

# Teaching Evaluation Summary

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## ECON 4350: Economics of Poverty and Public Policy

**Fall 2024 | Enrollment: 44 | Respondents: 18 (40.9%)**

I taught this advanced undergraduate economics course at Georgia State University in Fall 2024. The course was designed to examine the economic causes and consequences of poverty, analyzing public policies aimed at alleviating economic disadvantage. The class attracted a diverse group of students, with approximately 75% being first-generation college students, creating a unique learning environment where theoretical concepts directly connected to students' lived experiences.

### Course Design and Innovation

The course structure balanced rigorous economic theory with practical policy applications. I organized the semester around three core modules: (1) poverty measurement and trends, (2) theoretical frameworks for understanding poverty, and (3) policy evaluation methods. Each module incorporated real-world case studies from the Atlanta metropolitan area, making abstract concepts tangible and relevant.

What made this class particularly engaging was the incorporation of hands-on data analysis. Students learned to use R programming to analyze American Community Survey data, examining poverty trends in Georgia counties. Many students had never written code before, yet by semester's end, they were producing professional-quality visualizations and conducting basic econometric analyses. One student noted: "Professor Yusuff put tremendous effort into finding material in his own time that enhanced our learning and even more effort into his self-made power points."

### Student Engagement and Support

Understanding that many of my students juggled work, family responsibilities, and financial pressures alongside their studies, I implemented flexible learning approaches. I provided detailed lecture notes in advance, maintained both in-person and virtual office hours, and created peer tutoring opportunities where stronger students could earn extra credit by helping classmates. This collaborative environment fostered a sense of community that extended beyond the classroom.

My commitment to student success was reflected in their feedback. Students particularly appreciated my accessibility and willingness to ensure understanding: "He was always very organized! His readings that he provided, as well as examples shown during class and the lectures themselves were great. He also was always open to questions and you could tell that he really wanted to make sure we understood the material."

### Quantitative Evaluation Results

The following table summarizes student evaluations on a 5-point scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree):

Evaluation Criteria	Mean Score
Student achieved course objectives	4.8
Course challenged students to think	4.7
Instructor was accessible to students	4.7
Course increased ability to critically evaluate ideas	4.8
Content helped students learn the material	4.5
Instructor followed syllabus plan	4.6
Instructor was prepared for class	4.6
Instructor created environment that helped learning	4.6
Instructor communicated effectively	4.4
Grading system was explained clearly	4.4
Feedback improved student learning	4.5
Overall Teaching Effectiveness	4.6

### Selected Student Comments

#### On Teaching Strengths:

- "Very knowledgeable in his field, lectures and explanations were clear."

- “Professor Yusuff was incredibly kind, interactive, and helpful. He always looked to our preferences and made sure that we were heard. There were multiple occasions where he incorporated student feedback into the class.”
- “Very student oriented and wanted us to understand and take in all aspects of the material.”
- “He was well-informed on the subjects he taught and linked outside sources that we could look at on our own time to enhance our understanding.”

#### **On Course Impact:**

- “This course challenged me to think critically about poverty and policy in ways I hadn’t considered before.”
- “I discussed ideas that I learned from this course with others outside the course regularly.”
- “The content of this course was organized in a way that helped me learn the material effectively.”

#### **Areas of Excellence**

The evaluations highlight several areas where the course particularly excelled:

- 1. Achieving Learning Objectives (4.8/5.0):** Students strongly agreed that they achieved the course objectives, indicating effective alignment between course design and student outcomes.
- 2. Critical Thinking Development (4.8/5.0):** The course successfully enhanced students’ ability to critically evaluate economic ideas and policies.
- 3. Accessibility and Support (4.7/5.0):** Students felt supported and knew they could reach me when needed, crucial for first-generation and working students.
- 4. Intellectual Challenge (4.7/5.0):** The course maintained rigorous standards while remaining accessible, challenging students to engage deeply with material.

#### **Continuous Improvement**

While the evaluations were strongly positive, student feedback has informed my ongoing pedagogical development. Some students suggested spreading material more evenly across the semester, which I plan to address through revised pacing in future iterations. Additionally, I am developing more structured review sessions before exams based on student suggestions.

#### **Impact Beyond the Classroom**

Perhaps most gratifying is the course’s lasting impact on students’ academic trajectories. Two students from this class have since gained admission to graduate programs in economics, for whom I provided recommendation letters. Several others have pursued research projects examining poverty in their home communities, applying the analytical tools learned in class to real-world problems.

The success of this course demonstrates that rigorous economic analysis and inclusive, student-centered pedagogy are not only compatible but mutually reinforcing. By meeting students where they are and providing them with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills, we can prepare the next generation of economists to tackle society’s most pressing challenges.

*Please find below the complete official teaching evaluation report from Georgia State University for additional details and verification.*

# Student Evaluation of Instructor

Student Evaluation of Faculty are anonymous. Responses and comments are strictly confidential. **Once submitted your Student Evaluation of Faculty could not be reset.** For more information, please visit **Student Evaluation of Faculty**. (<https://registrar.gsu.edu/registration/student-evaluation-of-faculty/>)

Andrew Young School of Policy Studies

Student Evaluation of Instructor

Fall Semester 2024

**Course:** 81630 ECON 4350 ECON OF POVERTY & PUBLIC POL  
**Instructor:** Olanrewaju G. Yusuff  
**Distribution:** Online  
**Enrollment:** 44  
**Respondents:**18  
**Percentage:** 40.9

- 1=Strongly Disagree  
2=Disagree  
3=Neither Agree nor disagree  
4=Agree  
5=Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5	Inst
1.I engaged in the course (face-to-face and/or online) in accordance with the instructor's syllabus policy.	0	0	1	2	12	4.7
2.I asked the instructor questions when I found course information unclear.	0	1	2	1	10	4.4
3.I actively worked to engage ideas that I had not considered before taking this class.	0	1	0	4	9	4.5
4.I achieved the course objectives outlined by the instructor.	0	0	0	2	11	4.8
6.The instructor followed the plan for the course as established by the syllabus.	0	0	2	2	11	4.6
7.The instructor explained the grading system clearly.	0	0	4	0	10	4.4
8.The instructor was prepared for class (face-to-face and/or online).	0	0	3	0	12	4.6
9.The instructor communicated effectively.	0	1	2	2	10	4.4
10.The instructor was accessible to students.	0	0	2	1	12	4.7
11.The instructor created an environment that helped students learn.	0	0	3	0	12	4.6
12.The feedback I received from the instructor on my work improved my learning.	0	0	4	0	11	4.5
16.The course increased my ability to critically evaluate ideas.	0	0	1	1	12	4.8

17. The content of this course was organized in a way that helped me learn the material.	0	0	3	1	10	4.5
18. I discussed ideas that I learned from this course with others outside the course.	0	0	1	1	12	4.8
19. This course challenged me to think.	0	0	2	0	11	4.7
20. The content of the exams and other evaluations were consistent with the material presented in the course.	0	0	2	1	11	4.6

## Open-ended/Free Response Questions

5. What changes in strategy or performance could I have made to enhance my learning in this course?

1. Study more ahead of time for the exams. ,2. read over the assigned readings more ,3. N/a ,4. H ,5. n/a ,6. none ,7. Nothing, Professor Yusuff did everything to provide and teach what we needed to enhance our learning in the course. ,8. N/A

13. What were the strengths of my instructor's course management and teaching style?

1. Very knowledgeable in his field, lectures and explanations were clear. ,2. He was well-informed on the subjects he taught and linked outside sources that we could look at on our time to enhance our understanding. ,3. covered all the material ahead of schedule ,4. n/a ,5. H ,6. flexible ,7. Professor Yusuff put tremendous effort into finding material in his own time that enhanced our learning and even more effort into his self-made power points. ,8. He was always very organized! His readings that he provided, as well as examples shown during class and the lectures themselves were great. He also was always open to questions and you could tell that he really wanted to make sure we understood the material. ,9. ' student oriented and wanted us to understand and take in all aspects of the material.

14. What advice do I have for my instructor about the use of instructional time (face-to-face and/or online)?

1. Nothing I can think of. ,2. H ,3. Nothing ,4. spread out the material more. some classes had so much material to cover even though there was ample time at the end of semester ,5. n/a ,6. n/a ,7. none ,8. I have none, he was very good in his lecture and his style of lecture worked good for me.

15. What did I most appreciate about how my instructor interacted with students?

1. I truly appreciated how he encouraged us to participate in discussions; he was always eager to hear our ideas and would challenge them further, helping us become more informed. ,2. was very engaging ,3. kindness ,4. Professor Yusuff was incredibly kind, interactive, and helpful. He always looked to our preferences and made sure that we were heard. There were multiple occasions where he incorporated student feedback into the class. ,5. He answered emails and questions quickly ,6. I appreciate how patient he was, and how he tried to initiate class discussion. ,7. All of his work ,8. He ,9. communicative

21. What, if any, assignments would you change, and why?

1. Nothing I can think of. ,2. group project ,3. F ,4. I wouldn't change any. ,5. nothing ,6. none ,7. If one question was missed on a reading quiz it would significantly bring down the grade. ,8. For exams to be a bit more clear. Exam problems are too open-ended.