



Minutes from the programme board meeting Chinese programme

Date: 21.09.22

Time: 14.15-16.00

Place: seminar room 301, HF building

Present: Shouhui Zhao, Guowen Shang, Helen Zhang, Julia Marinaccio, Jens Karlsson, Tuva Aareskjold, Marit Skaatan

13/22 Approval of notification of meeting and today's agenda

Approved

14/22 Approval of minutes from the programme board's last meeting (appendix 1)

Approved

15/22 Courses taught in the spring semester: student feedback and ways to improve (appendices 2-5)

The programme coordinator gave a summary of the four courses taught during spring 2022. Student evaluations and teacher's self-assessment were conducted for all four courses.

KIN101 and KIN102 were taught by Guowen Shang and Shouhui Zhao.

KIN101

The survey results show that the students feel generally happy about the course. 31 students did the final exam in KIN101.

KIN102

Teaching

The teachers think this batch of students did not seem motivated. Oral participation in class was low. It was hard to get the students motivated to speak in class.

The student representative explains that students were not motivated because the course was not their number one choice. Motivation in class overall was dropped because students were influenced by the students who lacked motivation. This was driving the motivation down overall. Student groups did not work well. Pace was an issue. Many had difficulties with raising their hand. It was also a problem that the less motivated students only joined one course. The student representative suggest that we put up an announcement in the system if students only register for one course or inform the students ahead that KIN101 and KIN102 should be taken the same semester.



Exam

23 students did the exam in KIN102. 7 failed. The failure rate is a bit high. Many students had difficulties writing Chinese characters. Many did not complete the hand-written requirements.

The student representative also stated that many students complained about too little time to answer all the tasks in the exam. The student representative herself felt that time was ample. Time management is one of the generic skills that the exam is supposed to test. Students were inexperienced with the written exam format. The student representative suggests a more mock exams ahead of the actual exam to help students practice time management. During the mock exam, the students can be guided in what to prioritize.

KIN201

KIN201 was taught by Jens Karlsson and Helen Zhang.

The student feedback was predominantly positive. There were some drop-out issues this semester: 5-7 students failed or did not take the exam.

Jens Karlsson and Helen Zhang made some suggestions on how to improve further this time: Make an explicit study plan to hand out when the course commences. Jens and Helen will go over the material and cut out some parts and focus on vocabulary, Chinese characters, and grammar. Jens pointed out: At some point the students reach the level which is more open-ended. At this level, they will not get the grammar points explained, instead the students will start using your own resources. KIN201 is an intermediate step between beginner's level and the advanced level. Textbooks are not ideal in the long run, but the teachers will do their best to bridge the gap. KIN201 is meant to be harder than the 100-level courses.

EAS251

EAS251 was taught by Julia Marinaccio (partly joint teaching with EAS250 taught by Nathan Hopson).

There were several issues with EAS251. The students responded that the teaching needs to start earlier in the semester. Technical issues in Mitt UiB need to be improved. They responded that there was a missing link between what Julia told them and what exercises were done. EAS251 is a mix of a crash course in research methodology and academic writing, and a bachelor's colloquium. Nathan and Julia attended each other's lectures, but it was still not ideal. One person should teach the course and give theoretical input.



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The teaching should start from the beginning of the term. We will terminate the co-teaching with the Japanese programme. We could do six individual lectures in a shorter time span of 3-4 weeks. This could enable to students to pick a thesis topic earlier.

Julia stated that some students responded that the lectures did not make sense to some students. They did not decide a topic based on the lectures.

A good solution could be to give input with closer connection to the actual course; do the six lectures, focus more on relevant methodology within the different areas, and show them *how* can they do the research.

The programme coordinator thinks these lectures can still be helpful. We can keep this. But for the research methodology part, we start from the beginning.

16/22 Format of student evaluations – how can we conduct them to increase respondent rates? (Discussion)

The student representatives think the survey questions are so open. It makes it hard to remember. Students are not motivated to answer.

The student advisor said that we see the tendency that response rates on these surveys are low overall. The students who are very dissatisfied often respond, the ones who are happy or neutral do not respond. This results in an uneven impression of the actual satisfaction level.

We specify that all comments in its entirety will be forwarded to all the teaching staff. We urge the students to keep the feedback civil and constructive. It's happened on occasion that students use the opportunity an anonymous survey provides to lash out in the comments section. The administration is obligated to forward this to the teacher when this happens, as we cannot keep information from them which regards them.

The format we have used up until this point is a standard template for student surveys. We can choose to do it differently if we want. We need to have some sort of student feedback as it's a requirement in the student quality system and provides data for the teachers to write the course self-assessments. It's up to the course coordinator to decide on a format to receive the feedback.

Some suggestions from the student advisor:

- 1) Set aside 15 minutes in a lecture or seminar in the second half of the term. The students give oral feedback on questions provided, as well as general feedback. Student advisor takes notes and hands over to the course coordinator.



- 2) Include the student representative and let them collect oral feedback and take notes.
- 3) Keep the same template, but let the students respond with full name, and stress that their full name will be linked to their full response.
- 4) Set aside time during a lecture or seminar, for instance before the break. Urge them to respond. Set aside time well before the exam period starts.

Helen thinks reflection is important. Make a new template as a compromise, where we ask 1-2 core questions. The student representative thinks the boxes are a bad idea – her peers see a box and opt out. Helen thinks a warm-up discussion will make it easier to write more in-depth.

Julia thinks it's a good idea to do it in class. Not in the very last lecture, but 2-3 meetings earlier. It's also possible to do another kind of evaluation: leave the students alone in class and let them write their comments on the blackboard. She thinks UiB should have a quality assessment centre with standardized surveys, where the centre does the analysis.

Jens thinks it's an idea to let the students reflect upon their learning process. We could establish a system to lure the students into reflection mode if we devise the questions smartly and let the students engage in a running self-reflection process. For instance: Where are you now compared to the beginning of term? Where did you feel like you absorbed a lot, or absorbed less? It's more likely to get a good response rate at the end, when most students have reflected already. We could try this in KIN201.

Student representative: Norwegian students are timid. Discussions in groups first will make it easier to answer.

17/22 Statement from the programme board on ekstern fagfellerapport by Xinzhen Wan (Discussion) (appendix 6)

The programme board has read the external examiner's report with great interest.

In the last year we have had 'kollokvie' groups organized by the teachers. This was helpful to the students, but a bit complicated for the teachers. This year we did not organize 'kollokvie' groups.

18/22 EAS251 - change of course description: add "±10 %" to the word count and "excluding references, appendix, etc."
<https://www.uib.no/en/course/EAS251>



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<https://www.uib.no/emne/EAS251>

The programme board passed the suggestions. Marit will make the changes in the course descriptions online.

19/22 Possibility of swapping the instructional semesters of KIN101 and KIN100?

The programme coordinator has consulted the head of studies Benedicte Irgens on this matter. Irgens responded that the courses cannot be switched because:

- The standard number of credits for a full-time term is 30 credits.
- The teaching hours do not match.

The student representative wanted to know if this has been suggested by the students or the teachers. It has been discussed among the teachers based on their general impression. The teachers responded that KIN100 is regarded as a heavy theoretical course among students. Some start to question their motivation when the first Chinese language course is in the second term. Helen suggests putting more Chinese words into the KIN100 lectures. She has already started doing this (keywords and practice). KIN100 is now more focused.

Conclusion: We will not swap the instructional semesters but continue to make improvements to KIN100 instead.

20/22 Status for exchange studies to China, Taiwan or other places (Discussion)

The situation in China has not changed. It was possible to apply for NCCU for the spring semester 2023. Two students are now in Taiwan. The student advisor hasn't been contacted by anyone who has applied for the spring term.

21/22 Reminder: Helen will take over as programme coordinator October 1st 2022.