

Til:

SV ADM Fakultetsadministrasjonen

Dato: 17.01.2018

Saksnr.: 2009/4067 RANNVEIV

Master sos.ant: Søknad om opprettelse av engelskspråklig masterprogram

Sosialantropologisk institutt søker herved om å opprette et engelskspråklig masterprogram i sosialantropologi, og samtidig nedleggelse av det nåværende masterprogrammet på norsk i sosialantropologi etter en overgangsperiode.

Begrunnelse for opprettelsen, forslag til konkrete tiltak og detaljerte beskrivelser av nåværende og ønsket masterprogram finnes vedlagt til denne søknaden.

Så fremt søknaden godkjennes av SV-fakultetet, tar instituttet sikte på oppstart av nytt masterprogram i sosialantropologi høsten 2019.

Med hilsen

Rune Flikke (signering)
Undervisningsleder

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Dette dokumentet er godkjent elektronisk ved UiO og er derfor ikke signert.

Vedlegg:

- 1 Master sos.ant: Vedlegg til søknad om opprettelse av engelskspråklig masterprogram

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Proposal for an English-language master's programme in Social Anthropology.

In order to address the challenges of low applications numbers, low entry grade level and job relevance, the department of Social Anthropology proposes the following changes to its Master's programme:

- Establishment of a Master's programme in Social Anthropology in English, open for Norwegian and international applications, and starting from autumn 2019.
- Last intake for the current Norwegian Master in Social Anthropology will be autumn 2018. Last teaching semester for old courses: autumn 2019 and spring 2020.
- Establishment of two (possibly three) streams of specializations within the programme.
- Introduction of more coursework in the second semester to cater for the specializations; addition of more research-based content and hands-on practical experience.

We anticipate that these changes will lead to more potential applications, an increase in application numbers and entry grade levels, and will make graduates more competitive both for PhD positions nationally and internationally and on the general job market.

1. Assessment of current situation

The department of Social Anthropology at UiO is currently facing a number of challenges with its current "Masterprogrammet i sosialantropologi", introduced in 2003. The biggest issue is waning application numbers. While initially very successful in attracting applicants, over the last few years the numbers have been on a steady decline, which has also led to a lowering of the entry requirements when it comes to acceptable grade levels. The students that do join the programme tend to evaluate the programme highly in terms of its academic challenges, critical edge, and the space for reflection it provides. Our programme is also outstanding in its strong focus on original research, with master students undertaking up to six months of fieldwork on a topic of their choice. While generally satisfied with the academic and research experience we provide, our students, however, do see room for improvement when it comes to job market-related questions (see, Studiebarometeret 2016). These three issues that SAI faces with its current master's programme (i.e. application numbers, entry grade levels, and job relevance) have also been raised in the ongoing "dimensjonering" process of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The following proposal will address the challenges outlined above. The revised structure of the Master's Programme is designed to both retain the successful aspects of the current system (i.e. the production of an original piece of research through extended fieldwork; the flexibility our students have in pursuing their own interests; and the solid introduction into the discipline of anthropology we provide), while

simultaneously strengthening the programme's overall quality. By turning our master's programme into English, making it more teaching-focused, and introducing specializations that respond to our students' concerns about job market relevance, we believe we will be able to attract significantly more highly qualified students from both within Norway and abroad. Students will, however, still be able to receive supervision and write their dissertations in Norwegian. After the proposed reform has been implemented, future students will be able to choose between two streams — one entitled "Contemporary Ethnography", the other "Global Political Economy", with a possible third stream on the anthropology of environment being developed over the course of the next year.

The specializations are in part also an attempt to align SAI's teaching portfolio more directly with its staff's current research foci. The department of Social Anthropology has been ranked 37 in the most recent round of QS world university rankings, which makes it the highest-placed department at University of Oslo as of 2017. In 2017, SAI has also been singled out as the Social Sciences department in Norway with the highest number of publications (52%) in level 2-publication outlets. These recent ranking successes are a good indication of the scale of research activities at SAI, which, for a department of its small size, has been highly successful in attracting external funding (e.g. ERC, H2020, Marie Curie, FRIPRO). The specializations that we wish to introduce will allow us to draw more actively on ongoing research activities at the department in our teaching, and, will make it easier to actively include MA students in ongoing or future research projects.

2. A reform in line with the faculty's "Strategi 2020"-goals

With the proposed changes, we will make substantial progress towards fulfilling the faculty's stated goal of three first-priority applicants per study place. We expect to increase our numbers through the internationalization of our programme and the introduction of thematic specializations within the new master's programme in English. By opening the programme up to both excellent European and overseas students, we will also become more attractive to our Norwegian BA graduates, the best of whom over recent years have often chosen to do their MAs abroad or at other programmes in Norway. By steadily increasing the number of applicants over the next few years, we will be able to become more selective again, which will then raise the entrance level grades of the students that we do take into the programme.

The new programme is somewhat more teaching-intensive than the current system. This reflects a shift from a programme that is fundamentally geared towards attracting our own BA graduates to one that will also be competitive with other English-language anthropology programmes in Scandinavia and Northern Europe. Hence, the first semester of the proposed MA programme, with its focus on general training in key theories and methods in anthropology, will assure that our students leave the programme with a solid, advanced understanding of the subject matter. The specializations will then take up most of the 2nd semester's teaching, and will allow future MA students to gain thematic or regional expertise, which, together with the qualitative methods-tool kit and hands-on ethnographic experience that we provide, will give them a competitive edge in the academic world and the larger job market.

In line with the faculty's overall goals, it is also our aim to increase the number of students that end up working in jobs in which they can actively draw on their MA education. In its "strategi 2020"-statement, the faculty's goal is summed up in the following way: "Fakultetet vil være i dialog med relevante aktører i arbeidslivet om kompetansebehovet for våre kandidater, og arbeide for en sterkere bevissthet blant kandidatene om deres egen kompetanse etter endt utdanningsløp." The proposed programme will take such considerations actively on board. For instance, a course entitled "Ethnography, in Practice" (mandatory for students in the "Contemporary Ethnography" stream, and offered as an elective 2nd semester course to students in "Global Political Economy") will showcase existing work opportunities to anthropology graduates, and seeks to activate our students into a more energetic engagement with the job market. Course participants will focus on how anthropological tools can help create better solutions within a wide range of work environments, such as the human rights field, media and communication, development, consulting, the health sector, or museums.

In conjunction with this 10-credit course, students are also encouraged to complete an internship related to their MA projects (that they will search for themselves, but have to get their supervisor's approval of, and for which they can claim up to 10 additional study points). This will further enhance their chances to gain relevant employment after graduation. "Ethnography, in practice", however, can also be taken without the additional internship-component, which then frees up 10 credits for other study purposes. This allows maximum flexibility for the "Contemporary Ethnography" students to choose a final elective course in accordance with their own research interests and career goals. In the past, students have expressed frustration about not being able to receive study points for course work they felt they needed to do in preparation for fieldwork — i.e. language classes or region-specific courses. In the new system, students will thus have the option to gain 10 credits through four different routes: i.e.

- a) by taking a pre-approved internship;
- b) by taking any of the two 10-credit courses offered in "Global Political Economy" as an elective;
- c) by receiving accreditation for an intensive language course as pre-fieldwork training that will ideally be taken in the country the student wishes to do fieldwork in; or
- d) by taking an elective course on offer at SAI, at another department, or faculty (e.g. regional course at HF).

Options c) and d) may pose some challenges to the overall envisioned timeframe, as students may end up on different schedules than the rest of the cohort. Consequently, in order to ensure that students have found the right course for themselves, and do not fall behind the 2-year timeline, the students' individual choices will have to be closely coordinated with the supervisor and signed off by the programme leader.

3. Transitional arrangements for students in existing programme

For the last intake into the old programme — i.e. students beginning their studies in autumn 2018 — we will provide the necessary course work needed to finish the old 2-year-master's. This means that during the academic year 2019/20, we will run both old and new structures in a parallel fashion. This overlap will be manageable, as the old programme in the 2nd year only requires the running of two 10-credit-courses (i.e. “Skriveseminar” and “Litteraturseminar”). For the potential students who for legitimate reasons cannot take or finish the courses offered in 2019/20, we will find flexible solutions (e.g. extra, credited writing and reading tutorials with their supervisors) so that they too can finish their degree within the old programme structure. The existing “SOSANT4090 Masteroppgaven” itself requires no coursework, only exams, and can be continued as long as there is need for it. Teaching related to the old programme will end in spring 2020 at the latest, while the exam units may remain open for the students left in the old programme structure.

In order to ensure that students finish their studies in the least amount of time, some flexibility can also be provided to students who will be in the new structure, and who get delayed for legitimate reasons. If a student, for instance, falls ill in the second semester, we want to avoid a situation where they will consequently face a 3-semester delay. Under such exceptional circumstances, then, and with the approval of the programme leader, students will be able to conduct fieldwork without having done the course-work that is normally done in the second semester, and can take these exams when they return from the field.

For students who have started but not finished the old programme, and who later wish to apply again to the new English-speaking programme, we will establish general rules to incorporate the exams they have already passed.

4. Effects on the faculty's economic, administrative, and academic resources

The proposed change will have minimal impact on the faculty's economic, administrative or academic resources. Although more coursework-intensive than the existing programme, the new system allows for more teaching efficiency: four of the six courses to be taken during the first year will be mandatory for both streams, i.e. the entire cohort of 50 students can be taught by a small number of instructors.

With the upcoming move from Fronter to Canvas, we also want to shift our exam forms from take-home exams to ongoing online evaluations of our students.

Over recent months, through a series of meetings with “Knutepunktet”, and members of “Human Geography” staff who have been involved in making the transition to an English-speaking MA last year, we have already begun to familiarize ourselves with existing UiO rules that apply for the proposed structure, and the new administrative tasks that the changes will bring along. For instance, there will be extra work to be done related to having three different intake deadlines — for overseas students, EU students, and Norwegian students — from now on. More work on this remains to be done over the coming semester, but we are confident that we can cover all expected

work tasks with the existing permanent academic and administrative staff at SAI, so added pressure on the department's economic resources will be fairly limited.

We have also paid attention to research leaves while designing the programme. According to our calculations, we do have enough teaching staff at hand to run the overall programme (incl. both streams) successfully at all times without impinging on the current flexibility our personnel enjoys when it comes to sabbaticals and research leaves: up to six staff members can teach all courses in "Global Political Economy", and the "Contemporary Ethnography" course work can be covered by any of our instructors. With the third stream to be developed on Environmental Anthropology over the next year, we can also draw on at least six permanent staff members whose research interests are reflected in the general topic.

5. Addressing society's increased need for anthropological knowledge: "Contemporary Ethnography" and "Global Political Economy"

The rationale behind "Contemporary Ethnography":

Ethnography — the long-term, holistic engagement with people's lives — is *the* method used in social anthropology. Over recent years, the ethnographic method has made its way into a number of other social scientific disciplines. In addition, it has become a much sought-after tool in varied workplaces, ranging from consulting, NGO work, to telecommunication. And while anthropologists obviously do not hold a monopoly on ethnography, we can certainly claim the most extensive and critical engagement with this qualitative research method. SAI's MA programme has always been unique in its heavy focus on ethnography: the mandatory 6-month fieldwork component is what essentially distinguishes us from our anthropological competitors, where shorter research stints are usually the norm. The focus on ethnography in our MA education has also been mentioned as a definite strength of the department in the NFR-evaluation of Social Anthropology in Norway in 2011, and has led to our MA graduates being highly competitive for PhD scholarships in Europe and the US over recent years. We will make sure to safeguard this advantage in the new structure.

We can and should do better, however, when it comes to highlighting the usefulness of this methodological tool that we hand to our students during the MA education — and the introduction of a "Contemporary Ethnography" stream is an attempt to do so. By highlighting "ethnography" already in the title of the stream, which will also be printed on the certificates our graduates receive, we can potentially make it easier for our students to reach their future employers who may only have a vague idea about social anthropology, but could find the ethnography-background of our graduates appealing.

The added focus on ethnography is also reflected in the teaching to be done. In the current system, our first-semester students gain most of their theoretical insights into ethnography through a 20-credit course on "teori og metode". By splitting this course into two 10-credit courses ("Advanced Anthropological Theory" and "Advanced Anthropological Methods"), actual lecture time will be increased from 12 to 20 sessions, through which we can now provide our students with a more solid

understanding of the ethnographic method, its benefits, challenges, ethical implications etc. In doing so, our students will be better prepared for their own fieldwork projects and will ideally be more capable to highlight in future job interviews what makes them stand out vis a vis graduates from other social scientific disciplines.

As stated above, the “Contemporary Ethnography” cohort will also have a mandatory course on “Ethnography, in practice” to attend, which will help our students to better understand the current job market and its potential openings for anthropologists. In addition, students of “Contemporary Ethnography” will be able to shape their own curriculum when it comes to the remaining 10 credits of the 2nd semester: they can either enrol in an internship, receive credits for a language course related to their upcoming fieldwork, or take a regional or thematic course that will help them gain further knowledge in their progression towards their own MA project’s completion.

Finally, the “contemporary” aspect in this stream will be addressed via a 10-credit course in the second semester that is also mandatory for students in the “Global Political Economy” stream: “The Anthropology of Globalization”. This course will figure as an introduction into how anthropologists have sought to make sense of globalization over the last few decades. In addition to giving an overview of the major theoretical debates and key terms, the course will pay particular attention to the expanded methodological toolkit of anthropologists who have sought to study global phenomena. By focusing on “multi-sited fieldwork”, the “extended case-method”, “global ethnography”, and related approaches, it will build and expand on the methods introduced in the first semester.

This course is, in part, a reflection of a central and long-term research focus at SAI. It is thus part of the aforementioned attempt to increasingly align departmental research foci with teaching. Globalisation has been at the very core of SAI’s research efforts for many years now. From 2000 to 2004, for instance, a Norwegian Research Council-funded project called “Transnational Flows of Concepts and Substances” (PI: Lien) that involved six permanent members of staff has produced a number of key contributions to this field. From 2012-2017, SAI has also hosted an ERC-Adv.-Grant project on the topic (“Overheating”, PI: Eriksen). A recent “Young Research Talent”-FRIPRO grant (2018-2021, PI: Schober) will take up the issue of globalisation again from a maritime angle. The first in-take of autumn 2019 will have up to three spots reserved for MA students interested in maritime issues, who will be given additional funding to be part of the FRIPRO-project.

The rationale behind “Global Political Economy” stream:

In the current context of ongoing global economic uncertainty, anthropological perspectives have often had a surprising influence with policy makers and public opinion shapers. A specialist MA stream, investigating political economy from a global angle, will make the Oslo department of Anthropology a central institution in shaping anthropology’s wider social influence, and in addition will be highly attractive to significant numbers of students coming out of BA programmes with an interest in anthropology’s contribution to such debates.

Currently there is no specialized MA in this theme anywhere in the world. The nearest match is Copenhagen’s MA in Business Anthropology, but the focus of our proposed

course is significantly different. Copenhagen's course is capped at 81 students and is over-subscribed on a regular basis, suggesting that there is a large pool of potential students in Scandinavia and beyond potentially interested in pursuing postgraduate anthropological studies in this broad area of specialization, and that it will be possible for us to fill our initial planned quota of 10 highly qualified students with a properly designed and marketed specialization. In more detail, the specialization will consist of three courses: 1) "The Anthropology of Globalization" (see description above), 2) "Finance, Markets, and Resources", and 3) "Work, Capital, and Business".

"Finance, Markets, and Resources": The past ten years has seen an explosion of anthropological interest in the workings of global financial markets and other economic institutions. As Bill Maurer observes, this takes us beyond some of the 'blanket generalisations' that social scientists have traditionally used in such discussions, such as 'the economy', 'capitalism' or 'neoliberalism', and in many ways, reasserts the importance of fine-grained ethnographic observation that has been at the heart of anthropological research. This raises both old-standing questions, such as what are the moral limits of market morality and new ones such as what is the potential agency of computerized algorithms that construct new financial instruments such as Collateralised Debt Obligations (CDOs) on human relations. This trend coincides with a growing interest among financial operatives and policy makers in what anthropology can offer to our understanding of markets and financial institutions in the past decade. This course provides a unique overview of the theoretical developments of recent ethnographic work in this area whilst also preparing students to reflect on the methodological challenges of working in this field.

"Work, Capital, and Business": This course looks in depth at the ethnographic tradition of exploring the nature of work and organizational relations with a particular emphasis on developments in this field in the current century. The course encourages reflection on such classic questions as 'what is the nature of labour' whilst at the same time exploring issues concerning the reorganization of business enterprise and worker subjectivity in the early 21st century. Students are introduced to a variety of theoretical approaches that bring into question the conceptual separations between spheres of social activity such as 'capital' on the one hand and 'kinship' or 'society' on the other in order to explore ethnographically how the making and unmaking of such distinctions is key to contemporary economic life and bringing the 'economy' into being. Students are also encouraged through key readings to reflect upon the methodological and ethical challenges of conducting ethnographic fieldwork in such areas as part of the final preparation for their own fieldwork.

6. Expected effect of new programme on other institutions

With its sharpened focus on ethnography and political economy, the proposed programme will only minimally cut into the recruitment pool of other departments at UiO. Furthermore, while several English-language offers in social anthropology exist in Scandinavia at large (e.g. Copenhagen, Aarhus, Stockholm), we will be the only department within Norway with an MA programme taught in English. While designing the specializations we have paid attention to what other universities and departments have on offer in order to avoid duplications and overlaps that would

negatively affect our recruitment — our angle, we believe, is unique in the Scandinavian region and beyond, which will make the programme attractive to students outside of Norway.

In summary, we believe that the proposed English language master's programme in Social Anthropology will address a number of urgent challenges our department faces on the teaching front these days. By retaining both what works within the current structure and strengthening the overall quality and attractiveness of our MA studies, we will move substantially closer to fulfilling the faculty's aim of three applicants per place.

We look forward to working with the faculty during the implementation of these changes.

Blindern, January 17th, 2018.

Rune Flikke
Undervisningsleder sosialantropologi

OUR CURRENT STRUCTURE			
1 st semester	SOSANT4110 "Teori og metode" (20 credits)	SOSANT4120 "Prosjektutvikling" (10 credits)	
2 nd semester	SOSANT4200 Feltarbeid (30 credits)		
3 rd semester	SOSANT4090 "Masteroppgaven" (40 credits)	SOSANT4300 "Skrive- seminar" (10 credits)	SOSANT4400 "Literatur- seminar" (10 credits)
4 th semester			

PROPOSED "CONTEMPORARY ETHNOGRAPHY"

<p>1st semester</p>	<p>SANTH4010 "Advanced Anthropological Theory" (10 credits)</p>	<p>SANTH4020 "Academic Writing and Proposal Development" (10 credits)</p>	<p>SANTH4030 "Advanced Anthropological Methods" (10 credits)</p>
<p>2nd semester (compressed to 6-7 weeks, i.e. 4-5 lectures p. week)</p>	<p>SANTH4100 "The Anthropology of Globalization" (10 credits)</p>	<p>SANTH4150 "Ethnography, in practice" (10 credits)</p>	<p>SANTH41xx Elective course(s) e.g. SAI, region, language, internship (10 credits)</p>
<p>3rd semester</p>	<p>SANTH4200 Fieldwork (30 credits)</p>		
<p>4th semester</p>	<p>SANTH4090 Master thesis (30 credits) (+ voluntary, short writing and career development workshops)</p>		

PROPOSED "GLOBAL POLITICAL ECONOMY"

<p>1st semester</p>	<p>SANTH4010 "Advanced Anthropological Theory" (10 credits)</p>	<p>SANTH4020 "Academic Writing and Proposal Development" (10 credits)</p>	<p>SANTH4030 "Advanced Anthropological Methods" (10 credits)</p>
<p>2nd semester (compressed to 6-7 weeks, i.e. 4-5 lectures p. week)</p>	<p>SANTH4100 "The Anthropology of Globalization" (10 credits)</p>	<p>SANTH41xx "Work, Capital, and Business" (10 credits)</p>	<p>SANTH41xx "Finance, Markets, and Resources" (10 credits)</p>
<p>3rd semester</p>	<p>SANTH4200 Fieldwork (related to "Global Political Economy") (30 credits)</p>		
<p>4th semester</p>	<p>SANTH4090 Master thesis (30 credits) (+ voluntary, short writing and career development workshops)</p>		