

Revised principles

Introduction

The first draft of the principles has been very well received.

The principles are revised after feedback from

- Lærermøter 18.09 og 13.11
- Programrådsmøte 9.10
- Undervisningsleder Maria Utheim
- Høringsrunde 7.11-19.11.2018

Some principles are edited and changed after the first draft was presented.

In many cases, we have included comments in brackets to clarify.

We have marked principles that go beyond the responsibility of the committee and must be handled by undervisningsleder/IMK with yellow markings.

Regards from BA-revisjonskomite



Overarching principles for the new BA-programme (second version)

1. We teach a *BA-programme* and not a collection of ‘emner’. Successful BA-programmes have distinct identities where elements are clearly interlinked.
2. As a rule, we maintain our programme based on the *needs* of our students. The programme shall reflect the academic strengths of our staff, and have a distinct profile in relation to other Norwegian BA-programmes in media and communication. **The needs of students are defined by programråd in dialogue with staff, students, employers and other stakeholders [Implies a changed and more active use of programråd, and a clarification of responsibility of programleder]**
3. We run two *separate* programs: the BA and the Årsenhet. The årsenhet is redesigned with a separate identity.ⁱ The courses in the 80-group are only for BA-students. **[Already decided by programråd]**
4. The new BA-programme has a clear *cumulative* structure, indicating what skills and knowledge students obtain on different levels. There is a ‘rød tråd’ running through the programme from the first courses to the final ‘BA-oppgave’.
5. **We follow the principle of a full use of the semester for all teaching and courses in our BA-program. [New in principle document after committee meeting 19th of November.]**
6. Our programme should be based on a *bolder formulation of societal importance* of media and communication than is currently the case.
7. Perspectives from both the humanities and social sciences are *integrated* in major courses. The fact that our programme is interdisciplinary is an advantage and should be communicated as a precondition for understanding today’s media and communication.
8. Communication *from, within and around* our BA should be radically improved. It should be communicated more clearly what the programme is about, why it is important, what students learn, how elements are linked. **Communication between teachers, between teachers and students, between leadership/programråd and teachers/students must be improved [leadership issues].**

9. *Roles and responsibilities* in connection with the programme must be clarified: where decisions are made, what are the responsibilities of programråd, head of studies, programleder, administration and teachers. Today's programme relies too much on decisions made by shifting individuals (particularly 'emneansvarlige'). [leadership issues].
10. There must be greater *continuity* in the conversation around, and monitoring of, the quality and purpose of the BA-programme. It is a common mistake to adhere to the major principles only in the early phase when the programme is re-designed. [leadership issues].

Relevance and skills

11. There must be a *greater emphasis on relevance* in each course taught. Relevance must be explicated more clearly in 'læringsmål' for each course, and be improved through use of examples, guest lectures, student activities, varieties of skills taught, and types of assignments given to students. Emner must specify a minimum number of activities, for example at least 2-3 excursions, alumni, bransjebesøk in each emne.
12. The programme shall place *greater emphasis on skills*, particularly critical/academic skills and analytical skills. Some practical skills are also taught, especially in connection with third year 'BA-oppgave'. The programme shall ensure that students learn and practice skills that will be relevant for their working life. [All agree that this means particularly critical academic skills, yet we argue that students shall also learn some practical skills, for example in final "redskapsemne" and through variations in work tasks they have to do. The practical skill includes for example presentation skills, writing a journalistic text or make a short film, find literature, using an app to take notes and read etc. **Maria U can help with describing skills in courses**].
13. There should be a *greater variation in teaching methods*, with a higher emphasis on (supervised) projects, team work, oral presentations, and 'real-life'-genres such as writing a journalistic text, make a podcast, write a film review, produce a short video etc.
14. In redesigning the programme, it is important to seek inspiration in the type of practical assignments *currently present* in these courses (strong recommendation from student panel):

- a. [MEVIT1110 – Audiovisual Aesthetics](#),
- b. [MEVIT1300 – Journalistikk, makt og mediebruk](#) (journalistic text as a qualification assignment)
- c. [MEVIT2700 – Medietekster: teori og analyse](#)
- d. BA-oppgave: [MEVIT3810 – Gruppeprosjekt - medievitenskap](#) / [MEVIT3811 – Mediestudenter i arbeidslivet: praksisplass og prosjektarbeid](#).

15. Overall there should be *fewer lectures*, moving away from a standardised norm of 50% lectures + 50% seminars. ‘Emneansvarlige’ should be involved in seminars/activities as well as lectures. [Requires revision of timeregnskap as well as the way lectures are scheduled at the beginning of term].

Curriculum and courses

16. The committee will not move existing courses around but *suggest new elements*. The exception is the BA-oppgave in industry practice/academic practice (term 6) which the committee wish to retain as a cornerstone of the redesigned BA-programme. [Although we wish to rename “gruppeprosjekt” til “BA-oppgave: forskningspraksis]
17. The new programme is structured along the lines of *critical skills, theory/history and analysis/projects*.
18. The BA will use a combination of 20pt, 10pt and 5pt courses to allow for *more flexibility*. Courses may run both within and across semesters.
19. The new programme should have a strong *‘foundation’ course* with a more in-depth introduction to media and communication theories and history (the committee will suggest a foundational course over two terms in the first year, 20 p). The course will be a team effort and will integrate perspectives from various traditions in social science/humanities).
20. The programme should have *a strong methodological/analytic strand* with analysis/projects in 1st, 2nd and 3rd year. It is less important that students get superficial knowledge of many methods, and more important that key methods and approaches are taught in a project setting with emphasis on *practicing* methodological and analytical skills. There should be a progression of analytical skills pointing up to the final ‘BA-oppgave’ where skills will be used in industry practice/academic practice. [Maria U will check progression of skills]

- especially in the suggested programme. Methods/analysis should have other titles better showing relevance.
21. There should be *a better balance between old and new media* in the curriculum, i.e. a greater emphasis on newer media (social media, streaming, digital culture, global media). The students (rightly) expect that a media studies programme should address topical issues – and that also *histories* of newer/global media be included in the curriculum. There should be a greater emphasis on understanding current issues and challenges in media industries. [Here we talk about *bettering the balance*, we will main strong historical focus.]
 22. The BA-course should have some elective elements in 1st and 2nd year, to improve the link to our MA's and clarify the academic profile of our department. The committee will propose 4 courses developed for the BA-programme where students choose 2 (one in the first and one in the second year). The 4 topics should correspond to our MA-programmes and introduce students to strong research fields in the department.
 23. The norm should be that students go abroad in the fifth term and do either academic courses or an internship (expectation must be clear from the start and facilitation must be improved. Students who are unable to go abroad do courses at home). [leadership issues].
 24. A major aim of the BA-reform is to keep a media studies presence through all three years, strengthen links between elements and improve programme identity among students. Collaboration between teachers in the BA-programme must be formalised, for example two coordination meetings per semester for teachers involved in each of the years 1, 2, 3, and coordination between teachers involved in progression from one year to another. We teach more in pairs and teams to ensure coordination and quality across disciplines. [leadership issues].
 25. Exfac and exphil should both be in the first year. Exfac should be redesigned with an emphasis on fundamental critical/academic skills. Exfac is redesigned “Medievitenskapelige grunnferdigheter”, and a new 6th term course is “Medievitenskapelige profesjonsferdigheter”.
 26. The syllabus requires continuous scrutiny to avoid outdated literature. The current balance between Norwegian/English literature should be kept. [leadership issues].

Follow-up and feedback

27. Students should to a greater extent *receive feedback* on assignments, seminar activities and presentations, as well as final essays, term papers and projects. Mandatory feedback on at least one (written or oral) assignment during the semester prior to exam. Students should be taught to give and receive feedback, and to incorporate feedback and reflections on feedback into their workflow.
28. Students should receive *more supervision* on their work. BA-supervision groups should be continued and strengthened with some formal and mandatory aspects (for both supervisors and students). [Many support shifting teaching emphasis towards more supervision and introduce obligatory supervision elements, we need to specify this in the programme issues] plus [leadership issues].
29. End-of-term exams will be used less, *the norm will be portfolio exams, term papers, group projects with supervision, and oral presentations*. End of term school exam only in exceptional cases plus [leadership issues].

Mandate for the working group on the bachelor revision

The department of Media and Communication has decided to revise the bachelor programme¹ and has established a working group to accomplish the revision on behalf of the department.

Members of the group

Professor Trine Syvertsen (leader of the group)

Førstelektor Kim Johansen Østbye

Førstelektor Kjetil Rødje

Associate professor Tim Vermeulen

Associate professor Anders Fagerjord

Administrative Head of Studies Katerina Houben will assist the group.

Head of Studies Maria Utheim is project owner, and Syvertsen will keep Utheim updated.

A panel of students will advise the working group. Staff will be involved, both through programrådet and directly.

Background

The department has three main quantitative parameters that the study programmes are measured by: the number of applicants, the amount of credits produced, and the number of students finishing their degree at the department. The number of applicants for the study programmes at the department has decreased over the last few years². The retention numbers are constantly low (approximately 40% for the BA). The new financial model in higher education emphasizes retention, meaning that the number of students obtaining their degree will influence the level of financing.

Results from recent student surveys at the department³, point at some main findings regarding our BA programme: 1) students are satisfied with teachers and teaching (in total), 2) students miss

¹ A result after: the external evaluation of our programmes (2017), the Son seminar (May 2017), results from 'Prosjekt gjennomføring' (2017), seminar with the management team (January 2018), programrådet (March 2018), and other strategic ongoing discussions at the Faculty level and rectorate level.

² <http://www.uio.no/for-ansatte/enhetssider/hf/imk/arrangementer/2017/170402-arnek.pdf>

³ Student survey of students finishing their BA (2016), interviews with students who dropped out (Prosjekt gjennomføring 2017)

more up to date content and subjects within the discipline, 3) students miss, in their degree, more focus on the usefulness of their learning, and 4) students miss more feedback⁴.

Literature on retention and student success point at four main factors that have to be present in higher education in order to increase retention numbers and student success. Those are 1) expectations between students and study place/teachers, 2) academic support, 3) feedback, and 4) involvement in student everyday life (Tinto 2012, UiO Universitetsstyret 7. Feb. 2017⁵).

In a broader frame, within the Norwegian politics of higher education and university life, the focus on education has been intensified over the last years, eg the white paper on Quality Culture in Higher Education (St Meld 16, 2016-2017⁶). On the UiO level the rectorate just launched their vision on quality education at UiO, with three points of focus: Strengthened connection between research and education ('Styrket kobling mellom forskning og utdanning'), the use of knowledge ('kunnskap i bruk') and using to a fuller extent the interdisciplinarity of UiO. In addition the issue of retention was added as a fourth point. (University Board 6th February 2018.⁷)

Explanation of the mandate for the working group

The revision of the will be on five main areas, 1) programme structure, 2) the course portefolio in the mandatory '80-gruppe', 3) the progression of subjects in the discipline and of skills, 4) the follow up on students throughout the degree in terms of systematic feedback and engaging learning environment, and 5) working life relevance.

There are two main goals for this revision:

1. Increase the retention percentage of students at the bachelor programme.
2. Educate candidates with updated knowledge about and skills that are relevant for the working life over time.

The revision should take into consideration the following issues:

- Expectations (bridging between high school (vgs) and university)
- Student involvement (academically (involvement in research) and socially)
- Working life and the use of knowledge

The members of the group shall:

⁴ Reported as what we would understand as working relevance ('arbeidslivsrelevans') and/or more opportunities in getting working life experience and/or working with more closely with theory in practice.

⁵ <http://www.uio.no/om/organisasjon/styret/moter/2017/1/d-sak-1-studiesuksess-ved-universitetet-i-oslo.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/meld.-st.-16-20162017/id2536007/>

⁷ <https://www.uio.no/om/organisasjon/styret/moter/2018/02-06/d-sak-2-en-langsiktig-og-framtidsrettet-satsing-pa-utdanning-ved-uio.pdf>

Revise the bachelor programme at the department according to, and answer at their best, the questions, issues and goals raised above. The revision shall conclude in

- a new structure for the programme
- an updated course portefolio for the '80-gruppe'
- a systematic plan for progression in the programme, both subjects/discipline and skills
- a list of guiding principles and common standards for the department on educational issues and for the programme, teaching, students, and teachers

Process and timeframe

The new bachelor programme will be running from the fall of 2019.

Deadline for the working group is 1. December 2018.

Suggestion for time frame and process:

20. March	12. April	May	8. June	Sept.	Nov.	1. Dec.
Programrådet	Start	Student panel	Seminar for the department: first involvement of staff	Programrådet and student panel	Hearing among staff (eg email)	Final deadline

UiO, 11. April 2018

Maria Utheim, Head of Studies

ⁱ Årsenhet may be reformulated and given a separate and distinct identity, for example as a life-long learning course (for older students/students who work), as a block-taught/distance learning programme, a programme with a pedagogical profile, or other possibilities. It could also overlap with the 40-group. [leadership issues].]

Other elements that need to be rethought in connection with the BA-reform are the 40-group; Medie- og kulturteori for KULKOM (can be linked with årshet/40 group) and 80MEDIEVIT2: <https://www.uio.no/studier/emnegrupper/hf/80MEDIEVIT/index.html>. [leadership issues].]