

OLC Minutes 19. February 2018

Members present:

Marat Markert, Hannah De Mulder, Ksenia Robbe, Anna Pott, Anna Karisto, Viktor Blichfeldt, Jin Seong, Florentina Tudose, Elizabeth den Boer (observer).

1. A student member of the programme board, Imogen Stevens, visited the meeting and discussed the issues regarding course enrolments (via uSis). In the past, the system was crashing due to the fact that a lot of programmes university-wide have enrolments for their courses on the same day(s). We discussed a proposal on how to run the enrolment for different programmes and courses on different days in order to avoid the crash of the system. Given the size of our programme, we recommend to the programme board to find different dates for enrolment for the BAIS programme.
Regarding enrolment for electives, we discussed the possibility to have students indicate a preference ranking for different elective courses. This way students would get a higher chance to take part in an elective that matches their academic interests. In light of the high demand for economic electives a recommendation to the programme board has been made to ensure that more economic electives are offered in the coming year(s). However, it was also pointed out that the primary goal of electives (up until now) is to train students in writing a longer paper, so arguments that students need to take a specific elective in order to fulfil an entry requirement for their master's programme should not play a role in allocating students to their elective. At the same time, most students choose electives based on the substance of the course, not primarily because of the academic skill that is trained in electives.
The OLC decided to look further into the issue of how the purpose of electives is communicated to students in our programme and if any adjustment can/should be made in this respect.
2. The lack of study space in the campus was discussed and where this issue should be relayed. In addition, some of the classrooms are too small, and badly insulated against noise from outside or above, and therefore impact the quality of teaching in tutorials/seminars.
3. Course evaluations were discussed. Cultural Interactions evaluation has improved from previous years, but it still scores rather low. The OLC decided to look further into the course by setting up a small subgroup (composed of two student members and a staff member), seeking the input/views also from the instructors of this course, so as to get an overall impression of what needs to be improved. In the language courses, there is a great variation in the language levels between students and the issue of some language courses being overcrowded was raised (it is not clear whether this is due to students being allocated into overcrowded class rooms, or whether students themselves choose to switch into tutorial groups that are already full). Issues regarding the Culture of Latin America course were also discussed.
4. Issues regarding thesis seminars were discussed and the opportunity for organizing an information session in the second semester of the second year about thesis seminars was brought up. This way students know already what to expect from the thesis seminar (allocation process, content and purpose of these seminars etc.).