

The PECOS Programme Council meeting 23 April 2015

Dato: 20. august 2015

Present:

Hilde Henriksen Waage (Chair), Kristian Berg Harpviken, Hanne Hagtvedt Vik, Håvard Strand, Anne Julie Semb, Mari Hidle Simonsen, Turner Jacobs, Siri Marie Aamodt, Siv Håberg (secretary).

Absent: Mackenzie Catherine Mertz

Agenda:

Resolution items:

1/15 Removal of the motivation letter

Resolution: The Program Council decides to remove the motivation letter as part of the PECOS admission procedure.

Orientation items:

2/15 Orientation by Håvard Strand concerning the periodic programme evaluation

The aim for the periodic programme evaluation is to improve the PECOS program in general by pointing out strengths and weaknesses and suggesting improvements. The programme has supplied the external committee with a self-evaluation report and various statistics on relevant topics. Today we are recruiting strong academic students and we would like to improve their academic skills throughout our program. We do not know if we are successfully enough.



The students on the history track faces a huge challenge when they take the history method and a course in political science at the same time since the courses in political science is running over a period of 6 weeks. One solution could be to teach the historical method intensively for some weeks as well.

The students on the history track (2 and 3 semester students) believe they have few courses to choose from compared to the students on the political science track. **HIS4424- America and the world since 1898** were not considered relevant among the students since most of them write thesis concerning contemporary history. Therefore they end up taking political science- and human rights courses.

Geir Lundestad's course shall be continued in a new version, and the Faculty of Humanities has hired more English speaking staff in order to increase the English portfolie. Turner Jacobs pointed out that the introduction course PECOS4010 is only focusing on the political science issues. Håvard replied that Geir Lundestad's course originally focused on history matters so that this would balance the needs of both groups. Therefore it is extremely important that the new version continues in this slot.

The track in the Pecos program is very locked. It is not easy to be an exchange student for instance, and we would like to discuss with the external committee if this is good or bad.

We would like to increase the number of activities where the student participate more actively in the teaching process, and we will look into different ways of evaluate our students. The aim is to improve our student's skills regarding, oral communication, teamwork, practical skills as well as academic. For instance will the course in method focus on working in team, home assignment and cooperation tasks.

Student course completion is not currently at an adequate level, but according to the students council members, this may be because a lot of students who have been on internships get an extension and other gets a job before finishing. It may also due to illness or because they have selected issues which are too difficult to

operationalize. For whatever reason, it is important for the staff that our students finish on time, since this is considered essential feature of working life. We need to look into how we can help our students finish on time and hopefully will this evaluation process help us along in the right direction. Håvard also hopes that this evaluation will end in a strategic plan where for instance one PhD-candidate per cohort will be a fact.

Kristian Harpviken called for investigation on how our students manage in the working competition.

Discussion items:

3/15 No students signed up for HIS4424- America and the world since 1898, but Siri suggests that students from now on can choose their own curriculum and have an oral exam. For students in the master's program in History a course like this, HIS4110, is mandatory. In this course, the students can choose to read the syllabus from an already existing course or they set up their own syllabus. They would then need to get the reading list sign by an academic staff member. There should therefore be possible to create a similar course for PECOS.

4/15 Date and time of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held in October 2015 and we will agree on the exact time and date later on. It cannot be in the beginning of October (Autumn Holiday) or October 7th.

Any other business:

5/15 Kristian Harpviken wants a closer cooperation for PECOS and PRIO since a lot of the researcher miss teaching, and our students may take PHD courses at PRIO. One measure could be to invite Kristoffer Lidén to our information meetings.