

# Individual Report for Sp19-NUTR-0238-01-Econ Food and Nutrition Policy (William A. Masters wmaste01)

Project Title: **Spring 2019 Course Evaluations - Friedman**

Courses Audience: **47**  
Responses Received: **29**  
Response Ratio: **61.70%**

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Creation date of the Report: **Monday, May 13, 2019**

## Summary of Results

### Course evaluation summary

Question	Course		School (Friedman School of Nutrition)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. This course met its defined objectives (as described in the course abstract and the syllabus).	1.41	0.57	1.64	0.81
2. The amount of material covered in the course was effective for my own learning.	1.59	0.63	1.79	0.98
3. The assigned readings for the course were instructive and relevant to the course objectives.	2.06	1.24	1.93	1.01
4. Information communicated by guest lectures was useful.	1.57	0.79	1.62	0.77
5. The workload for the course (readings, homework, papers, etc.) was effective for my own learning.	1.48	0.57	1.93	1.04
6. Audio/video media was relevant to the course objectives (if used in this course).	1.26	0.45	1.76	0.87
7. Experiential activities outside of the classroom were relevant to the course objectives (if used in this course).	1.57	0.65	1.63	0.86
8. Overall, how satisfied were you with this course?	1.48	0.74	1.83	0.98
Overall	1.55	0.71	1.77	-

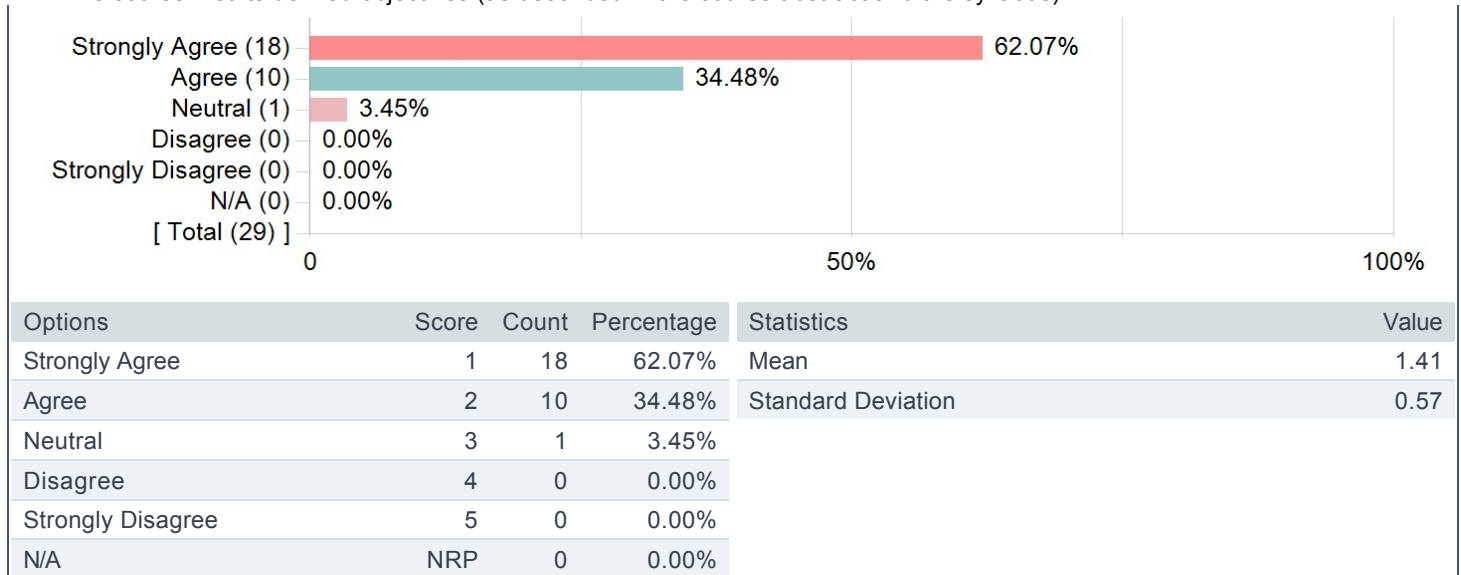
### Instructor evaluation summary

Question	Course		School (Friedman School of Nutrition)	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
15. The instructor was prepared for class.	1.10	0.31	1.43	0.74
16. The instructor communicated the course concepts clearly.	1.79	0.86	1.64	0.89
17. The instructor responded clearly and completely to questions and/or feedback.	1.52	0.74	1.57	0.88
18. The instructor stimulated enthusiasm and interest in the subject.	1.21	0.41	1.41	0.79
19. The instructor was available for help outside of the class.	1.17	0.38	1.62	0.89
20. The instructor provided useful feedback on assignments and exams to date.	1.17	0.38	1.75	1.02
21. The instructor was sensitive to issues of diversity (e.g. race, class, culture, gender, sexual orientation).	1.44	0.58	1.60	0.83
22. Overall, how satisfied were you with this instructor?	1.28	0.53	1.55	0.87
Overall	1.34	0.59	1.57	-

## Detailed Results of Course Evaluation

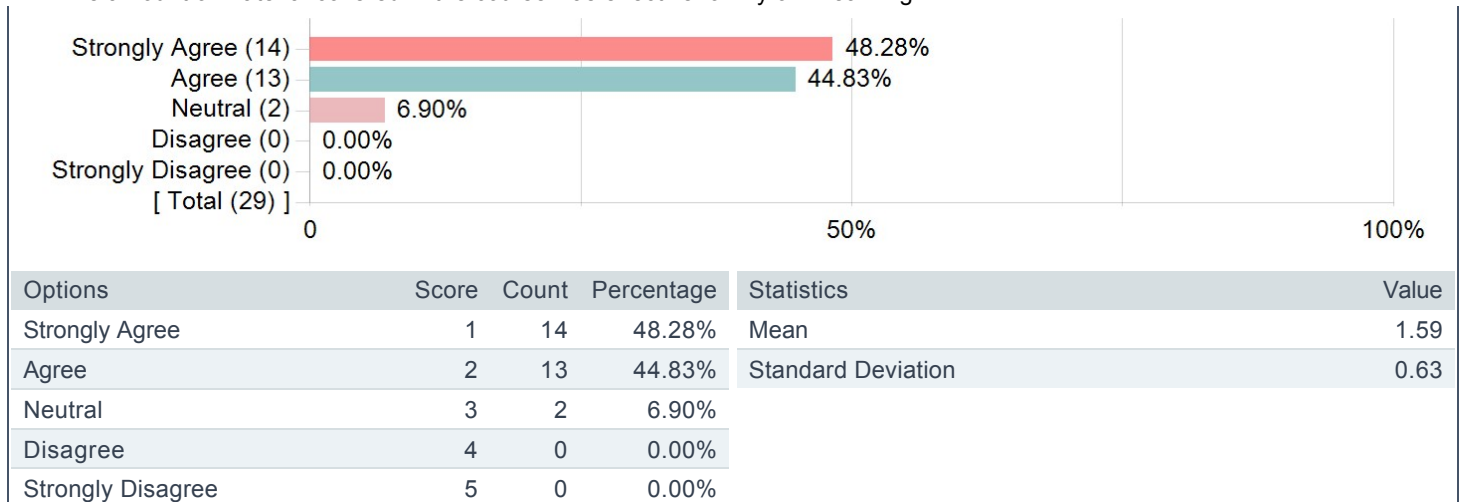
### 1. This course met its defined objectives (as described in the course abstract and the syllabus).

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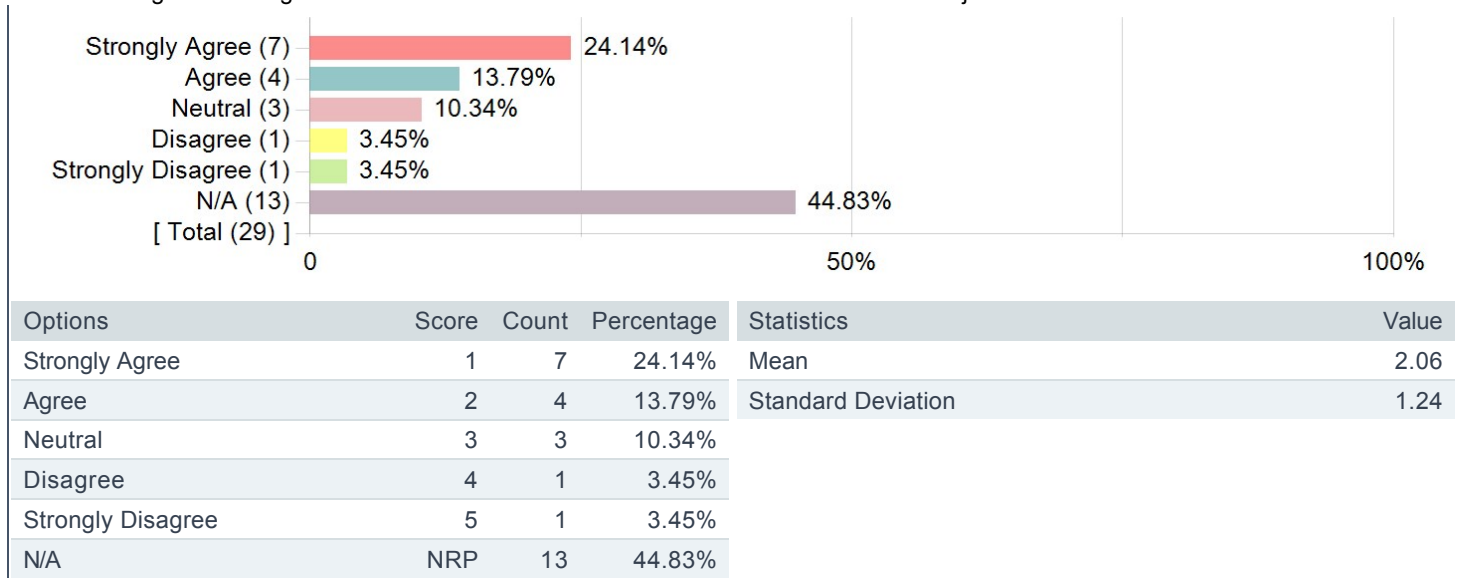
### 2. The amount of material covered in the course was effective for my own learning.

1. 2. The amount of material covered in the course was effective for my own learning.



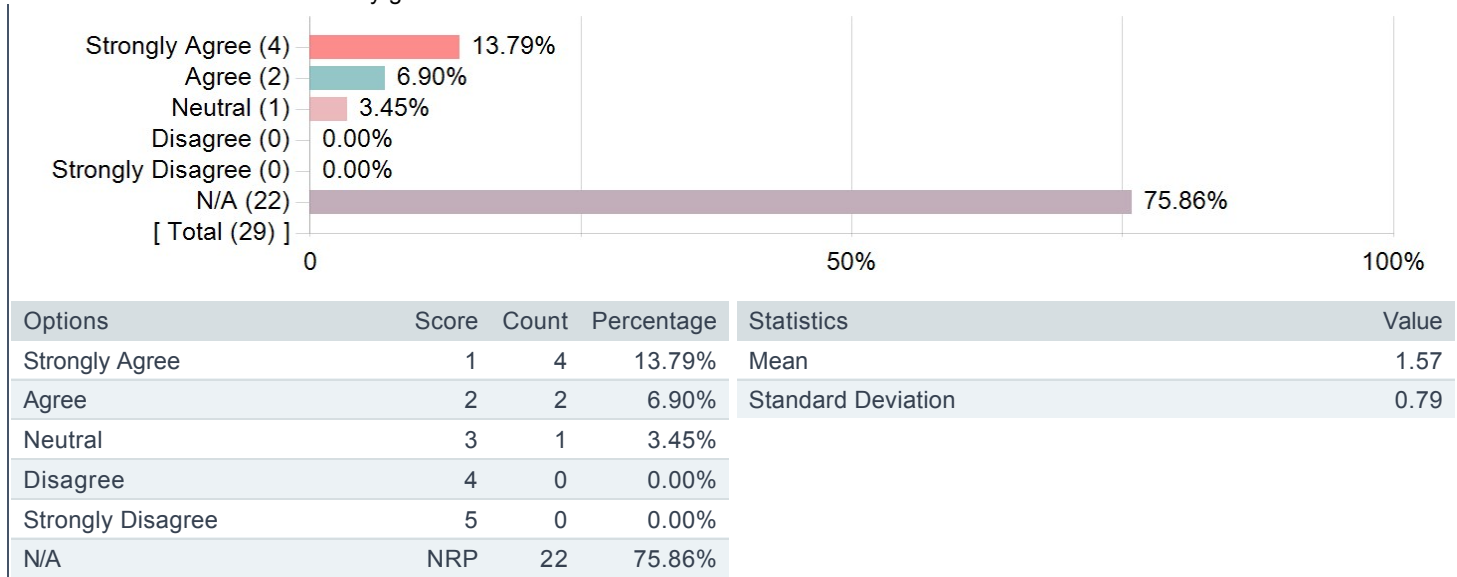
**3. The assigned readings for the course were instructive and relevant to the course objectives.**

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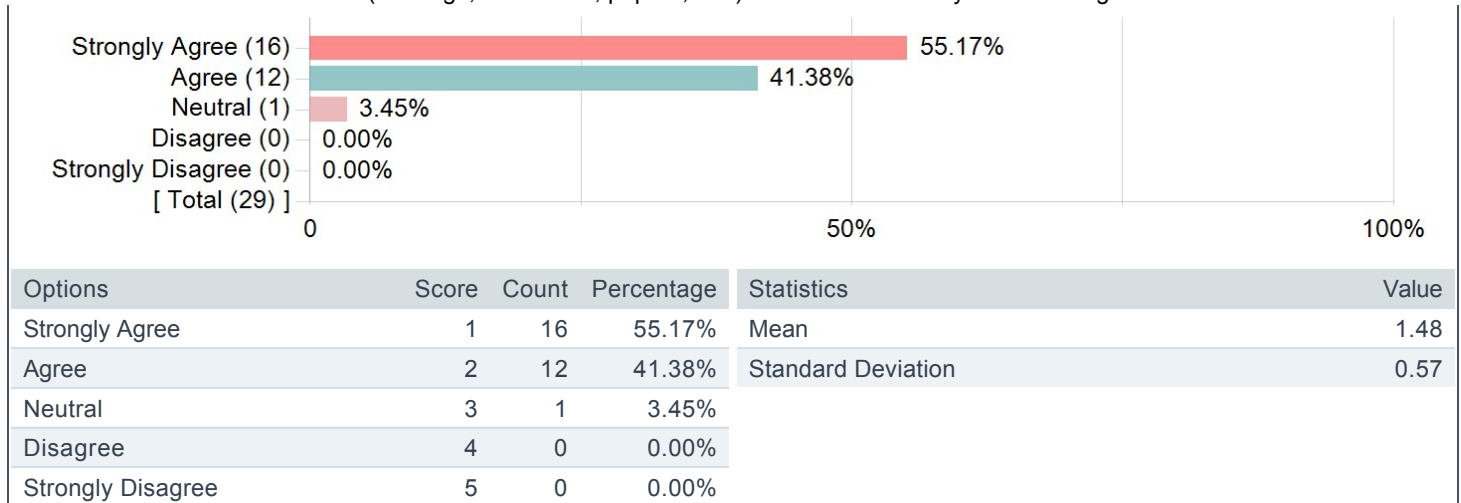
**4. Information communicated by guest lecturers was useful.**

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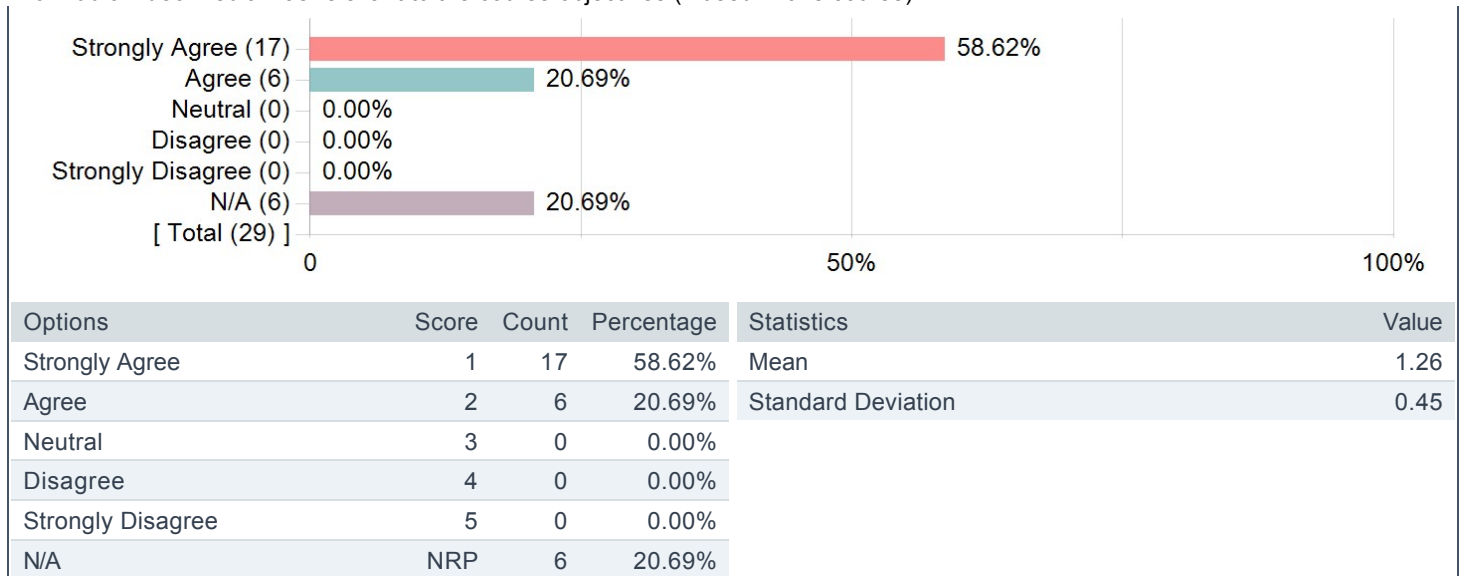
**5. The workload for the course (readings, homework, papers, etc.) was effective for my own learning.**

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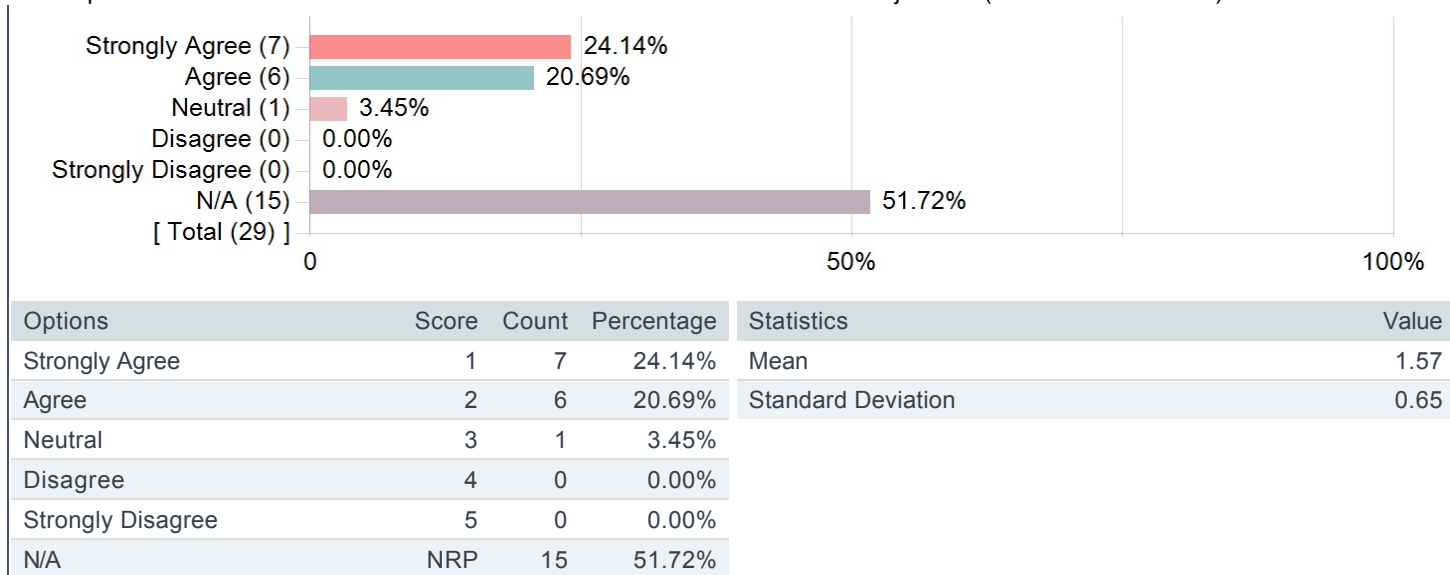
**6. Audio/video media was relevant to the course objectives (if used in this course).**

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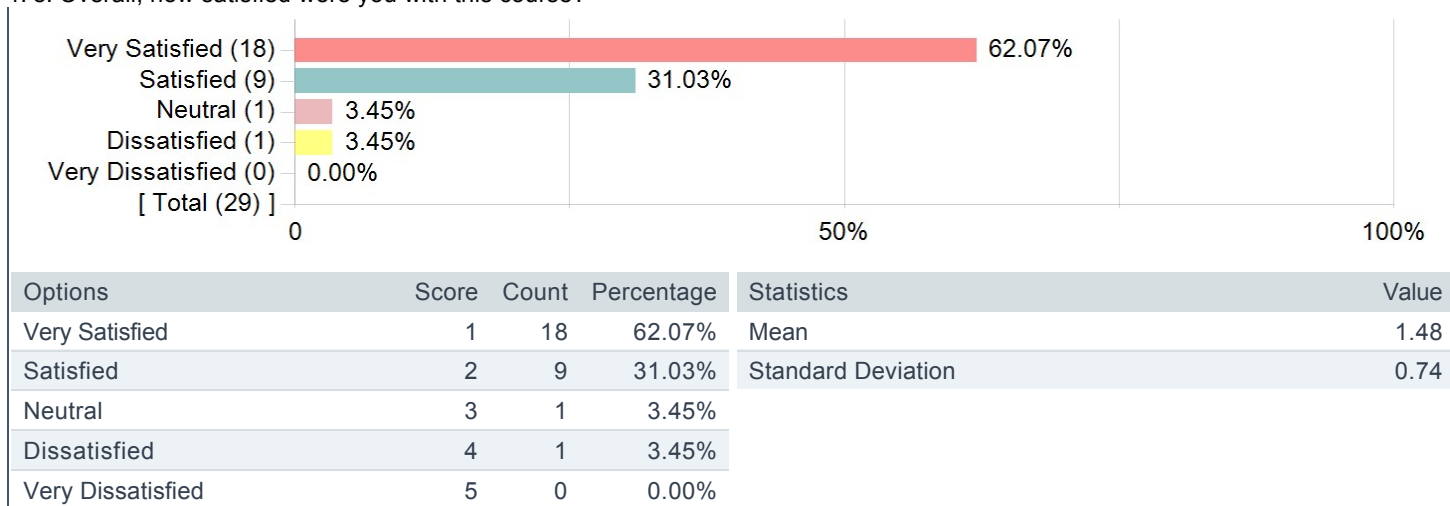
**7. Experiential activities outside of the classroom were relevant to the course objectives (if used in this course).**

1. 7. Experiential activities outside of the classroom were relevant to the course objectives (if used in this course).



**8. Overall, how satisfied were you with this course?**

1. 8. Overall, how satisfied were you with this course?



## Open-Ended Feedback

### 9. Comments regarding the assigned readings:

Comments
There were no assigned readings for this class, which is surprising. External readings would have definitely helped contextualize some of the content covered around macroeconomics.
There were not many assigned readings, but the lectures and slides were very useful
Almost no readings. The course is very aligned to how millennials think and learn.
Assignments were helpful for readings, would have liked to read a few published econ journal articles as optional reading, although I am doing that for my course project
There were no required readings. The lecture slides and recording were helpful to review.
N/A
NA
no assigned readings– may be useful though to get a different perspective
N/A
We didn't have assigned readings but we had recorded lectures from current and past years which were very useful to understand the concepts better.
powerpoints as reading material were useful for review of materials, as were video recordings. I wouldn't mind a few paragraphs to prepare for classes.
It was nice that the class was completely lecture based, with outside readings provided for those who were interested.
I didn't use the economics textbook at all — it might be useful as a reference text, but I'd make it clear to students that they likely don't need to purchase it.
I appreciated the relevant scholarly research, but I do wish we had the opportunity to discuss them in class. Maybe not for every reading every week, but it might be nice to set aside 5–10 minutes at the top of class to talk about what we read and connect it back to the economic principles we're learning in class.
I think having some assigned readings might have added to classroom learning. Not too many, because the assignments are a significant amount of work, but some reading, perhaps especially for the second part of the class, might make discussion richer.
The course material was definitely exhaustive and very useful. I would have definitely liked to see some more relevant material / readings about current or from the past real world scenarios that would further connect me to the topic of weekly discussion (which at times was abstract).

### 10. Comments regarding guest lecturers/speakers:

Comments
There were no guest lectures or speakers in this class.
There were no guest speakers or lectures
n/a
N/A
NA
N/A
N/A
I liked the day the TA went over the homework, but she could improve her teaching style
na
N/A

**11. Comments regarding the Teaching Assistant(s) involved with the course (if applicable).**

Comments
Fair grading on HW assignments
The TAs provided helpful comments on homeworks.
I would have liked for the teaching assistants to have regular weekly office hours to have a reliable peer connection.
Adriel and Jessica were both incredibly helpful and knowledgeable about the subject.
smart and friendly
Super responsive and helpful.
TA's were both very approachable and helpful.
Both Jess and Adriel were extremely helpful answering questions and providing feedback in a timely manner. Jess's Excel workshop was very valuable and I would suggest doing it again next year.
It was nice to see them present and engaged during the lectures.
The teaching assistants were very responsive and willing to help.
I appreciate how much Will trusts the TAs to collaborate on grading and outreach for questions. I thought Jess and Adriel were excellent
Could they offer review sessions or more support?
Adriel and Jess were both very helpful and clearly dedicated to their positions as TAs.
They were both super helpful, both offering substantive feedback on homework assignments. Jess' Excel workshop was great.
The TAs were great. Jess, especially, was always willing to offer feedback and advice.
The teaching assistants were great. Though I didn't meet them for office hours, I found their comments on the weekly assignments to be encouraging and fair.



**12. Name at least one thing that should definitely not be changed about this course:**

Comments
recorded lectures posted on Canvas were very helpful
I found the online lectures to be extremely helpful, and the flexibility offered by them very valuable this semester. Since this course is a requirement for students across Friedman, the recorded lectures should be made available for everyone enrolled in the class.
Consistent workload was easy to plan for
I liked the news analysis because it forced me to look at news stories and examine them with an economic perspective.
The data analysis homework is very useful.
I think the difficulty and speed of the material is challenging in a good way, Will's openness to questions and discussion is great
Using poll everywhere to ask interactive questions about diagrams was helpful.
The weekly exercises were very effective for reenforcing material learned and putting it all together. Not having assigned readings was great. I prefer to learn via in-person and online lectures.
Homeworks. While they were so challenging and often frustrating they were what made all the difference in my understanding of the course.
recordings of lectures
combination of videos and lectures for learning; multiple types of learning objectives— analytical diagrams and more applied news related work to connect with real world. I really appreciated the mix. It was a nice crash course in economics related to food and nutrition— exactly what it was intended for!
The use of Poll Everywhere added value to the class and enhanced my understanding of the material.
I really liked that Will put all of the lectures, review sessions, and course information on Canvas so that we could access the sessions remotely and review them later if need be.
Weekly assignments: these were very useful to materialize the concepts and helped to understand further lectures.
Homeworks are VERY useful, Will's use of technology is great
The potluck!
Excel work was great refresher. Loved that we had those assignments. Wish they were less prescriptive.
Homeworks, professor, class structure, polls, professor's enthusiasm and pointing out what are the amazing things we're learning
No laptops / technology in class as well as the news analysis assignments.
The online lectures definitely helped me to process the information from the first half of the course, and learn it at my own pace.
The homework assignments are wonderful — appropriately difficult; relevant to news & contemporary policy; structured to lead you to increasingly sophisticated conclusions. I really appreciate all the work that's been put into developing them.
I think Will does a great job of balancing between U.S. and international policy. Especially later on in the semester, the slides were incredibly informative, and I really enjoyed walking through relevant contemporary data in class.
The assignments! I learned so much from them. They're so great – perhaps my only suggestion would be to have one fewer of the data analysis ones, to give students more time to dig into the datasets and find stories that are really interesting, but otherwise they were extremely helpful.
The course instructor. But honestly, it was a great class and I think the way the course instructor kept us engaged through the course with anecdotal material was great. The weekly assignments even though challenging at times since there was one due every week – were very useful for my learning. Also, the Friday catch up sessions were an excellent way to have more face time with the course instructor and I felt were definitely a perfect way to round up the week's learnings.
The weekly assignments were worth the time and provided a good resource to practice the concepts in class. The later ones (using Excel) were especially instructive in learning new skills and applying data analysis to real data.

### 13. Name at least one thing that should be improved about this course:

Comments
The instructor could consider using tablets (e.g. ipad pro, surface, etc.) and stylus for drawing graphs. You can easily modify the drawings, use different color pens. Tablets can be connected to the projector and the drawings can be cast on the big screen. I believe it would considerably improve the drawing part of this course.
Use of different colored chalk for drawing graphs during lecture
I enjoyed the interactive portion of this class, but it always seemed like there was not sufficient time or emphasis on classroom participation. If the instructor encourages students to watch online lectures before class, then more class time can be devoted to discussing examples, applications, or questions.
Some of the weekly assignments were far too time intensive.
I wish there was slightly more discussion and possibly a few less assignments.
More data analysis homework!
using colorful chalk or a white board to draw diagrams as needed or manipulate ppts but my personal preference is drawing with white board and multi-color markers
I'm the beginning, it was difficult for me to follow what we were supposed to be learning and how it fit in with the bigger picture. I now feel like I have a lot of useful analytical tools but I still am a little unsure about the contexts in which I might use them.
More poll-everywhere questions in class.
It was a lot of material to cover in one semester and we moved quite rapidly. I'd rather dig in a little more to specific parts.
I think some weekly assignments could be condensed into a larger assignment — less frequent assignments that require more work
the instructor sometimes goes through slides TOO fast (particularly key/important analytical diagram slides and their commentary). It takes a while to digest, and it feels sometimes like Will assumes we already know it. It's not always possible to watch the lectures beforehand, so this can be frustrating if you are seeing the material for the first time! We also suggested it may be useful to do the analytical diagram work on powerpoint (moving around lines on their with different colors and dotting) as opposed to on the chalk board. it gets very messy and hard to follow after 2 + iterations.
Explanations of how to draw analytical diagrams – often the powerpoint slides are very cluttered and confusing to follow, and drawing on the chalkboard is equally difficult to follow. A white board would be best for these diagrams.
Some of the small assignments were very time consuming, specifically with respect to organizing data/spreadsheets. It would be nice to know ahead of time which assignments are more time consuming, and maybe have them be worth more points.
The pace in the classroom is oftentimes too fast, which makes hard to follow. However, the availability of the recorded material helped with this.
Instructions for homework assignments were very lengthy and unclear. Wish they were more succinct and to the point.
Timeline of homework submission—class T–Th evening and review Friday afternoon made it hard to do the HW after the week's class sessions (thursday night) and have time to ask for assistance before submitting on Sunday night. More consistency between what we're tested on and what is covered in class. The second half of the semester hardly ever looked at diagrams, but that was the entire final exam. If they are important, I would like the professor to wave them into class explanations. Sometimes it felt like there was an imbalance in time spend on topics in class versus what was actually important for us know and what we would be tested on or have to do in homeworks
Manipulating graphs on powerpoint rather than drawing on the chalk board. Trying not to get derailed by student conversations on days where we are covering diagrams. On other days / during other lectures which were more focused on broad concepts, discussion was helpful and interesting.
It would be nice to have the assignments due on an alternate day besides Sundays.
This is a minor thing, but I'm not sure it was ever made super clear how to distinguish between the data analysis exercises we'd be doing and the more sophisticated econometric research that we sometimes looked at in class. Since we spend a decent amount of time at the beginning of class talking about what economics is as a discipline, it might be good to walk through what economic research actually looks like in relation to food policy.
The lectures were sometimes oddly paced and not helpful.
Definitely the room! The audi was definitely not the ideal setting for this class. I think more group based discussions would have helped than being instructor driven. Given the nature of the course – it may have been useful for us to come to class prepared based on some readings and have group discussions about topics relevant to the course.
– The Poll Everywhere is a great resource. Instead of showing live results as students click, hide the results so Will and the class can gauge our learning of the concepts, rather than be swayed by all the other students. – Tie the learning in the second half of the class (poverty, inequality, food and nutrition data, etc.) to the economic concepts. Throughout those lectures, it would have been helpful to consider the discussion topics in light of the concepts we learned in the first half.

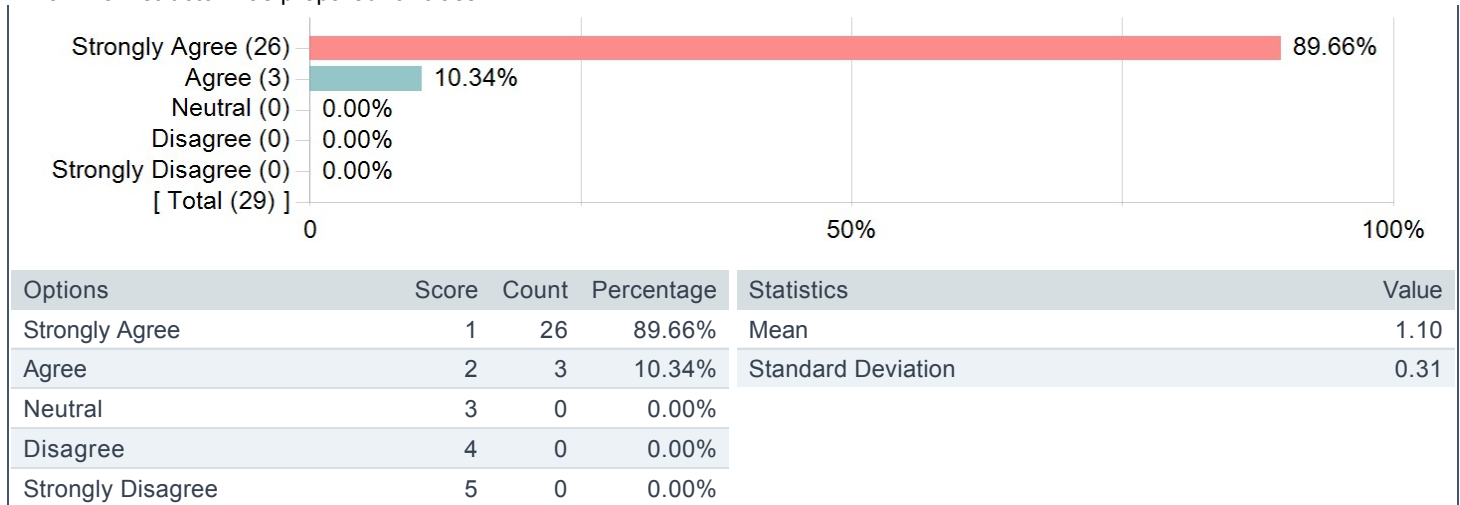
#### 14. Additional comments regarding any other aspect of the course:

Comments
This class lends itself very well to groupwork. I found that working in a small group and drawing diagrams helped me study for the midterm, and perhaps this experience can be translated to the broader class. I would also appreciate more suggested readings for the macroeconomics sections, which are never addressed in courses after 238.
I really enjoyed the course and feel that I gained some of the building blocks to examine food, nutrition and agriculture through an economic lens.
I found the material covered in the course super well tailored to the AFE/ FANPP student (as FANPP maybe I can only speak for FANPP) while still providing a broad understanding of economics, I loved this course.
Homework assignments were fun and informative!
Poll everywhere is a great tool especially when discussing analytical diagrams. However, it can be challenging to place points on diagram with a small phone screen ( I think that is why poll results were all over the place sometimes)
awesome course! very well though out and organized. loved the variety! The instructor has mastered the art of teaching this material to new econ students! I'm motivated to continue in this area and dabble into econ research.
I would have preferred if the assignments were due on Monday or Tuesday nights so as to have a bit more time to complete them.
While they were interesting discussions, I didn't always feel like the last few lectures were relevant to our assignments/exams, which made it difficult for me to be fully present and engaged.
This course is great and the best I had so far.
I can tell that Will puts a lot of thought and effort into lecture every day. He is very responsive to questions outside of class and I found his teaching style made me more enthused about learning this content for the first time. I really enjoyed this course.
Wish we spent more time discussing actual diagrams and why things are the way they are rather than putting them into context. Yes that is important, but need to spend more time on foundations of economic principles, in my opinion.
love the class.
Again just trying to stay focused on the analytical material when it's being presented because it is difficult to grasp and side conversations allow for additional confusion.
N/A
A consideration for a restructuring of the class: Have every student do the midterm to fully study, understand, and apply the fundamental concepts of the course. Then have everyone do a project (perhaps in small groups) to have the opportunity to produce applied economic work. This works especially because much of the second half of the course was not part of the final exam.

## Detailed Results of Instructor Evaluation

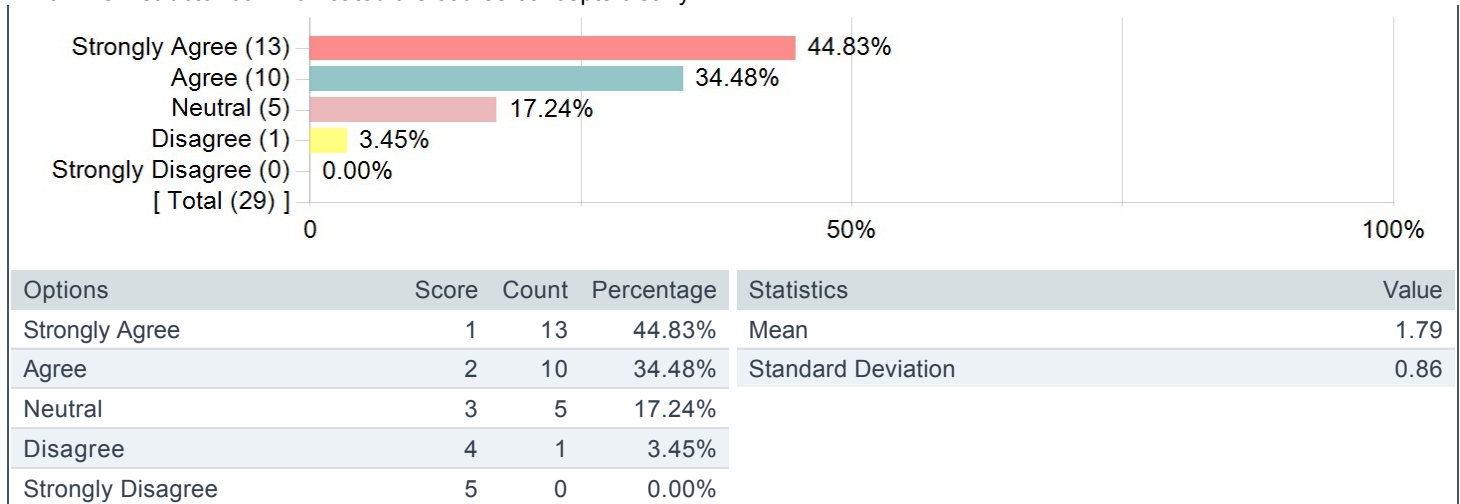
### 15. The instructor was prepared for class.

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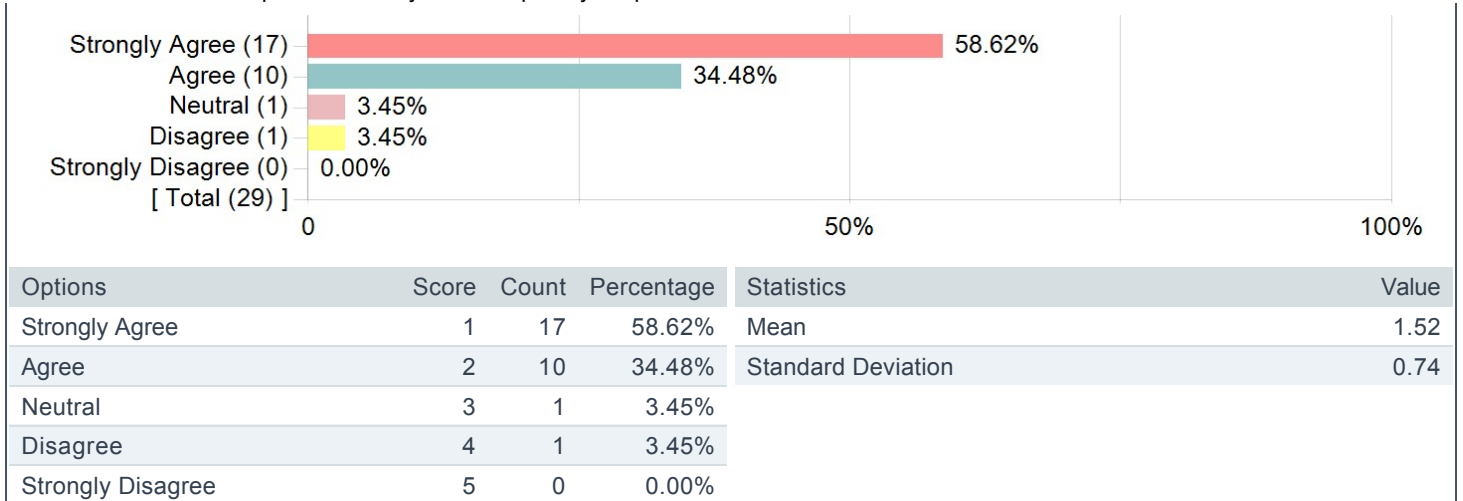
### 16. The instructor communicated the course concepts clearly.

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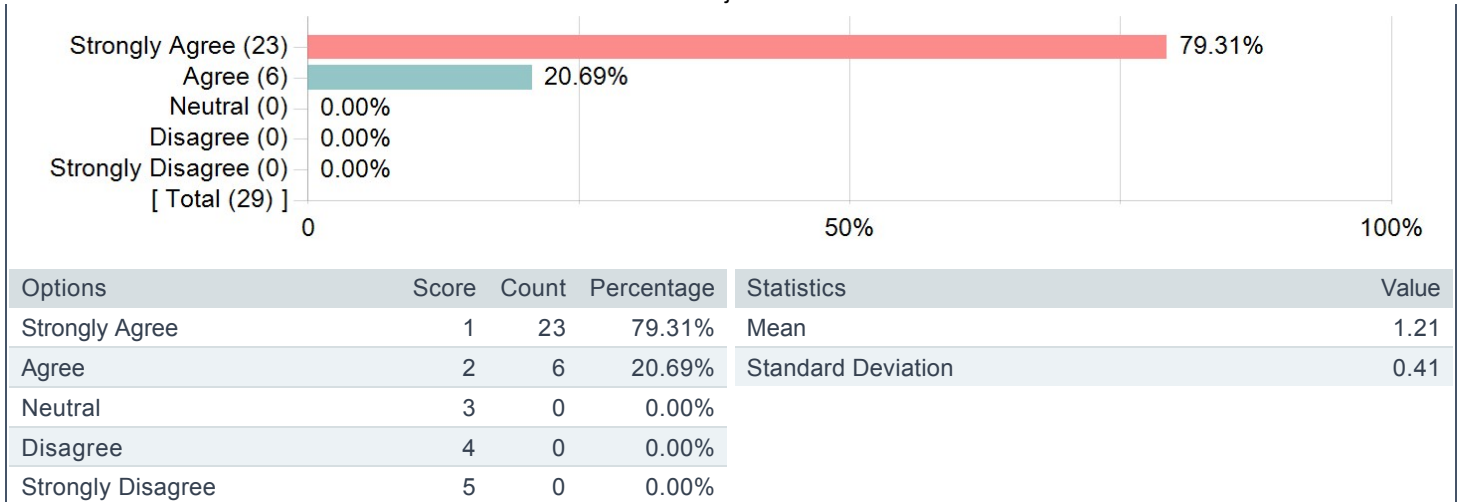
## 17. The instructor responded clearly and completely to questions and/or feedback.

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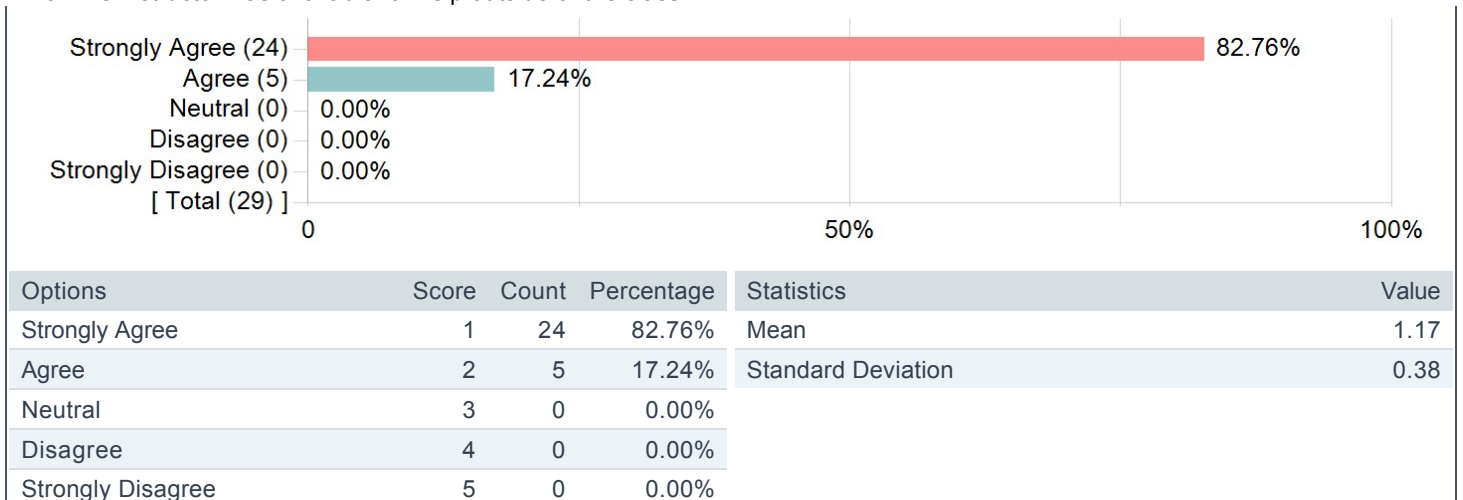
## 18. The instructor stimulated enthusiasm and interest in the subject.

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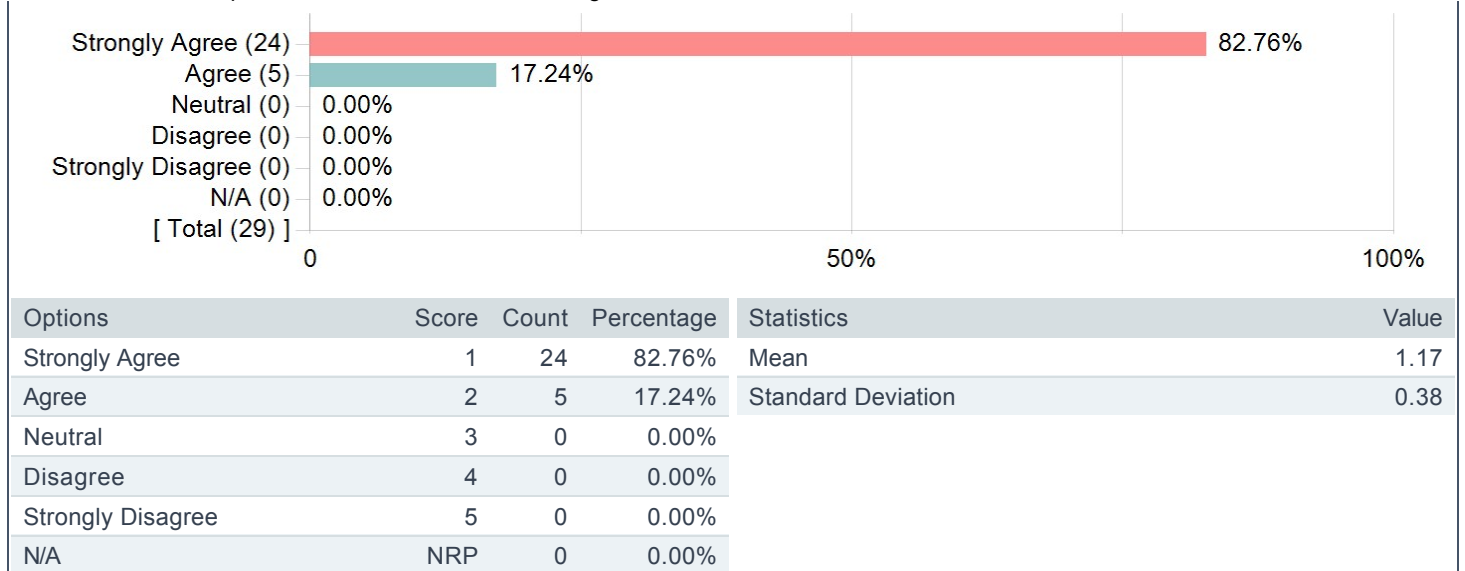
## 19. The instructor was available for help outside of the class.

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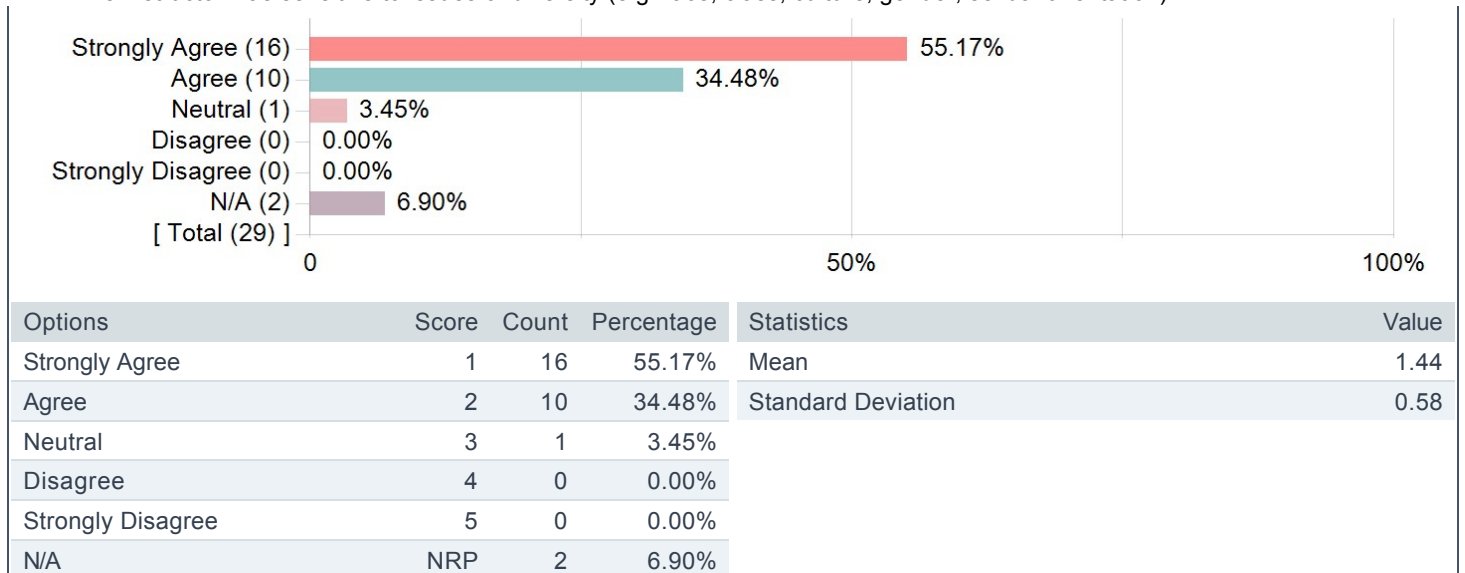
## 20. The instructor provided useful feedback on assignments and exams to date.

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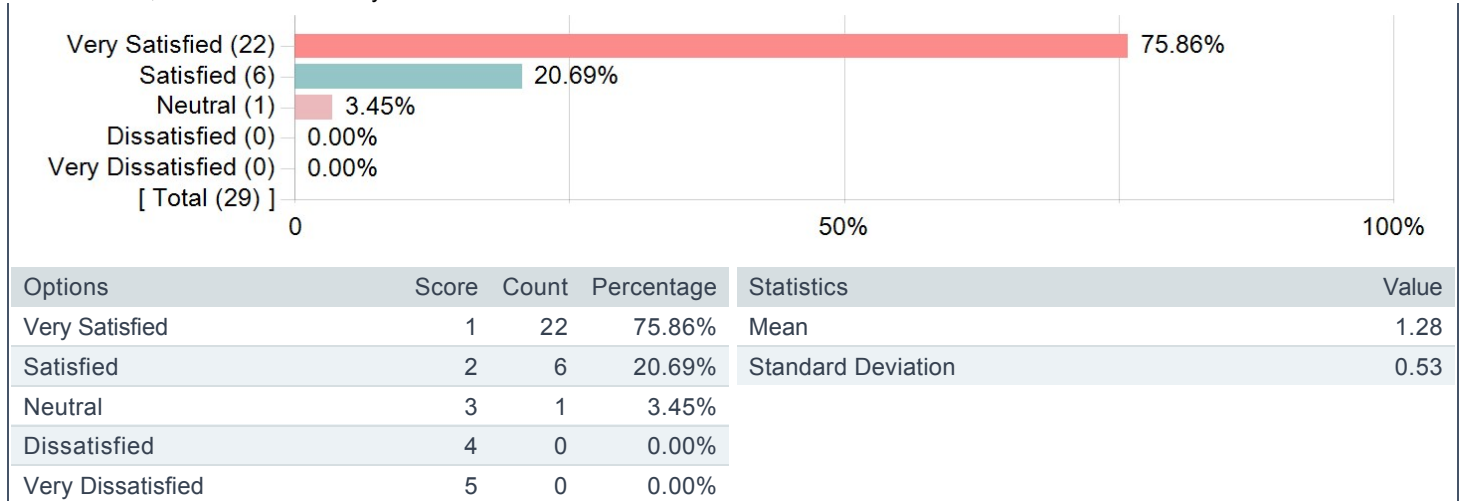
## 21. The instructor was sensitive to issues of diversity (e.g. race, class, culture, gender, sexual orientation).

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## 22. Overall, how satisfied were you with this instructor?

1. 22. Overall, how satisfied were you with this instructor?



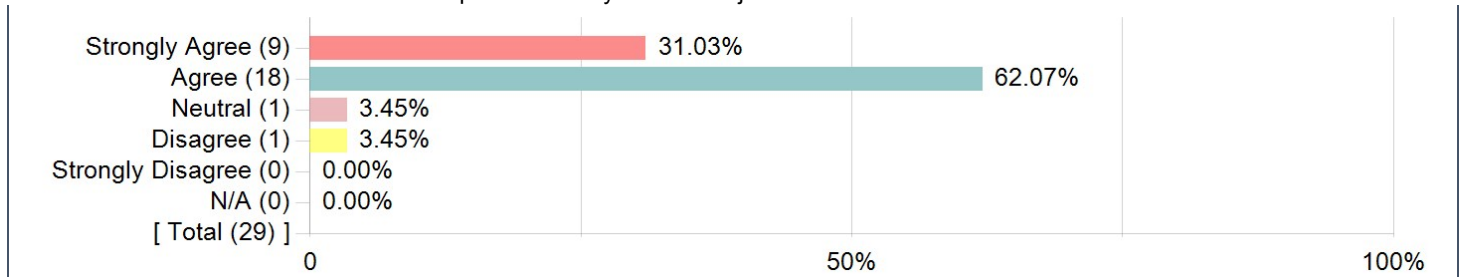
### 23. Additional comments regarding the instructor:

Comments
I liked Will's teaching styles a lot, but often felt like we were skipping steps in an explanation. There would be a lot of background for more simple concepts, but then we would skip the reasoning for more complicated topics sometimes. Also, the chalk drawings on the board got very crowded and it was hard to see them, even from the front of the class. Colored chalk or markers would be a huge help.
Will has been an excellent instructor and mentor for student projects. His Friday review sessions are often more helpful to me than the lecture component of this class. His use of PollEverywhere early in the semester was also very effective, and helped me establish a strong foundation in economic concepts.
Obviously very interested in the success of his students and a very caring instructor. Receptive to student questions during lecture to a fault though – so much time was spent on tangents in response to student inquiries that we often did not get through the slides, which was frustrating for me.
Bill was super helpful and certainly passionate about the material. I think I learned a great deal from him.
Will gets very excited about the content of the class, and excitement is contagious. He is very organized, it is easy to follow him and homework is useful. Great class.
Very enthusiastic! A wealth of knowledge. I appreciate that he took time to discuss issues of race/class/social justice etc. I often can come home to tell my partner something interesting that I had learned in class.
One thing that I think Will could improve upon is making it clear where we are in the learning trajectory and how these tools are used in real world contexts. What will I do with my ability to analyze news articles in the work place? I'd also like additional resources to help me better understand what the "complicated math" is that economists do so that I can understand the gap between my knowledge and what there is to learn.
Will was great. By far one of my favorite professors at Tufts. He knows the material and genuinely cares about the subject – this is apparent in class, which helps keep students engaged. Feedback on assignments was very helpful and also prompt. I wish he taught more courses!
Very passionate and well prepared instructor. Always available to help and provide guidance during and after class. I wish I could take more classes with Will!
Will was extremely thoughtful about ways in which he could make the course accessible and enjoyable for all students. I felt like he went above and beyond what I have seen other professors do.
Will was very well prepared and engaged to the course. It is also clear that he enjoys teaching and helping others to succeed.
Will was very responsive whenever I had questions and seemed very committed to ensuring I understood the material. He was a big help.
Wonderfully passionate about material. Hope to take more classes with Will in the future.
Great professor, very helpful and available and enthusiastic.
Absolutely brilliant professor who clearly cares a lot about students and providing the best possible learning experience. That being said, sometimes he can come off a bit intimidating and a few comments he made in class were somewhat condescending.
Will clearly puts a lot of work into making these issues resonate with wide variety of students, who may or may not have any interest in economics. I like econ, but I'll be the first to admit econ classes can be dry, but Will manages to explain issues clearly, while showing why this kind of analysis matters, all the while paying close attention to how economic principles play out in the real world, where they're subject to all sorts of social (and racial, gender, regional) dynamics that don't appear on the 2D diagram. It's not an easy feat! This class really benefits from all the years Will's put into improving it and incorporating feedback.
Thank you Will for a great class! I am not sure if I want to take another Econ class immediately but my fear about them and self-doubt about "would I understand what goes on in an Econ class" has changed for the better. It has also piqued my interest to understand the economics of public health and it is fascinating. Thank you for being such an involved course instructor with so much enthusiasm to share your knowledge. I know the skills I have picked up through this course will definitely help me going ahead.
In my opinion, Will is passionate and enthusiastic about teaching this economics course. The administration of the course is also impressive – each module, assignment, exam, is clearly laid out and explained. In crafting class discussion, it sometimes felt as if Will was not fairly entertaining each question, regardless of how thoughtful or advanced the questions were. To me, it felt that sometimes the responses were curt and stifled class participation. I would love to see more open discussion in the classroom. It also felt that Will would slowly build up to the key topics and then quickly sketch or flip through slides as soon as he presented the information. In talking with classmates, I heard that that much of the class would have preferred a step-by-step explanation when we were learning the key graphs.



**24. The course included relevant concepts of diversity and social justice.**

1. 24. The course included relevant concepts of diversity and social justice.



Options	Score	Count	Percentage	Statistics	Value
Strongly Agree	1	9	31.03%	Mean	1.79
Agree	2	18	62.07%	Standard Deviation	0.68
Neutral	3	1	3.45%		
Disagree	4	1	3.45%		
Strongly Disagree	5	0	0.00%		
N/A	NRP	0	0.00%		