

Course analysis (course evaluation)

Course code 4NT003 – Part 1	Course title Diet, physical activity and disease prevention	Credits 5
Semester Spring - 2023	Period January 16 – February 5 2023	
Course coordinator Ioannis Ioakeimidis	Examiner Magdalena Rosell	
Teacher in charge of component Ioannis Ioakeimidis	Other participating teachers Billy Langlet Emma Patterson Maria Henström Kosmas Dimitropoulos Christos Diou	
Number of registered students during the three week check 33	Number approved on the last course date	Response frequency course valuation survey 66.7 %
Other methods for student influence (in addition to concluding course valuation) Lecture-specific evaluation questionnaires distributed anonymously online, as well as a discussion with the whole class at the end of the course.		
Feedback reporting of the course valuation results to the students The students were informed via an announcement at Canvas XXX		

1. Description of any conducted changes since the previous course occasion based on the views of former students

This is the first time this course is given and there has been no reference to old material in previous course programmes. The course included traditional teaching seminars, invited lectures, practical workshops, a journal club, student presentations and sessions of individual and group work.

2. Brief summary of the students' valuations of the course

Overall, students were satisfied with the course. In the course evaluation, the overall opinion of the course was rated ok (45.5%), good (36.4%) or very good (4.5%) by most of the students (19/22 respondents). It should however be noted that the response rate for the course evaluation was not very strong (67% vs ≈80% in other courses). However, since the course is new and based on the ratings there is obviously room for improvement going forward. Looking into specific evaluated components, most of the items had ok-to-good responses, but there was some obvious variation in the provided opinions, with some components being quite diverse (e.g., 50% felt that they developed valuable expertise a “large/very large extend”, but another 27% stated that they developed that only to a “small degree”). The general feeling expressed for the course is that the “R programming” component should have received more focus, as it was highly appreciated. The participants noticed some thematic overlaps with the course “*Diet and health - scientific evidence, recommendations and sustainability*” and there were suggestions that parts of the courses should be merged. The

workload seemed somewhat light, as most students (12/22 respondents) had put 10-35 hours per week for the course, and another 8 dedicated the expected 35-45 hours per week.

3. The course coordinator's reflections on the implementation and results of the course

Strengths of the course: The course in general worked well regarding the mixed of content and structure, distributing the workload appropriately across the course schedule. The basic topics on diet, physical activity and prevention were covered well and the participants received valuable info on basic epidemiological tools for disease monitoring, including data visualisation techniques, R-programming and Big Data collection, curation and processing. These info will prove valuable as background info for the upcoming Part 2 of the course and the remaining of the master programme. Most students appreciated the content, including guests lectures from external teachers. The teaching form was appreciated in general, and most of the participants appreciated the novel/hybrid format of the poster examination, integrating group efforts with individual evaluations. The students also appreciated that the teachers were available, supportive and scientifically equipped to teach the covered themes.

Weaknesses of the course: The variation in the educational background and the technical capabilities of the students created a challenge in finding the appropriate mid-level for the provided information in order to satisfy all the participants. This was obvious within the framework of the oral examination task with the Poster presentation that seemed to be very easy for some and very challenging for others. Additionally, the participation in the non-mandatory components of the course could certainly be stronger, with many students potentially being pre-occupied with the preparatory efforts for the upcoming examinations. Finally, the short duration of the course and the variation of themes that should be covered made it challenging to dedicate appropriate attention to all the taught components.

4. Course coordinator's conclusions and any suggestions for changes

Based on the comments, and our first-hand experience with this newly introduced course there are many ideas to consider for the next year(s). Initially, we are planning to expand the part of R-programming, especially focusing on data visualisations (e.g., forest plot creation), which is a highly requested feature from the participants. Further, we will integrate components from the *Diet and health - scientific evidence, recommendations and sustainability* in this course, in order to eliminate overlapping themes across the programme and complement the "global" component of the course. We are also planning to modify the examination scheme for next year, dropping the final take-home exam, focusing more on the Poster creation and data visualisation training in the course, emphasising on individual components, while also retaining the group efforts and oral examination nature of the exams. Next year we will also try to integrate the lectures of the external teachers a bit better within the overall course theming to increase the interest of participation despite keeping the non-mandatory nature of the presentations. Finally, we are intending to improve the instructions and offer a better structured course schedule, with clearer guidelines about the required practical parts. For the long term, we have several more ideas that will be discussed again with the course representatives in the beginning of next year, before the course syllabus will be revised.