

## International Studies OLC Meeting

Date: 06/07/2017

Present: Harel Berger, Michelle Carmody, Elizabeth den Boer, Crystal Ennis, Jeff Fynn-Paul, Anna Karisto, Marat Markert, Maaïke Nievelstein, Rosa Seidler, + Programme Board (Joost Augusteijn, Jaap Kamphuis)

1. Response to minutes/recommendations of OLC by programme board:
  - a. Resits for individual exams components of a course (midterm (30%), final (40%), overall (70%)): the OLC discussed the programme board's proposal to introduce a resit for the midterm (see minutes from [18. April 2017](#)). The OLC remained divided on this issue. Those supporting the proposal pointed out that the option to resit the midterm would motivate students to study for the final exam, even if they failed the midterm exam (given that the final exam accounts for 40% of the end grade, students who failed the midterm might choose to not to sit the final exam and go directly into the resit). Those who opposed it, pointed out that it would demotivate students to study for the midterm (since students will have a second chance to take the midterm exam during the resit period), increase the workload for the lecturers to design three different exams and of the administration to monitor who can take what exam, and might diminish the standard of the programme overall (make it easier for students to pass a course). To move forward on this issue, the OLC (together with the programme board) agreed that Midterm resits will be introduced from the academic year 2018/2019 onwards for a trial period of one year; the exact details of this proposal (structure and duration of the resit exam, adjustment in the Teaching and Examination Regulations (so-called OER)) will be fleshed out during the coming year by the programme board, in consultation with the OLC.
  - b. Foreign Language in Practice/3<sup>rd</sup> year elective: the OLC remained opposed to abandoning the third year elective (see minutes from [18. April 2017](#)), advising the programme board to allow for a choice (students who want to take a language course in their third year could choose "Foreign Language in Practice", while students who wanted to specialize in a substantive subject would take an elective). Furthermore, student members reiterated that instead of having a third year language course (in the final semester), "practice" aspects of foreign language courses could be introduced in the first or second year language courses.
  - c. Research Methods: The programme board provided further details on how the new programme structure would effectively maintain two elective courses, albeit one elective would focus more on research methods. The OLC advised the programme board to introduce a proper research methods course that will be the same for all students (rather than an elective). The OLC took on board the feedback received from electives and thesis seminar instructors: some second year/third year students still have major issues with formulating a research question, setting up an appropriate/manageable research design for their thesis, selecting appropriate methods for analysis etc. The programme board stated that effectively there will be still two electives in the programme of which one will be integrated with a research

methods training. The programme board will send the details for this new elective / research methods course to the OLC in due time.

- d. On the issue of language class size (see minutes from [18. April 2017](#)): the maximum number of students per language class is 18 and language teachers should be informed about this (i.e. to not allow additional students into the seminar). The OLC recommended to aim for a maximum number of 12, so as to ensure a study and teaching environment that is conducive of achieving the achievement levels envisaged for the language classes.
- e. The OLC agreed to the programme board's proposal of awarding students a propedeuse after the first year.
- f. The programme board informed the OLC that a special track thesis seminar will not be introduced (see minutes from [18. April 2017](#)); a new proposal for tutorial attendance rules was discussed briefly, but it was decided that we will stick to the current rules (half or more tutorials missed => 1.0 for tutorial component of the end grade), which should be however enforced uniformly across tutorials.
- g. Evaluations: core and area course evaluations plus language course evaluations were discussed and relevant recommendation will be send to the programme board.
- h. The OLC discussed and agreed to adjust the questionnaires for course evaluations, taking on board additional questions for core/area courses, and language courses.
- i. In preparation of the academic year 2017/2018 the OLC has to set up its own internal rules of procedures (huishoudelijke reglement).