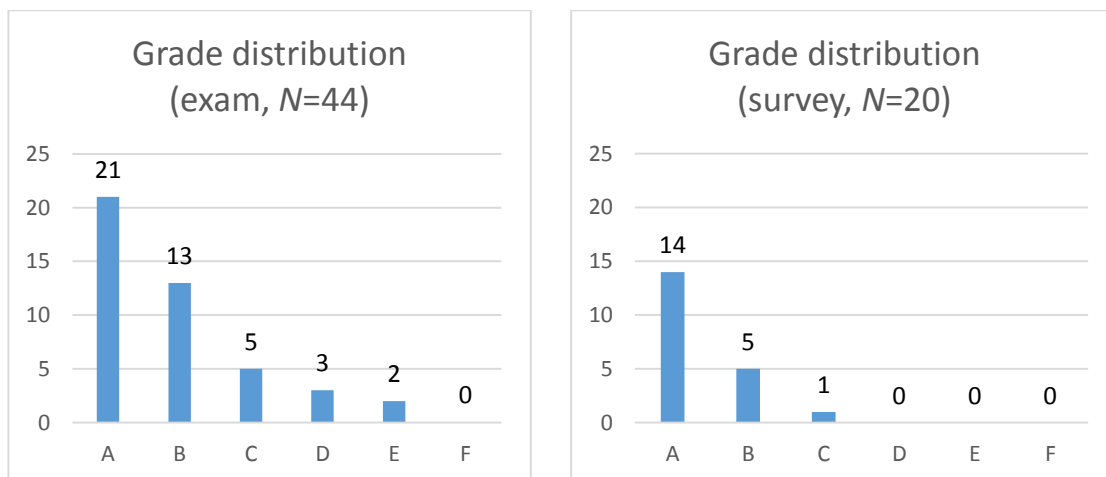


PSY-2585 Social and Community Psychology (Spring 2016), Course evaluation

“PSY-2585 Social and Community Psychology” is a mandatory course in the clinical psychology program (“profesjonsstudium”). In 12 two-hour lectures, the course introduces core concepts, theories, and methods from social psychology and from community psychology (see the next page for a list). The lectures build on a compendium (course readings) that comprises textbook chapters, literature reviews, and original research articles. Classroom demonstrations and exercises complement the readings. The course ends with a four-hour school-type exam that covers contents from all parts of the course (see Appendix 2 for details).

Forty-four students took the course including its exam in Spring 2016. After the exam results had been published, the class was invited by email to participate anonymously in an online course evaluation. Circa half of the class participated ($20/44 = 46\%$). The distribution of self-reported grades in the survey corresponds approximately to the distribution of actual grades in the exam, although feedback from students with grades in the D-F range is missing (and would have been desirable). Overall, the survey sample appears roughly representative of the class.



The survey is shown on the next page, the results are presented afterwards.

Course evaluation for "PSY-2585 Social and Community Psychology" (Spring 2016)

Thank you for participating. The evaluation is run by the course teacher (Assoc. Prof. Frank Siebler, frank.siebler@uit.no). Your answers are anonymous.

Here is a reminder of the course contents:

"Sosialpsykologi omhandler individets forhold til andre og belyser hvordan sosiale og kulturelle faktorer påvirker det enkelte individ. Undervisningen fokuserer på en rekke basale temaer innenfor sosial kognisjon, blant annet automatiske tankeprosesser, holdninger, stereotyper og fordommer, sosiale normer, relasjoner mellom grupper, og selvbylde. I den samfunnspsykologiske delen fokuseres på sosialpsykologi som anvendt disiplin. Det vil bli lagt vekt på intervensjonsplanlegging med hensikt å endre atferd og å løse helse-, sosiale eller andre problemer som kan oppstå i nærmiljøet, i en kommune, organisasjon eller i samfunnet generelt."

PART 1: LEARNING & TEACHING

How useful was each of the following elements for your own work with the course contents?

(If you don't remember an element or have not used it, then please leave that line unanswered)

	not useful					very useful
The articles and book chapters in the course readings ("kompendium") were ...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The lectures (the course teacher's live presentations) were ...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The classroom activities (videos, live IAT, social psychology trial exam, intervention plan in small-group work) were ...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The downloadable lecture slides on Fronter ("Powerpoint") were ...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The downloadable notes for the exam preparation on Fronter ("exam tips") were ...	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART 2: EXAMINATION & EVALUATION

How much do you personally agree with the following statements?

(If you have absolutely no opinion on a statement, then please leave that line unanswered)

	completely disagree					completely agree
"The course taught theories, methods, and techniques that are very practical and important for professional psychologists."	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
"The four-hour exam was an excellent match to the course contents."	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
"It was very clear for me how to prepare myself for the four-hour exam."	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
"At the end of the course I could easily have passed a much longer and more difficult exam about the course contents."	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
"It was no problem for me that the lectures and lecture slides were in English language."	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Summary evaluations

(If you don't want to answer a question, then please leave that line unanswered)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
What grade did the course give you?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
What grade do you give the course?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

PART 3: OPEN-ENDED FEEDBACK

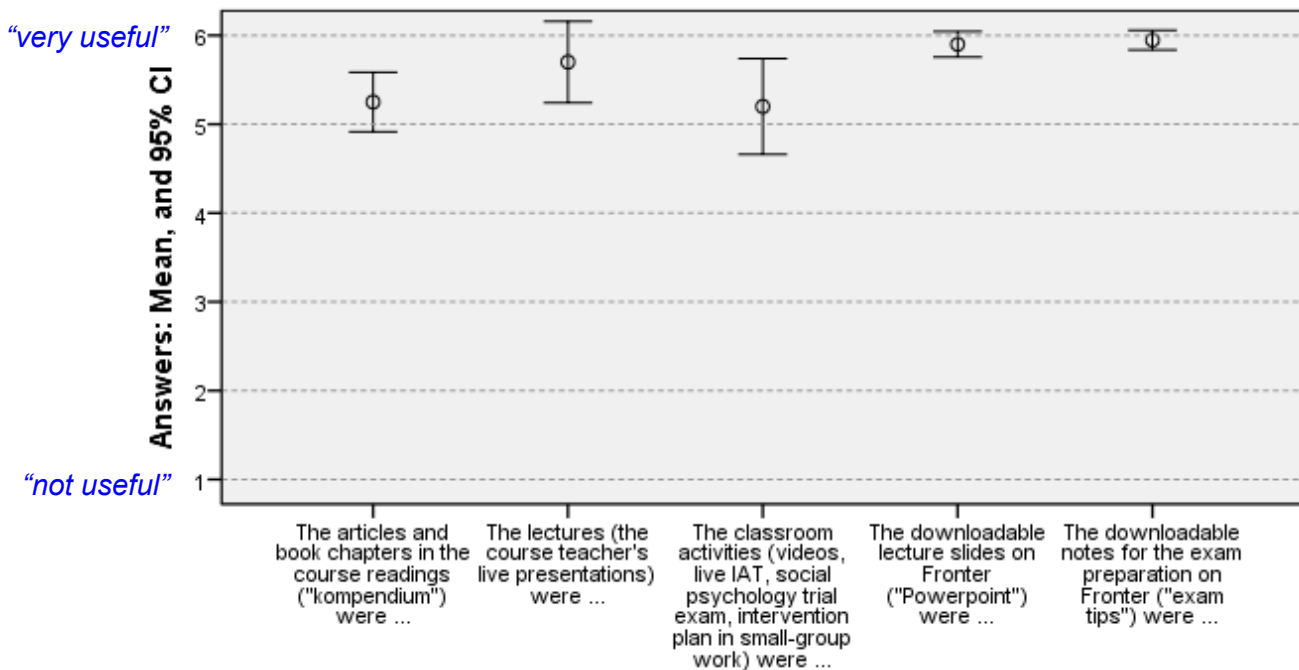
If you want to make comments or suggestions, then here is the place to do so. It can be on anything: the general course organization, the materials, the lectures, the exam, things that you missed, and so on. You can list things that you liked, and things that you did not like about the course.

Part 1: Learning and Teaching

“How useful was each of the following elements for your own work with the course contents?”

(Answer scale from 1 = “not useful” to 6 = “very useful”)

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
The articles and book chapters in the course readings (“kompendium”) were ...	20	5.25	.72
The lectures (the course teacher's live presentations) were ...	20	5.70	.98
The classroom activities (videos, live IAT, social psychology trial exam, intervention plan in small-group work) were ...	20	5.20	1.15
The downloadable lecture slides on Fronter (“Powerpoint”) were ...	20	5.90	.31
The downloadable notes for the exam preparation on Fronter (“exam tips”) were ...	19	5.95	.23



Verbal interpretation

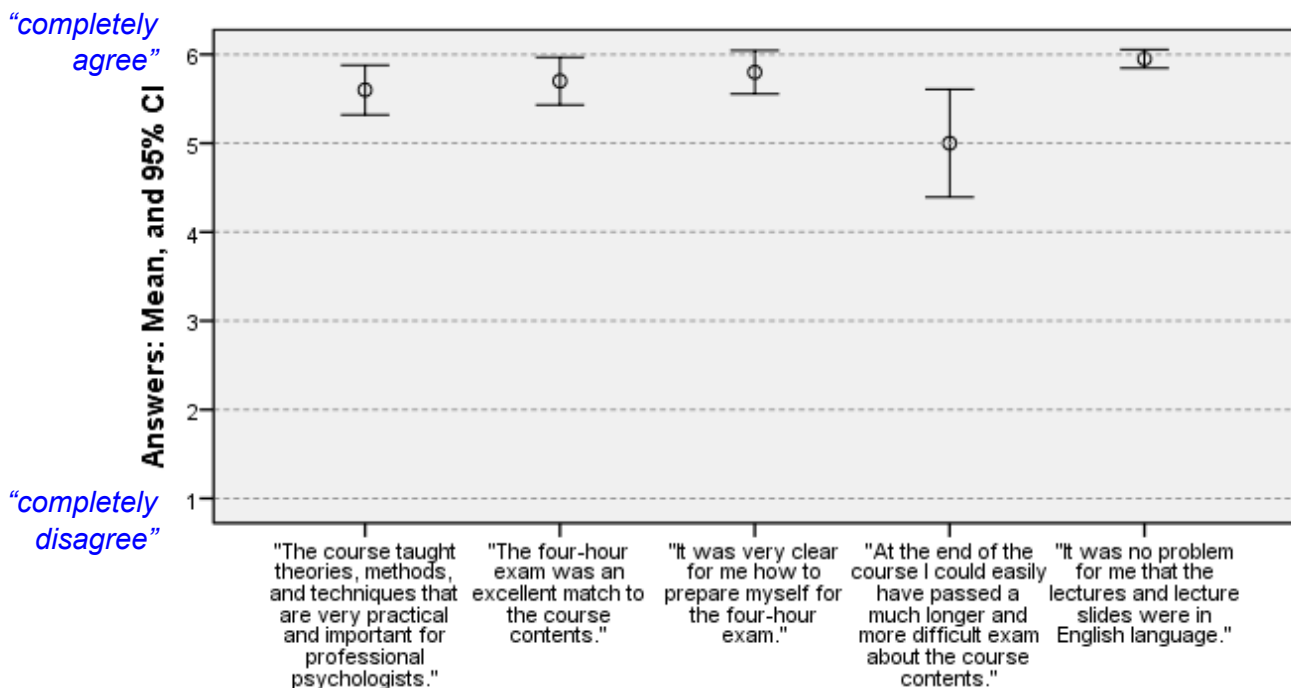
All course elements received the highest possible usefulness ratings in this survey, namely mean answers between the scale points 5 and 6.

Part 2: Examination and Evaluation

“How much do you personally agree with the following statements?”

(Answer scale from 1 = “completely disagree” to 6 = “completely agree”)

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
“The course taught theories, methods, and techniques that are very practical and important for professional psychologists.”	20	5.60	.60
“The four-hour exam was an excellent match to the course contents.”	20	5.70	.57
“It was very clear for me how to prepare myself for the four-hour exam.”	20	5.80	.52
“At the end of the course I could easily have passed a much longer and more difficult exam about the course contents.”	20	5.00	1.30
“It was no problem for me that the lectures and lecture slides were in English language.”	20	5.95	.22



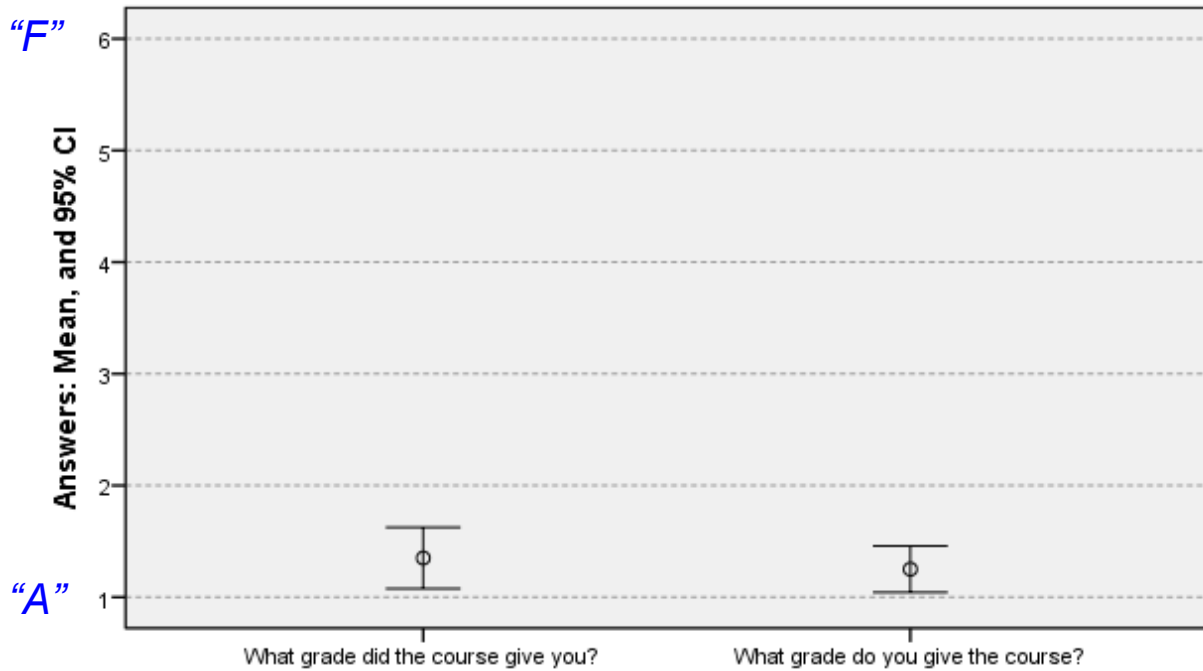
Verbal interpretation

The five statements about the course and its exam (all formulated into a positive direction) received the highest possible agreement in this survey, namely mean answers between the scale points 5 and 6.

Summary evaluations

(Answer scale: 1 = "A", 2 = "B", 3 = "C", 4 = "D", 5 = "E", 6 = "F")

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
What grade did the course give you?	20	1.35	.59
What grade do you give the course?	20	1.25	.44



Verbal interpretation

On average, the respondents achieved a grade between "A" and "B" themselves. On average, they also gave the course a grade between "A" and "B" as their summary evaluation.

Part 3: Open-ended feedback

Thirteen respondents also gave verbal feedback. Appendix 1 shows the full answers; below I will refer to the answers by their number in the appendix. Qualitative responses are of course open to multiple interpretations. Nevertheless, three conclusions seem warranted:

A) Overall, the class was very satisfied with the course. Most answers contain clear positive summary evaluations (1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12), whereas no answer contains a negative summary evaluation (not counting suggestions for single aspects and course elements here).

B) More time is desired for community psychology intervention planning. This is mentioned in several answers (1, 8, 10, 11, and to some degree, 5). Specific suggestions range from more classroom time for and group-work on intervention planning (1, 10, 11) to conducting a real-life community intervention (8).

C) The course's high degree of teacher-provided structure is overwhelmingly welcome, though with exceptions. Most answers explicitly mention the course's clear structure and organization as one of its strong aspects (3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11). Structure, of course, comes at a prize. Whereas the lectures are given in an interactive style (see 8), the sessions do not offer many opportunities for presentations by or free discussion between students. Some answers suggested strengthening the student-driven elements, either during the sessions or in complementing seminars (1, 7, and also 8).

Discussion

Twenty students (of 44 who took the course and its exam) completed an anonymous online survey to evaluate the course “PSY-2585 Social and Community Psychology (Spring 2016).” Whereas the sample appears roughly representative of the whole class, the results need to be taken with some caution because various self-selection biases may have influenced who did versus did not participate in the course evaluation. For example, no student with a self-reported exam grade in the D-F range participated.

The closed-format answers show that the respondents were very satisfied, giving the course a grade between “A” and “B” as their summary evaluation. All of the specific components of learning and teaching received the highest possible usefulness ratings, all of the more general statements about the course and its exam received the highest possible agreement ratings (in this survey, scores between 5 and 6, on an answer scale from 1 to 6).

The open-ended answers broadly support the positive course evaluation from the closed-format part of the survey. Going beyond the closed-answer part, they also revealed an interest in devoting more (and more student-active) time to the intervention planning.

In line with the overwhelmingly positive survey answers, the excellent exam result (see p. 1 and Appendix 2) also indicates that the course achieved its goals. Overall, then, it appears that the course in its present form is successful.

Appendix 1: The open-ended answers

1. If i were to describe excellence in higher education through an example i would simply refer to this course. If possible more time spent on intervention plans would be preferable. I think all groups should have to present their intervention plan in front of the class so that we could have a more elaborate discussion.
2. I would have liked for the articles in the "kompendium" to be more up to date; the newest article was from 2006, if I am not mistaken, and I am sure there are newer research on the field than that by now. All over very satisfied with the course.
3. Jeg likte dette faget veldig godt. Spesielt undervisningen og det faglige opplegget rundt. Fantastisk foreleser. Alt var virkelig godt tilrettelagt for at studentene skulle lære og prestere så bra som mulig. Det best gjennomførte faget hittil på dette studiet. Veldig fornøyd. All ære til en fantastisk emneansvarlig - Frank!
4. Frank Siebler er en fantastisk foreleser! Hvis alle forelesere hadde vært like godt forberedt, like engasjert, like systematisk og like grundig som han hadde livet vært en lek. Siebler fortjener masse skryt, han gjorde kurset morsomt og utrolig lærerikt.
5. Beste og mest spennende emne så langt i studiet. Godt lagt opp og godt lagt frem av emneansvarlig/foreleser. Var først skeptisk til pensumet(artikler) fremfor bok. Men faget har gitt meg bedre forståelse av forskningsartikler, jeg har blitt flinkere til å lese dem, forstå dem og se nytten av dem. Likte at vi visste hvordan vi skulle arbeide mot eksamen, det minsket eksamensangsten. Selv om supriseintervensjonsdelen gjorde meg veldig nervøs. Generelt veldig bra emne. Skulle ønske vi hadde mer sosialpsykologi utover i studiet.
6. Dette er det faget jeg har likt best så langt i studiet, både på grunn av en utmerket foreleser og organiseringen av faget.
7. I would like if there was more room for discussion in class, maybe seminars in addition to the lectures.
8. I think this was a really good course, overall. Good lectures, well organized slides, competent lecturer etc. I also really liked the fact that, in contrast to some other courses at the institute, things were made highly relevant. But not only that, the relevance was debated and built on solid arguments. This makes the course much more interesting. Really nice that the bar for asking questions was made low. I truly believe that the classroom was much more alive than in earlier courses. This is the result of the things mentioned above, and a interested, open lecturer. But, I'm not giving a top grade, due to the fact

that the community psychology part maybe isn't as complete as it could have been. I have read that in Bergen, students get the chance to actually influence the community through an assignment in cooperation with the municipality. So they get a specific problem, and then they're asked to create an intervention plan, in real life. Would that be possible also here in Tromsø in the future? It would have been really good. Once again, more practical training and drilling would have been good. A two page intervention plan during the exam is simply not enough, although a good start!

9. Jeg synes dette har vært det mest oversiktlige og overkommelige faget vi har hatt, og kunne ikke vært mer fornøyd. Foreleser legger fram materialet på en ekstremt effektiv måte der hvert eneste ord er verdt å få med seg. Jeg synes også "eksamenshintene" fungerte veldig godt, ikke fordi det var lettere å øve til eksamen, men fordi jeg lærte noe veldig godt i stedet for å lære litt om mye (som i tillegg har en tendens til å glemmes raskt). Vi fikk i tillegg anvendt mye i intervensjonsdelen av emnet, noe som bidrar til langvarig læring og dypere forståelse av stoffet. ALL ære til deg, Frank! :)
10. Jeg er veldig fornøyd med undervisningen i faget. Forelesningene var veldig interessante og relevante. Veldig fornøyd med faget generelt. Det var også veldig enkelt å forberede seg til eksamen med eksamenstipsene som ble lagt ut på Fronter. Men jeg skulle ønske at vi fikk mer tid til å øve på å planlegge en intervensjon. Dette ble kun gjort i en av forelesningstimene. Jeg skulle ønske at vi fikk et par intervensjoner til som vi kunne øve på å løse i grupper, siden intervensjonsplanlegging faktisk utgjorde 20 poeng på eksamenen. En annen ting som kan nevnes er at eksamenen faktisk var litt for lett. Den burde i tillegg til lette spørsmål også inneholde noen vanskeligere spørsmål, slik at det blir ett skille mellom de som kan veldig mye (A studenter) og de som kan stoffet "helt ok" (C studenter). Jeg føler ikke at jeg hadde trengt å lese så mye og kunne så mye som det jeg gjorde for å få en A. Det burde også være flere vanskelige spørsmål på eksamenen siden vi faktisk fikk såpass mange og konkrete eksamenstips på forhånd. Ellers er jeg som nevnt kjempefornøyd med faget generelt, og særlig undervisningen.
11. I liked the clear structure of the subject. Siebler was allways telling us what we should focus on and what we needed to know. Maybe we should have trained more to make a interventionplan.
12. Jeg er personlig veldig fornøyd med faget. Undervisningen var lærerik og lett å henge med på da foreleseren var veldig flink og engasjerende.
13. The lectures was very helpful. I felt like you cared about us and that you wanted to help us and makes us learn the important stuff. Thank you Frank

Appendix 2

(The following pages show the document that was distributed to the class after the exam had been graded. The document contains the exam result for the whole class, explanations of the grading process and of the result, and statistical analyses.)

PSY-2585 exam April 2016, Grading and results

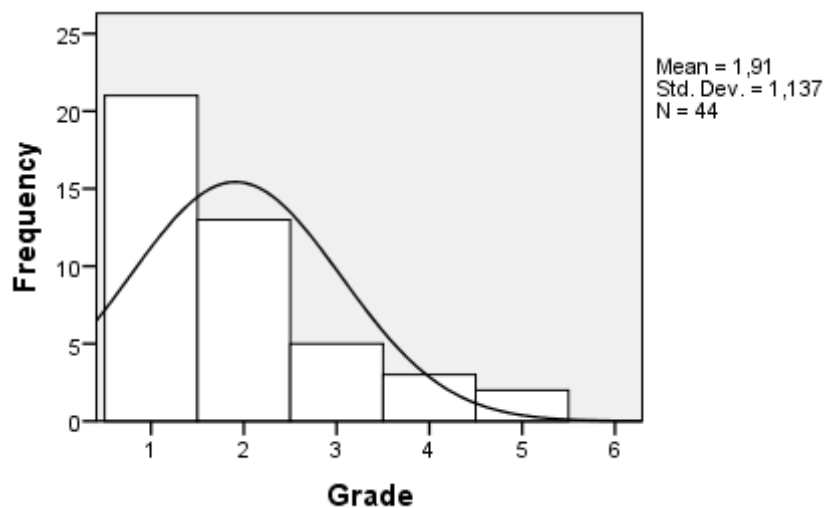
The exam for "PSY-2585 Sosial- og samfunnspsykologi" had 16 main questions (some with sub-questions). There were multiple-choice and short-answer questions; the longest question required to develop an intervention plan on circa 2 pages. Together the questions covered all topic areas from the course's 24 lecture hours. All questions had to be answered.

The evaluation committee comprised one internal examiner (a member of the Department of Psychology; actually: the course teacher) and one external examiner (a psychologist who is not a member of this Department; this examiner is a native speaker of Norwegian). The examination committee received the exams in an anonymous form, namely with candidate numbers written onto them instead of the student names. Detailed, written examiner guidelines listed the normatively correct answer to each question, together with answer variants that should also count as correct. The examiners first graded all exams independently, using the written guidelines for this exam plus the university's general "karakterskala" that defines the meaning of each grade verbally. Then they compared their ratings for each exam and determined the final grades.

Each question had a defined number of maximum points that could be achieved, from 2 points (for simple multiple-choice questions) over 3-4 points (for questions that required more thought and/or own formulations) and 9 points (for the self-formulated description of a full study or program of research) to 20 points (for the intervention plan). The maximum number of points for each question was listed in the exam; the examiners gave partial points for partly correct answers. The maximum number of points for the whole exam was 80 points. 70 points or more counted as an A. For each 10 points less, one grade was subtracted (B = 60-69, C = 50-59, and so on). The result for the class as a whole is shown on the next page.

		Grade			Cumulative Percent
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	
Valid	A	21	42,9	47,7	47,7
	B	13	26,5	29,5	77,3
	C	5	10,2	11,4	88,6
	D	3	6,1	6,8	95,5
	E	2	4,1	4,5	100,0
	Total	44	89,8	100,0	
Missing	System	5	10,2		
Total		49	100,0		

Missing: Not "F" – instead, a candidate number in the list, but no exam to grade



Almost 90% of the exams were graded C or better. That is an excellent result.

Where do the differences in the grades come from?

The differences in the grades come mostly from the questions that required to formulate an answer in one's own words. Multiple-choice questions ("identify the correct one out of four pre-formulated answers") and reproductive questions ("what is the definition of ...") were answered correctly most of the time. Several questions asked to apply a specific theory or technique to a small practical problem, by filling the word-gaps in pre-formulated sentences. Here the answers were mostly correct, too. Other questions however required self-formulated answers: to describe in one's own words a whole research program, a set of critique against a given research instrument, or to develop a full intervention plan for a novel community problem ("novel" = not presented in the lecture, not pre-solved in the penum). Here points were lost. Beyond knowledge gaps, a major reason were answers that were incomplete, imprecise, and/or not self-explaining.

To give an example from the community psychology part: The intervention plan part asked for the names of two methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the own intervention -- and for each of the methods, for a short explanation how it would be applied in the own intervention. Most exams listed two (or even more) method names. Not all exams, however, also provided good explanations. Instead, some answers named variables that could be measured, but did not say why these variables should be measured, when, from whom, and what the result of the measurement would tell us about the effectiveness of the intervention. Such answers received a point for the correct method name, but not additional points for the explanation.

In sum, the exams occasionally missed points for wrong answers, forgotten details, or unclear formulations. The loss was usually small at each place individually, but it added up across the whole exam. A loss of 10 points still allowed an A, but from then on, it impacted the grade.

Reliability I: Inter-rater agreement in the grading

Detailed, written examiner guidelines had been developed beforehand to strongly standardize the grading process. Using these guidelines, each examiner first rated all exams independently. Afterwards the examiners compared and discussed their results, and agreed on the final grades. Below are analyses with the point sums (theoretical range: 0-80 points) from before the discussion.

Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Pair 1 Points (examiner 1)	66,43	44	11,35
Points (examiner 2)	64,43	44	11,70

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation			
Pair 1 Points (examiner 1) - Points (examiner 2)	2,00	5,22	2,54	43	,015

Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 Points (examiner 1) & Points (examiner 2)	44	,90	,000

The tables above show that the examiners independently gave similar numbers of points on average ($M = 66.43$ and $M = 64.43$, respectively). Whereas the mean difference reached statistical significance, $t(43) = 2.54$, $p < .02$, its magnitude is small ($M = 2.00$ points, which corresponds to one fifth of a grade).

In a comparison exam-by-exam, the examiners separately reached similar results too. The table above shows a strong correlation between their independent ratings, $r(42) = .90$, $p < .001$.

In sum, the grading process showed high inter-rater reliability.

Reliability II: The exam's internal consistency

The following tables show Cronbach's Alpha as the measure of the exam's internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha is frequently used for that purpose.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,827	,834	19

Cronbach's Alpha is .83. For a regular research instrument (f. ex. an attitude survey or a personality scale), that would be good to very good. For an exam it is excellent.

Item-Total Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
q1	,835
q2	,829
q3	,826
q4	,818
q5	,821
q6	,819
q7	,819
q8	,815
q9	,821
q10	,828
q11	,834
q12	,808
q13	,795
q14	,814
q15	,803
q16a	,813
q16b	,825
q16c	,812
q16d	,806

The table to the left shows, separately for each exam question, what Cronbach's Alpha would be if that question had not been asked. If a question differs from the others, then removing it would increase Cronbach's Alpha noticeably. As we see in the table, this is not the case for any of the questions.

In sum, the exam's internal consistency was high, and all questions contributed to the total grades in the same way.

← q1 to q15 are the social psychology questions, q16a to q16d are the four parts of the community psychology intervention plan