

PP - Public Policy  
 Course Name: Quantitative Approaches and Policy Analysis



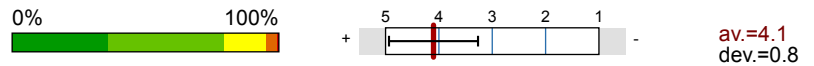
Course ID: 01-PP455\_AT25

Course Convenor: Dr Jeremiah Dittmar  
 Subject of Survey: Section 1

No. of overall course survey responses = 94 Response rate =64.8%

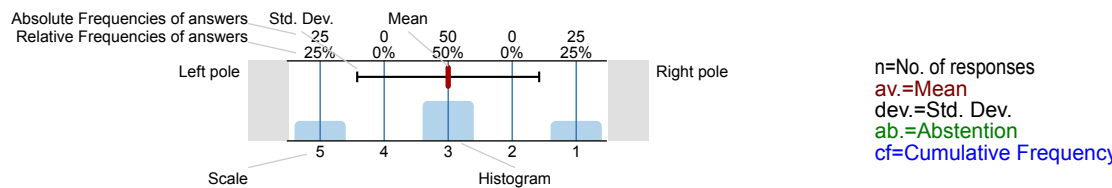
Overall indicators

Course Questions Section Average



Legend

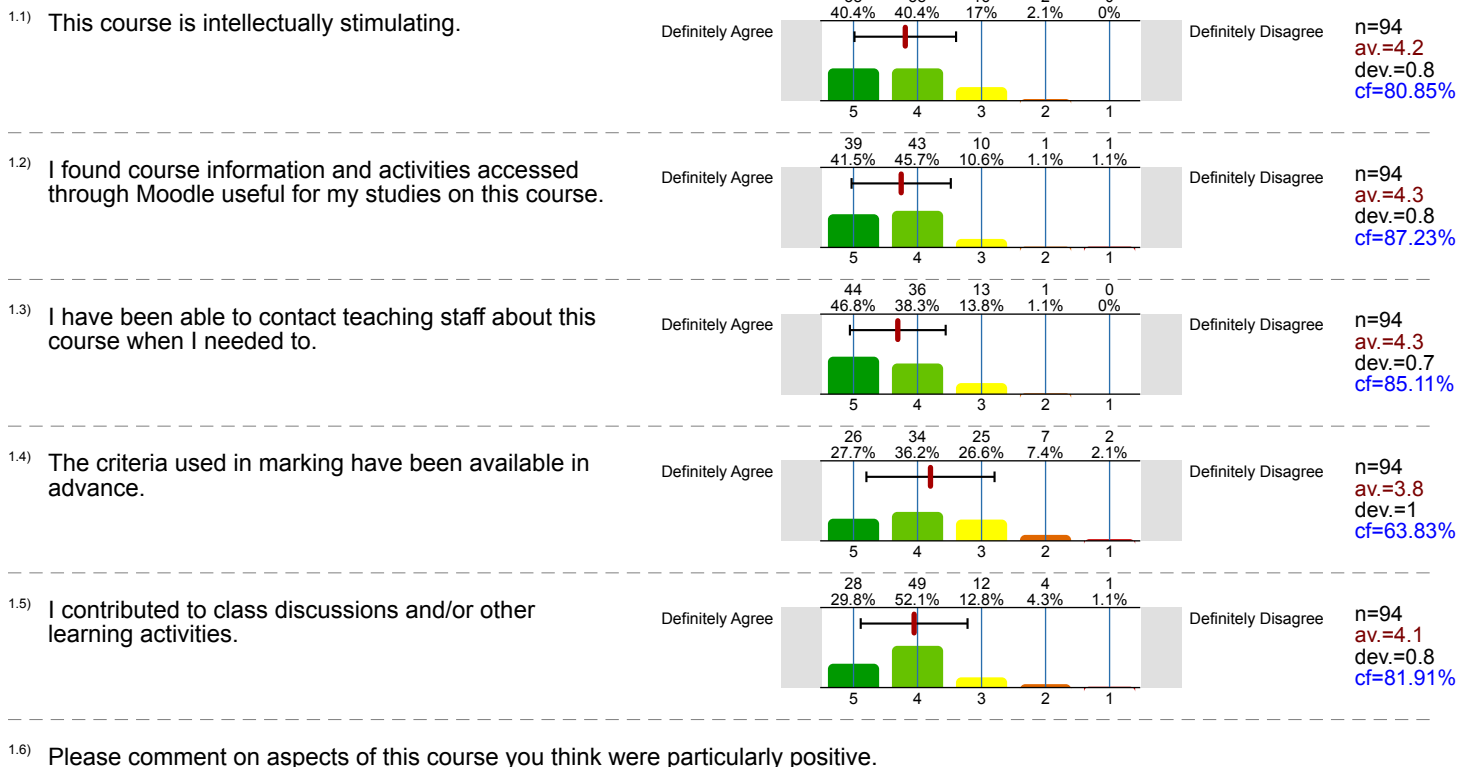
Question text



1. Course Questions

Course Survey Introduction:

Please comment on your course as a whole (lectures and seminars) in the course question section of the survey and please use the teacher section to submit comments on your individual teachers (lecturer and/or seminar teacher). Please ensure that any feedback you provide is constructive as 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. Please see this page for more information on LSE's course surveys.



■ Appreciate the teaching staff taking the input given by multiple students through the student body to revisit some of the difficult topics, inclusion of graphics and more examples during lectures. It was also encouraging to see that feedback given around the group switches have also been considered which is truly appreciated.

- As someone with no prior experience of quantitative methods, I find the course challenging, but manageable nonetheless. I appreciate that important concepts are discussed repeatedly in multiple lectures. This provides for greater clarity, and gives me the sense that my understanding is unfolding iteratively.
- As someone without any econometrics experience before this class, I feel like I am generally able to follow along and at this point feel confident with applying the concepts we have learned.
- Cases and real-word examples.
- Covers a wide range of statistical concepts.
- From the start, it was clear in how the content of the class would help us in our policy careers. There was a very smooth transition from math camp to the many course.
- Gives a strong foundation on quantitative concepts for policy analysis.
- Good connection between theory and policy applications. Good use of group work and seminar to build on lectures.
- I enjoyed when we the regression structure was explained, and how it was used in examples.
- I find the course very useful because of its value in supporting decision-making in public policy.
- I found the course to be intellectually stimulating, and as someone coming from a qualitative background, beneficial to expanding my skillset. In particular, I found the seminars to be reflective of course material and helpful for learning the foundations of quantitative analysis. Those extra 1.5 hours were where I believe I was able to learn most of the material, with a smaller class size able to ask more questions, dissect problem sets and grasp confusing concepts more clearly.
- I learnt a lot of new tools to analyze data. Particularly, in seminars, I had enough opportunities to ask my questions. The syllabus is quite comprehensive.
- I like that the course repeated concepts and that I felt like I was applying knowledge from previous session in future sessions.  
The presentation slides were easy to follow.
- incentive to work in group
- Intellectually stimulating concepts.
- I really enjoyed the seminar sessions, and the problem sets are very useful in consolidating and putting into practice key concepts.
- I think the course does really well at teaching the basics of econometrics. The repetitiveness has helped a lot in my understanding of regressions and how it applies to public policy. Because of this course I feel that my understanding of quantitative studies has increased significantly.
- I think the seminata sessions were particularly helpful.
- I think this course is challenging in a very good way. It is probably the most valuable class in the program as it teaches quantitative sills that the majority of students in the program do not have (including myself).
- I think Thomas Monk tries his best to explain and Jeremiah is very kind and nice.
- I thought that, in spite of the subject matter, I had a lot of fun in this class. I was engaged and felt that I was able to get a grasp of the course material.
- It is well structured and the team takes time to answer all of our questions and to explain things with a reasonable pace.
- Lecture is extremely abstract and has no minimal connection to the problem sets and the seminars.
- My favorite course though it's very difficult for me. I like the combination between theoritical and practical side of the course
- N/a
- Problem questions matching class topics were sometimes helpful for conceptual understanding  
Case studies are helpful in lectures to engage more with the topics, and Jeremiah does a good job in trying to get engagement from students in lecutres.
- Problem sets and seminar discussion really helped promote learning
- Seminars are extremely helpful in taking out the pace and allowing for questions.  
I also understand the material much much better after
- Seminar were very helpful-
- The content has started from the basics, which helps us developing skills and knowledge to be prepared for next term topics.
- The course content is essential for professional development, and the related activities were very helpful
- The course content is thoughtfully designed for students learning quantitative analysis in public policy, as it covers both the

mathematical foundations and the analytical applications. It strikes an effective balance by not delving too deeply into technical statistics, which might be overwhelming for those without a STEM background.

Coming from a STEM background myself, and comparing it with the statistical courses I took during my undergraduate studies, I appreciate that this course places greater emphasis on analysing and interpreting statistical results rather than mechanically solving statistical problems. This approach feels more aligned with the practical needs of policy analysis.

- The course content was curated towards public policy. The topics we explored were relevant, their application and their limitations were clear. Intuition was built - which was the most important part.
- The course covers interesting and relevant material on econometrics and statistics that could be useful for a career in policy.
- The course provides useful and relevant information for quantitative methods of research that I hope will be useful to me in the future. The policy applications studied in lecture are also helpful for illustrating topics and key concepts.
- The group assignments in the weekly problem sets were helpful. I also found the seminar classes particularly valuable and learned more from the TA's explanations.
- The introduction to Stata software and providing a solid basis for quantitative thinking. The classes clarify the concepts from lecture.
- The lectures and seminars help improve understanding of unfamiliar econometrics concepts.
- the lectures and seminars were rigorous and explained the content well
- The lecturing, given the content, has been well-done. However, particular thanks to TA Tom Mounk, who has done invaluable work re-affirming and further explaining core concepts and problems of the course.
- The professor makes a clear effort to engage students with the material and encourage participation during the lectures.
- The seminars are fun and the problem sets are stimulating.
- The seminars with Thomas were particularly helpful; his teaching style and presence really brought the rather dry material to life. I'm not a quant fan by nature, but he is helping.
- This course is generally the most challenging one but both the professor and TA are very involved in making sure we understand thoroughly which I deeply appreciate
- This course provides good foundational skills in quantitative assessments and interpretations of data and policies. It is mostly taught in an accessible manner, especially for those with no background in statistics or econometrics. I find working in groups for the problem sets a good way to learn from my classmates and share ideas about the meaning and interpretation of types of data, and the real-life implications. I appreciate that the weekly problem sets involve real world data and applications of the skills we are developing to real world scenarios. I think the course is taught at an appropriate pace. I can clearly see how each week's content connects to broader ideas and concepts of statistics over the term.
- Tom monk! Great TA very good at explaining things
- very interesting content, particularly useful to mingle pur statistics with real world public policy issues. the gradual introduction of concepts provided ample opportunities to understand them. The problem sets also really helped put our knowledge into practice
- We go deep into a lot of concepts, which is nice.

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

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- Consider teaching R instead of Stata.
- Feedback on the formative assignments would be helpful to have in order to know what criteria to follow for when we have graded assignments in the winter term.
- Frequent class allocation should be decreased. The room where the lectures are conducted is not convenient.
- Groupwork can be a bit challenging if some individuals drive the discussions and if others don't really participate or contribute. It works well for a formative setting, but I do worry about how this would work when the assignments become summative.
- I feel like I'm almost doing two different classes at the same time because the lecture and the problem sets rarely have anything to do with each other. So to me (I've never done Stata before and haven't done math since high school) it feels like I'm at the same time learning stata and then also learning all of the theoretical math that has no connection to the stata though.
- I think presenting from the beginning what exactly we need to retain from such course could be helpful as the couple first weeks felt overwhelming since we didn't know what exactly we should know by heart and what exactly we just need to comprehend
- I think the lectures could have been more clear. I found my seminars to be more engaging in terms of better understanding the course material.
- I think this course has a lot to improve, for example give more examples on classes on how to apply the concept to a real world situation. We have been the hole semester talking about class size.

- I think this course is already structured very well, starting with the basics of econometrics, and slowly moving toward more tangible conceptual policy applications. I do, however, believe we would have benefitted more from doing some sample questions in class. I understand the exam is not for a while, but the professors switch after term, and to my understanding, so does the focal point of material. As such, doing a bit more practice on formula knowledge, wording, and more with Jeremiah would have been a bit more helpful prior to winter break. Providing a bit more information and material to study / pinpoint what students need to focus on for the exam.
- It is a lot of new content to absorb in a short amount of time. I suppose the lack of 1-to-1 coaching for stata meant I had to get a few tutoring sessions. Also, some of the lectures were delivered over multiple weeks, which meant that following the teaching was far more difficult than the better format of 1 week, 1 topic.
- It would be better if the course aligned with the seminar. In the seminars, we were required to complete assignments on content that we hadn't covered in class, and at a level much more difficult than what the course had prepared us for.
- I understand teaching to people with such different backgrounds can be challenging but I think it would be helpful for professors to know their audience. Even the examples they give in lectures are hard to follow because most of us haven't read Oscar Wilde.
- I understand that the repetitiveness of the regression techniques is important to get us to understand it, however I find the course, especially the lectures to be very unstimulating. The professor introduces examples before explaining concepts so often times I feel lost and can't follow half of the lecture until our TA goes over the concepts in our seminar.
- I wish the regression structure was elaborated on more, and just drilled into us. Also, it feels like we waste a lot of time on learning Stata for it to not matter much in our seminars. I wish there were practice problems we could do on our own time.
- I would encourage the lecturer go slower over the more complex concepts and ideas. I would also like to see more practical applications of what we learn to careers in policy-making. For example, it would be good to learn more about how government agencies actually use statistics and data to inform policy, as opposed to just analysing the data itself.
- I would have appreciated feedback on turned in assignments so that we better knew what we should be turning in for next term.
- I would love to have a clearer picture of what we are working towards. On our quest to find causality, we still don't have an answer after a full term - we seem to still just uncover problems. It would be super cool to get a sneak peak of a best-practice "causality research set up", just to understand what we're working towards and keep motivation high.
- Lectures are hard to follow, questions in the problem sets were not always clear. I would have preferred it much more to use R-Studio, because it is much more useful for any potential career in my opinion.
- Lectures are sometimes all over the place. A lot of students don't seem to know whats going on (it doesn't seem level, especially in the group projects where often 1-2 people pull the work), should have some sort of team member evaluations because a lot of people show up to meetings not having done the problem sets which is unfair and not conducive to learning.
- Lectures could be more engaging
- Lectures were often times very conceptual and dry. Few times felt tone of condescension
- More academic help. The study groups are helpful, but not helpful because everyone has different times and availabilities. I think we need study drop in sessions that TAs/professors hold where you can come and ask questions. 15 minutes is not enough!!!
- more engaging lectures and classes, no feedback provided on formatives
- More initial prep would be appreciated
- More resources for efficiently learning Stata and Stata commands would be useful.  
Perhaps a best practice/tutorial on how to use AI to best learn the commands.  
Perhaps keeping us aware of LSE sessions on data workshops would be useful. Informing us of ways to enhance our skills outside of class.
- More support resources for stata especially at the beginning of the term would be great. There are some resources available through LSE, but the class convenors could do more to promote these, or it would even be great to have special OH sessions for stata help.  
Having a few readings throughout the term that are more applied - thinking about how statistics and econometrics is either used or misused in policy applications - could be interesting and would help people connect the more theory-heavy concepts from class to real world applications.  
It would be useful to have more focus on how to translate the technical work we're doing into laymen's terms - i.e., how would you write a memo to a policymaker that is based on the results of a regression analysis that communicates the rigor of your findings without using jargon that the policymaker will not understand?
- Need more office hours for TAs. Seminar duration should be extended to 2 hours because we rarely finish discussions entirely. Seminar is the best way to understand concept in lecture session, so it needs more time. I am willing to trade off the lecture duration with the seminar duration.
- Perhaps could have catered the course content in a less mathematical manner.
- Some lectures were quite complex and not easy to understand. Maybe this was because I did not have a previous quant background. However, it would be great if the concepts were explained more clearly, if it is possible.
- Some of the things that could make this course more interesting - is the use of examples or true RCT data, or other panel data in

lectures to explore the topic. Another way would be to use 1-2 set examples to explore the various topics taught during the course e. g., taking the worm paper and exploring the various concepts through that paper.

- Sometimes the delivery went too fast for me. Could be because I have no prior knowledge to the Quantitative course prior studying at LSE
- strengthen the learning experience. Many students begin the programme without prior exposure to Stata, and the current pace introduces multiple commands and techniques very suddenly, without a gradual progression. While completing datasets in teams is helpful for practice, it does not replace the need for introductory sessions that build core skills from the beginning. Providing this foundation would allow all students to follow the empirical components more confidently and would support a more accessible learning trajectory for students with diverse backgrounds.
- The Autumn Term does not include any summative assessments, which creates two challenges. First, although we complete weekly formative problem sets, we have not received feedback on our submissions. This makes it difficult to understand the expected standard and to prepare effectively for the higher-weighted summative assessments in the Winter Term. Second, because all Autumn Term assessments are purely formative and feedback is not provided in a timely way, students have less incentive to invest substantial effort. This has been noticeable in group work, where the risk of free-riding appears higher.

These issues could be addressed by introducing a modest summative component to the weekly problem sets (similar to PP440, where a selection of problem sets is randomly graded), or by providing timely feedback. For example, TAs could review common mistakes and misconceptions during seminars after looking over the weekly submissions.

- The course could be better aligned with the exam format. The AT sessions highlight a strong emphasis on Stata, while from what I heard that the exam prioritizes intuition and conceptual understanding. Aligning the weekly problem sets more closely with the exam's structure and expectations would improve preparation.
- The course could benefit from additional applied examples.
- The course lectures are difficult to follow, with what are meant to be clarifying examples making the poorly explained concepts more confusing. Students do not participate out of confusion rather than having no desire to, which the professor does not seem to appreciate. Students are also left to figure out Stata mostly on their own.
- The frequent changes of work teams, while useful for interacting with different people, make it challenging to establish a good working rhythm with others in such a short time.
- the group work felt forced and it would be good for individuals to have the opportunity to complete tasks on their own
- The lecture delivery could have been more engaging with more examples, working through papers, maybe, and the pacing was initially rushed and then slowed down. Having a clear lesson plan for the entire semester could have been beneficial. The STATA exercises were completely separate from the content being taught and this meant a lot of self learning for a course that was new to a lot of people. A lot more cohesion between the lecture - the exercises - the seminar was needed.
- The lectures are often difficult to follow where the concepts are taught in such an abstract manner that they almost seem inaccessible to learn. It is also incredibly difficult to read and attempt to decipher the lecture slides while the professor is talking about the concepts in ways that would require my full attention. Most of what I have learned in this course has been self-taught, a lot of the concepts are overcomplicated in lecture-- they are much clearer and simplified in other teaching materials.
- the lectures could use more interlap between the concepts to understand the bigger pictures of the class (what are we trying to achieve, what each new concept adds to the whole statistics)
- The lectures themselves are not as interesting. Some of the questions in problem sets are confusing. Ideas like dropping, significance of an effect etc. should be better explained in terms what the norms of statistics/literature are. As non statistic people we don't know what makes a change significant (if its only 0.001 different vs 0.1 vs 1) etc.
- The lectures were a bit jargon-y and hard to follow at times.
- The mismatch at times between the lecture content and the problem sets and tutorial content has been notable. This has made maintaining a consistent understanding somewhat complicated. However, with time this has corrected itself.
- The pace is too fast for those with no prior knowledge of econometrics.
- The pace is very slow and lectures are quite repetitive. Would appreciate a faster pace with more theory, fewer tangents at the beginning of lectures, and fewer reviews of concepts from early weeks. Especially for people who have done economics in their undergrad, the first term of the course has barely introduced any new/interesting content.
- The presentation slides were difficult to follow the overall storyline, and how different concepts fit together. I rely a lot on these slides because Jeremiah's style is very one-note and a constant flow of information without much signposting so I need to figure out how everything pieces together in stages.

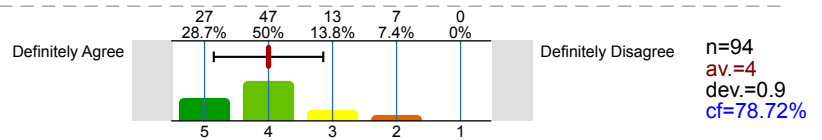
Problem questions solely on stata every week as the priority seemed counterintuitive when this doesn't reflect exam conditions or real world where we can google and get help with stata code. I would have preferred to actually engage with the topic of the week and practice this in a similar form to how we will be examined.

- The problem sets greatly diverged from material taught in class -- students were thrown into Stata problems without giving them the commands necessary to tackle the problems, leading to many students defaulting to AI rather than learning how to use the programs themselves.
- The problem sets have so many typos and are often unclear on what it is asking us to do. It is extremely frustrating. We also are never taught how to use Stata, we have to learn on our own. Those in the MPA Data Science for Public Policy did NOT learn Stata in the

pre-sessional. Also, when we go over problem sets in seminar it would be more helpful to live code instead of looking at pdf slides about code.

- There seems to be a disconnect between lectures and seminars in terms of the speed at which concepts are taught. I also strongly dislike the weekly group problem sets – I think it is a waste of time to assign these to groups and that they should remain individual assignments.
- This course's lecture hall is a disgrace. It is almost impossible to focus in such a small, crowded room. I previously studied at a tuition-free European university and never experienced anything like this. In my opinion, it is frankly embarrassing for the LSE that we have to endure this despite paying so much in tuition fees. The only approach that works for me is to watch the videos from home instead of going to the lectures.
- too theoretical sometimes and not empirical especially in lecture.
- We have not had any direct feedback.
- We should receive some feedback for the group project submissions we do for the problem set.

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



# Profile

**Subunit:** PP - Public Policy  
**Responsible for modules:** Dr Jeremiah Dittmar  
**Name of the course:** Section 1  
**(Name of the survey)**  
**Comparative line:** School Average 24/25 - Course Questions

Values used in the profile line: Mean

## 1. Course Questions

