



ECMA 31340 1, ECMA 31340 1 - Big Data Tools in Economics - Instructor(s): Thibaut Lamadon

Project Title: **College Course Feedback - Autumn 2021**

Number Enrolled: **37**

Number of Responses: **11**

Report Comments

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

Creation Date: **Tuesday, April 19, 2022**

What are the most important things that you learned in this course? Please reflect on the knowledge and skills you gained.

Comments
Did not learn anything that wasn't already taught to us in other courses.
Significant review of econometrics, MLE, basics of neural nets, clustered errors, bootstrapping, difference in differences.
Python, pandas, OLS, inference, neural networks.
Econometric methods surrounding OLS, instrumental variables, 2 stage least squares, maximum likelihood. Also touched briefly on the structure and mechanics of neural nets
Various econometric methods and some exposure to their application with datasets
Reviewed core estimation and regression concepts (OLS, MLE, asymptotics, identification, etc.) as well as other advanced inference topics like bootstrap and difference-in-difference.
how to deal with big data, how to integrate economic/econometric concepts with big datasets
data tools used in economics (ols, iv variables, nls, 2sls, bootstrap, stochastic gradient descent, neural nets, etc.)

Describe how aspects of this course (lectures, discussions, labs, assignments, etc.) contributed to your learning.

Comments
The assignments had nothing to do with the exams and were very poorly written.
Professor Tibo gave very interesting lectures and I liked how he went over the derivation with us. He also answered questions with clear explanation in class and in office hours. Assignments were a mix of pencil and paper and computational and both complimented the lectures well.
Homework varied in terms of difficulty. Programming assignments were not extremely challenging because what the solution was meant to look like was provided. Homeworks that made us work through econometric proofs by hand felt informative but were much more difficult. Lectures helped with the written assignments and the midterm but felt only connected conceptually to the coding homeworks.
Handwritten assignments were probably most useful and pertinent to what was tested, but there were only two of them. The coding assignments seemed secondary. Lectures were quite difficult to follow.
Jupyter notebook homeworks were a great way to reinforce theory learned in class while applying it using Python.
assignments were mostly quite practical
lectures and occasional discussions, weekly/biweekly assignments

Please respond to the following:

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
This course challenged me intellectually.	4.27	5.00	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%	36.36%	54.55%
I understood the purpose of this course and what I was expected to gain from it.	3.45	4.00	9.09%	9.09%	27.27%	36.36%	18.18%
I understood the standards for success on assignments.	4.36	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	63.64%	36.36%
Class time enhanced my ability to succeed in graded assignments.	3.45	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	36.36%	45.45%	9.09%
I received feedback on my performance that helped me improve my subsequent work.	3.91	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%	72.73%	18.18%
My work was evaluated fairly.	4.55	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	45.45%	54.55%
I felt respected in this class.	4.73	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27%	72.73%
Overall, this was an excellent course.	3.82	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	27.27%	27.27%	36.36%

Additional comments about the course:

Comments
This is definitely the most useless class that I have ever taken, and the fact that it is considered a data science elective is a joke. I didn't learn a single new thing in this class because all of it was covered in different classes required by the major. Complete waste of my time and I think the department should really think about what courses they make students take. I would have much rather taken an interesting course with new materials.
Professor Tibo covered a lot of material yet made it manageable with clear lectures and weekly homework where we could apply to content. Also, the TA Ed was awesome and was always available and helpful during office hours and over slack when the class had questions.
It just feels like the name of this course is so misleading. It had little to do with actual big data concepts except for maybe the neural net work and one programming assignment. I thought we were going to deal with distributed systems, Dask, Spark etc, but it ended up feeling like Econometrics V2. If it was not required for Econ Spec Data Science I would not have taken it, but I guess it was better than some of the other DS electives.
Not super difficult, quite fair, somewhat theoretical exams, practical homeworks

I would recommend this course to:

	No	Yes
Highly-motivated and well-prepared students	18.18%	81.82%
Anyone interested in the topic	36.36%	63.64%

Thinking about your time in the class, what aspect of the instructor's teaching contributed most to your learning?

Comments
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Lectures, availability to answer our questions. Clear explanations. Good pace. Sharing notes with us after class. Gave us a week to complete each assignment which was fair. Ability to sense what concepts students were struggling in and putting more time in them. Interesting assignments that made us understand the content from class more.
Lectures were helpful and so were the written homework assignments. Coding assignments were sort of fun and interesting, but otherwise not really helpful for preparing for the midterm.
Thibaut is incredibly smart, and he would be able to help you understand anything you might know to ask questions about.
The slides and in-class derivations were very helpful in understanding the models.
Professor was very patient in explaining/repeating concepts
lectures where we would go over in class coding examples that were helpful

What could the instructor modify to help you learn more?

Comments
The course was very disorganized. No one knew when assignments were due until later, which made it hard to start assignments early.
In addition, his handwriting is quite horrible, which makes it difficult to follow along in class. I hope going forward he uses more presentations or something rather than the iPad.
Lectures felt geared more towards people who might be on a grad school track, which I guess makes sense given that it's ECMA, but it felt like we were just expected to know all of these linear algebra and econometric concepts, and it was clear that the people who did got a ton more out of this course.
It was often difficult to follow what was happening in lecture, and it often felt as if something more prepared would have been helpful. Because nearly all class notes were written on-the-spot, it was even sometimes difficult to interpret concepts or math when looking back at the notes.
Would have appreciated if Prof. Thibaut could slow down when speaking, as well as write a little more legibly, as it would make it much easier to follow. Otherwise, lectures were great.
Lectures were a little boring, I think the theoretical aspects/content of the class can be better integrated together with the practical part
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Slow down. There were a lot of materials needed to be covered, but the professor's handwriting is unreadable when he tries to write fast. – Try to explain the coding part better. I found it difficult to understand everything when the professor went through the code he wrote. – Proofread the HW questions. Almost all HWs contained typos, grammatical errors, and sentences that missed a word or two. They sometimes seriously hindered my understanding of the questions. – Redesign the pen-and-paper HWs and midterm. Some questions in these assignments seemed like they were directly taken from a statistics course and had really little connection with the materials covered in this class.
N/A

The Instructor . . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Organized the course clearly.	3.55	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	27.27%	54.55%	9.09%	0.00%
Presented lectures that enhanced your understanding.	3.82	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	9.09%	63.64%	18.18%	0.00%
Facilitated discussions that were engaging and useful.	3.29	3.00	9.09%	0.00%	27.27%	18.18%	9.09%	36.36%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the course.	3.91	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	18.18%	36.36%	36.36%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.18	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	0.00%	45.45%	45.45%	0.00%
Helped you gain significant learning from the course content.	3.82	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	18.18%	45.45%	27.27%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.50	4.50	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	45.45%	45.45%	9.09%
Motivated you to think independently.	4.45	4.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	54.55%	45.45%	0.00%
Worked to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.	4.73	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	27.27%	72.73%	0.00%
Overall, this instructor made a significant contribution to your learning.	3.91	4.00	9.09%	0.00%	18.18%	36.36%	36.36%	0.00%

What aspects of the TA's teaching contributed most to your learning?

Comments
Ed was fantastic. From the first to the last day, Ed was always willing to answer our questions and follow up questions. He really cared that we understood the material and it was much appreciated. He even was available through slack outside of office hours and would read our questions carefully and give a clear and helpful explanation as the answer.
Ed was always extremely helpful and available outside of class, going over midterms and homework assignments. His office hours before the midterm were extremely helpful and made me feel prepared.
Availability and assignment feedback
Ed was very responsive on Slack, great during office hours, very patient, good at explaining concepts
held a couple discussion sessions to add further instruction to help with problem sets or go over midterm

What could the TA modify to help you learn more?

Comments
Being a TA again!
Nothing! Thanks for everything Ed
Nothing – he was great

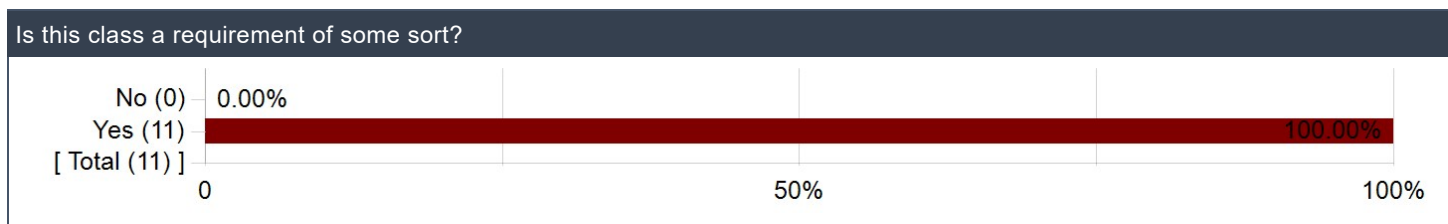
The TA/CA or Intern. . .

	Mean	Median	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A
Facilitated discussions that supported your learning.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%	0.00%
Gave you useful feedback on your work.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%	0.00%
Stimulated your interest in the core ideas of the class.	4.67	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	66.67%	0.00%
Challenged you to learn.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%	0.00%
Helped you succeed in the class.	4.78	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.22%	77.78%	0.00%
Was available and helpful outside of class.	4.75	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	75.00%	0.00%
Overall, this individual made a significant contribution to your learning.	4.71	5.00	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	28.57%	71.43%	0.00%

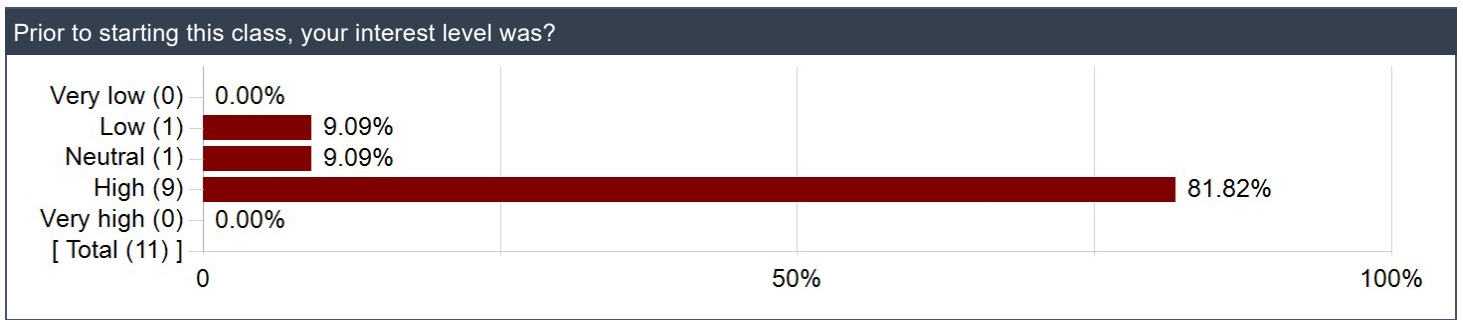
Additional feedback to the TA/CA/Intern:

Comments
Is an example of how more TAs should be.
He is too similar to Ed Sheeran in so many ways not to be him in disguise (long blonde hair in a bowl cut, british accent, literally named Ed)

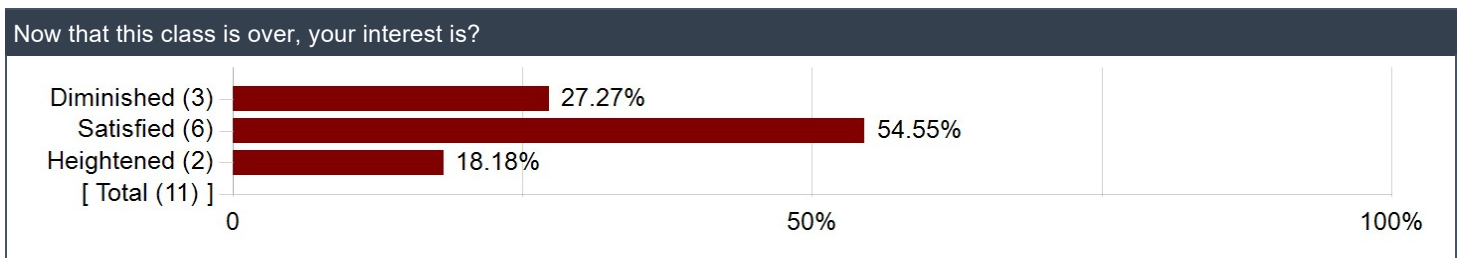
Is this class a requirement of some sort?



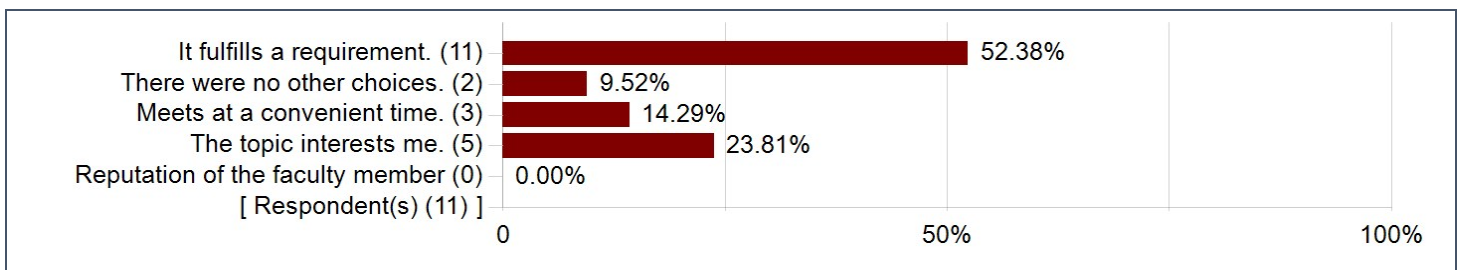
Prior to starting this class, your interest level was?



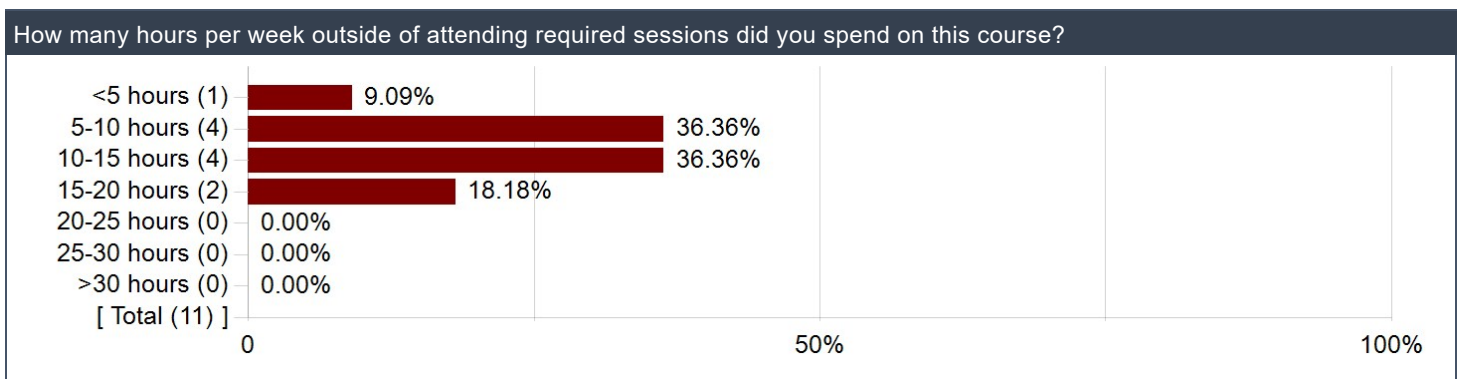
Now that this class is over, your interest is?



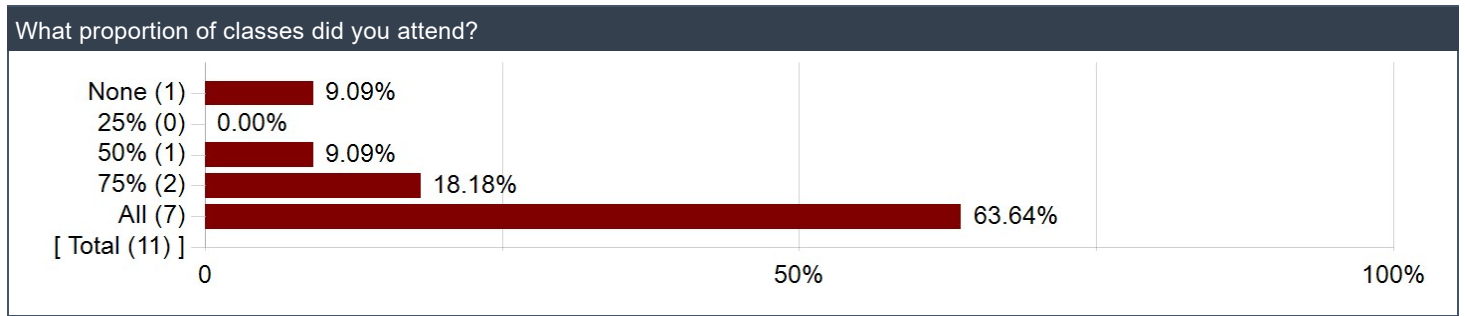
Why did you choose to take this course? (Select all that apply)



How many hours per week outside of attending required sessions did you spend on this course?



What proportion of classes did you attend?



Please comment on the level of difficulty of the course relative to your background and experience.

Comments
Super easy. Didn't need to study because it was all old material
If you know econometrics or statistics and the basics of python, you will be okay.
Good level.
Very hard to follow lecture if you were not up to snuff with econometric and linear algebra concepts. One poorly taught linear algebra class 2 years ago is not enough
The course ends up being more of an Econometrics II, and is much more for the math-oriented than the CS-oriented
not unreasonable, good statistical background would be helpful
DO NOT take this course if you have no experience writing code in Python. I have taken CS121-123 and still found the coding HWs challenging.