.

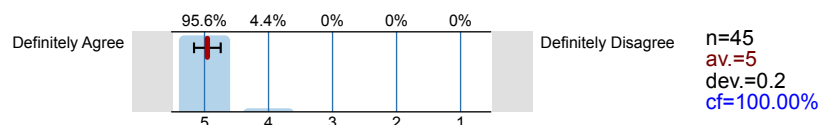
- **Amazing quality of teaching**
- **Teacher very careful of students' reactions, and focused on involving students in the discussion (for that, the surveys before lectures were key)**
- **Honesty in everything said in class, good or bad**
- .
- **200% contribution and support to the students.**
- Besides the structure, my favourite part about the course was how it was taught. Not all courses intend to make you feel invested and connected to the material, this course, the professors and teachers managed to that very well. And **I don't think effective teaching is appreciated as much at LSE. (It should be!)**
- **Dr Santos is very knowledgeable and was very approachable both in and outside of the class, so the students could access the valuable resource that his knowledge has. He made efforts to make the class inclusive and always remembered people's names which was both humanising and useful to create a motivating learning environment.**
- **Excellent quality teaching, draws from personal experience without drowning in it, always to explain the applications of a bigger issue. Excellent communicator and approachable**
- **Fantastic teacher in all aspects**
- Good communication with clear language and intuitive explanations. Very approachable and likeable in general. **Showed genuine interest in students and radiates passion for the subject.**
- Great way of teaching, enthusiastic about growth diagnostics and includes real-life examples and research. Conveys content clearly and is able to hold the attention of the class. Uses tools to monitor class participation and ensure an equal and inclusive participation.
- He is a great communicator, the ideas are clear and he motivates people to talk, making the class really dynamic
- **He is a great person and even better teacher. Passionate about his course and brings tons of experience to the job. LSE will have a hard time finding a replacement.**
- **He is the best professor I have ever had.** He is a very humble person and a brilliant academic at the same time. Is not solely important to be a successful technician if you don't know how to communicate with students and care about their learning process. **Miguel has the extreme ability to explain complex things in an easier way and inspire people.** For sure **this is the most valuable course** that is going to give me company once working after finishing the MPA.
- He worked very hard to make concepts clear and be available to students.
- His enthusiasm, his insights, his clearness in communication.
- His passion and commitment with the course and its contents. I deeply value **his desire to constantly improve the course.** He explains very clearly and in a very engaging way.
- I think Miguel's enthusiasm for the topic is what made it so interesting to me. I also really liked his anecdotes and how everything was really rooted in practice.
- Is brilliant, and very committed to the course and students.
- Miguel is a clearly a talented and motivated educator who cares about the learning outcomes of his students. He puts in so much effort into preparing classes that deliver interesting and insightful content. **He also created a safe and productive environment that was conducive to class discussions**
- Miguel is amazing – an incredible **commitment to teaching and making sure the class actually imparts knowledge to students.**
- **Personalized teaching**
- See above. In addition: Miguel is highly experienced, encourages participation from all students, clearly puts time into designing a course that is stimulating, cohesive and logically structured.
- See above. **Miguel is unbelievable and a big loss for LSE.**
- Style in communicating a complex concept in an engaging way with examples.

- The class is interactive, the teacher really takes time to prepare a customized class for their students. He also provides information and resources that is new and valuable. The class is thought-provoking and even with the hard work, **makes you have "fun" rather than feel "torture"**
- The fact that each example and case study provided is a project he worked on gave us more insight into learning the different concepts. In addition, **using his connections to expand our knowledge was also beneficial.**
- **The feedback for the first two problem sets was very comprehensive.**
- The teacher was amazing, prepared the class before and deeply knowledge of all topics
- You can tell he enjoys what he does and to teach, that makes the class very enjoyable and interesting.
- You can tell the professor cares about the topic and his students; not that often have a professor I feel comfortable to bring my questions to. Very good professor

3.5) Please comment on aspects of this teacher's teaching you think could be improved.

- -
- .
- Don't have any complaint
- He spoke **a little too quickly**/things went **a little too fast in lectures** so I often left confused.
- I can't think of anything – **gold standard for others to aspire to.**
- I don't know
- If Dr Santos himself could offer some overarching feedback on the assessments in this course during the lectures, that would be really helpful.
- More time in explaining concepts
- N/A
- N/A
- No notes to improve
- None
- None. TAs could be clearly improved though, see above.
- Nothing
- Perhaps **working with the TAs a bit more to make sure that expectations and marking around assignments are consistent and made clear to all students ex ante.**
- **The fact that participation makes up 10% of the grade was however quite stressful for some people, as it puts more pressure and might prevent an organic, natural participation in class.**
- **There are a lot of graphs and information presented in class but it is not always clear how you arrived and these graphs. It would be helpful if you could explain more of the process and not just the result**-- and also explain creative solutions for countries where not all the data is available. Growth diagnostics broadly could be improved by explaining more of the step by step and not just the answer to the specific prior questions or symptoms.

3.6) Overall, I am satisfied with the teaching by this teacher on the course.



4. Finally - Thank you for taking part

Understanding your experience of this course is important to us. So thank you.

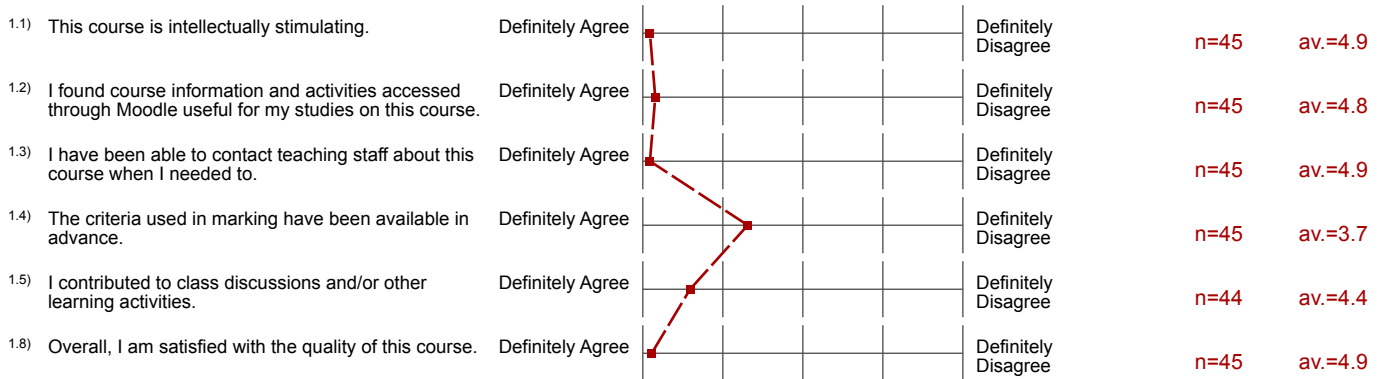
Please now click on "Submit" on the bottom right of this page.

Profile

Subunit: PP - Public Policy
 Responsible for modules: Santos
 Name of the course: Growth Diagnostics in Development: Theory and Practice
 (Name of the survey)

Values used in the profile line: Mean

1. Section 1 - Course Questions



3. Miguel Santos - was my teacher

