

Meeting: OLC meeting  
 Date: Friday 7th of December 2018, 16:00 until 17:50  
 Location: Meeting room, 5th floor Wijnhaven  
 Chair: Marat Markert  
 Secretary: Eveline Vos  
 In attendance: Crystal Ennis  
                   Hannah de Mulder  
                   Maurice Kirschbaum  
                   Madhav Warawdekar  
                   Emil Munte  
                   Alessandra Barrow

### 1. Curriculum Plan 2019/2020 (Onderwijsvoorbereiding)

The curriculum plan for 2019/2020 was discussed and the following points were raised:

- As a general remark on the curriculum plan/programme structure, the issue of turnover of staff was brought up. The OLC unanimously agreed that both programme board and the faculty institutes should ensure the continuity of teaching staff at BAIS. The reason for this is that lecturers who only teach once at BAIS get no chance to improve (where necessary) the course material or didactical methods. Likewise, continuity allows students to identify supervisors for their thesis and receive recommendation letters for their master's and job/internship applications later on throughout their first two years of studying at BAIS. Moreover, without continuity, specific goals, such as allowing more intensive supervision, as well as more general goals, such as creating a community in the Humanities faculty across both Leiden and The Hague might not be realized.
- Likewise, the OLC was wondering what the state of play was on the 13 (permanent) UD/tutor positions that were supposed to be created for the BAIS programme. Currently there are 8 UDs dedicated primarily to teaching at BAIS.
- The current 3rd year elective (to be held one last time this academic year 2018/2019) will be moved to the 2nd year/2nd semester. Overall, the number of electives will decrease from currently 25 to 23 in 2019/2020. Given the limited amount of places per elective, the OLC advised the programme board to make sure that there are enough electives/places per elective available so as to allow also those students who might fail their 3rd year elective this year (including resit) to retake the elective next year.
- On the course Foreign Language in Practice, the OLC noted a number of issues with regard to:
  - o Staffing: The OLC found it peculiar that content lecturers appeared to be scheduled to teach the new "Language in Practice" language courses. We thought language teachers (who were involved in the design of this course) should be involved in its delivery.
  - o Workload: workload for instructors in language courses such as Mandarin, Korean and other languages where the final achievement level remains below B1 seems to be much larger than in other language courses with higher achievement levels and this should be taken into consideration;
  - o Differentiation: will there be greater differentiation across the different language courses with regard to the achievement levels? Students who begin their foreign language course in their first year a pre-intermediate level will be at a higher level of language proficiency in their third year. Will those students get a different language course? With regard to Mandarin, it was suggested to provide a course with a higher proficiency level above A1+ so as to allow students (who pass this course) to fulfil the entry requirements for the Asian Studies Master's at Leiden University.
  - o Communication: programme board should communicate clearly to students the aims and learning goals of the new language course; and clearly communicate to the student body as a whole that the 3<sup>rd</sup> year elective will be moved and replaced by a language course.
- The programme board (and by extension research institutes at the faculty) should ensure a good match between the subject of the courses in the BAIS programme, and the lecturer(s) assigned to these courses. Lecturers should be familiar with the subjects that they are assigned to teach.

## 2. Other issues

### Thematic seminars (electives)

The issue of the standardization of papers for the thematic seminar were discussed. The programme board decided to fix the word count at 5000 words and set a common deadline for all thematic seminars. Last year this decision was implemented for the first time. The OLC contacted all electives instructors to get their input on this issue. Responses were divided – some welcoming the standardization, others indifferent and yet others again opposing any standardization. The OLC sees a merit in arguments for and against standardization. The deadline seems to be placed fairly late in the semester, potentially interfering with instructors' research obligations and research trips/field work for the summer month. At the same time, putting the deadline towards the end of the semester allows students to dedicate more time to writing the final paper. The same goes for a standard word-count of 5000 words. It would be desirable if the programme board could find a compromise that would allow for some flexibility, i.e. stating that the deadline should be no later than a certain date; or that the word-count should be a range 4000-6000 words, but with no margins at the lower and upper bound.

Moreover, the OLC underlined that the way the new standardization was introduced leaves a lot to be desired. The changes made to the e-studiegids were done without the consultation of the OLC, even though the e-studiegids form part of the Curriculum and Examination Regulations, over parts of which the OLC has a right of consent.

### South- and Southeast Asia economics midterm grades

A student member of the OC stated that the midterm for economics south- and southeast Asia were revealed 5 weeks in to the second part of the first semester (instead of within 15 working days)

### Thesis seminars variety (Sout and South East Asia)

For the South- and Southeast Asia region, topics for the thesis seminars are very specific and do not cover all disciplinary varieties offered in the programme (expertise in certain disciplines is missing in the relevant institute providing the thesis supervisors for SSEA); the OC recommends that topics need to be more broad, general and flexible so more students will be able to fit their thesis topics of interest in to these seminars (after all, BAIS is a multidisciplinary programme). Alternatively, students should be informed (by the programme board) that in certain area specialization not all disciplines are covered in thesis seminar.

### Travel reimbursements for students

Maurice Kirschbaum proposed an idea for travel reimbursement for International Studies students who travel regularly to Leiden for their Honours classes, their minor in the third year or for a general course taught in Leiden. Travel expenses can pile-up quite fast and because of that students hesitate to do for example a minor programme in Leiden, choosing instead to do an internship in The Hague. The student members want to inquire with the programme board whether parts of the annual budget could be used to finance the travel reimbursement for students taking a minor or honours classes in Leiden (either through reimbursements or subsidies for a NS-annual card).

### Communication from programme board to students

In light of the controversies surrounding the cancelled Zwarte Piet protest event (including the security measures put in place at Wijnhaven) and the follow-up communication by the rector of the university, the student members want to stress that it is important for the programme director/programme board to communicate with the student body, rather than receiving emails from the rector who they don't know and can't relate to.