

OLC Meeting Minutes December 2 2014

Present: Dana Polakova, Florian Volz, Helene Rudd, Jeffrey Fynn Paul, Meike de Goede, Michelle Carmody, Tom Vensters

1. Decision of Roles within DC

Chair: Michelle

Secretary: Tom

Tentative Scheduling of meetings:

3rd week of November

3rd week of February

3rd week of May

Mid September (3rd week)

Aiming at 15:00

Use Anna to find best time in the weeks stated.

2. Program Board response to minutes of last meeting

Tutors in DC still a wish, but not possible under legal regulations. Observer members of course more than welcome when in need.

We unanimously agree that Midterm evaluations are not useful: The evaluation takes place after 2 or 3 tutorials. It seems a waste of time for tutors, as well as administration: the results are too late to actually change the course mid-semester. More useful would be to facilitate better feedback moments between for example students and tutors. Additionally, students do not take it seriously when filling in.

We agree that recordings can be a valuable asset to the students. It allows students to gain the knowledge in a way they prefer and best speaks to them. While the non-attendance seems not particular to taped lectures, it should be further looked into.

We feel the laptop issue should be referred to the tutor meetings to discuss their view and suggested plan of action with this regard.

3. DC openness and functioning

Minutes and correspondence shall be made available. Anna is the one responsible to publicizing this correspondence. The minutes will be circulated through email and approved, after which they shall be published.

Additionally, it should be more clear for students where to go to (BASIS, Degree Committee, Faculty council). Preferably this should be on the website.

Student members will divide following tasks among themselves: monitoring OLC email address, monitoring OLC Facebook page. Staff members will consult with OLOCs in their various programs to receive advice on tasks and functioning; Dr Carmody will collate all OLC-Program Board correspondence so far and pass on to Anna for uploading on website.

4. Annual Report

Annual Report has not been delivered to us, so we can't respond to it right now

It was noted that this lack of timely delivery of important material is becoming habitual – we hope that with the publication of our meeting schedule the Program Board will be able to deliver material to us in a timely fashion.

We will request the materials electronically and provide our feedback to the Program Board in this way.

5. Student Issues

a. Thesis Seminars

East Asian Seminars were problematic as there were not enough area-specific seminars. For example 12 spots for around 70 people. The discipline (thematic) and comparative seminars do make up for some of the lack of spots. Problematic still is that students have not been clearly informed on the difference between thematic, comparative, and area specific students; this should be better explained on the website as well in the informational emails being sent on these seminars.

The faculty of the Thesis seminars seems to have been differently informed on the content of these. Better communication is therefore highly encouraged. The staff members present seem to have received different instructions.

Additionally the limited nature of topics forces students to adhere to standards of topic they might not wish to specialize in. This contrasts with the idea of allowing the students to do their first proper and individual research in their own interests.

Furthermore the problem might arise that certain seminar supervisors allow more leniency and freedom with topic choices, and others might not. This does not send a clear message to the students.

b. Electives

The supply does not match in any way the demand. Nor does it match the actual supposed course composition. With 4 pillars of economics, politics, history and culture needing to be represented, having merely 1 second-years on economics for example seems rather disproportionate. There seems to be over-representation of culture, along with religious studies and linguistics. This disenfranchises students who have developed a plan or designed a programme. Additionally, of the specializations offered few regions seem to be represented.

With regards to the system, the timing (midnight Sunday) is ironic considering the lecturer's wish for students to attend lectures the next morning. Furthermore the communication with regards to the system is rather abhorrent. As it should be obvious the amount of stress being caused by the rat race, and with no explanation one only can complain.

As to content-wise registrations, it seems very unfair to students to lose their plans and interests simply because of a slightly slower internet connection. Instead, perhaps they should be forced to hand in a study plan and motivation which could grant them priority placement.

6. Course Issues

There should be more coordination between global and area-specific courses, as well as in between area-specific courses themselves. Currently there is a lot of overlap and not knowing what the others do.

General agreement is that flowcharts of content is needed to share in-between lecturers so that these issues can be avoided.

Suggested is to create coordinators of areas, so that there is a more centralized approach to area courses.

Further discussion of this topic has been moved to next meeting.