Advanced Mathematical Economics questionnaire feedback

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In 2017-8, the class had 36 students, of which 28 answered the questionnaire. Overall, about 75% of these students reported that they were happy or very happy with the quality of the course.

75% of students were happy with the way the course was *prepared and organised*. Many students wrote that they were very happy with the lecture notes. Some students wrote that the homework questions and sample solutions had too many mistakes. Since I correct mistakes as soon as they are discovered, I think this will be a much smaller problem next year. (This was the first year that I typed up sample solutions for all topology questions and all homework questions.) Several visiting students felt that the assessment favoured local students over visiting students. This was an oversight; next year the visiting student project will become optional, i.e. the visiting project will only count if the mark is high enough to help the student. Several students wrote that there ought to be more material introducing how to write proofs. While I provided recommended extra reading, I will try to provide more of my own material so that students can see what proofs look like in economics contexts.

All students were happy with the *clarity of the learning aims.*

60% of students were happy with the *feedback they received.* Many students wrote that they expected more personalised feedback (e.g. marked homework), and suggested smaller tutorials and replacing lectures with more tutorials, i.e. a flipped classroom. I have two plans to increase the feedback next year. First, I plan to use the website, Piazza, which is a way for students to ask and answer

each other queries, but with guidance from teaching staff. Second, it seems that the school can allocate at least one more tutor (and maybe more) next year. I plan to make tutorials more like office hours and less like a lecture. Tutorials will become place to do homework and ask questions from other students sitting by, or one-on-one with one of the tutors or the lecturer, who will be walking around the room.

Almost all students found the course *intellectual challenging.* Most students appreciated the ambitious nature of the course, although a few students felt the course was too hard given the prerequisite was high-school level mathematics. Nonetheless, I think I was clear at the outset that this is a very ambitious course, and students with minimal background knowledge will have to work very hard. Moreover, I think the assessment scheme is forgiving for students that are not able to master the more difficult parts of the course.

Almost all students felt the course helped them *develop their skills and abilities.* Many students wrote that they felt this course helped them prepare for post-graduate study and that this course is very different from any other course they have taken so far.

Only about half of the students felt I was good at *explaining the material.* This year, I had little time to prepare my lectures, because they were scheduled at 9am, following the tutorial finishing at 6pm the previous day. This is very important, because when I have all of the technical details in my short-term memory, I can concentrate my attention on explaining ideas. I have requested that lectures be scheduled in a way that allow me to prepare during more sociable hours. This will also be important for accommodating Continuing Professional Development students, who will be able to enrol starting next year.

Almost all students found me to be *approachable and willing to help.*

About 75% of students found that I *stimulated interest in the subject.* Several students wrote that I should try to include more links between economics and topology in lectures and in the notes. I plan to do this, but I think it is a slow process of stumbling across particularly well written papers that connect nicely to a particular concept (without having to learn a whole lot of unrelated concepts as well).