

## Report on SOSANT1300

The Economic Anthropology course has progressed in the last few years. It has been a course that, at least according to student evaluation last year and the year before, has been particularly popular, with some student feedback expressing even degrees of incredulity as to “not have expected that economics could be interesting”. The teaching by both Keir and Theo has been praised for being fun and engaging according to the written record of this official feedback, but also according to informal oral feedback.

The stats re this year are as follows:

Enrolled in SOSANT1300 September 4th: 157.

Still with us November 26th 2019: 140.

Submitted paper November 29th: 116.

The current trends in the last 3 years are the following -

	2019:	2018:	2017:	2016:
Signed up for exam on the date of the exam:	140	145	121	79
Submitted exam paper:	116	130	80	55

Please note that the surge in 2017 was followed by a record all-time high of student participation in 2018, while there is a slight drop of 5 students overall and 14 in exams this year (still, more than double the number of 3 years ago).

This year I believe we have taken yet another step forward in two ways. Firstly, the changes suggested in the syllabus seem to have worked out. One fifth of the course was changed (see earlier communication last year) in order to strive for more cohesion, to avoid repetition and to render it more student-friendly. We are eager to see student feedback this year but I believe this new organization of the course has streamlined teaching in many ways. The course is now formed as a narrative with no overlaps, clearly marked thematic weeks and a buildup of the story of seeing

“economy” through ethnographic analyses and with anthropological eyes from week one to ten, in order to highlight the holism in the approach as well as underline connections between readings.

Secondly, further streamlining was brought into the structure of the course through finally integrating the course’s lecturers in the course’s seminars. Both Keir and I taught 3 of the 5 seminar groups, and in my experience with thorough student satisfaction and relative high participation (typically 16 people in one seminar, 9 in another, and 8 in another in my case). This has been the most obvious improvement and should be maintained that way: lecturers of the course should keep some seminar classes to assess how lecturing works and facilitate discussion with the students to guarantee the pedagogical purpose of classes and make sure readings are well understood. Ståle also introduced a week of “deep reading” in the library, that students found very useful.

These two major improvements have emboldened the course and strengthened what is a huge course taken across the board by students in many departments. Since SAI decided more decision-making to conveners of courses, the effects on this course have been positive, both in terms of the hands-on teaching in seminars and on the curriculum.

Re future changes: Two of the 30 readings seemed to have puzzled students (Appel and Graeber) and I shall consider removing them next year. Also, further linking the course to more visual material (other than just referring to the etnografisk film series) might help.

Best,

Theodoros Rakopoulos

Course convener