

## Minutes MITRA Programme Council 1 October 2017, 12.15 – 13.45

Council members present: Daniel Maul, Toufoul Abou-Hodeib, Hanne Hagtvedt Vik, Magne Olav Rønningen, Ragnar Holst Larsen & Ingar Stene (secretary)

Student representatives: Lars Magne Tunglund, Lena Kelle

Absent: Hilde Henriksen Waage, Odd Arvid Storsveen

### Agenda

Time and place: October 31, 2017. 12.15 – 14.00

Place: Håndbiblioteket 5<sup>th</sup> floor Niels Treschows building

### Orientation items:

Programme leader Daniel Maul briefly presented the current status of the programme. Overall the outlook is positive – the start of studies programme and the ongoing courses are all going as planned. It was stressed however that this is according to the view of the department, and that more feedback from the students should be welcomed.

### **5/17 MITRA4400 & MITRA4450: Status for the Internship and History Project (see course descriptions online)**

Student Advisor Ragnar Holst Larsen presented the current status of the Internship and the History project courses. Deadline for applications is set to 1<sup>st</sup> March.

The students will be able to apply to the faculty of humanities agreement with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign (UD), and IAKHs agreement with PRIO (Peace Research Institute Oslo).

Furthermore, work is ongoing to provide a third partnership with Norwegian company Statoil, but this is still pending. Both the internship deals with UD and PRIO are set abroad, and the deal with UD requires a Norwegian citizenship.

Following the presentation some key issues were discussed by the council. *Can international students go abroad without losing their resident permit to stay in Norway? And: Should international students go abroad, given that they're already in an international environment (Item 7/17 from the students)?*

Holst Larsen informed the council that both issues are being worked on. Regarding the first issue with resident permits the current information provided by The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is that foreign students can stay outside of Norway for up to 6 months without losing their permits. Further inquiry is still necessary, and work on this issue is ongoing. If international students will have the option to stay in Oslo, the programme will look into providing more internship options located in Oslo.

Another key issue discussed was the process of application. Currently the students can only apply for one internship. What happens if the internship is declined by the client? The current solution is for the students to be granted a late registration of a history project in MITRA4450.

A different question was raised concerning the amount of internships offered by the clients. If most students apply for the same client and the client only provides a few spots, could a large amount of

the students be left without an internship? Could such a problem be accommodated by providing more than one choice in the applications?

There are some administrative restraints concerning the application process, both related to the deals with the clients, the faculty and the central administration of the university. Holst Larsen will look at the possible alternatives and update the students.

**Key issues:**

- Resident permits for international students going abroad.
- Provide more internship alternatives in Norway for international students.
- Look into possible problems and solutions with the application process.

**6/17 Teaching plan for MITRA spring 2018 (attachment 1)**

Daniel Maul briefly presented the teaching plan. The plan is close to finished, with the exception of MITRA4030 which is now lacking a teacher, given that Sunniva Engh is no longer available to teach due to her new role as head of research at the department from January 2018. The council provided some candidates for the programme leader.

An issue was raised concerning the lack of gender balance among the teachers teaching the MITRA-courses. Currently only one woman is planned to teach in courses provided in the spring, and only for one hour. Maul agreed this was a problem, and one he was aware of. The problem had been difficult to accommodate in the short term, due to various reasons concerning the current available teaching resources. It was agreed by the council that this is a long term problem that should be worked on to improve in the future.

**7/17 Periodic evaluation of courses (attachment 2)**

Ragnar Holst Larsen presented the suggested periodic evaluation form for the MITRA courses. The council gave feedback on the questions and format, and there was some discussion on how the evaluations should be collected. The council agreed that the best solution would be to ask the students to perform the evaluation in class. Holst Larsen will look at the suggestions and make a new version of the evaluation form.

**Discussion items:**

**8/17: Items from the students.**

The following items were discussed by the council.

- Discuss the possibility for the international students to take the internship in Norway, as for some of them going abroad again could be problematic.

This was addressed under point 5/17.

- The possibility of putting the PowerPoints for the lectures and seminars on Fronter before the sessions rather than after.

While several possible reservations were mentioned, it was agreed that the wish should be communicated to the teachers teaching in the programme. But the academic staff present at the meeting were cautious to the idea, mostly because the PowerPoint slides were edited up to the last minute, and would limit the thought process of the students before the lecture/seminar.

- We would like to know if it will be possible to relate the research project in the third semester to our master theses, or if this would be problematic considering some of us will be doing internships.

This was answered no. It was recognized as problematic, but it was affirmed that the unfair advantage such a possibility would give to the history project students should be weighted heavier.

#### **9/17: Start of studies 2017 - evaluation**

Daniel Maul requested feedback from the students regarding the start of studies programme offered by the department. In general, the students provided positive feedback, but there were some reservations regarding the library orientation. The impression from the students was that the presentation was too basic.

Another issue was raised concerning the final confirmation of admission into the programme provided by the faculty. This was given very late to some students, only three days before the start of studies. It was pointed out by Holst Larsen that while this is unfortunate, but UiO cannot give students a final admission to the programme before documentation on a completed degree is received and verified.

#### **Without the students present:**

#### **10/17: First draft of the exam questions for MITRA4000 – Key Issues in Modern International and Transnational History and MITRA4421 - War, Peace and the Nobel Peace Prize**

The exam questions were presented and the council provided feedback on the first drafts.