

## MITRA Programme Council 21 October 2019, 14.15 – 16.00

Council members present: Daniel Maul, Hanne Hagtvedt Vik, Hilde Henriksen Waage, Odd Arvid Storsveen, Anna Marie Skråmestø Nesheim (ad.min) and Monika Birkeland (secretary)  
Student representatives: Simen Hunding Strømme and Leonardo de Cassio Rodarte

Absent: Toufoul Abou-Hodeib, Magne O. Rønningen

### Agenda

Time and place: October 21, 2017. 14.15 – 16.00

Place: Room 424, 4th floor Niels Treschows building

#### 1. MITRA affairs – Introduction

Programme leader Daniel Maul briefly presented the status of the programme and welcomed the two representatives of the MITRA student council.

The first candidates from MITRA1 (class of 2017) have graduated, with five students handing in their thesis in May 2019. Ten students are signed up for handing them in this fall, and two have asked for further extension. As for the MITRA2 (class of 2018) two are now doing the History Project, and twelve are placed out on internships.

We gave 27 offers for MITRA3 (class of 2019), and now have 25 students. Out of these, 11 are women (44%) and 4 are international students (16%). This is the highest percentage of both in all the intakes. (40% women and 15% international in MITRA1, 29,4% women and 0% international in MITRA2)

#### 2. Teaching Plan MITRA spring 2019

Programme leader Daniel Maul went through the status of the teaching plan for the spring of 2020, where everything is in place. He explained the threefold division of MITRA4010, and that Toufoul Abou-Hodeib has taken over the part that Douglas Rossinow previously taught.

Daniel announced that for the spring term of 2021, new course coordinators/teachers should be found for both MITRA4011 and MITRA4300 which by then will have been taught three times by Kim Priemel and Daniel Maul respectively. He also pointed out some of the critical feedback MITRA4011 was given in the spring of 2019, and how it can be addressed.

#### 3. Summer school “Transnational History” 6/ 2020 - Participation and application process for MITRA Students

MITRA and UiO takes part in a newly launched annual summer school series in “Transnational History”, in cooperation with six other universities in Europe in the context of [“the "Guild" network of European Universities](#). Bern is the initiator and Aarhus will host this summer at Sandbjerg. The course will take place from 22.-24. June 2020, and there are two open spots for MITRA-students.

The Programme Council decided that the application process for the two spots is going to be merit based and that 2<sup>nd</sup> semester students can apply. Teachers who supervise students from the group of MITRA students concerned at the time of application should not be part of the selection process.

The application will contain a letter of motivation and grades from the first semester. Students will apply in the beginning of 2020; deadline will be set after the final details have been decided on.

#### 4. Evaluation of MITRA

Programme leader Daniel Maul summed up what feedback we have at this point and presented the way we have planned to work with the evaluation of the programme.

- The existing feedback: Course evaluations from 2017 to today, including MITRA4095 for MITRA 1 (presented by Anna Marie), the résumé of MITRA2 feedback and answers to the “great expectations” questionnaires that have been sent to all MITRA students upon acceptance of their study spots 2017-2019.

The goal is to develop in the coming weeks, with the help of what we have, a comprehensive evaluation scheme for MITRA after its first round. This includes next to the students also the teachers/supervisors, which will be subject to a separate evaluation scheme. Daniel, together with Monika and Anna Marie will work out these evaluation schemes as soon as possible. The desire of the program council, to involve the students and teachers in the process was confirmed.

The feedback so far collected suggests, that a significant part of students experience difficulties in finishing their master thesis in one semester. Some of the answers from MITRA4095 survey indicate that they do not feel ready to write it in their fourth semester. Hilde H. Waage raised the issue of the possibility to have a 60-credit thesis; Others held, that this would possibly create an undesirable split between a research track and “the others”. Daniel pointed to the elements in the program’s first three semesters, that were deliberately created to prepare students for their master thesis. The way forward should be to both strengthen these elements and to encourage students more aware of the need to start the work on the master thesis during the second semester, also in individual and group supervision. In the same context, the suggestion to tie the programs’ courses themselves closer to the individual writing of the master thesis was brought up. This was to be found partly in contradiction to the spirit of the programme, which aims to open students’ horizon more generally to new approaches.

#### 5. Varia

##### **Items from the students.**

The following items were presented to be discussed by the council.

- The students would like the council to look into the possibility to create closer ties with potential employers/ the job market through different arenas, e.g. a MITRA- career day. The council is positive to this idea.
- The students wondered if there is opportunity to take in consideration that some of the students would like to take Norwegian classes, when we plan the courses. The study administration pledges to look into possibilities to reconcile with other parameters in the planning of teaching.

- Academic writing courses in English. This is provided by UB, the study administration pledges to send out information if needed.

The students were asked if they think AIC (Academic Internship Council) is something we should look into. A more thorough presentation will be given later, but the students were positive to have more options.

6. Exam questions MITRA 4000 and 4421 (without students)

**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, and agreed on the questions.