

Self-evaluation of the Master's Programme in Peace and Conflict Studies

This document presents the self-evaluation of the PECOS programme, and is a part of the Periodic Program Evaluation process that PECOS is subjected to in the academic year 2014–15. This document is based on the faculty template¹, with slight deviations.

The aim of this process is to assess the quality of the programme and guide its future improvement or termination. Quality as a concept is not defined as such, but this document will use the term to describe the extent to which key strategic goals are met.

1. Recruitment. Is there a demand for the programme among both national and international students?
2. Activities. Can we do what we do better within the available resources?
 - a. How can we improve education of current topics?
 - b. Should any current topic be replaced?
 - c. Does the evaluation system reflect the skills of the students, and are there any biases to our examination structures?
3. Progress. Why do students fail to finish on time, or fail to finish at all?
4. Relevance. Do our students get the kind of jobs they want?
5. Internationalization. PECOS should mix Norwegian and international students.

This report will try to answer these questions to the extent possible, and highlight the topics where we need more or better information to provide answers.

About PECOS

The Master's programme in Peace and Conflict studies is based on history and political science as a two-track programme with about 20 students accepted each year. The programme was initiated in 2003, with a much broader, multi-disciplinary mandate. The founding idea was to reap the benefits of a truly pluralistic body of students based on a common interest in the topic of peace and conflict studies.

¹ <http://www.sv.uio.no/for-ansatte/arbeidsstotte/sta/kvalisystem-studier/programmer/mal-for-periodiske-programevalueringer.pdf>



The complexities of combining numerous different backgrounds in a single master's programme became too large and a thorough reform in 2011 limited the programme to history and political science students². The current programme accepts students as either history students or political science students. Most of the programme is similar, except for the advanced methods class and the Master's thesis.

Programme plan

The plan of the programme is published as the programme web pages³. We will review the plan page by page.

Why choose this programme?

This web page presents a broad overview of the programme and a few general questions that are discussed at some point or another during the coursework. This set of questions appears slightly random, but they are dominated by a clear political science perspective.

This page has a paragraph referring to career relevance:

The programme aims at providing a background for work in voluntary organizations, research, inquiry and information activity, civil and military administration and the educational system.

This very sentence currently constitutes the whole page 'Career prospects'. The sentence above is not too bad, but it should link to a more exhaustive discussion on the 'Career prospects' page.

Learning outcomes

The following learning outcomes are defined:

Knowledge

- Develop your ability to discuss the history of war and peace in the 20th and 21st centuries
 - Acquire advanced knowledge of the central theories of causes of conflicts and wars between states and groups and the conditions for peace, as well as the explanatory factors emphasized by these theories
 - Be well acquainted with different conflict resolution mechanisms and have acquired a special comprehension of conflict resolution through negotiations and mediation.
 - Be well acquainted with the existing state of knowledge in a specialized relevant field of research.
 - Be able to discuss what influence the Nobel Peace Prize may have had on international relations.
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² The telegraph pole that broke the camel's back was the annulment of the general agreement regulating the transfer of work hours between UiO units.

³ <http://www.uio.no/english/studies/programmes/peace-master/>

By and large, these five goals is a summary of the obligatory classes PECOS students must take, and (pt. 4) an optional class. None of the goals point towards some form of overarching knowledge that students are expected to achieve. This is as such not different from the parallel political science pages⁴ or history pages⁵.

Skills

- Identify and assess relevant scholarly literature.
 - Distinguish between different levels of analysis and understand how the different levels interact in analysis of specific historical or contemporary conflicts
 - Assess the analytical and methodological quality of relevant scholarly work.
 - Formulate a researchable problem in an independent way and assess how your choice of research question influences your choice of research design as well as your choice of method(s).
 - Identify, select, collect and assess relevant sources and data for purposes of analyzing specific research questions.
 - Analyze large amounts of relevant data in a scientifically tenable way and present the results of your analysis in a clear, succinct and lucid way.
 - Give and receive comments to ongoing scholarly work in a constructive way.
 - Discuss academic questions connected to your own and other people's work.
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The skills that are listed underscore very clearly the academic nature of this programme. I believe this is very important. There should be no doubt about this issue, and we must remain firmly rooted in the two academic disciplines. However, most of our students will not become researchers. It might therefore be a good idea to present the list of skills in a manner that makes them come across as more universally useful.

Furthermore, some of these skills refer to discipline-specific coursework. History students don't learn statistics, and political science students don't learn historical methods. There is a trade-off between the correctness and clarity, and I think we should prioritize clarity above truthfulness in this list.

⁴ <http://www.uio.no/studier/program/statsvitenskap-master/hva-lerer-du/>

⁵ <http://www.uio.no/studier/program/historie-master/hva-lerer-du/>

Competences

- The study provides you with theoretical and methodological tools that enable you to analyze key issues of peace and conflict in a scientific manner.
 - You will have competence to critically assess the validity and reliability of different sources of information and on that basis form your own qualified opinions about the strengths and weaknesses of arguments.
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If we define competency as more abstract than a set of skills, these two succeed in summarizing much of the previous bullet points. They also strongly repeat the academic message.

I do not believe it is necessary to provide more lofty learning outcomes than what is currently in this list, but I do believe it could be useful to discuss whether there are other, less academically oriented goals that should be included in the list. I do not think this list is too long – it can handle a few more entries.

All of the statements above refer to intended learning results. The term ‘learning outcomes’ usually refer to the sum of intended and unintended learning results. While I do not doubt that there are unintended learning results arising from this Master’s programme, the title of the Norwegian pages^{4,5} for the parallel programmes are literally translates ‘What will you learn?’. A renaming of the page might make sense as such.

Partial summary

The total set of learning objectives stated in the program plan seems neither overly abstract nor unrealistic. However, we should probably expand the set of objectives to include more work life relevant skills and competencies, and a more active take on the programme’s impact on future careers of its students. The program plan does not present any overall strategy for the programme, nor is there any such document available elsewhere. It is therefore difficult to document an overall set of goals for PECOS. We should develop a strategy well before the next evaluation is due, and the wake of this process is probably an optimal time to do so.

These overall goals for the programme should be measurable and relevant. Some present themselves by reference to the faculty-wide and university-wide strategies, such as the share of students that finish on time and the share of international students. Yet, while it is, and should be, worthwhile to contribute to the common strategic goals, this programme should also have its own goals.

The key measure of success is the extent to which our students get the kind of jobs *they* themselves want. This is rather hard to measure as such, but this might be possible. A key element in attaining

the previous goal is to recruit good students. We should at least preserve a minimum average entry grade of B, which we have been able to do over the last years⁶.

Programme structure

PECOS consists of a 50 credits Master's Thesis⁷ and 50 credits obligatory coursework, which leaved a mere 20 credits to the student's discretion. This is comparatively strict. The history Master's has a number of options within a succession of obligatory topics, whereas political science has 30 credits obligatory coursework and 40 optional credits. As a consequence, it is difficult to spend time with other institutions as part of the Master's degree.

1th term

The first term consists of an introductory class, a general methodology class and the HIS4421 class. Together these three classes should introduce the students to the subject matter of peace and conflict research but even more to the general scientific approach towards problems, puzzles and paradoxes.

The introduction class, PECOS4010, is based on a series of topical lectures, sandwiched by an introduction and summary lecture. Each topical lecture is held by a leading expert, and the students should both learn the actual content of the lecture and try to understand the perspective that the lecturer uses in his or her research.

The general methodology class, PECOS4021, introduces some qualitative research methods and the basic line of thought behind a comparative research design. It is taught at the Political Science department, which results in a bias.

HIS4421 is a class offered by the History Department on the topic of war and peace in the long 20th century, a basic overview of the most prominent theories of international relations, and a unique take on the interaction between international peace and the Nobel Peace Prize. The class is currently offered by the outgoing secretary of the Norwegian Nobel Committee. The future of this class is therefore a bit unclear at the time of writing.

The known issues and challenges in the first term differ between the courses. PECOS4010 is seen by the students as overly fractured and incoherent. PECOS4021 is by some seen as overambitious and HIS4421 suffers from the fact that it is to some extent an introduction to IR theory for

⁶ Pending the current budget debate, it is possible that we will lose a large share of our international students. While this is outside our control, we should consider efforts to counter the loss of highly skilled students from non-EU countries.

⁷ The web pages states that the Master's Thesis is 30 ECTS credits, but we have moved 20 credits to PECOS4080 & PECOS4092/3 as a means to secure credits from students that somehow fail to finalize their thesis.

historians, something our political science students find redundant. While these challenges should be addressed, they appear to be matters of adjustment.

2nd term

The second term differs between the two tracks: Political science students have a statistics class, PECOS4022, whereas history students are offered a mandatory methods class, HIS4011. In addition, there is a mandatory class in negotiations, PECOS4110. These two mandatory classes are in total 20 credits, which leaves 10 credits to the student's discretion.

In the second term, PECOS students encounter an incompatibility between the Political Science Department and the rest of the university: term sections⁸. Political Science divides each term into three sections, where students choose one class in each section, whereas the rest of the university teaches term classes in parallel.

PECOS4110 is taught in the first term section, weeks 4–9. The aim of this class is to provide a deep understanding of negotiations as one particular mode of conflict resolution. Directly opposed to the introductory course, which gives a broad overview of several perspectives, this class will expose the limitations of theories and concepts in light of real world empirics, and even offers a simulation exercise as part of the experience. This class provides both a deep insight into an important theme, and develops the student's ability to critically evaluate established research.

PECOS4022 and HIS4011, the methods classes for the two tracks, aim at providing students with the relevant toolkit for their further studies and for critically evaluating relevant empirical research. PECOS4022 is taught in the second term section, weeks 10–16, whereas HIS4011 spans the weeks 3–19.

The final 10 credits are open. This slot is commonly used for PECOS4006, a 10 credit internship 'course'. For other students, the range of courses available is clearly contingent on proficiency in Norwegian. The number of relevant courses for non-Norwegian speakers is limited. **This is a major issue.** Unless the sequence of PECOS4110, PECOS4022 and PECOS4006 (or a relevant class at the Department of Political Science) is chosen, a student will experience a very uneven workload balance throughout the 2nd term. All history track students will suffer this experience as well. **This is also a major issue.**

In sum, the 2nd term is the most problematic of the four. It is not obvious for the programme leadership how these issues should be addressed.

⁸ I have translated 'bolk' to 'term section', awaiting a better alternative.

3rd & 4th term

The third term is split between the final 10 credits of coursework and the Master's thesis. The timing of the final 10 credits is very flexible, but it is clearly advantageous to have them in the 3rd term.

The MA thesis is worth a total of 50 credits, but only 30 of these is the actual thesis itself, through the codes PECOS4094 (history track) or PECOS4095 (political science track). 20 credits are allocated to either PECOS4080 – Design seminar/HIS4031 – Project seminar (10 credits) or PECOS4031 & 4032/ PECOS4092 & 4093 –Thesis seminar (10 credits in total). The rationale behind this split is to make sure that the Departments can register some credits even if the MA thesis never is completed.

PECOS4080 – Design seminar/ HIS4031 – Project seminar

The design/project seminar is placed at the onset of the 3rd term and serves to kick-start the writing process. Participation is mandatory, and every student must, and each student must present an outline of their thesis, including a research question and a discussion of relevant methodological requirements. The seminar is partly based on peer feedback, which in turn enhances oral skills.

PECOS4031 & 4032/ PECOS4092 & 4093 –Thesis seminar

These subjects are merely codification of thesis supervision and information meetings, which again is put in place to make sure that the two departments receive some credit for supervision even if the thesis is not finalized.

PECOS4094/5 Master's thesis

The MA thesis setup is between 16 000 and 35 000 words, or between 50 to 90 pages. It should be an independent research product with a clear research question, a theoretical or empirical discussion and a form of conclusion which is relevant to the study of peace and conflict.

The MA thesis is the student's project – he or she is the project leader and must be able to steer the process themselves. All students receive a supervisor, whom should *respond* to the material produced by the student. It is not the role of the supervisor to tell the student what to do. Selecting the right supervisor is therefore crucial. PECOS students are very often interested in topics outside the scope of UiO faculty, which leads to a significant number of external supervisors. Our experience with external supervision is uneven. Some do very well, others guide the student in the wrong directions, which does create tensions when the final product is evaluated by department staff. As a result, we strongly advise students with external supervision to include an in-house co-advisor to make sure that the thesis meets the academic standards of our departments.

The fragmentation of the Master's thesis into several topics has caused some confusion and irritation among the students, which is something the programme should rectify through more and better information.

Summary

	History track	Political Science track
1 st Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PECOS4010 - Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies • PECOS4021 - Research Methods • HIS4421 - War, Peace and the Nobel Peace Prize 	
2 nd Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PECOS4110 - International Negotiations/Conflict Resolution • 10 open credits 	
3 rd Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIS4011 - Historiography and Historical Theory: Accounting for change and continuity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PECOS4022 - Applied Statistics for Peace and Conflict Studies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PECOS4080 - Design seminar • 10 open credits • PECOS4094 - Master's Thesis • PECOS4092 - Thesis seminar 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIS4031 - Project seminar, master thesis • 10 open credits • PECOS4095 - Master's Thesis • PECOS4031 - Thesis seminar 1
4 th Term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PECOS4094 - Master's Thesis • PECOS4093 - Thesis seminar 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PECOS4095 - Master's Thesis • PECOS4041 - Thesis seminar 2

Examination

PECOS is a small programme, with a predictable number of students. This opens up for a variety of different forms of evaluations. The current set of examinations is distributed as follows:

PECOS 4010	Term paper and Written exam
PECOS 4021	Term paper and Written exam
HIS4421	3-day take-home examination
PECOS 4110	Term paper and Oral exam
HIS4011	Oral exam, pass/fail
PECOS4022	Term paper and Written exam
PECOS4006	Term paper, pass/fail

The HIS classes are more modern in their approach to examination than the PECOS classes, and this is something we should look at more thoroughly. The department of political science lists a

range of various examination forms that are currently in use, but there is also the possibility to move beyond the current set of topics⁹.

Examination procedures should address several issues. Key is of course to evaluate what knowledge the students have attained from the class, and label this attainment with an appropriate grade. However, this attainment must be seen against the wider learning goals for the class and the programme at large. For our grades to be considered relevant outside of academia they should reflect relevant knowledge and the test should optimally reflect the conditions in which the named goals are to be applied. Finally, an examination form that can be integrated as part of the learning experience is superior to other forms.

Term paper

A term paper is a very good tool to allow students to show what they are able to do. This form of evaluation also provides excellent training in the most common form of academic communication. The subject is left for the student to decide. Selecting an interesting and achievable topic for discussion hence becomes part of the exercise. Arguments against the term paper are that cheating is very possible and difficult to detect; the variety of subjects and perspectives might make it difficult to objectively compare answers. The term paper is quite effective, as a typed, edited manuscript is much more readable than a hand-written exam.

Written exam

The school exam offers a controlled environment where a standardized test can be applied to a large number of students. The closed nature of the exercise is similar to an experimental situation, from which it is possible to infer that the difference in quality between the students must be due to the knowledge they have attained. It is therefore supposedly both valid and fair. The unknown nature of the exam is a strong incentive to read the curriculum at large. However, it is often very difficult to come up with good questions, and the questions are strictly limited to what is covered in the curriculum. Furthermore the exam situation highlight skills that are less relevant in the labor market our students are about to enter, and encourages a form of learning that is orthogonal to the competences and skills defined by the program plan. Finally, reading a pile of handwritten exams is cumbersome, and the operational part of the exam has been marred by some problems, such as a lack of English skills among the employees.

Oral exam

An oral exam offers a unique level of interaction between student and examiner, where the student is given much room to demonstrate his or hers abilities. Combined with a term paper, this mode of

⁹ <http://www.sv.uio.no/isv/for-ansatte/arbeidsstotte/ressurssider%20for%20undervisere/master-emnemanual-v10.pdf>

evaluation is quite appealing, as it measures skills relevant to work-life, adds oral training to the programme, and provides an incentive to read the curriculum at large. The cost factor makes this alternative less appealing, but innovative solutions should be found to alleviate this issue. A counterargument against this form of exam is that it opens up for favoritism, as the exam by its very nature cannot be anonymous.

Take-Home Exam

The take-home exam places itself in between the term paper and the written exam, where students are given a very short period of time to write one or more essays over a given topic. This form of evaluation is very close to the mode of operations in many of the sectors where our students are likely to end up: a given task must be completed in a short period of time. It does not require a staff of exam attendees, or the reservation of an exam room. Paperwork is reduced and readability is enhanced. This form of evaluation does not guard against cheating as well as the written exam, nor does it hold similarly strong incentives for reading the full curriculum.

Portfolio Exam

A portfolio exam is a sequence of smaller assignments that are handed in during the term. Each assignment is relevant to the current topics of the class, and will at the end form a coherent portfolio that is graded as a whole. This form of examination stimulates and enforces learning, and provides a very good assessment of actual, work-relevant skills. The approach is susceptible to cheating, is rather costly, and highly time-consuming. It does not therefore scale very well. Advances towards a less costly variant of the portfolio exam are highly welcome.

Collaboration

A common feature of real life situations in academia and elsewhere is collaboration, either in teams or in peer networks. It is legal to offer students the possibility of submitting a joint paper, both at individual classes and as the thesis, but this is not practiced at the moment. Traditional objections would stress that this procedure blurs the assessment of a given individual, and that it opens up for unlimited freeriding. However, if we trust our students, this form of commitment to a team and a process would possibly shape the writing process more efficiently, open up for more complex analyses and give our students a 'little something' to separate them from the vast majority of potential applicants.

Summary

PECOS evaluations are largely based on written exams. While being the most resilient to cheating, it is unclear whether it has any other redeeming features. The written exam does not offer any useful experience as such, nor does it reflect any known workplace environment. The irrelevance of

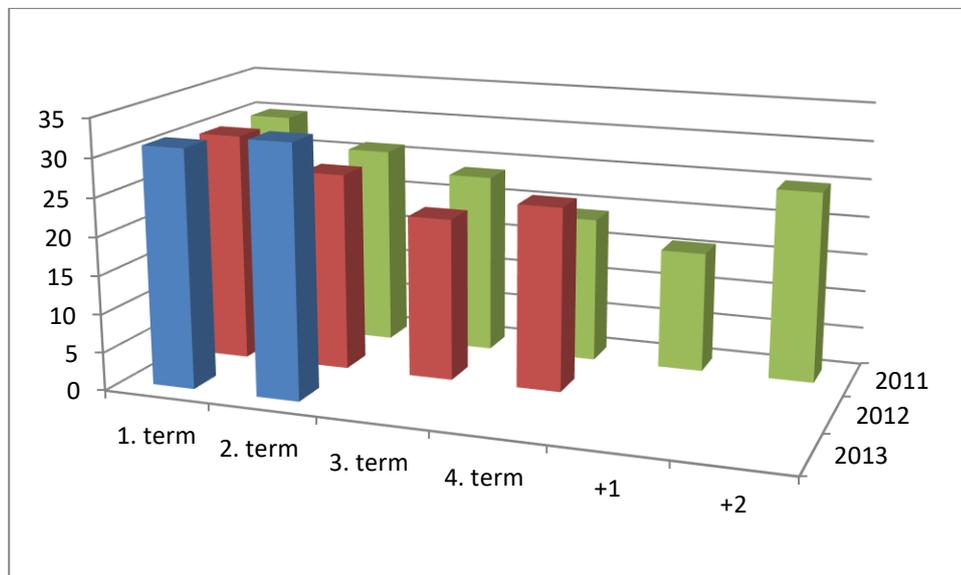
this form of examination is often cited by potential employers as the prime reason they find grades to be of little importance in hiring our students.

Alternative approaches differ in cost and validity, but there seems to be much room for improvement in this area. Hopefully, future exam arrangements will be aimed at facilitating learning, relevance and cost-reduction. By viewing evaluation procedures as part of the learning process it might also be easier to reallocated funds from teaching to evaluation

A key problem is that the number of students in each class is not very predictable from year to year. An alternative could be to use more intensive forms of evaluation when classes are small and opt for less costly alternatives when the number of students goes up. For instance, PECOS4022 could be evaluated through a portfolio procedure when less than 10 students sign up and a written exam/term paper solution when more than 10 students are present.

Progress and results

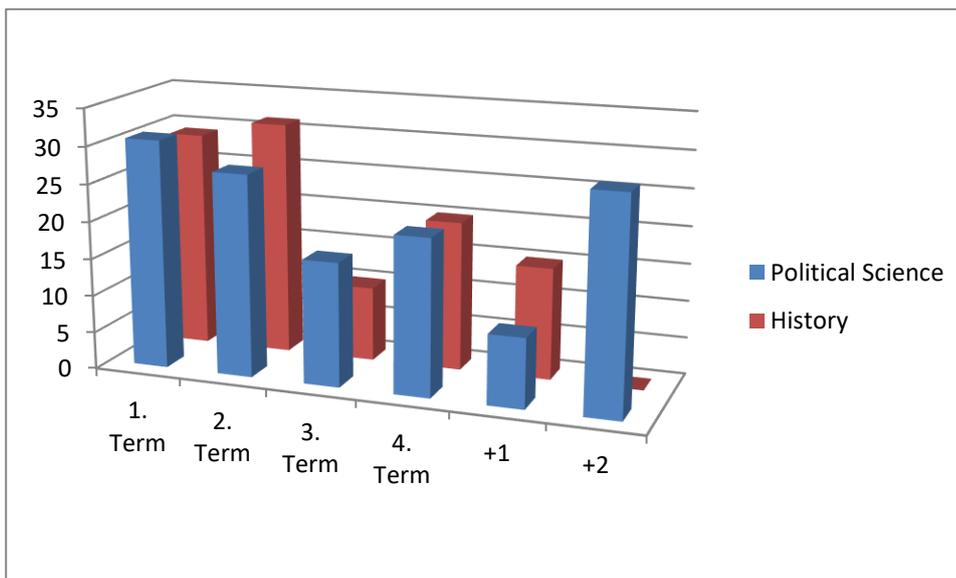
PECOS was reorganized thoroughly in 2010-11, which mean that the first cohort admitted under the new system came in 2011. The graph below summarizes the average number of credits produced per student by term and cohort. As can be seen, the first term does not present many obstacles. The green and red cohort did fall behind in the second term, whereas the 2013 cohort did not.



These numbers are difficult to compare and interpret, but they do tell us that the second term is difficult for many, and that the MA thesis is particularly difficult.

The second term is, as discussed previously, complicated due to the incompatibility between the two departments, or between Political Science and the rest of the university. In addition, the negotiations class, PECOS4110, is a Political Science subject and can further complicate the situation for History students.

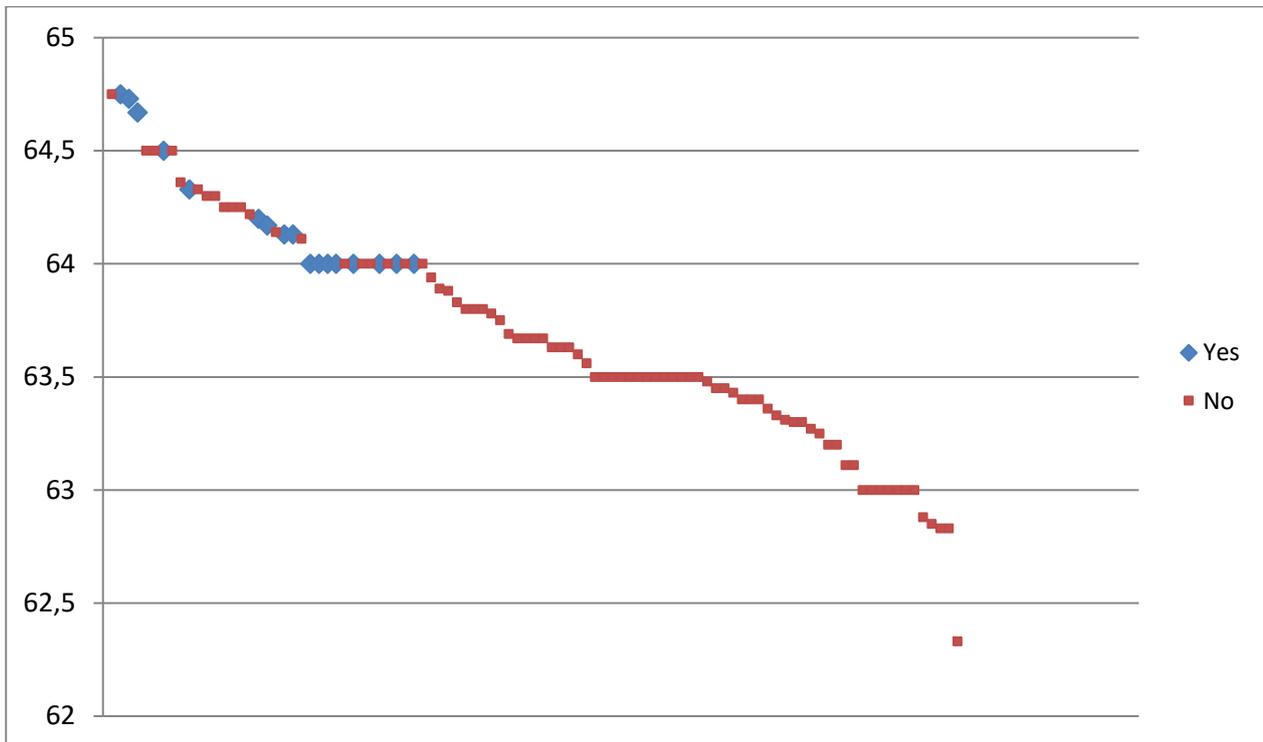
The figure below compares average credit production by track, and there is little that indicates that the second term is particularly problematic for History students.

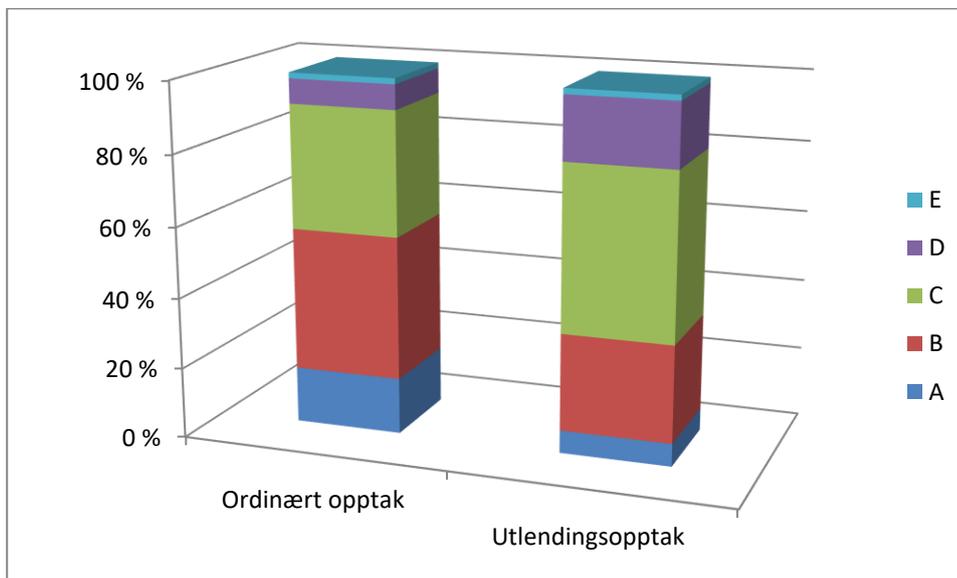


Recruitment

PECOS is a popular programme, with a steady number of applicants and a fairly good quality among them. We recruit students through two different processes: SFS and ORD. ORD (ordinary students) includes all students with degrees from Bologna compliant universities, whereas SFS (self-financing students) involves students from other parts of the world. Note that PECOS does not admit quota students.

The vast majority of students (79.5%) are recruited through process ORD, vs. 20.5% from process SFS. The latter is the more difficult to evaluate, as grades from a very heterogeneous set of institutions must be matched against each other.





ORD does better than SFS. This might be due to other factors, such as language problems, unfamiliarity with the Norwegian system, personal economy and part-time work, etc., but we cannot rule out that process SFS has some issues.

Process ORD returns a heterogeneous group of students, including both Norwegian and non-Norwegian EEC members. If the mechanisms alluded to above is correct, then the mixed nature of ORD students could cover over an even larger problem.

The SFS students are already evaluated at a stricter criterion. The average B in the Bologna system corresponds roughly to the upper quartile of their cohort, whereas SFS students must be above the 15% threshold. Yet, this is not very

We aim at recruiting students with an average of B or better, and we do meet this criterion with some room to spare. However, we could do better. We do not recruit very many students from UiO the relevant bachelor programs.

We have a consistent, healthy mix of national and international students.

Student's perception

Two independent surveys can illuminate how PECOS students view their programme. As the results and reports from the 2014 Candidate Survey will be made available to the committee, I will mainly focus on the alternative source in this summary. In short, the 20 respondents from the PECOS programme were reasonably satisfied with their Master's programme on par with the average SV faculty student, all had a job(!), and 16 out of 20 were pleased with their current position.

The student council collected a survey during the spring of 2014. The results, in anonymous form, were shared with the programme administration. Key findings will be presented here.

- 29 students participated, 21 females and 8 males, indicating some issues with representativity.
- 20 students were political scientists, 4 were historians and 5 would not answer.
- 14 students had submitted their thesis, 10 were in the process and 5 were first year students.

Progress

18 students claim to have either submitted within the deadline or be on track to do so, whereas 6 either have submitted past the deadline or plan to do so. Keeping in mind potential selection issues, this shows a healthy level of ambition. 8(!) respondents deliberate on their reasons for being late. These are as follows:

- Financial Issues
- Internship and other studies
- Job
- Problem in finding supervisor
- Stress, depression, anxiety, too heavy workload over time
- The topic was too complex
- University having assigned me a supervisor too late
- Work, difficult topic (too big), lack of proper guidance.

We can summarize these as being either external (job, internship, money issues), institutional (insufficient support from UiO) or internal (complexity or illness). From this, a few questions arise.

Is UiO support sufficiently good?

Two questions relate to this issue.

- Q1: How much structure and support does/did the university offer you for your thesis?
- Q2: How would you rate the support from the university in writing your thesis?

The results are quite even, which is less than we should aim for.

Q1	Fair	NA	Poor	Grand Total
Fair	13	3	1	17
Poor	3		9	12
Grand Total	20	3	10	29

13 students are generally happy, 9 are unhappy and 7 students are undetermined. The three students citing insufficient support from UiO are among the 9 that are unhappy, but apart from that there is no correlation between the ambition or ability to finish on time and the rating of university support.

External factors

No less than 23 of the 29 have had some form of external job during their Master's thesis, including everyone that did not finish on time. There is little the programme can do to change the economic situation of the students, but we must accept the reality here. We should discuss if there are any alternative solutions that can ease the integration of an external job into the student's schedule.

Internal factors

While there are no questions in the survey related to illness, there are a number of questions related to stress. Respondents are asked the extent to which they 'feel stress to finish your thesis from' four different actors.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Self	9	13	7	0	0
UiO	5	3	10	6	5
Peers	1	2	6	7	13
Parents	1	0	4	5	19

All students, to a varying degree report that they stress themselves. It is difficult to decipher these numbers, as a certain feeling of urgency probably is a good thing in order to achieve ones goals, but at some level this can become destructive. A clear majority feel that they are stressed by the university. Again, we should put some pressure on our students, as it is a stated objective to have as many as possible finish on time, but the same caveat applies here. When does this sense of urgency become counter-productive? We should explore with the students how this message should be communicated, and specify in our instructions to supervisors that they too should communicate this matter. It is interesting that the supervisor did not feature in the survey.

Summary

To the extent that this survey is representative, we are neither doing very well nor very bad. A good number of students are geared towards finishing on time, and many of them are happy with the support they receive from the departments. On the other hand, a good number of students are neither able to finish nor are they content with their situation. We should keep further track of these numbers.

A key issue here is to communicate to the students what they can and cannot expect from the university. It is a danger that students might have unrealistic ideas of how much support they will get, and that this discrepancy might fuel discontent individually and within the group.

The programme coordinator and the chairperson of the PEOCS Student Council have frequent meetings to discuss and solve problems. However, there are a number of problems that has yet not been satisfactory resolved, as, possibly, reflected in the survey numbers above. Some of these are the result of the programme coordinator's inexperience, whereas others are more fundamental.

Relevance and work satisfaction

We are unfortunately unable to report on this point beyond the sample of 20 previous PECOS students in the SV faculty candidate survey, which all had a job, and where 16 of 20 were satisfied with their job. Being an international programme, it is not unlikely that the sample in question is skewed towards residential Norwegians. This is a potential validity problem.

It would be very useful to know what kind of work our candidates can expect, and the extent to which the Master's programme is relevant. We have some indications based on the reports from the PECOS4006 Internship programme. There is a general tendency towards a slightly negative conclusion. The average student reports that their tasks seldom allow them to draw on neither theoretical nor methodological insights.

On the other hand, PECOS is, and must remain, an academic programme. Our challenge is to identify how we can integrate the academic focus on research and rigor with the fact that very few of our students will become researchers themselves.

Conclusion

PECOS is a small programme which does fairly well on a number of indicators. We recruit good students, we have a fairly well-established set of courses, and the students report a fairly good level of satisfaction. PECOS is an international programme, and does fairly well in recruiting international students.

Having said this, the glass is also half empty. Integration between the two departments is not as good as it should have been. We have a shortage of relevant courses for international students. Our students are too often either not able to finish on time or finish at all.

We could do better in recruiting UiO bachelor students. While our recruitment statistics are within our stated goals, we have no guarantee that this situation will prevail. Finally, we should take a thorough look at the balance between academic and career orientation in the way we construct our courses.

The programme would like to express gratitude for all feedback on how we can improve the way we seek to meet our goals, and on how we can improve our goals to make the programme more relevant for our students.