

## Minutes 23 Feb 2022 Program Council Meeting

Date: 23.02.2022

Location: T451 and Zoom session

Attendees: Kateryna Krutskykh; Torun Fretheim; Amy Stinchcombe and Arild Angelsen in physical presence; Roberto J. Garcia, Jenny Krogstad, Erlend Dancke Sandorf, Anders Dugstad, and Ståle Navrud via zoom.

Note takers: Roberto J. Garcia and Kateryna Krutskykh

### Agenda for the meeting

1. Changes to the program
2. Study barometer results and comments from periodic meeting
3. Student-faculty social event
4. Other

### Items to be approved

Resolution: Minutes from meeting of November 2021 were approved.

### Action Items

Item	1. Changes to the M-ECON program, 2022-23
Item information	<p>1.1 ECN305 Research Methods – new course responsible and new course outline</p> <p>1.2 ECN331 and ECN332 Internships in Economics – course codes for students participating in internships that involve course credit (10 and 5 ECTS, respectively)</p> <p>1.3 ECN320 Macroeconomics III proposed name change to Macroeconomics III International Macroeconomics</p>
Discussion:	<p>1.1 The course outline for ECN305 was considered ambitious but includes content that was relevant and useful. The groupwork exercises and the individual tasks toward the research proposal were considered appropriate.</p> <p>The course is to consist of two parts. Part 1 involves group work on the various components of a thesis. There will be short videos related to each assignment and mentors will work with the groups. Short assignments will have to be submitted and approved. Part 2 involves individual work on the thesis proposal (or in pairs if two students are working together on their thesis). Mentors will provide direct supervision on the development of the proposal.</p> <p>Option 1. Both parts 1 and 2 occur in the autumn semester of year 2. Option 2. Part 1 is in the first half of the spring semester of year 1 with student-faculty “speed dating” and match making in the second half of the semester. Part 2 is in the autumn of year 2.</p>

	<p>There was one concern related to the sessions on quantitative methods and impact assessment. It was argued that R, Python and Stata are covered in various courses and that the ECN305 should not focus on programming. It should not be assumed that all students have “mastered” the programming, but there should address relevant issues such as how to structure data. Perhaps it could make sense to allow students to work on the exercise according to the program they are likely to use for their thesis.</p> <p>1.2 ECN331 and ECN332 Internship in Economics</p> <p>The M-ECON and M-ØA program leaders and their respective student advisor developed processes for internship applications and the course outlines for internships that earn study points. The committee was to approve the course outlines. Applications for the autumn are in progress and some students have already been offered an internship by external organizations.</p> <p>ECN320: There has been suggestions across economics programs that our courses have some description of the course content rather than simply Macroeconomics I, II and III. The B-ECON program is proposing such changes. For ECN320, it was proposed to highlight that external accounts (balance of trade, capital account, balance of payments, exchange rates, etc.) are a focus. The proposed name was Open Market Macroeconomics or International Macroeconomics. There are no proposed changes in the structure or content of the course. There was some dissention in the proposal to change the name because Macroeconomics III has meaning in other programs in Norway, but there was a general consensus that our course titles should contain clearer description of the content of the course.</p>
Resolution:	<p>ECN305: The course as proposed for autumn 2022 should be a pilot course to see whether the activities can be covered comfortably within the period of a semester or whether it would be more appropriate to begin the group work exercises during the first half of the spring semester followed by some “speed dating” with students and faculty members to facilitate matchmaking in the autumn when individual tasks and advising is required. Anders should proceed to finalize the draft of the course outline and ensure that the coursework does not resemble a 10 ECTS course.</p> <p>ECN331 and ECN332: There was no objection to having ECN331 as a 10 ECTS internship that takes place in the autumn of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the program, and ECN332 as a 5 ECTS internship that takes place in the summer after the 1<sup>st</sup> year of study. The course descriptions require minor changes (e.g., moving some specific activities away from learning activities to assessment methods, and to leave blank required activities as this refers more toward grading). The processes for application and supervision were considered appropriate. The course outlines will be modified as per suggestions.</p> <p>ECN320 will be renamed to Macroeconomics III – International Macroeconomics.</p>

Item	2. Study barometer results and periodic meetings
Item discussion	The study barometer results and opinions expressed during the period meetings suggest that students are generally satisfied with the course instruction, content, expectations, and overall impression. M-ECON scores well relative to previous years and to other economics programs in Norway. One particular weakness is the connection to work life. The internship opportunities is, in part, a concrete action in response to this weakness.
Resolution	

Item	3. Student social event
Item discussion	The program council has taken upon itself to arrange social events for M-ECON students and faculty. While covid-19 restrictions have limited the number of events that have been organized, there was an informal event held at the beginning of the autumn semester. The program leader together with student representatives of the council should consider an event to celebrate graduation of 2 <sup>nd</sup> year students and the completion of 1 <sup>st</sup> year studies.
Resolution	The program leader with the three student representatives will look into arranging an activity and putting together a budget to present to the Dean.

Item	4. Other
Item discussion	<p>4.1 There needs to be information on the deadlines on the thesis (submission deadline and oral defense date).</p> <p>4.2 Observation on Environment, Climate and Energy specialization</p>
Resolution	<p>Kateryna noted that the submission deadline is 15 May but that the date for the oral defenses has not yet been finalized. The 15 June is the likely date. Nevertheless, the information will be disseminated via e-mail and on student-related webpages once the decision has been taken.</p> <p>It was noted that some students have dropped the specialization by withdrawing from ECN375 because it became too much work given that ECN301 was moved to the spring semester. We will need to take note of changes in study patterns associated with having moved ECN301 to spring semester of year 1.</p>