SAMHÄLLS-
VETENSKAPLIGA
FAKULTETEN

LUNDS
UNIVERSITET

Graduate School

Graduate School Board, 2024-02-27

<u>In attendance</u>
Board members

Lena Karlsson	Director of Studies, Graduate School
Leysan Storie	Program Director, Politics and Society of the Contemporary Middle East
Catia Gregoratti	Program Director, Global Studies
Marta Kolankiewicz	Program Director, Social Studies of Gender
Anne Jerneck	Program Director, Development Studies
Christopher Swader	Program Director, Social Scientific Data Analysis
Mikhail Martynovich	Human Geography
Axel Fredholm	Sociology
Rikard Bengtsson	Political Science
Ida Nafstad	Sociology of Law
Sunniva Sæverud	Student representative, Social Scientific Data Analysis
Patrycja Andrychowicz	Student representative, Social Scientific Data Analysis
Sarah Rebecca Kurian	Student representative, Global Studies

Other

Lucie Larssonova	Graduate School, Secretary in the Board
Helen Wiman	Graduate School, Administrative team leader
Katherine Ahlstedt	Graduate School
Yağmur Yilmaz	Graduate School
Daniela Dolenec	Graduate School
Frank Schreier	Graduate School

<u>Absent</u>

Leili Laanemets	School of Social Work
Angela Kinyanjui	Student representative, Development Studies
Vacant	Gender Studies
Vacant	Student representative

§   Decision item

1.   Meeting opens
Meeting opens at 13.15. Roundtable presentation round.

2.   Election of a Board member to check the minutes
The Board decides to elect Rikard Bengtsson to, together with the Chair, check the minutes.

3.   Confirmation of the agenda
The Board decides to confirm the agenda without amendment.

4.   Minutes from the Graduate School Board meeting November 28, 2023
Minutes from the meeting 28 November 2023 are confirmed.

5.   Information from the student representatives

The student representatives, Sunniya, Patrycja, and SK, collected information and feedback from students enrolled in the various Graduate School programs and update the Board on several items:

- Regarding accessibility, specifically for SASDA students – students are aware that this program is rather new, and that GS is adapting to this, but the program always requires computer usage. One problem is that many of the classrooms and study spaces being used do not have electric sockets. Further, if students' computers crash then there is no aid available for students to be able to get help with repairs or buying a new computer via for instance scholarship funding. Students would like for such resources to be available or for information about the lack thereof to be readily available.
Discussion on available library resources, e.g. borrowing computers from the library, but students report that this service does not work. Discussion of computer labs at the faculty, but availability seems to be an issue. Lena is in touch with Chris and the faculty regarding the question of computers; this will likely not be a quick fix but she will look into what can be done – potential for extension cords is brought up as a temporary solution since we cannot wait for the faculty's building project/moving into a new building.
For SASDA specifically, there is also very little available in terms of written recaps of lectures in English. Different English level amongst students can make it quite challenging for all students to follow the lectures so students would appreciate written notes (academic articles and course literature often differ from class discussions).
Chris will discuss the question of written content with course teachers.
In the second half of the course SIMM61, the students report that two separate deadlines were offered, with the earlier deadline resulting in extra points. The earlier deadline was in the middle of the winter holiday period, making it difficult for many students to make. These extra points would have been the difference between letter grades for some students.
Chris and Lena will investigate this issue further.

Chat GPT – As future data analysts, SASDA students are expected to know how to use Chat GPT as a tool and would like a proper discussion on how this is going to be incorporated into the curriculum.

This is not something that has been previously discussed within the directors of study network meetings, it's a tricky question both financially as well as in terms of privacy/GDPR, but Lena will bring it forward to the other directors of study.

- SASME students have reports regarding the curriculum (see 'Other questions' item below).
- SASSG students have reported that there are not enough relevant third term elective courses in English.

    Discussion in the group about why this is because nothing has changed in terms of third term options.

- SAGLS students report struggling with questions of expectations for master's students in the face of an ongoing situation that is impeding their education experience, classroom culture, etc. They are also currently talking about ways in which the program could be made more competitive.

    Lena and Catia are in dialogue regarding the ongoing situation; we have the faculty's code of conduct to lean on, but this is also something we must actively work with so as to ensure it is engrained at an earlier state.

- Regarding mental health services, students report that mental health services on campus are only related to studies and not readily available which is difficult for international students especially, who are often in a bit of a limbo in terms of the Swedish healthcare system.

    Lucie mentions the student chaplaincy at the university, which is open to all students regardless of religion, believers and non-believers alike, is a potential resource for counselling services and does not usually have a long wait time for making appointments. Students report a perceived problem with communication since they are not able to find this information. Graduate School offered a 'wellness fika' in the autumn where representatives from the student chaplaincy, student health center, and academic support center were invited to present their services. Additionally, available services and counselling contact information is available on cohort pages in Canvas.

6. Information from Graduate School

Graduate School updates the Board on several items:

- *Program admissions:* Frank reports that program applications at Graduate School are up by an average of 7% despite a university-wide decrease of 3% at LU and a 5% decrease in applications nationally. All programs have received an increase in applications apart from SASSG but, even so, SASSG application numbers are still up when compared to two years ago. Total application numbers are as follow: 746 applications in SADVS (17% increase), 460 applications in SAGLS (10% increase), 127 applications in SASME (increase of 36%), 356 applications in SASDA (12% increase), 318 applications in SASSG (decrease of 24%). Discussing whether or not to open SASME up again the late application round.

- *Spring methods courses:* Yağmur & Daniela report that Graduate School is offering one less methods course this year, SIMM29 *Evaluation Research – Theories and Methods*. 254 students applied for the spring methods courses, which includes applicants from all five GS programs in addition to applicants from Sociology, Political Science, Sociology of Law, and Media and Communication. We are basically at or almost at capacity in all methods courses so, going forward, we will probably need to reach out to all departments in advance to get a better idea of student numbers and interest.

7. **Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunity**
   Student representatives report hearing from SASDA students about the curriculum, specifically course literature, not fulfilling the guidelines of diversity perspectives; literature is very Eurocentric and male dominated. SASSG students also reflect on the amount of literature being problematic, especially for neurodivergent students.
   Lena responds that we will definitely look into the question of literature and Chris adds that if students find alternate literature, they are encouraged to let us know.
   Discussion on faculty guidelines pertaining to amount of required course literature/pages, teacher can motivate steering from faculty guidelines and Board can discuss/decide on it on case-by-case basis. Students are also encouraged to report these issues in the course evaluations as these are one important basis for developing the course going forward.

8. **Course evaluations (Appendix §8a-j)**
   - SIMP01 *Introduction to Global Studies*, fall 2023
   - SIMP27 *Gender, Class, Ethnicity and Sexuality*, fall 2023
   - SIMP37 *Theories and Issues in Development*, fall 2023
   - SIMP45 *Introduction to Middle Eastern Studies*, fall 2023
   - SIMP55 *The Process of Social Research*, fall 2023
   - SIMM52 *Designing Research in Social Sciences*, fall 2023
   - SIMR46 *Social Sciences: Internship*, fall 2023
   - SIMR50 *Social Sciences: Fieldwork*, fall 2023
   - SIMS40 *AI in Society*, fall 2023
   - SIMS59 *Document Research*, fall 2023

9. **Establishment of Graduate School course offerings, fall 2024 (Appendix §9)**
   Appendix §9
   - The establishment of Graduate School course offerings, fall 2024, was approved.

10. Changes in course syllabi
<u>Appendix §10 a-b</u>
- The Board approves the following course syllabus changes:
  - SIMP01 *Introduction to Global Studies*, fall 2024

  - SIMP45 *Introduction to Middle Eastern Studies*, fall 2024

11. Next meeting

- April 18
- June 3

12. Other questions
A brief discussion circling back to the student representative feedback regarding SASME, which involved repeating reports from program students of a desire to have discussions of more current issues and debates within course seminars.

13. Meeting closes
Meeting closes at 14.45