Study Board for International Affairs:

Evaluation of semester, projects and courses for the fall semester 2016:

Development and International Relations; European Studies; Global Refugee Studies

Development and International Relations

Semester evaluation:

At DIR 47 student evaluated the fall semester.

Most students find that the benefit from the semester was average, while a big group find the benefit big or very big. At the other end six percent find the benefit small or very small. Students generally find that they were informed well about the semester and connections between study activities from the beginning of the semester. Most students find that their work effort was appropriate, although a group of more than 40 percent state that they worked 30 hours or less per week. The study board of International Affairs has found out that many students are not aware that they should also consider the hours spent on project work. In the future this will be made clear for students, and it is likely that we will see much less students report work weeks of below 30 hours.

87 percent wrote their project in a group and a big majority found that the team work was good, though 22 % disagree (0 % strongly disagree). Everybody agrees or strongly agrees that they contributed constructively to the teamwork.

A big majority find that the physical conditions were good and a majority find that they were well informed about practical issues, though a small minority disagrees.

All in all, the semester has gone fairly well. However, it is important to seek to improve further to increase satisfaction amongst students.

Project supervision evaluations:

29 groups have evaluated the project supervision. A big majority are quite satisfied with the project supervision. One supervisor has been evaluated relatively negatively by three groups, though five
groups were satisfied. The coordinator has addressed the issue with the supervisor. Other than that supervisors have been positively evaluated.

**Course evaluations:**

81 out of 100 students participated in the evaluations – a very high percentage.

The general feedback from course evaluations was fairly positive with most courses evaluated to be quite good. The level of satisfaction amongst students has been developing positively the last two or three years.

There were a few specific criticisms. A criticism mentioned by a number of students was that one teacher in the course “Theories of International Relations” was hard to understand due to poor oral English presentation skills and unclear pronunciation. This problem is being dealt with as the teacher is getting training from the pedagogical center at AAU. There was also some criticism of the teaching of quantitative method, though most students were relatively positive about the course – “Theories of Social Science and Methodology”. The issue has been discussed with the teacher in question. The general picture is that students are fairly positive about the course teaching. “Political Development” and “Economic Development” received good evaluations, though there were some criticisms of unclear communication regarding the exam that covers both courses as they are part of the same module. This issue has been dealt with by giving one teacher the responsibility to make sure that communication about the exam is clear. “Theories of International Relations” gets mixed evaluations, most positive. The criticisms are mostly related to the unclear communication of one teacher mentioned above. “Regional Integration and Regionalization” received a rather positive evaluation. The four specialization courses from the specializations “Chinese Area Studies”, “Latin American Studies”, “Global Gender Studies”, “Arctic Studies” all received quite positive evaluations.

**European Studies**

**Semester evaluations**

21 students/groups evaluated the semester. The evaluations mirror those of DIR’s semester evaluation for the most part. Most students are satisfied with their own total work effort, though a big percentage says they studied 30 hours or less per week. Again, this high share may be explained by many students not realizing that they should include the project work in calculations. This issue will be made very clear in the future to avoid this possible reason for students reporting low figures of hours studied per week. At European studies there is a substantial group of students who found that information about the connections between study activities in the semester was not sufficient. This issue will be in focus in
the coming semesters. Similarly most students find that the overall benefit of study activities was only average. There will be a focus on assuring better overall student views of such benefit in the coming semesters. Students report that they contributed constructively to teamwork in project groups. Students who had been in internships were quite pleased with this. There was lack of satisfaction amongst many regarding the information level at the study program. This issue will be considered with a view of explaining well to students how to find needed information.

**Project supervision evaluations**

9 students/groups evaluated their project supervisor. Generally evaluations were quite positive. There was one exception, but the supervisor in question was evaluated positively by several groups, so there is no indication that there is an important problem.

**Course evaluations**

20 out of 27 students evaluated the courses. This is a 74 % participation rate. The courses were evaluated fairly positively, though there was criticism of one particular teacher in the course of “Theories of International Relations” due to poor oral English skills. The teacher is now in a pedagogical training process in order to improve on this. Satisfaction with the course was reasonable. “Regional Integration and Regionalization” was evaluated positively, although there were some criticisms on unclear explanation about what to expect from the exam. “The External Role of the EU” received a relatively positive evaluation. “Theories of Social Science and Methodology” received a relatively positive evaluation. “PBL and Project Writing” got positive evaluations as did the courses offered by different specializations. One issue that is challenging is to find an appropriate academic level for the theoretical courses, because students enter with different BA degrees and have different levels in the theoretical subjects taught. The relatively positive overall evaluations of these courses suggest that the teachers have found a reasonably good way to deal with this challenge.

**Global Refugee Studies**

**Semester evaluations**

32 students evaluated the semester. Generally there is satisfaction with the semester. However, there was some criticism of the group formation process, and some students did not think the group work went well for their groups. Quite a few students mention dissatisfaction with the physical conditions –
lack of rooms for group work. This problem has been dealt with in the meantime. Overall the semester evaluations show a relatively high degree of satisfaction.

**Project supervision evaluations:**

24 students/groups evaluated project supervision. Evaluations are generally quite positive, though a few students are not positive regarding all aspects of the supervision.

**Course evaluations:**

Around 65% of students responded. Course evaluations were generally quite positive. In one course many students thought that the level of the course was not satisfactory, however. The coordinator has discussed the issue with the teacher in question.