



PPHA 37040 1 - Economic Growth and Development: Theory and Policy - Instructor(s) Miguel Santos

Project Title: **Graduate Course Feedback - Winter 2025**

Number Enrolled: **22**

Number of Responses: **13**

Report Comments

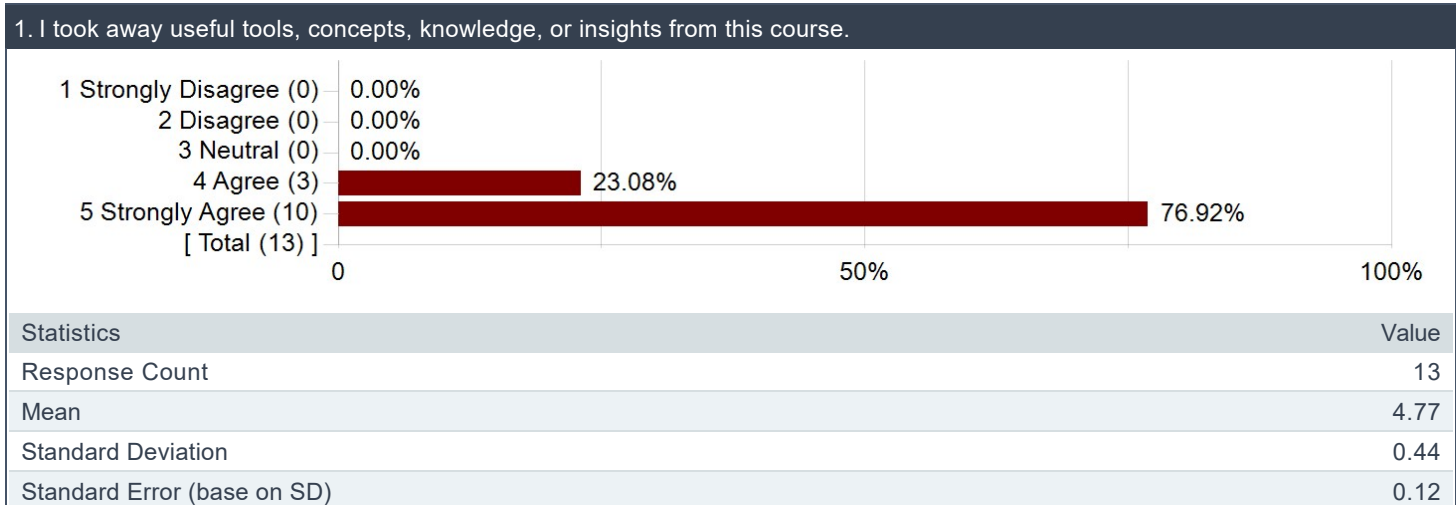
Opinions expressed in these evaluations are those of students enrolled in the specific course and do not represent the University.

Creation Date: **Monday, March 31, 2025**

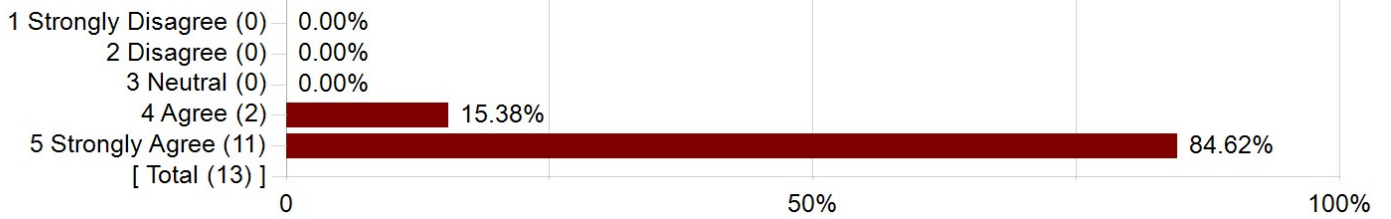
Please review and evaluate your work in this course overall.

Comments
Did well.
I love Prof. Santos. He is the first professor who ever wrote me an email to answer a question I mentioned in the class survey. He is wonderful and super easy-going.
One of the best courses that you can take in Harris. Yes it can be a little bit busy, but at least you feel like you are learning something. Professor is very enthusiastic about the subjects and made an amazing job to channel his own experiences.
Overall, I found the topics covered in this class highly engaging and valuable. We explored key concepts such as the Economic Complexity Index, National Financial Health, and Binding Constraints of an Economy. Through active participation, I gained insightful perspectives from professors and guest lecturers on economic growth, which have broadened my understanding and provided a strong foundation for future research. Given the depth of learning and opportunities this course offered, I would rate my experience a 5 out of 5.
I put a lot of time on this class and did well.
This course is structured around a final capstone project applying the growth diagnostic theory of economic development to a country. This course is really interesting, Professor Santos is amazing, and I developed useful skills in analyzing an array of economic indicators and writing policy-style reports. I found it challenging to transition between the in-person/virtual weeks and the group project was a bit stressful. I would recommend this course to anyone interested in economically analyzing a particular country.
Very practical one of the best courses at Harris School, I loved the course content and instructor
One of the best classes I've taken at Harris (Top2 for sure)!! I really enjoyed the content of the class and how there was a very structured framework and approach to solving economic development problems, and the Professor and TAs ensured that we could have all the resources possible to work on the growth diagnostics. I also appreciated how the data analysis was integrated in solving the problem and providing evidence for our arguments, instead of stand alone assignments that were there just for the sake of answering a question. In terms of the final project, I will say a lot of it is based on teammates and it is for sure a lot of work, but it is definitely rewarding and very interesting to dive deeper into a country and attempt to understand what is hindering its growth.

Please review and evaluate the course on the following:

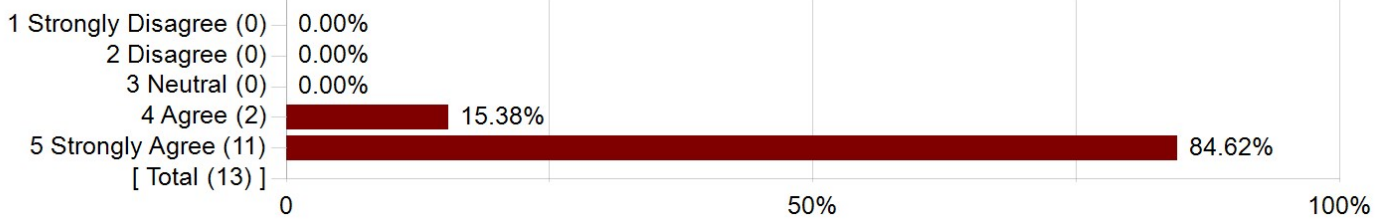


2. I received regular, effective feedback to help me understand where I was in the learning process.



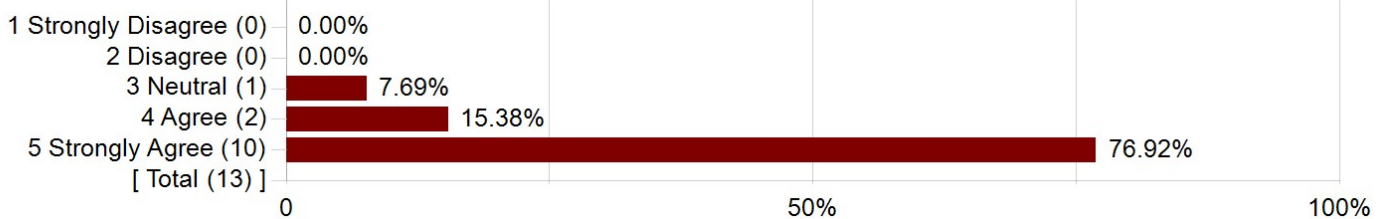
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	4.85
Standard Deviation	0.38
Standard Error (base on SD)	0.10

3. I would recommend this course to other students.



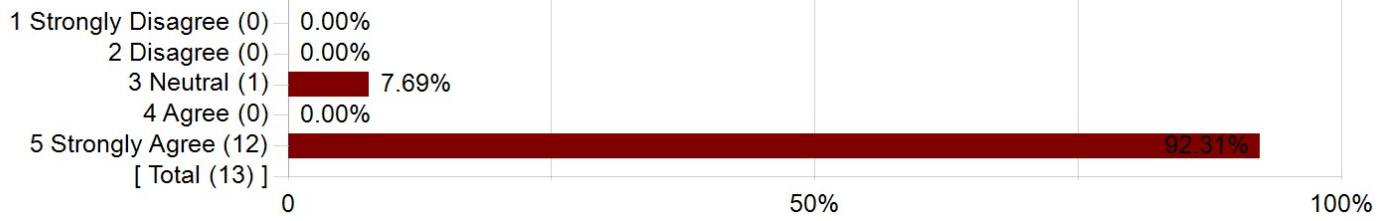
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	4.85
Standard Deviation	0.38
Standard Error (base on SD)	0.10

4. The material in this course was constructively challenging.



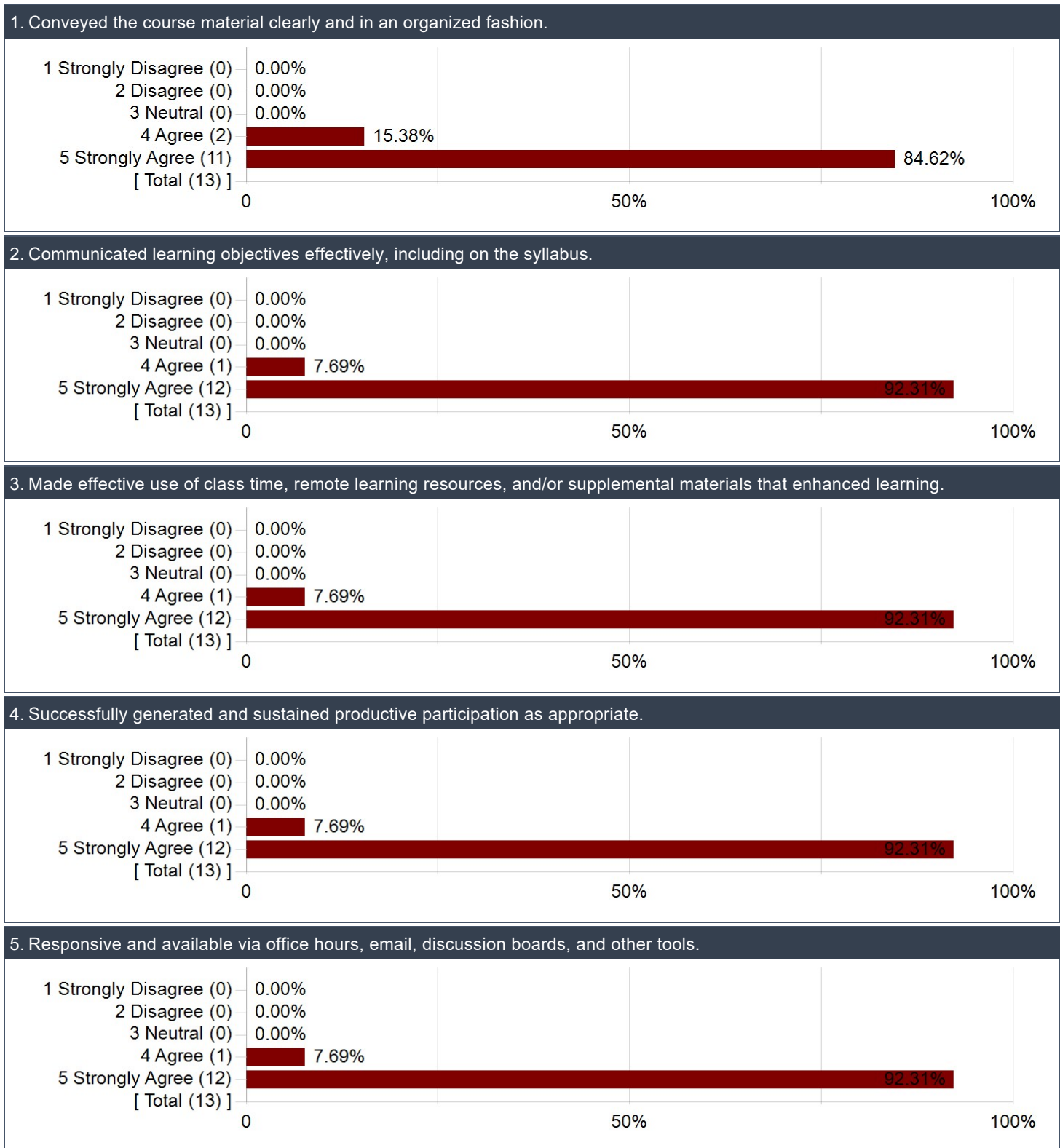
Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	4.69
Standard Deviation	0.63
Standard Error (base on SD)	0.17

5. I felt that the classroom was an inclusive learning environment for me.



Statistics	Value
Response Count	13
Mean	4.85
Standard Deviation	0.55
Standard Error (base on SD)	0.15

Please review and evaluate the faculty on the following:



Please elaborate on any of your responses above.

Comments
Best class I've taken at Harris so far. The professor is amazing, and the class material is incredibly relevant and challenging yet rewarding.
Prof Santos is very enthusiastic, engaging, knowledgeable, and great at explaining. The TAs are also helpful and nice, especially Astari.
The class is interesting and has broad topics to cover. However, due to the limitation of lecture time, some topics may be dropped or added based on the need of that quarter. There is a reasonable amount of reading across the quarter. Be sure to read them before coming to the class; you will learn a lot from discussion. For problem sets, my teammates and I have learned a lot from utilizing the researching tools and finishing the final analysis of a country, although the workload is larger than most of Harris Master's Classes.
I highly recommend this class, as the professor not only keeps the students actively engaged but also has meticulously structured the course. The material is thoughtfully organized and builds toward meaningful outcomes.
Future courses should better organize the Canvas page and upload readings directly—often times, the links posted did not work and I could not access the course materials.
He is very practical, conveyed concepts very deeply and clearly, fully committed to the course
Although I personally did not participate a huge ton, I think the environment is very welcoming and the Professor tries his best to encourage people who haven't spoken to speak.

What aspects of the instructor's teaching contributed most and least to your learning?

Comments
Experience and insights.
Organized slides and clear, engaging explanations by the professor.
useful powerpoints, formulas, theories. And the readings are fun.
His inclusive and understanding approach
Professor Santos is humorous, approachable, and always willing to help. He effectively draws from his years of experience working in developing countries to illustrate course concepts with real-world examples. When relevant, he leverages his resources to invite guest speakers who provide practical insights, broadening students' perspectives.
The course has well-defined objectives, the professor always stays on top of things, and very engaging content.
Professor Santos fostered an incredibly inclusive learning environment—he learned our names and often included our perspectives in the slides. Although remote for a few weeks, he was always accessible via email. I really enjoyed his lectures, especially given his real-world experience working in Namibia, Jordan, and Chiapas. He also encouraged participation in lectures through the different mini-questions and quizzes, which helped me stay engaged and check my learning.
Practical experiences, tools and frameworks
The course had a clear objective: using data to deconstruct national development issues. The professor was excellent—his thinking was exceptionally clear, and listening to him speak and teach was genuinely enjoyable.
The Professor has a lot of lived experiences and he was very willing to share how he navigated working with different stakeholders and governmental officials, and how the projects were taken to implementation. He was also very reflective and obviously very passionate about the topic, and really patient when you ask questions. The readings were generally very supportive to understanding the content, and the problem sets were reasonable, especially given that the TAs provided the codes and walked through them over TA sessions. Guest speakers were also superb and on spot.

Please suggest any changes that could improve this course (e.g., class material, class structure, assignments, inclusive pedagogy).

Comments
Cant think of any
I hope the professor could have been here in person for the whole quarter. I miss him.
I would suggest the format of assignments could be more diverse, like having online discussion which could count to participation.
Better organized Canvas page with the readings uploaded.
its one of the best
I would have liked the course to be more quantitative (as some students, including myself, were particularly curious about this aspect). Furthermore, I think the lack of a stronger quantitative foundation contributed to some ambiguity in definitions, which led to an endless range of plausible explanations—each of which made sense in its own way.
Personally, because the growth diagnostics of my country involved coordination failures, I would appreciate a class on how to apply market failures to a country and how to find evidence for that (I understand that the concept was taught over core courses, but would be interested in learning how that applies in this scenario). Other than that, I think the topics are really helpful in grasping the big picture, and definitely appreciate all the case studies.

Please comment on how respected, valued, and included you felt as a participant in the course.

Comments
very valued and respected
Very good
5 out of 5.
Very respected and valued.
I felt very respected and included in the course.
All the time
Very respected, valued, and included, as the Professor goes out of the way to provide office hour chats or after class discussion time. I would personally prefer a little bit more time to ask questions in class, but the content is usually dense anyway.

Please include the name of the TA you are evaluating. What aspects of the TA's teaching contributed most to your learning? What could the TA modify to help you learn more? Please include any additional feedback for the TA.

Comments
Both TAs were good. Especially Astari
Astari and Jose were both incredibly helpful and contributed a lot to the entire course. Their sessions were critical to get the most out of the class.
Both Astari and Jose are good and helpful. Jose gave very detailed feedbacks, but was sometimes harsh at grading.
Great TAs. Astari is super kind.
Astari was good. Jose is good too, but he is a little bit harsh with the grading.
Jose Miguel and Astari are wonderful. 5 out of 5.
José Miguel and Astari were good TAs. Always tried to help.
Jose Miguel Pascual and Astari Raihanah were the TAs for this course. They were incredibly accessible and helpful, especially in preparing the different Problem Sets and Final Project. I always attended their TA section because they did a great job explaining coding techniques and data analysis strategies to strengthen our assignments.
Astari – Very caring, supportive and generous in feedback and queries
José Miguel Pascual (Excellent) Astari Raihanah (Excellent)
Astari and Jose were absolutely fantastic! They were really willing to go out of their ways to get resources and find help, and their gave detailed feedback for our assignments. The codes were extremely clear and helpful as well.

