

Course evaluation for GEOM09 2019 based on (oral and written) responses by the students

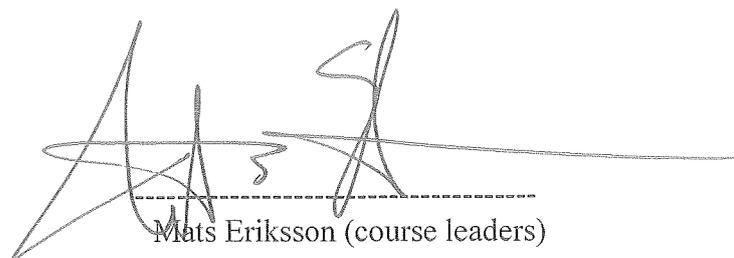
Based on the response by the students and our personal impression, it seems that most students rank the course very high (in similarity with previous years). As we continuously strive at improving GEOM09, we are obviously happy to get this positive feedback! The level of the course is a rather difficult issue since it is a MSc course with students from different study backgrounds and originating from multiple countries. However, based on the course evaluations, it seems that the current level is appropriate. Furthermore, based on evaluations dating back to 2015 (then GEOM04), we introduced the individual project earlier in the course this and last year but also scheduled the presentations earlier. This seems to have worked well since there are no students this year commenting that the work load is slightly biased towards the end of the course. Although this is all very pleasing, for next year, we might nonetheless consider scheduling the final presentations one week earlier in order for the students to be able to focus more on the final exam the last week. As with previous years, it seems as if we cannot stress enough (at the beginning of the course) that the students need to plan their time carefully and start early with the individual projects. It also pleases us immensely to hear that all excursions were well received and greatly appreciated. This was the second year that we ran the excursion to Denmark (Fur, Mors, and Faxe) and it had been improved since the first time with the inclusion of new in-field student tasks. However, one student noted that we could also arrange more formal discussions in the field, which is something that we will look into. There is also the possibility of extending the excursion slightly, either by including, for example, a trip to Geocenter Møn and/or adding localities in southern Jutland. Continued discussions and evaluations by the course leaders will address this issue next year. This year we also introduced a new part of the course; “the microscopic world” in which the students after introductory lectures and practical guidance, worked independently on “blind samples”. They practiced picking, sorting and identifying microfossils, which eventually resulted in an oral presentation and discussion. This course segment was highly regarded by the students and is therefore something that we will include also next year. The guest lectures were highly appreciated and we as in-house teachers see it as a good learning experience for the students to meet teachers also from other departments and countries. We are further very pleased with the fact that the students have shown appreciation for the uniqueness of our course, and that they get to experience an unusually broad range of paleontology-related topics and issues (notably including the trip to the *10 Tons* studios in Copenhagen, the cross-disciplinary exercise and lecture by Emma Hammarlund, and the opportunity of meeting and learning from the fossil preparator Frank Oesbæck in Denmark). Obviously, guest lectures are somewhat difficult to evaluate as we do not know what can be expected next year and which teachers will eventually show up. We do, however, hope to be able to continue with guest lectures. In short, we feel very pleased with how the course has continuously evolved, and that some previous issues have now been taken care of. Nevertheless, courses should be dynamic, and we will strive at further strengthening and developing the course in the future.

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Johan Lindgren

and



Mats Eriksson (course leaders)



Clarence Lagerstam (course representative)

Course evaluation 2019: GEOM09 Summary based on three students

1. How did you perceive the course in general (from 1-5, where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent)?

(1) (2) (3) (4) 33% (5) 67%

2. How did you perceive the level of the course (from 1-5, where 1 is too simple and 5 is too difficult)?

(1) (2) (3) 33% (4) 67% (5)

3. How easy was it to keep your level of interest up during the course (from 1-5, where 1 is difficult and 5 is easy)?

(1) (2) (3) 33% (4) (5) 67%

4. Did you miss something on the course? If so, what?

One student suggested to perhaps integrate more exercises into the course (instead of seminars). Other students had nothing to add here.

5. How could we improve the course?

Comments:

#One student wished to have a home exam instead of a written exam at the university.

6. Potential views on the lectures?

Comments:

#Top class and very rewarding with different teachers who have all been great and very inspiring.

#Good and easy to understand and follow.

7. Potential views on the labs and seminars?

Comments:

#Labs were positive as they allowed us to reinforce aspects we had learned about.

#Perfect! Difficult but very good learning experiences and exciting. Especially the lab of Emma H.

8. Potential views on the excursions?

Comments:

#Really nice and the fossils were the best I have ever seen. Going to the museums was also really great as sometimes in fieldtrips you do not get to see what you are supposed to, and learn about.

#A privilege to hear and see, and Frank was a true highlight! Make sure more students get to meet him.

#Great, perhaps more structured discussions in the field instead of the small handouts we did.

9. Other issues?

Comments:

#Thanks for a fantastic fun and inspiring course!

Thanks for participating in this course evaluation! Johan Lindgren and Mats Eriksson (course leaders)