

SELECTIONS FROM

Mattole Field Institute Field Course Evaluation Form

Student responses inserted in Blue

Name of Field Course: Socioeconomics of Natural Resources in the Mattole Valley (EC 630)

Date of Field Course: August 17-21, 2015

Please answer each question honestly and completely. Your responses will be kept confidential, and will not affect your grade. Providing thorough, honest feedback will help us improve future field courses.

Thank you for your participation, and best wishes.

1. On a scale of 0-5, with 0 being “not at all valuable” and 5 being “exceptional,” how would you rate this field course overall?

8 students gave it a 5; one student gave it a 4.5; one student gave it a 6.

2. What was the most valuable segment of the field course, and why?

"The most valuable aspect of the field course was the diverse groups of individuals we met. They shared a variety of perspectives and worldviews that it allowed for a great introduction to interview and data collection. It also made for interesting research question development."

"The openness of all the community members that met with us and their enthusiasm in spending time with us; listening and answering all questions completely."

"I found the fireside chat (roundtable) to be of most value to me. We were able to see some hot topics in the community come to light and those individuals address them from their point of views. It was apparent that even disparate residents shared some similar feelings on those topics. Our time at Moore Hill may have been equally valuable though!"

3. What was the least valuable segment, and why?

"Sleep."

"This is difficult! Everything was valuable."

4. What could be done to improve the logistic aspects of the course? (i.e. camping, food, transportation, etc.)

"I thought everything was planned really well, especially for it being the first time this field course has been done."

5. How well did this field course complement your on-campus, classroom-based education? Please explain.

"This course was great for meeting and creating relationship with other students that may not have happened in the classroom, as well as hands on learning of research projects."

"The field course added depth and a real-life, tangible context to the readings we discussed in class on Sunday. It's important to be in the field to see the abstract theories and concepts we learn come to life."

"The trip allowed me to access years of study and experience and understand academic theory as it functions in real communities."

6. Did this course change your understanding of rural communities and their relationships to natural resources? If so, how?

"Yes, profoundly. Rural communities in the Mattole are extremely unique and they provide me with a new perspective. I had a very limited understanding of positive rural community development."

"Yes. It gave me insight into the attitudes, needs, and challenges of rural communities."

"Yes! This community has such a unique relationship with their natural resources. I believed rural communities were somewhat more connected to their NR's before taking this course. I learned how complex and historically based these relationships are."

7. Did this course inspire you to pursue research on an issue or issues affecting rural communities and/or natural resources? If yes, please explain the research topic(s) you may pursue.

"Yes, I am now interested in studying the ways in which shame and shunning are used as social control. My experience here pointed me towards this research question."

"It definitely did. I have already formulated a research question, where I will be comparing and contrasting the Mattole community to a Latino community in Fortuna - in regards to how the Mattole community has created self-identity centered on restoration/stewardship which positively affect our environments."

"Possibly! There were many fascinating research questions that developed for me in my time here in the Mattole. Several of these included the relationships community members form within the watershed. Another topic would be surrounding the community's desire for prescribed burning as a tool for watershed management and obstacles that currently exist for making it a reality."

"Yes. Self governing rural communities. Dynamics of adolescence in rural communities."

8. If your E&C research interests lay outside of rural communities and natural resources, to what extent was this field course still worthwhile for you?

"This course was extremely worthwhile because we discussed such a variety of environmental + social justice issues. Even if I didn't care about these things, this course still would have been valuable because of all the research ideas and conversations we had."

9. To what extent did this field course provide a good balance of immersion in a place/exposure to various inhabitants' perspectives AND reflective time/time with professor and cohort to consider your own research interests?

"The first two days consisted of a lot of data collection and gaining exposure to various inhabitants (which I loved) however it did not give much time for reflection and summarizing. The rest of the week there was more time, which was great."

"Our time was a little more balanced towards immersion in the community, so we may have benefitted from more time to reflect and work through questions with the cohort. Although, spending as much time as we did with community members was very valuable."

10. What was the most valuable aspect of this course for you, or the most valuable lesson(s) you learned?

"I found talking to the first farmer, and his grandson, exposed me to some of my favorite lessons. Up until that point, I didn't really fully understand (or believe) that such skillful intelligent people were living in this way because they care about something much greater than themselves. This community has turned away from what most societies would deem "successful" (money, power), and placed their environment + eachother above that."

"Patience. Letting people who we are interviewing talk at their own rate."

11. What would be the single most important change we could make, to make this a better course?

"Making it a requirement to go down the river to snorkel with our cohort and professor. I did it and it made me have a stronger connection with this type of water."

12. What was one thing you learned during this field course that surprised you? (This does not necessarily have to be about the course subject; it can be anything at all.)

"how open and honest people were with us - and the trust they demonstrated in sharing their stories. This is a beautiful community."

"That formal government isn't necessary for a community to have structure and cooperation."

"The human beings with completely opposite views and practices: Communicating with them personally removed the barriers and categories in my mind."

13. Would you recommend that the E&C graduate program continue to require this field course as one of its Socio-Cultural (Place) curricular category classes? Why or why not?

"Yes, it was a great intro to both my graduate program and the world of research. It was a strong start to a two year grad program."

"Yes! This class was an amazing experience. I learned so much new info and got so many ideas for new research projects. I loved getting to know all the people in the E+C program. This was the perfect way to start off graduate school :) "

"Yes. It's a fantastic way to learn about Humboldt County in a way that may not be possible if you don't have connections to the Mattole Valley."

"Yes, I strongly believe that the field course is beneficial to introducing students to the process of research. AS well as the invaluable experience of bonding with your cohort."

"Yes. I learned more in 5 days than I do in entire semester courses. Real research and experience is an antidote to ideological thinking."

14. What advice would you give to the leaders of the Mattole restoration community?

"My advice would be to continue the excellent work and commitment to social and environment change within their community."

"Keep it up. You're models for other communities."

"Continue to listen to one another and the earth. This community has such an amazing variety of individuals with unique experiences and beliefs and ideas. If the community continues to listen to one another the restoration process will be spurred by new ideas and perspectives."