



FACULTEIT DER MAATSCHAPPIJ- EN GEDRAGSWETENSCHAPPEN

Decaan

Annual report 2017-2018 & Annual plan 2019-2020 (PDCA 2018-2019)

School/College:

Graduate School of Social Sciences

Onderwijsdirecteur:

Annette Freyberg- Inan

Overview programs/tracks:

12 programs with 26 tracks in total

One-year Master Programs	Tracks
Conflict Resolution and Governance	
Contemporary Asian Studies ¹	
Cultural and Social Anthropology	Cultural and Social Anthropology (general track) Applied Anthropology
Human Geography	Economic Geography Environmental Geography Political Geography Urban Geography
International Development Studies	
Political Science	European Politics and External Relations International Relations Political Economy Political Theory Public Policy and Governance
Medical Anthropology and Sociology	
Sociology	Comparative Organisation and Labour Studies Cultural Sociology Gender, Sexuality and Society Migration and Ethnic Studies Social Problems and Social Policy Sociology (general track)
Urban and Regional Planning	
Research Master Programs	
International Development Studies	
Social Sciences	
Urban Studies	

¹ Discontinued; offered last to incoming students in 2017-18.

Additional teaching organized under the auspices of the GSSS

- Summer Programs of the GSSS Summer Programs Office (SPO). See also **Annual Report 2017/18 of the SPO**. Available upon request.
- Methodology Crash Course in Summer for incoming Master's students with minor methodological deficiencies. As of Summer 2018 this course is given from within the SPO.
- Life-long-learning course offers by the Amsterdam Advanced Graduate School (AAGS). As of January 1st 2019, the AAGS operates under the auspices of the FMG under the label UvANext. See also **Annual Report 2017/18 of the AAGS**. Available upon request.

The director of the GSSS also bears responsibility for the educational element of the PhD trajectory offered at the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR). Information on PhD education is contained in the annual report of the AISSR. Available upon request.



At the annual Workshop on Negotiation and Conflict Resolution, 10-17 January 2019.

David Laws (UvA) and John Forester (Cornell) guided some 46 students through an exciting week. Apart from our own master students in Conflict Resolution and Governance, participants joined from social science programs in Amsterdam, Leiden, and Maastricht.

1. Jaarverslag academisch jaar 2017-2018

Inleiding met belangrijke ontwikkelingen school/college

Denk aan ontwikkelingen instroom opleidingen, wijzigingen opleidingsaanbod/trackaanbod en schakeltrajecten, naamswijzigingen, voertaalwijzigingen.

Please note: Given that internationalization is well-advanced in the Graduate School of Social Sciences (GSSS) and our working language is English, this report is written in **English**.

I became director of the GSSS on April 1st 2017; the 2017-18 academic year was my first full year in office. Also the executive manager (afdelingshoofd) and financial manager (bedrijfsvoerder) of the Educational Office Social Sciences (EOSS) were new and settling in. By now we know that our financial manager will leave us again at the end of March 2019. This is a matter of some concern, as the work this person does is important. We are currently in the process of arranging her replacement/succession.

Overall, the year 2017-18 went well for the GSSS. The admissions process, which had received criticism the year before, went to satisfaction; total student numbers went up in 2018; the finances of the GSSS are relatively sound; and no crises affected our teaching programs. We have moreover been through a number of successful re-accreditation processes: As of November 2017, our Masters in **Political Science** and **Conflict Resolution and Governance** are re-accredited. They had both received a 'good' on the first standard and a 'satisfactory' on standards 2, 3, and 4. In January 2018 the Master **International Development Studies** went through a highly successful re-accreditation, in which it received a 'good' on standards 1 and 2 and 'satisfactory' on standards 3 and 4. In December 2018 the Masters in **Cultural Sociology and Anthropology** and in **Medical Anthropology and Sociology** passed inspection. **MAS** received a 'good' on standard 1. For the remainder both programs scored satisfactorily. In January 2019 the Master Sociology passed inspection with a 'satisfactory' on all standards. In April 2019 we will receive the site visits for the Masters **Human Geography** and **Urban and Regional Planning**. There has been no case in which the re-accreditation committee issued any significant concern or warning. Generally speaking, we often get the feedback that our programs are well thought out and set up, staff is of high quality, and assessment and quality control are fine. However, re-accreditation committees do tend to pick up on the high workload among our staff (and sometimes also our students) and regularly remind us to do our best to address this issue. An important issue of concern at the GSSS (and also the College of Social Sciences) is that our teaching staff and also our support staff is stretched to the limit. Work loads and perceived work pressure are high.

The one-year master program in **Contemporary Asian Studies** was discontinued as planned, and without problems. It is no longer being offered as of 2018-19. Given the considerable relevant research and teaching expertise we have in house, those colleagues active on Asia are, with the support of the GSSS, continuing to explore possibilities to keep Asian Studies alive in some form.

The **Summer Programs** had another very successful and lucrative year, and also the second year of functioning the **Amsterdam Advanced Graduate School** can be called a success. During the year 2018 the faculty explored options for scaling both the AAGS and the SPO up to faculty level. In the end it was decided that the AAGS would be scaled up (as of January 1st 2019, under the new name of UvANext). The SPO will remain institutionally embedded in the GSSS, but offers courses also on behalf of other parts of our faculty.

With respect to the functioning of the teaching support office, the past year saw the acceptance and successful implementation of the 'bureauplan', a new way of organizing the office. This involved a number of changes, inter alia the splitting up of the teams Admissions and International Office; the reduction of our MarCom team to a two-headed Communications support team focusing on information events and web support; the move of the EB (examination board) and PC (program committee) support staff to the team Policy and Quality; and the creation of five sub-domain teams for each department/ program cluster plus ISS (Interdisciplinary Social Sciences), including the relevant study advisers, program coordinators, and (scheduling) assistants.

Organizational change is difficult, especially when there has been as much unrest in the past as has been the case with us. We are very pleased that this process is now over, the structure of the office is settled. We now focus on optimizing the work processes within and across teams, with particular attention to reducing work pressure. We are proud that during this difficult process, and in spite of frequent personnel shifts and

absences, we have stayed within our budget for the teaching support office in 2018 and in 2019 to date. Our guideline continues to be not to spend more than 15% of teaching income on teaching support.

Our most significant challenge in the teaching domain is how to continue to do as well as we do with ever decreasing financial resources (per student). In my opinion, several important considerations need to be kept in balance in this context:

1. We cannot go on to spend more than we have, as reserves are limited and partly off limits.
2. We want to maintain what we believe is good teaching quality.
3. We cannot (nor would we want to) let go of permanent staff, which means that these staff costs are fixed (and increasing over time).
4. We want to protect research as well as teaching (i.e. not play them out against each other).
5. We want to maintain a level of solidarity within our domain (i.e. between teaching and research, between the four departments, between teaching programs, and between research groups).

For me as director of the GSSS this has more concretely meant that I have worked towards the following goals:

1. Protect our teaching programs, staff, and students against hasty interventions, maintain sufficient stability to safeguard program quality and workability, and ensure that we deliver our programs to our students as promised. To this end our program directors are not asked to make significant changes within ongoing academic years. However, they are consistently asked to maximize the use of sitting staff, minimize the use of external staff, and keep seminar groups at the size of ideally 25 (maximally 35) students.
2. Maintain solidarity within the domain of the Social Sciences and avoid a situation in which each teaching program needs to constantly maintain financial self-sufficiency. At the same time, unless there is good reason and strong support, there must be no “black holes” in the domain which are consistently loss-making and place a structural burden on other activities. We continue for the time being to grant our research master programs 125% of teaching hours (thereby cross-subsidising them structurally), because there is good reason and support to do so.
3. Support the programs in searching for and implementing ways to make teaching more efficient while simultaneously maintaining, ideally even improving, quality. There is no general recipe to accomplish this, as programs and their goals differ greatly. (Some specific planned measures are laid out in section 1.2 below.). Important to me is that cost-reduction measures in teaching should generally be decided on at the level of the program. Those who run the program know best where savings can be realized without causing damage. To help program directors assess their programs’ financial viability, we have in the current academic year introduced a new step in planning the teaching for the upcoming academic year: Our financial manager prepares an estimate of expected income (within a multi-annual perspective), based on expected student numbers and graduation rates;² our program directors are then asked to plan a program that, once fully staffed, can be financed with the expected income. In other words, we are aiming to align the teaching planning process more closely with the (expected) available resources. This process is still being refined, but a beginning has been made to make financial constraints more transparent. At the same time, a fourth goal is to:
4. Protect the room in the teaching programs to focus on the primary processes. Program directors, PC members, and other key persons in the programs need to understand the constraints under which they need to work in order to function well, but they should not be asked to reveal, to manage, or to enforce them. The financialization of university life needs to stop at the level of institutes, if we want to protect the core norms of the university.

1.1 Kwantitatieve reflectie op ontwikkelingen academisch jaar 2017-2018

In deze paragraaf reflecteert u op de beschikbare kwantitatieve gegevens van uw school/college en geeft u een prognose voor het volgende jaar. U gebruikt hiervoor het overzicht kwantitatieve gegevens uit de tabel hieronder en de risico-analyse die u als bijlage aan het jaarverslag toevoegt. De gegevens voor de tabel en de risico-analyse zullen begin november worden aangeleverd door de afdeling Strategie & Informatie.

² Unless otherwise indicated, “graduation rates” in this document refers to the Nominal+1 graduation rates which serve as KPIs.

Kwantitatieve doelen	Doel 2020 instellingsplan	Voortgangs afspraak 2017-2018 convenant	Resultaat 2015-2016	Resultaat 2016-2017	Resultaat 2017-2018	Prognose 2018-2019
KPI2: Rendement master: % C+1 rendement (masters)	>90% (instellingsplan) 87% (Convenant FMG)	86%	86,5%	91,9%	90,3%	90%
KPI3: Rendement research master: % C+1 rendement (masters)	>90% (instellingsplan) 90% (Convenant FMG)	88%	89,4%	76,2%	82,9%	82%
% tevredenheid over studie-inhoud (NSE)	Doel gesteld in Facultair plan: >70% (score onder algemene beoordeling)	XXXXXX	71%	75%	76%	75%

Instroom en ingeschrevenen		2017/2018	2018/2019 ³	Prognose 2019/2020
Instroom	GS SW Instroom september	633	673	667
	Reguliere master	549	606	590
	Culturele antropologie	26	34	30
	Medische Antropol en Sociol	20	32	25
	Politologie	215	233	250
	Contemporary Asian Studies	8	x	x
	Sociologie	116	114	110
	Planologie	44	37	35
	Sociale geografie	45	54	50
	International Development	49	68	60
	Conflict Resolution and Gov.	26	34	30
	Research master	84	67	77
	Social Sciences (res)	39	31	35
	Metropolitan Studies (res)	21	15	20
	Intern Development st (res)	24	21	22
	Februari instroom	20		
Ingeschrevenen	Diplomaprogramma (17/18 inclusief februari instroom)	M: 827 RM: 176	M: 797 RM: 171	XXXXXX

³ Meetmoment is 30-10-2018. Door correcties op het aantal inschrijvingen kan de definitieve telling licht afwijken van deze voorlopige telling.

Studieprestaties		2016/2017	2017/2018	Prognose 2018/2019
Diploma's	Bekostigd	642	550	580
	Niet Bekostigd	73	70	XXXXX
	Totaal	715	620	XXXXX
Studiepunten	Bekostigd	41.396	37.082	38.000
	Niet Bekostigd	5.648	5.953	XXXXX
	Totaal	47.044	43.035	XXXXX

Reflectie op kwantitatieve prestaties school/college

Daar waar uw school/college afwijkt van de afgesproken voortgang, of daar waar de risico-analyse een onvoldoende identificeert, wordt gevraagd om een reflectie. De kwantitatieve tabel en de risico-analyse vertonen hier en daar overlap, uiteraard kan u de thema's in dat geval gezamenlijk behandelen.

=> reflecteer hier op bovenstaande kwantitatieve gegevens en op de rapporten en heatmaps van de risico-analyse.

I will here reflect on the strongest points in our performance as well as on those points for attention where, in my opinion, there are some risks of continuing insufficient performance. I will leave out of the discussion points where performance is satisfactory and there is, for all intents and purposes, not much to say. Any issues raised in the heatmaps of the risk analysis will be treated further down, where I go through the programs one by one. Generally speaking, the heat maps revealed no serious problems in the GSSS programs.

As for particularly strong points, we are very happy with the graduation rates of our one-year master programs. In fact, we find very little room for improvement here, as some attrition is unavoidable and also desirable. Important in terms of policy is that we strive not for "maximum rendement" but for "maximum studeerbaarheid" (ease of study) and maximum motivation among students and staff. This means that we aim to minimize *unwanted* loss and delay among students, while accepting that there is some loss and delay that is wanted, by the student and/or by the staff. Further increasing the graduation rates of our one-year programs is therefore not a goal of the GSSS.

Points for attention are the following: Our research master programs struggle to maintain desirable graduation rates. Given that fact that those programs are already quite expensive and rely on cross-subsidisation from the one-year programs, one priority for the future is to work on **improving graduation rates in the research master programs**. To this end, close supervision of students during the period of research and writing for their final thesis is important, as is a good more general support structure centred around the invaluable work of the study advisors and a constructive sense of community in the programs. In some cases, also the curriculum can be further simplified (e.g. by having fewer but longer courses) and/or some content dropped to improve ease of study. Our research master students tend to express a high, sometimes alarming, level of stress. It is important to build the insight into the programs that sometimes "less is more".

As regards student numbers, they inevitably fluctuate year by year. Over the past years, however, they have overall been sufficiently stable. That being said, there are some programs for which **safeguarding sufficient intake** must be a priority. Those are the programs at risk of falling (or in fact falling) under the number of 25 students (i.e. in the past years Cultural and Social Anthropology, Medical Anthropology and Sociology, RM Urban Studies and RM International Development Studies). It is desirable for all programs to attract 25 students (or multiples thereof). However, achieving this is of course tricky, given the unpredictability of admitted students actually joining the programs. We address this challenge by forecasting attrition rates based on previous years, and by working to optimize communication with admitted students in the run-up to their arrival. While this is a point of attention, I foresee no need to discontinue any programs at this point. Regarding total student numbers at the GSSS, I am optimistic for the coming years, last not least because I expect that the introduction of the bilingual bachelor programs in Political Science, Sociology, and soon hopefully also Anthropology, and the increase in bachelor graduates they bring with them, will have a pay-off also for enrolment in our Master programs.

Reflectie op uitkomsten NSE en andere (student)evaluaties

Opvallendheden in NSE-scores, de resultaten van UvA Q vakevaluaties, curriculumevaluaties, uitkomsten Nationale Alumni Enquête (voorheen) WO-monitor, etc.

I do not put much stock in NSE-scores, because the numbers of participating students are generally too low and their representativity is questionable. Unfortunately, they receive publicity and find their way into rankings and can therefore not be ignored. Luckily, we are doing ok here. One frequently mentioned complaint concerns the facilities, in particular the availability of study places (by which students seem to also mean places to simply hang out with each other). I have to agree with the critical students that this is still a problem. Hopefully continuing improvements in and around the REC will help here. Another recurring complaint, also in UvA-Q evaluations (although interestingly less so in the alumni surveys) concerns preparation for the labour market. I will reflect on this point separately below, as it is a topic which not only the individual programs but also the GSSS as a whole see as a priority. A final complaint that recurs and that needs to be taken very seriously given our didactic aims is feedback. Students generally want both more and quicker feedback on their work. Next to the manifold work done within the programs to improve feedback, the GSSS and CSS support the programs in addressing this issue, by means of supporting innovations in didactics such as increased use of peer feedback, organizing workshops and trainings, providing needed infrastructure and infrastructural support such as through Canvas, and organizing comparison and exchange of best practices.

Other negative evaluation results are incidental. I find it most heartening that the quality of our teaching staff, curricula, and courses is evaluated almost without fail as high to very high, and that students generally feel that they are learning and developing.

1.2 Kwalitatieve reflectie op ontwikkelingen academisch jaar 2017-2018

Resultaten van audits, visitatie en accreditatie

Geef een overzicht van de lopende en afgeronde visitaties en bespreek in ieder geval de opvolging van de aandachtspunten/verbeterafspraken die hieruit volgen.

I will here provide an overview program by program. This mainly summarizes the issues discussed at the yearly program talks (and other exchanges) of the GSSS director with the program directors (PDs) and program managers (PGM) as well as the chairs of the relevant program committee (PC) and examination board (EB). Points of attention raised by the last program assessment visits (visitaties) are also included in the overview. Priority points are indicated by bold print. Some passages remain in Dutch to save time on translation.

M International Development Studies (last assessment 2018; PD Courtney Lake)

Points of attention raised by last assessment (note: the program was also assessed on the EADI/IAC criteria and received an EADI/IAC accreditation):

- Relate program objectives more clearly to subjects, issues and perspectives from the Global South.
- Although students come from various countries, the panel proposes to try and increase student group diversity, particularly from the Global South. The panel also advises program management to offer scholarships, enabling lower-income students to enrol in the program.
- The panel suggests to improve the information about the fieldwork and especially about the costs involved and to improve the organisation of the fieldwork, starting the fieldwork with sound research questions.
- The panel advises to add detail to the thesis assessment form, as this is rather concise.
- The thesis research projects were strong on data collection and data analysis, but some of the projects could be strengthened in terms of the conceptual framework and the reflection on methodology. In addition, in some cases the panel found the formulation of the research questions to be too broad.

- In the panel's opinion, the program should remain attentive to the preparation of the graduates for positions on the labour market.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Curriculum:

- 8-10 weeks fieldwork in a development setting are part of the program. The meaning of a "development setting" is changing, this requires attention.
- There is a 30-credit prep-program on offer; program is now exploring on-line prep options.
- Since 2017/18 there is only one intake moment (in September). This seems to work out well.

Core data:

- Capacity 60 students/year; 2017/18 only 45 came (49 according to UvAData); 2018/19 larger intake than expected (63); volatility is problematic; **aim is: bandwidth 60-75**
- Majority of students is international; there is a generally felt need to **strengthen the Global South connection** (in terms of people, content, fieldwork, networks).

Students:

- Labor market preparation as weak spot > Policy and Practice Seminar "new style" evaluated well (plus better cohort – Feb 2017 cohort was experienced as problematic); also, alumni are used more now – this is all good.
- Pressure in block 2 is too high. More generally, students feel too little space for reflection (**making the program lighter** is a win-win for teachers and students)
- More explanations needed in thesis evaluations (EB point also) – this is more important than more detail in criteria; more generally feedback is an issue (needs to be on time for next assignment, useful, clear); more transparent assessment criteria in courses are less important
- Better qualitative/quantitative balance in the Research Training course (now quant teacher included) – this is good.
- Organization of fieldwork; more help with research design needed (also point of visitatiecommissie); Thesis Supervision Workshop to be held again – good.
- Academic integrity issues: do not make it too complicated; make sure all students see a set of guidelines, those are addressed in a course, and each student is asked to react to them individually.
- PC: admissions: Students feel there is a lack of transparency as to why certain students are sent to the compulsory methodology crash course or the IDS standard preparatory program (maybe write a standard explanatory text to be sent in an e-mail you send to students anyway before they come).
- Let students know who else is there (PhDs, staff) (see anthropology visitatie remarks: students need to know the staff and have easy access to them).
- Canvas and course manuals: of course, course manuals are still needed (but keep them simple).

Staff:

- Very useful external EB member (Tropeninstituut)
- Work pressure > focus on **reduction of workload within courses** – yes, good!; "drastic reduction in IDS teaching staff"; question whether it is really necessary to hang on to the idea of an "IDS teaching staff" (as opposed to GPIO); but point taken: there is need for **more stability in available qualified staff** - again more senior staff for IDS courses and/or longer-term contracts for non-senior staff; this is a priority for the OWI; also do not give students so many assignments! Do less!
- How can we recalibrate a happier work environment? Perpetual guilt; we are emptying out; staff is being drained (in both senses); cap on students to be installed? Look at streamlining the IDS programs.
- Communication within the program – should not be such an issue. Why not just use e-mail and have occasional meetings?

Finances:

- Volatility in intake and success rates is problematic.
- High level of teaching hours –go through the onderwijsvraag in detail to review curriculum.
- Need for external supervisors 2018/19 acknowledged.
- Need for clear, reliable and to a certain extent 'predictable' budgets; the first two we got, the third will come soon to the extent possible.

Current priorities:

- Addressing staff shortage
- Looking into reducing the amount of teaching hours and real work spent on the curriculum
- Pressure for students in block 2 too high; more generally, students feel too little space for reflection (making the program lighter as a win-win for teachers and students)

M Contemporary Asian Studies (last assessment 2012; PD Gerben Noteboom)

This program has by now been discontinued. The last incoming cohort of students was accepted in 2017-18. It comprised 9 students, of whom 7 have graduated already. One is about to defend her thesis. The last one is actively working on her thesis. The students are properly supported, even as the program has been discontinued, and expected to graduate successfully.

M Cultural Sociology and Anthropology (last assessment 2018; PD Alex Strating)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- Welcoming the broadly defined transferable skills, the panel advises to consider adding specific anthropological and ethnographic skills and to communicate these skills in more pronounced terms.
- The panel advises to encourage and facilitate internships through establishing and sustaining contacts with relevant organisations and institutions that may need and use anthropological skills and methods.
- Although the assessment scoring forms include relevant criteria and are transparent, the panel proposes to have examiners add written comments and to use proportional weighting of clusters of criteria.
- Some of the theses may have been marked slightly too high. One thesis was found by the panel to be unsatisfactory, but the panel considers this thesis to be an outlier, not being representative of the general quality of the theses.
- The panel suggests to collect more information about the professional field and graduates' careers.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Curriculum:

- Methods e-course and online preparation more generally: het lijkt goed te gaan; vooral e-course theorie heeft goed effect (opvrisser); cursussen worden door studenten gewaardeerd; vinden plaats voor dat studenten naar UvA komen (dat is belangrijk want anders zou het anders geregeld moeten worden)
- Track visual anthropology is coming; GIS lab could be useful facility if available at the right times.

Students:

- Post-fieldwork period, Writing Ethnography: students want better support with more contact hours by someone experienced; also UvAQ evaluations indicate this; has now been addressed - good; nadenken over TLC-achtige ondersteuning; mini-piloot thesis clinic? In video-kamertje?
- More preparation for life afterwards; facilitating internships (zie visitatie feedback); applied veldwerk is ook stage > studenten moeten dat ook weten
- Evaluate courses mid-way > wordt met staf besproken > punt voor PC
- Expertise list and open office hours to be explored

Organizational:

- Bundle diploma-ceremonies? bij bachelor doet antro dat al, bij CREA; bij master nu in common room, een groep na de ander; decision to continue as is.
- We should provide not only forms for thesis/paper evaluation but also narrative evaluation (always); the grading list is not always a good match with the final grade – this requires some narrative

explanation (can be short) > room needs to be made for this in the form; also: having 14 criteria means that there should be some indication of their relative weight > point for EC

- End products could take many forms: film, design, exhibitions, multi-media installations; the challenge then is assessment (EB); next to the supervisor there might then be an external assessor active in the relevant field > point for EB: **beoordelingsformulier voor scripties met een audiovisuele component and guidelines ethics and archiving for visual work**
- Evaluatie van scriptieproces (los van exit survey) > point for PC
- Er is behoefte aan coördinatoren voor applied and voor visual anthropology > this will be paid for with the kwaliteitsgelden
- Werkveldcontacten: er moet iemand voor verantwoordelijk tekenen! Nadenken over mensen; dat is dan ook gelijk de stage coördinator; takenpakketten voor drie coördinatoren (werkveld, applied, en visual) en duidelijk maken welke uren dan bij PGM weggaan
- Grading practices to be adapted to US norms? Don't do it. Goed nieuws: in diplomasupplement komt percentile te staan (waarschijnlijk referentiekader GSSS)

Finances:

- High level of teaching hours per EC. Income keeps going up, but costs in this way are also high; we need to work in a more sustainable direction.
- Plan bijhouden moet beter - bedrijfsvoerder moet helpen.

Current priorities:

- **Preparation for new track visual anthropology**
- Support staffing: preparation of task lists for **three coordinators - labor market, applied, and visual** - and estimates of the needed worktime, to relieve program manager
- Analyzing possibilities for reducing costs

M Medical Anthropology and Sociology (last assessment 2018; PDs Trudie Gerrits, until August 2018 together with Rene Gerrets)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- The panel suggests to promote further integration of the program within the wider professional field.
- The panel advises to monitor class sizes.
- Although the assessment scoring forms include relevant criteria and are transparent, the panel proposes to have examiners add written comments and to have proportional weights attached to clusters of criteria.
- In the panel's view, some of the theses may have been marked slightly too low and would have merited somewhat higher marks.
- The panel suggests to collect more comprehensive information about the professional field and graduates' careers.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Curriculum:

- Visitation: saw no problems at all in terms of profile, content, quality – very good
- Since 17/18: Contemporary Topics condensed in block 1 – well-evaluated. Risk: too quick and does not settle in > maybe ask in exit survey or even better in panel talk at the end of the year if content is remembered; course also adapted to represent better the disciplinary anchors. Veel werk, ook voor docent > misschien komend jaar twee docenten? Dit keer erg onrustig (veel studenten, tolk, skype), dit gaat in de evaluaties waarschijnlijk terugkomen.
- Also since 17/18: MAS in Action replaced Global Health, Development and Care for better connection to praxis; seems to have improved labor market preparation evaluation; course evaluations ook heel goed.
- Methods prep e-course; well-evaluated - online, maar heel lage respons; materiaal veel Moerman (en individueel contact met Bregje); Moerman komt dan ook later een keer langs als gastdocent; keep an

eye on whether the course really achieves what it is supposed to; kijk hoe de studenten die de cursus opgelegd kregen het doen (ook vergeleken met de anderen).

- In development: prep program plus: er wordt iets ontwikkeld over theorieën specifiek voor MAS (blended, voor mensen die gaan instromen); latere stap: ook voor externe/professionals aanbieden.

Core data:

- 17/18: 20 students in fact; this year the group is big (31 over van 33 die begonnen), but not impossible; **aim for 25-30 actually present**.
- Rendement ok. Students happy. Risicoprofiel: geen problemen.

Support:

- Now very good permanent PGM; hope for stability after chaos in the past; en goede EB ondersteuning.
- Toetsdossiers digital verzamelen? EOSS biedt het aan als het gewild is > wordt besproken op de afdeling.
- Permission to pay external supervisors – this time given on time to prevent unrest for the students; 3-4 nodig dit jaar.
- Tuition reduction for Duke student approved > do something to bring in paying US-students (involve professors).
- To improve website: EOSS will help but program has to give the content.

Teaching staff:

- “Kort samengevat kunnen HCB/UvA staf 14-16 MAS studenten thematisch begeleiden, en daarnaast 14-16 studenten mits deze hun onderzoek/scriptie aan onderzoeksprojecten koppelen” – we discuss this; OD wordt aangemoedigd om AVO te betrekken bij bemensing scriptiebegeleiding mits moeilijk.

Little points for improvement:

- More consistently narrative comments on thesis evaluation; EB gaat ermee aan de slag; en geef ook aan waar feedback *wel* gebeurd (namelijk daar waar het nog uitmaakt, tijdens het proces).
- Strengthen alumni relations and data about alumni
- Timely feedback on assignments
- Scriptietraject gaat apart van exit survey geëvalueerd worden
- Nog maar een diploma-uitreikingsmiddag
- Op website staat dat HBOers niet kunnen schakelen (moeten eerst bachelor antro halen), maar zij doen het soms wel? Remove inconsistencies.

Financien:

- Dit jaar relatief ver over ‘beschikbare’ uren heen; meer studenten maar nog meer extra uren in programma; ook bijzonder veel NPO uren in Plan dit jaar
- Het blijft een relatief duur programma (uren per EC); het is wel de moeite waard om hierna te kijken (minder onderwijsuren besteden en dus ook minder docentenwerk)

Current priorities:

- Analyze possibilities for reducing cost
- Expand cooperation with Duke University (attract high quality and ICG students)

M Sociology (last assessment 2019; PD Marguerite van den Berg, until December 2018 Stephanie Steinmetz)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- Strengthen the influence of the labor market on the learning goals
- Teaching norms are tight, and four-week courses are intense
- High work pressure among staff
- Offer an English-language preparatory program

- Feedback comes sometimes late or is not detailed; also on the thesis evaluation form feedback/ explanation of the evaluation is necessary for the sake of transparency (even if it has been shared with the student by other means)
- Better let each thesis evaluator fill out an own form, to improve transparency
- Need to set up formal **procedure for ethics check in case of data collection by students**
- Students feel insufficiently prepared for the labor market

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Core data:

- Declining student numbers; try to keep stable; we expect growing student numbers again from 2020/21
- **Tracks: need to be re-thought;** don't be path-dependent, be strategic; fluctuation depending on current events is not sustainable; create tracks that can draw more stable numbers or build them into the general curriculum (as electives to lead to "specialization profiles"); there is now a reorganization committee busy with this; preliminary ideas: some tracks are no longer viable; maybe new tracks: digitalization? sustainability? Maybe reorganizing along research groups? Or aligning with the bachelor more? To be continued!
- Rendement and cum laude rates are good.

Evaluations:

- Sem 2 afgelopen jaar: De cursus *Gender and Sex in the City* kreeg het hoogste rapportcijfer: een 9,0. Alle gerapporteerde aspecten werden positief beoordeeld (meer dan 82% was (zeer) tevreden). Het gemiddelde rapportcijfer voor een cursus was een 8,0, dit is nagenoeg gelijk aan het GSSS-gemiddelde van 8,1. De werkcollegedocent werd gemiddeld met een 8,2 beoordeeld, ook dit is nagenoeg gelijk aan het GSSS-gemiddelde van 8,3.
- Exit survey: labor market preparation is an issue. Needs nothing fancy but simply the mental attention of teachers and informal events; maybe also give it more room in curriculum (3 EC, and more attention to what skills students have acquired, to make them more confident); use alumni; look at best practices around the GSSS (point for PC also).
- Thesis process: improvements are possible here (read exit survey carefully) (2 students said they had only 1-5 group sessions); PC and OD want the thesis groups to be evaluated > this needs to be worked out with EOSS; teachers are asked to meet with group minimally five times; PC looks at streamlining practices and supervisor allocation.

EB points:

- Masterscriptieherbeoordeling: een scriptie kreeg 7.3 in plaats van 5 (een beoordelaar is met pensioen, met de ander is gesproken). Besluit: minstens een van de twee beoordelaars moet ervaren zijn – goed.
- Coordinate beoordeling in *Sociological Perspectives* (let op: feedback geven ook coördineren).
- Scriptieseminar: Two students complained about a course in which their internship product was supposedly not allowed to be critical; and they felt too little hands-on supervision; this is being followed up; there are two sides to the story.
- Scriptieproject gecombineerd met stage – goed idee, maar maak duidelijk wat hier wel en niet kan en zorg voor aansluiting met eindtermen; stage should not be discouraged, we want this possibility for the students.
- Diplomauitreikingen: inefficient: 5 dagen, 18 sessies, 94 studenten; program is already moving towards consolidation – good.

PC points:

- Priority feedback
- Further improvement of course *Sociological Perspectives*
- Methodology block sometimes found too short; if students do data gathering there is no time left to learn data analysis (maybe look at entry requirements again?)
- Staffing/ replacing people, werkdruk: students talk about pressure, and they catch up on staff work pressure; staff gets strained in domino effect; what can be done? Help staff to do less; maybe not use same assessment guidelines in master as in bachelor (SOC is alone in doing this > point for EB); maybe

not give feedback on papers unless students come for it; EB chair is coming to PC meeting on this to back it up (students are critical)

Admission:

- Crash course: struggling students practically all from track Gender and Sexuality SOC – look into admissions criteria here
- Keep an eye on admissions rules and procedures; when tracks are being reorganized these should also be streamlined

Finances:

- Declining student numbers now require tightening; program was already not very efficient before; tracks are costly and maybe not necessary; they can also be “specialization profiles”
- Look at NPO flexible hours

Current priorities:

- **Re-organization of the track structure; include also admissions criteria and handling** in re-organization process

M Urban and Regional Planning (last assessment 2013; PD Hebe Verrest)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- “OC splitsen: iedere master (PI en SG) een eigen OC of studentlid toevoegen voor gelijke vertegenwoordiging beide masters”: The Program Committee (PC) has not been divided, but there are student members from both programs. Separate PCs are not desired, as in the department GPIO the wish is strong to work in a pan-departmental way as opposed to within individual teaching programs.
- “Studenten zouden meer diverse en geavanceerder methoden en technieken van onderzoek moeten toepassen in eindwerken. Methodologische vak beter verbinden met master thesis project (the qualitative research methods often used by students in their master theses were rather straightforward; one would like to see students applying more diverse and advanced techniques).” This remains a point of attention.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Curriculum:

- Program moved away from teaching planning itself to teaching critical perspectives on planning; is this desirable? Heeft absoluut te maken met verschuivingen in de staf (in onderzoeksgroep wordt heel veel gesproken over opleidingsprofiel); studenten leren nog wel advies geven op basis van analyse; sommige dingen kunnen ook niet meer in curriculum in verband met internationale studenten; idee om meer praktische afstudeerprojecten ook mogelijk te maken
- Thesis defense to not be cancelled (OC); nieuwe regels eerste en tweede lezer naar aanleiding van scriptieherbeoordeling EB: een van de twee moet een ervaren stafid zijn dat al enige tijd aan het programma is verbonden. In het geval van een in het Nederlands geschreven scriptie, moet een van de twee het Nederlands als moedertaal hebben; eindtraject wordt nu onder loep genomen (in voorjaar komt voorstel).

Core data:

- Rendement affected by Rethinking Urban Transportation Planning, where a substantial group fails the final exam also after the resit.
- Drop-out rate seems to increase.
- Inflow: numbers of applicants decreasing > reasons? Oneerlijke competitie binnen Amsterdam; quality of applicants is still ok. Note: In 2019 the number of applicants seems to be going up again.
- EB gaat kijken naar toetsing (eerste semester doorschoemelen met groepsopdrachten en compensatie?); niet compenseren tussen eindtermen!
- Strongly international inflow – how is that? Goed, word ook gebruikt; sterke cohort (altijd samen).

Student experience:

- Problems are feedback (also during courses, see OC) and preparation for labor market.

- Least positive about the methods course Planning Research (6,2) – has been thoroughly revised. Specifically the items ‘feedback on assignments’ and ‘I learned a lot from this course’ were crucial in this lower grade.
- Let op Planning Studio (OC): werkdruk drop-off na sem 1 > hier moet overleg over komen.
- UvAQ sem 2: Evaluations below average for courses and teachers. Not much learned. Feedback heavily criticized.

Staff:

- Workload problem

Finances:

- Nog keurig, maar onder druk; kijk naar beschikbare uren voor komend jaar. En er moet beter zicht komen op de overige lasten.

Current priorities:

- **Re-accreditation site visit April; use the feedback to re-think program profile (in relation with other programs and tracks with an urban focus, in light of changing landscape of competition and declining intake)**

M Human Geography (last assessment 2013; PD Hebe Verrest)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- “Beroepsloopbaan oriëntatie verbeteren”: This is being addressed (see details below) but deserves continuing attention.
- “OC splitsen: iedere master (PI en SG) een eigen OC of studentlid toevoegen voor gelijke vertegenwoordiging beide masters”: The PC has not been divided, but there are student members from both programs. Separate PCs are not desired, as in the department GPIO the wish is strong to work in a pan-departmental way as opposed to within individual teaching programs.
- “Core-course toevoegen (basis van de sociale geografie aan begin master); de 5 thematische keuzevakken zijn te specifiek (need to provide students with a common ground).” This has not been done and might be raised again in the next assessment.
- “Studenten zouden meer diverse en geavanceerder methoden en technieken van onderzoek moeten toepassen in eindwerken. Methodologische vak beter verbinden met master thesis project (the often qualitative research methods used by students in their master theses were rather simple; one would like to see students applying more diverse and advanced techniques).” This remains a point of attention.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Curriculum:

- Need for **broad and creative re-thinking of whole program and tracks**: Urbanization is central; program changed last 3 years ago; what about the next change? Could there not for example be one master: “Livable City: Urban Geography (and Urban Planning, since there is a focus on metropolitan areas in URP as well)”? Is there anybody working in HG who could not teach in an Urban Studies program? And do not all four tracks (and a planning track) also fit under that label? Could it be an RM (to be combined with the RMUS)? Or a one-year “Livable City” and then a 2-year planning master?
- GeoFocus went to Naples > good evaluations > continues for now
- Gebundeld afstuderen – hoe bevalt dat? Positief ontvangen dat het hele jaar bij elkaar is, opkomst ook groter; datum kan nu ook vroeg gecommuniceerd worden; dit is een goede verandering; groepsfoto gemaakt ook.

Core data:

- Intake numbers seem to stabilize around 50-60 per year, with the Urban (15) & Environmental (20) tracks being about twice as popular as the Political & Economic tracks > implications for class sizes? Advanced courses for pol (10) en econ (10) are small.

- Quality of applicants? Good enough, maar grote verschillen bij M&T (sommige hadden toch beter de crash course kunnen doen); studenten krijgen nu brief met opties en boodschap: je moet het straks echt kunnen!
- Why do we get relatively few applicants from other Dutch bachelors? This is no problem (wij hebben ook meerdere master opties voor onze bachelors); maar er zijn ook veel opties binnen NL voor al die brede geografen.
- EB voorzitter wil met toelatingsmensen 1 keer per jaar overleggen.
- EB zal engels taaleisen/toetsen bespreken.
- Rendement: 2017 drop? EB: Besloten was om dit studiejaar de masterstudenten die uitstel aanvragen in de gaten te houden. Dit jaar waren er 4 studenten.
- Flex students: how is that going? Karen controleert effect on rendement.

Student experience (PC seems perhaps overly positive for both URP and HG):

- Evaluations 2018 quite bad – what happened? Volatility > ask students to take NSE seriously (lijkt niet te helpen...)
- Thesis seminar course evaluations improved but still not really high – what is the problem? Maakt nu stap van wetenschap naar praktijk (Geography and Practice); altijd op het verkeerde moment.
- Methods & Techniques (Geoskills) not well evaluated – why? PC waakt hierover.
- Feedback as structural weakness
- UvAQ sem 2: De vraag 'Ik heb veel geleerd door dit vak' werd het minst positief beoordeeld. Evaluations below average for courses and teachers (but sem 2 only, 1 vak)

Finances:

- Best goede basis en even ook stabiliteit; onderwijsuren zouden idealiter nog stukje omlaag

Current priorities:

- **Re-accreditation site visit April; use the feedback to re-think program profile (in relation with other programs and tracks with an urban focus)**

M Political Science (last assessment 2017; PD Luc Fransen)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- Make the program more inclusive and provide more guidance to international students at the start of the program, to make them feel at home more quickly.
- Feedback on assignments and exams should be delivered within the designated limit of fifteen working days at the latest.
- To fully guarantee the independence of the second thesis examiner, he/she should be appointed by the program director or Examinations Board, rather than by the supervisor.
- The new standardized thesis assessment form should be developed further by clarifying the relative weight of items per category and separating the grades for the thesis seminar and the thesis itself.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Post-accreditation goals for both POL and CRG:

- Softer landing for internationals: more needed? Going ok
- Second examiners policy: advice to continue as you have decided for this year (PD checks on some criteria); do not make the EB appoint 2nd examiners
- Looking into drop-outs; good, there is only so much you can do; thesis supervisors matter a lot
- Bonding post-admission: use of social media; use best practice
- **Ethical guidelines:** to be continued

Post-accreditation goals for POL:

- Various labor market measures; question: what are the plans for making an internship easier? They are on hold for now. Better use alumni network.
- Sweep-up RPs in Fall continue – good

- Continuation of methods offer next to RPs; **methods classes now should make more visible 'transferable skills' relevant to employers**
- Final report of the Committee on Master Track Evaluation has been produced. Decision is to continue all tracks.
- Transnational Politics; evaluations still unacceptable in 2017; 2018 N=140, 6.3 general grade (negative: feedback, active participation); now a new coordinator has taken over and begins reflection and revision

Core data:

- Enrollment is great in all respects; EPER could use a few more students; but do not grow too much
- Quality inflow: requires sharp eye on admissions; introduction of required preparatory literature lists?
- Rendement is fine

Studenten:

- Vakevaluaties 17/18 sem 2: uitstekend
- NSE satisfaction down, but we feel we do not need to do anything about that specifically

Anders:

- Thesis assessment form: EB is done with revisions
- Ondersteuning EB now ok
- Sub-domain support team POL can make their lives easier in some ways > this will be a focus of attention for executive manager EOSS in the coming months
- Verplicht plagiaatquiz > this is a best practice
- Diploma-uitreikingen bundelen! Staf en studenten krijgen dan lang van tevoren te horen wanneer het zal zijn maar moeten dan ook tijd maken (zie piloot GPIO; CREA een hele dag afhuren, er een feest van maken); probably 2 days necessary for POL – this needs to be followed up to make it real
- EB wil meedenken over schakelprogramma met ODs POL en sub-domein team
- Difficulty organizing panel evaluations; perhaps not in course time, but right after courses?
- Pressure to reduce staff is felt by program directors
- Strategic orientation > we will discuss early Spring > David will put some thoughts on paper for us to start from

Financien:

- Program is doing ok; should try to stay stable

Current priorities:

- Standardize and streamline the admissions process across the tracks.
- Develop policies with regard to evaluating master tracks and inviting new track ideas
- Organize a thesis grading meeting

MSc Conflict Resolution and Governance (last assessment 2017; PD Luc Fransen)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- "Formulation of the exit qualifications in terms of perspectives and approaches instead of theories, in order to express even more clearly what is intended." This will be considered by the coordinator of CR&G, David Laws, and the PC.
- "The panel suggests two ways to strengthen the students' theoretical knowledge base: by providing a preparatory reading list and assessing the students' knowledge at the start of the programme, and by giving a stronger focus and more coherence to the theoretical base in the 'Capita Selecta' course." This will be considered by the coordinator of CR&G, David Laws, and the PC.
- "The panel advises emphasizing from the beginning of the research project, the importance of commenting on the possibility of generalizing the outcomes of the case and/or relating the research outcomes back to the theoretical framework." We agree and will work to strengthen this aspect.
- "The panel advises requiring students to report explicitly on the ethical aspects of their research in the methods section of their thesis." The GSSS agrees that this is important, not only for theses in this program.

- "Feedback on assignments and exams should be delivered within the designated limit of fifteen working days at the latest." This generally happens already, but there should be no exceptions.
- "To fully guarantee the independence of the second thesis examiner, he/she should be appointed by the programme director or Examinations Board, rather than by the supervisor." Here the GSSS does not agree with the committee: We see nothing wrong with the current practice, and, given the number of theses, assigning this task to the EB or OD would mean considerable additional bureaucracy and work for them.
- "The new standardized thesis assessment form should be developed further by clarifying the relative weight of items per category and separating the grades for the thesis seminar and the thesis itself." The latter is already the case, given that the thesis seminar counts in the process component of the thesis grade. For the rest, the GSSS disagrees with the committee. We find the current evaluation form already excessively detailed. The current EB is working on improving the format to create a balance between the needs of teachers for realism and ease of use, of students for transparency and appropriate detail, and of the EB for accountability.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Post-accreditation goals:

- Increasing applicant pool to be able to expand program; seems still feasible; develop organized alumni network – yes! Connecting to new undergraduate sources (like beta programs)
- Personal admissions letter – good, but coordinate well with Renee
- Staff turnover problems; good news: Martijn now permanently with the program

Core data:

- Enrollment figures good; aim for stability
- Rendement is fine
- Risicoanalyse: NAE en cijferdistributie strange results, can probably be ignored

Students:

- NSE satisfaction excellent
- UvAQ evaluations through the roof

Priorities for next years:

- **Stabilize program faculty**
- Increase applications (and enrollment when staff is available; to two groups, but not more)

Financien

- Niet krimpen in studentaantallen; **aim for 30-35**

RM International Development Studies (last assessment 2015; PD Courtney Lake, until August 2018 Michaela Hordijk)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- "Wel merkt de commissie op dat 'mixed methodology' op dit moment geen kenmerkend onderdeel van de opleiding is; de opleiding heeft een duidelijke kwalitatieve bias. De commissie heeft er waardering voor dat de opleiding bereid is de eindkwalificaties en het programma aan te passen, mocht de nadruk in de (nabije) toekomst meer op kwantitatieve methoden van onderzoek komen te liggen. [...] De commissie stelt vast dat studenten met name methoden van kwalitatief onderzoek wordt bijgebracht, maar dat de studenten ook graag meer aandacht voor kwantitatief onderzoek, specifiek gericht op IDS zouden zien. Het management herkende het verzoek voor meer kwantitatieve onderzoeksmethoden specifiek gericht op IDS, maar gaf ook aan dat de animo bij het daadwerkelijk aanbieden van vakken specifiek gericht op kwantitatieve onderzoeksmethoden binnen IDS vaak minder groot is dan van tevoren wordt gedacht. De commissie heeft begrip voor deze situatie en geeft de opleiding in overweging om een vak, specifiek gericht op kwantitatieve onderzoeksmethoden binnen IDS verplicht te maken. De commissie beveelt de opleiding aan om in de verplichte methodologievakken een meer directe verbinding te maken tussen kwantitatieve onderzoeksmethoden en voorbeelden uit het IDS vakgebied en beveelt aan een vak specifiek gericht op kwantitatief onderzoek binnen

IDS verplicht te maken voor alle IDS onderzoeksmaster-studenten.” The qualitative bias in the program is partly a result of the staff composition. Attempts to attract more quantitatively oriented staff to the program have failed. This will not be easily changed now given the financial situation. A quantitative course has been developed, elected by a significant portion of the RMIDS students. The course is offered by non-IDS staff and has run last year for the second time. The overall strengthening of the mixed methods profile is also taken up in the Research Design Mixed Methods course, and will be a feature of the ‘fieldwork profile’. The proposal to set up a required course on quantitative methods has not been followed up, as it goes against the spirit of the program, which encourages students to broaden the methodological scope of their bachelor background. Students with a quantitative background should have the choice to acquire qualitative and/or GIS skills. And each student should have the possibility to develop his or her preferred profile.

- “De commissie heeft waardering voor de inzet van het management om binnen de kaders van tijd en middelen een passend opdrachtenpakket aan de onderzoeksmaster-studenten aan te bieden. Zij beveelt de opleiding echter ook aan om te zorgen voor verdiepende en/ of meer complexe opdrachten voor onderzoeksmaster-studenten in de vakken die zij samen met reguliere masterstudenten volgen. Zwaluwstaart: De commissie heeft vastgesteld dat de opleiding differentieert tussen onderzoeksmaster-studenten en reguliere masterstudenten in de vakken die zij samen volgen, maar is ook van mening dat dit verschil nu meer gaat over extra opdrachten en niet zozeer verdiepende noch over complexere opdrachten. De commissie heeft begrepen dat de opleiding ieder jaar opnieuw kijkt naar het extra takenpakket voor onderzoeksmaster-studenten en beveelt de opleiding aan dit punt hierin mee te nemen.” This issue has been resolved in a different way. Electives that are shared with the one-year master IDS now constitute only 10% of the program. There are no additional tasks assigned to the RM students in those courses. The EB’s concern is whether the exit qualifications of the RM IDS are met by its students. It believes that this is the case and therefore sees no problem with the current situation.

- “Beoordelingsformulier: De commissie beveelt de opleiding aan de hogere eisen voor de onderzoeksmaster te expliciteren op het beoordelingsformulier, of een apart beoordelingsformulier voor de onderzoeksmaster te gebruiken. De commissie ziet het formulier voor de beoordeling van de scriptie als een verbeterpunt. Voor de reguliere masters en de onderzoeksmaster wordt nu hetzelfde formulier gebruikt. De commissie begrijpt dat de opleiding in eisen en beoordeling wel degelijk differentieert tussen beide studentenpopulaties, maar beveelt de opleiding aan deze differentiatie expliciet zichtbaar te maken op het beoordelingsformulier.” This has been addressed with a new evaluation form for the research master.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Curriculum:

- Portfolio approach seems to work well
- Communication to students is improved
- Good attention to academic integrity (example function)
- Development sector is changing > programs have to keep changing (yes, but keep calm – calm in the program is essential)
- “Undertaking fieldwork” was not evaluated very well

Core data:

- Goal: group of 20, with at least 50% international students > met in 2018, 20 again; aim for 20-25
- Rendement relatively low for GSSS – where do most students start delaying?
- 2016-18 (20) best batch ever; Blended Learning innovation implemented in post-fieldwork training; in ‘Professional and Academic Skills’ course co-creation of assessment forms combined with peer-review of first results; leaving students free in choice of communication product; Mieke Lopez Cardozo and her (extra-curricular) course Critical Development and Diversity Explorations very valuable
- Batch 2017-19 (24): Blended Learning Innovation of reflection workshops; two crucial courses given by non-permanent staff did not go very well; intended educational innovation (blended learning) went less well – why? PD had to step in in one of the courses; cohort problematic > delays (we see this in RMSS also; the RM population in general seems to contain highly stressed individuals, and a few of those can “infect” the others)

Points from the EB:

- Work on assessment forms and rubrics ongoing (implementation) – remember that what matters more than detail is good (narrative) feedback!

- Working procedure established to ensure that highly valuable thesis supervisors who do not have a PhD can continue to supervise theses; additional requirement for thesis supervisors of recent publication activity (< 5 years) only applies for Research Master supervision - ok
- Clarifications requested by OWI regarding the 'limited program capacity' and 'preferential selection' have been incorporated in the OER – thanks
- Proposed OER addition: “With equal qualification of applicants, preference will be given to eligible applicants from the Global South.” > Need to check if this can hold up in court.

Points from the PC:

- PC report 2017/18 will be rewritten
- Maybe reconsider PC composition (to balance students and staff members)

Current priorities:

- **Review curriculum to see how it can be lightened**, to reduce pressure on students and staff and also save hours (e.g. longer courses, free weeks, less learning objectives > less assignments, less readings, less re-takes; no beauty contests about course manuals)
- Also **review need for additional tasks** (peer review among staff etc.)
- **Address IDS staff shortage** (both one-year and research master); also work towards greater stability and more senior staff

RM Urban Studies (last assessment 2015; PD Richard Ronald)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- “Een punt van aandacht is de voorbereiding van studenten op niet-academische carrières. Hoewel het bewustzijn bij de opleiding over dit onderwerp groeit en er wordt nagedacht over te nemen stappen, geven studenten aan op dit moment een disbalans te ervaren. Hoewel bijna één derde van de alumni van RMUS aan een promotie begint, gaan ook veel alumni aan de slag in een niet academische werkomgeving.” This is a bit of an odd problem. There is quite a difference between the satisfaction levels on this point of the three Research Masters (RMSS satisfactory, RMIDS barely acceptable, RMUS too low). How come the students do not recognize that they are preparing for a career in research (whether academic or not)? The GSSS is considering creating a yearly special Research Master event about the labour market for Research Master graduates. Perhaps this can even more usefully be a faculty-wide event? To be discussed.
- “Keuzevakken: Studenten, maar met name alumni, gaven aan dat kwantitatieve onderzoeksmethoden evenwel een steeds grotere rol krijgen in het vergelijkend stedenonderzoek, onder meer in de vorm van *big data*. Ze zouden dit ook in het programma terug willen zien. In het gesprek met docenten en management blijkt dat dit signaal ook bij hen is terechtgekomen. Echter, op het moment dat keuzevakken worden aangeboden blijken weinig studenten daadwerkelijk het vak te (willen) volgen. De commissie meent dat dit een gevolg is van de voorkeur voor meer kwalitatieve (en gemengde) methoden bij studenten die deze opleiding volgen. Ze stimuleert de opleiding ontwikkelingen in het veld blijvend te volgen en hier in de keuzevakken ruimte voor te maken. Tevens is het van belang dat studenten al tijdens hun opleiding het nut van deze methodologieën voor hun verdere carrière onderkennen. Natuurlijk staat het de leiding van de opleiding ook vrij om deze kwantitatieve onderzoeksmethoden verplicht te stellen.” This is good advice. However, updating the methodological skills taught requires updating the expertise of the staff first (or taking on different staff). This is a challenge. One improvement which can be made easily: The RM Social Sciences developed an additional mandatory course (in the second semester of its first year) focused on developing a mixed methods research design. This can be offered as an additional elective to RM US students also. More generally, if we invest in developing new cutting-edge methodological courses at this level they should be offered across all RM programs to optimize the cost-benefit ratio and to make sure they draw sufficient enrolment. This requires some coordination between the programs, which will be stimulated by the GSSS
- “Global South: Studenten waren tijdens het bezoek van de commissie enthousiast over het buitenlandverblijf en gaven aan dat er voldoende mogelijkheden zijn. Wel vinden ze het jammer dat de mogelijkheden in de *Global South* vooralsnog beperkt zijn. Juist voor deze locaties zijn interessante kwesties die aan de hand van een comparatieve benadering tussen twee steden kunnen worden onderzocht. De opleiding is zich hier van bewust en gaf aan hier druk mee bezig te zijn; zo zijn al afspraken gemaakt met instellingen in India en Zuid-

Afrika.” The program is indeed constantly working to expand and improve the range of destinations abroad, inter alia to create more opportunities in the Global South.

- “Beoordelingsformulier: Een punt van kritiek is dat de navolgbaarheid van invullen van beoordelingsformulieren duidelijk beter kan. De commissie is ervan overtuigd dat studenten mondeling een uitgebreidere terugkoppeling ontvangen dan de formulieren die de commissie heeft ontvangen, maar formeel is dit niet af te toetsen. De commissie adviseert de opleiding dan ook de scriptiebegeleiders te stimuleren de formulieren op een navolgbare en informatieve wijze in te vullen.” The PD and EB are working to create improvement on this point.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Core data:

- Influx 2016: 22; 2017: 21; 2018: 14 – problematic decline
- Unstable influx; but we admit everyone we can (and send some others to the crash course); so we **need more applicants** (better PR, use of networks); competition from AMS is a problem; also advertise in the bachelor (we have no own bachelor students this year!). Staff to **promote** the research master Urban Studies more actively among own bachelor students, in summer school courses, and in research networks.
- Nice mix international-Dutch, also non-EEA
- **Graduation rates low**; only GSSS program that does not meet the KPI! There were drop-outs in the beginning of the first semester in the past; now things seem to be going better; need to keep an eye on this.

Evaluations:

- **Student satisfaction** not great. KPI not met (as only program in GSSS). In course evaluations students, on average, award courses in Urban Studies with a 7,0. In more detail, the core curriculum is awarded with a 6,7, while the method electives are awarded with a 7,3 on average.
- Sem 2 last year: Professional and Academic Skills Seminar RMUS not well evaluated; de vraag “ik heb veel geleerd door dit vak” werd hier het minst positief beoordeeld > needs attention; ask Zef Hemel to join the new structured course and split up the course in two 3 EC courses.
- Advanced GIS workload needs to be watched
- Advanced Urban Studies has been problematic in the past – keep an eye on this
- Feedback is an issue; also preparation for the labor market: exit survey:

Negatively evaluated	A clear idea of professional practice in my field
	Information about results of teaching evaluations
	Attention to practical skills

- Consider who the students are now: do they still want academic careers? Align what your students want/need with what you offer.
- More student self-evaluation/ peer review? Be careful! Students want guidance from the scientific staff!

Points from the PC:

- Quality of exchange universities needs to be watched: maybe truncate the list (PD is working on this); advice: overlay research network universities with Erasmus partners to identify the good exchange destinations
- After exchange semester students should get together again more (reconnect)
- PC to organize focus group meetings (interactive evaluation) to gather feedback on the program and get more insight in evaluation results.
- Evaluation forms can be adjusted as suggested by program team
- Online forum for exchange semester – good idea. Advice: look at the new anthropology fieldwork tool; FB is not used by all students and cannot be made obligatory.
- Develop active alumni network - yes
- Idea of “Biographies of Cities” course in sem 2. Nice idea but keep in mind possible constraint regarding how much methods there has to be in the curriculum.

Points from the EB:

- What happened to the plagiarizing exchange student? We didn't give him any credit.
- External member EB Burgers inactive: what is happening? Need to find out. EB to discuss: are external members for each RM functioning? Should there maybe be only one external member?

Finances:

- Income up two years running > this year almost within budget; but this is because of dwindling numbers. Budget smaller next year > aim to stay within.

RM Social Sciences (last assessment 2015; PD Alex van Venrooi, until August 2018 Oskar Verkaaik)

Points of attention raised by last assessment:

- "Een punt van aandacht is de voorbereiding van studenten op niet-academische carrières. Hoewel het bewustzijn op dit onderwerp groeit en het opleidingsmanagement nadenkt over te nemen stappen, geven studenten aan op dit moment een disbalans te ervaren. Hoewel een relatief hoog percentage afgestudeerden van RMSS aan een promotie begint, is de verwachting dat het aantal promotieplaatsen in de toekomst niet zal stijgen." This is a challenge for all Research Master programs, although there is quite a difference between the satisfaction levels on this point of our three Research Masters (RMSS satisfactory, RMIDS barely acceptable, RMUS too low). Students need to feel that they are preparing for a career in research (whether academic or not). The GSSS is considering creating a yearly special Research Master event about the labour market for Research Master graduates. Perhaps this can even more usefully be a faculty-wide event? To be discussed.
- "Tutoren: De commissie is van mening dat deze tutorrol een grote bijdrage levert aan de kwaliteit en cohesie van de opleiding. Ook studenten zijn positief over de tutoren en geven aan dat ze via de tutor een duidelijke connectie met de specialisatie en de daarbij behorende onderzoeksgroep hebben. Het feit dat er één tutor per specialisatie is, bevordert de *peer* groep. Echter, tijdens de visitatie kwam ook een risico naar voren. Als door ziekte of vertrek deze tutor wegvalt, kan dit tot grote problemen leiden voor de betrokken studenten. Het management heeft dit probleem recentelijk opgepakt en heeft besloten een schaduwpersoon achter de tutor te plaatsen om voor snelle en adequate vervanging te zorgen. Een tweede punt van aandacht met betrekking tot de rol van tutoren is de wijze waarop de vijf tutoren hun taak invullen. Hoewel studenten expliciet aangaven dat de kwaliteit van de tutor in geen van de gevallen onder de maat is, zou de onderlinge communicatie over taakuitvoering beter kunnen. De commissie adviseert hier aandacht aan te besteden." The introduction of the back-up tutor addresses the first issue raised by the committee. The second issue is addressed by ensuring more frequent meetings and better coordination between the tutors.
- "Beoordelingsformulieren: De beoordelingsformulieren behorend bij de scripties waren niet altijd even informatief, in de meeste gevallen ontbrak een substantiële schriftelijke terugkoppeling. Daarbij heeft de commissie bij de in totaal acht scripties maar liefst vier verschillende beoordelingsformulieren ontvangen. Scriptiebegeleiders moeten worden gestimuleerd de formulieren op een navolgbare wijze in te vullen. Hoewel studenten zeer waarschijnlijk mondeling een relevante terugkoppeling krijgen, moet deze ook beter schriftelijk vastgelegd worden. Met name als een student niet akkoord gaat met het gegeven cijfer, is dit van belang." The PD and EB are working to create improvement on this point. And all teachers should now be using the same evaluation forms.
- "Beoordelingsprocedure: Ze vindt de beoordelingsprocedure in principe voldoende maar ook voor verbetering vatbaar, met name de procedurele aspecten. De student hoeft de scriptie niet te verdedigen, hetgeen de commissie een gemiste kans vindt. De rol van zowel de eerste als de tweede beoordelaar dient helder te zijn. Voor de commissie was het niet navolgbaar op welke wijze de twee beoordelaars ieder onafhankelijk tot een eindoordeel komen en op welke wijze tot een eindoordeel is besloten." For the staff itself the procedure is quite clear. It is unfortunate that it did not become clear to the committee. Greater care must be taken to clarify the procedure before the next assessment. The program is slightly too large to make a thesis defense easy to introduce, as doing so would require additional time commitment from an already highly burdened staff. In principle, nobody dislikes the idea of a thesis defense, but we need to carefully consider if it is worth spending the extra time and energy on.

Points of attention raised in yearly program talk with GSSS director:

Curriculum:

- Methodology: Versterking mixed methods track – nieuw vak in blok 6: team work research seminar voor iedereen verplicht; misschien straks ook verplicht voor mixed methods in blok 3: mixed methods in practice; quantitative moet anders – volgorde inhoud; maar PC geeft aan dat ook qualitative beter kan (shallow; gebrek aan skills)
- Interdisciplinarity: nieuw intro vak “The social in social sciences”: te antropologisch, niet echt interdisciplinariteit versterkend vooralsnog > needs more attention
- Multi-methods nature: Team work research seminar
- **Versnippering** (veel 1 blok-vakken)
- Verplicht vak in blok 1 van jaar 2 > buitenlandstage moeilijk (veldwerk in buitenland wel mogelijk)
- Plan: vervanging core specialization courses door thematic courses in blok 2 (repetitive; een docent, alle programmgroepen in discipline moeten aan bod komen) – is dat niet te veel vanuit WP perspectief gedacht? Wat wil je studenten hier meegeven? **Rethink course offer**

Ondersteuning:

- 2e jaars tutorschap wordt nu gebruikt voor studieadvies –dat gaat goed. Wie keurt nu onderzoeksvoorstel goed? Begeleider!
- Nieuw: stagecoördinator
- EB/PC Secretaris nu goed

Omvang:

- Streven naar instroom van max. 40, nu bijgesteld naar **gewenste instroom 45** > maak dit duidelijk
- Voldoende belangstelling – heel goed!
- Verhouding nederlands/international goed (dit jaar meer internationals dan nederlands)
- Verhouding toegelaten/ingestroomd: altijd problematisch; advies: persoonlijk benaderen om te komen weten of zij echt zullen komen

Rendement:

- Van 2016 cohorte (37) 10 nog niet afgestudeerd – waarom? Laag rendement dreigt!
- “Uitstel voor afschrijven van scriptie” – waarom?

Studentbelevens:

- Werkdruk; **geef studenten meer rust en ruimte**
- Studentbetrokkenheid (punt voor OC)
- Voorbereiding arbeidsmarkt; veranderingen in opzet thesis seminar (is dat voldoende?); advies: aanbod van vrijwillige praatgroepjes met staf met ervaring ook buiten de universiteit
- Mandatory attendance moet kunnen blijven

Stafing en staf:

- Verkiezing PC leden: zorg dragen dat alle disciplines vertegenwoordigd zijn (laat PC zelf voorstel doen voor manier)
- EB lid voor RMSS moet ook in verzoekencommissie zitten (in regels en richtlijnen?)
- Coördinatie docenten (hebben zij wel het overzicht? Wat kan helpen?); staff meetings are important
- Vraag staf om beter te communiceren over evaluaties (punt voor PC)
- Vraag staf om minder assignments te geven en om in hun blokken blijven
- Streamline use of software, and use free software where possible
- Diversity policy (staff, literature, study contents)
- Guidelines on reading courses

Financien:

- Onderwijsuren boven begroting (zonder NPO uren wel binnen)
- Increasing cost of hours per EC (more hours put in to reach the same results)
- Let op NPO en primaire onderwijsuren; niet krimpen; rendement houden (do it with less)

Overarching issues

- The financing of our pre-master/schakel trajectories remains an important issue. We have pushed, together with the domain POW, via our faculty, for better financing for HBO pre-master trajectories, which encompass 60 EC of which we are forced to cross-finance roughly half. While the university board has pushed us to keep our pre-master programs running, it has not yet improved their financing. This situation is not really sustainable, and also very unfortunate, given the express policy goals of university, faculty and GSSS of diversity, including, as I understand it, an open and welcoming approach to students coming from HBO. This issue remains on the agenda. We have in the past year surveyed all our pre-master/schakel practices and are in the process of developing alternative policy options, to be implemented depending on the decisions made at national, university, and faculty levels regarding the financing of these trajectories.
- There is overlap in our teaching programs regarding the field of urban studies. Urban studies are taught in the RM US, in the M URP, in the track "Urban and Regional Planning" in the M SOC, and in the track "Urban Studies" in the M HG. From the teaching director's point of view, the track in the M SOC appears unsustainable, given the internal competition. But sociology at the UvA has a proud tradition of urban studies. This issue has to be approached carefully to see where and how urban studies expertise can most usefully be translated into teaching offer while minimizing destructive internal competition and maximizing synergies and complementarities among the programs. This is work in progress.
- We now admit flex students in four of our programs (M CSA, M SOC, M HG, and M URP). They raise no concerns so far. We do, however, continue to wonder whether flex students are included in cohort graduation rate figures we receive from the UvA and how we receive money for them (EC income only? Partial diploma bonus?); for small programs this could make a major difference. We are still waiting for clear information on these points.

Functioneren OCs en EBs

Noemenswaardige ontwikkelingen m.b.t. PC's en EB's en reflectie op hun jaarverslagen. Zijn er verbeterafspraken gemaakt?

Overview PCs and EBs Responsible for GSSS Programs

PC		EB
Political Science and CR&G		Political Science and CR&G
Sociology		Sociology
CSA and MAS and CAS		CSA and MAS and CAS
HG and URP		HG and URP
IDS and RM IDS	Common meetings of RM PCs	IDS and RMIDS and RMUS and RMSS
RM US		
RM SS		

The yearly reports of the PCs and EBs have been submitted and their content has been discussed in the yearly program talks. The most important points raised have been summarized above per program.

Generally speaking, our PCs and EBs function to satisfaction. The following issues are worth mentioning here:

- The PCs have been given extended (co-decision) powers on some parts of the OER as of 2017-18. This seems to have gone smoothly. Our "Beleid en Kwaliteit" department has done great work in supporting this transition process and the production of the OER documents more generally.
- The PCs of IDS and RM IDS, RM US, and RM SS have had an umbrella PC, in which they have occasionally met together. This umbrella format is gradually becoming defunct. A formal decision needs to be made about whether it should be given up.
- The RM US has been unrepresented in its EB. It was represented by an external member who first was generally absent and then dropped out entirely. A new external member to represent the program has been

appointed, but the problem seems not to have been resolved, even a year later. **The PD should keep an eye on the program's proper representation in its EB.**

- In the EB for IDS and RMIDS and RMUS and RMSS, the RM SS finds itself weakly represented. There is only one member from the program, but the PD finds that there should be at least one person from the quantitative and one from the qualitative side. This should be discussed by PD and EB asap, to make possible necessary changes to the OER.

Betrekken van alumni en werkveld

Denk bijvoorbeeld aan de wijze waarop alumni worden betrokken bij de opleiding (bijvoorbeeld als ambassadeurs, in voorlichting, of als adviseurs voor aanpassingen van de inhoud van het onderwijs), uitkomsten van overleggen met de werkveldadviesraad.

The GSSS and the CSW together have an Advisory Council which includes mostly alumni but also non-alumni and serves as both an alumni council and a 'werkveldadviesraad'. As incoming GSSS director, I took on the task of revitalizing this institution. To this end, it has been entirely reformed and expanded and a new way of using the Council and making more of it has been developed together with the PDs. In 2018 we began working with our new and improved Advisory Council. The Council has visited us twice so far:

June 12th 2018: Initiation Visit

- 15:00-16:15: Participants: Council members, directors College and Graduate School, program directors, ODO and BoS students, teaching quality officer: Getting to know each other and inventorying the topics that deserve our attention in the coming months and years.
- 16:30-18:00: Open to all staff and students in the Social Sciences: Panel conversation on the reasons why one might want to study a social science and what good that can do one later in life and on the job market. Advisory Council members reflect on the links between their study experience and what they have done since and answer questions from the audience.
- 18:15: Dinner with Council Members

October 29th 2018: Topic Change-Making

- 15:00-16:15: Participants: Council members, directors College and Graduate School, program directors, ODO and BoS students, teaching quality officer: What does change-making mean? How can the relevant qualities and qualifications be taught or practiced? What are didactic methods/ ways of working that help students develop the abilities to apply their knowledge and skills to solve problems/ make change? What are examples of topics that allow us to practice those abilities? How can this sort of student work be assessed? Whom outside the university could and should we involve in such activities?
- 16:30-18:00: Meeting with Students and Staff: What does it mean to be a change-maker and why is this particularly relevant for social science students? How are the students' studies empowering them become a change-makers? What is especially important to seek out or avoid if you want to empower yourself in this way? Tips and tricks from the advisory council members.
- 18:00-19:00: Drinks and Snacks with Students and Staff

Our Council members will visit us next on April 17th 2019 to support our annual the **Career Day** as speakers and coaches.

Our individual programs all conduct their own activities to keep contact with their alumni and use them to inspire and guide current students. However, one of my priorities has been to make more of the possibilities which alumni can offer to improve labour market orientation and preparation for our students. To this end, I am working to inventory all that is being done in the different programs to these ends; identify best practices as well as good ideas which require organization at GSSS or higher scale to be feasible; and develop new initiatives at GSSS level (and push for activities at still higher levels) to improve alumni contacts and labour market orientation and preparation. In the process, I want to remove redundancy among and improve the economies of scale of our programs' activities while placing no limitations on program-specific initiatives.

Internationalization

I am adding this as a separate point because I find it important to report also on the activities we have carried related to this important policy issue. Obviously in the GSSS we have very many international students and a tradition of the international classroom. What is less visible is our outgoing mobility. In 2017/18 we have:

- sent 12 students from the Research Master Urban Studies on exchange for minimally one semester; they have in this context also carried out their fieldwork abroad;
- sent an additional 102 GSSS students to carry out fieldwork abroad;
- sent 2 students from the COLS track of Sociology to study abroad in the context of the EMLS network (in Milan and London);
- sent one human geography and one political science student on a master-level exchange (inofficially, so not as part of their study at the UvA)

Our International Office is also currently working to expand our network with key universities in the Global South, to benefit in particular the programs in International Development Studies and Anthropology by providing reliable on-location support for student fieldwork abroad.

The Summer Programs

Also our Summer Programs deserve an own section in this report, but the full annual report of the SPO is available upon request and provides lots of detail. The following programs were offered in Summer 2018:

Programs 2018

Bachelor Level Programs*

- Introduction to Sexuality Studies
- The Urban Food Experience
- Amsterdam Sensescape: 1800-2018
- The Everyday City and Beyond
- Security Governance and Conflict Resolution

Master Level Programs*

- Urban Studies: Planning and Living in Cities
- A Peaceful Mind: Mindfulness and Compassion-based Interventions
- The Circular City: Towards a Sustainable Urban Ecosystem
- Migration and Integration: Refugees, Rights and Realities

Professional and Ph.D. Level Programs*

- Planning the Cycling City
- Summer Institute on Addiction
- The Politics of Ageing
- Grant Writing and Proposal Development
- Summer Institute on Sexuality, Culture and Society

Pre- University Honours Programs

- PUHP Amsterdam: Global City
- PUHP Urban Studies
- PUHP Politics and Identity

Preparatory Summer Programs

- Comprehensive Introduction to Research Methodology and Design

Tailor-made Programs

- TM Public Policy, City University of Hong Kong
- TM University of Washington, Art History
- TM Michigan State University, Sexuality Studies
- TM University of Washington, Law and Public Policy

*There is often crossover with regards to student levels in the programs. It is possible for people with Master and Professional profiles to take courses at a different level, and for highly motivated bachelor students to take programs of a higher level. We do not have rigid rules for admission, as we believe that knowledge transfer is enhanced not only by diversity of background and culture, but also of education level and age; nevertheless our programs are selective and we admit only the highest motivated students.



There were 514 students across the 22 programs, from 65 different nationalities, with an age range from 17 to 62. All courses received very good evaluations. The only concerns have to do with infrastructure: the cleanliness (and other features) of the UvA housing locations and the lunches in Agora, provided by Cormet. The SPO makes maximum use of available scholarships and our limited resources and manages to provide life-changing experiences and top academic quality for many students from all over the world with a very small staff and committed academics.



Summer course "The Circular City: Towards a Sustainable Urban Ecosystem", taught by Mendel Giezen (2018)

1.3 Reflectie stand van zaken belangrijke thema's uit onderwijsvisie

In het najaar van 2017 is na een brede consultatieronde binnen de UvA-gemeenschap de geactualiseerde onderwijsvisie van de UvA vastgesteld. In deze actualisering van de onderwijsvisie zet de UvA in op de verdere aanscherping en concretisering van de uitgangspunten voor het onderwijsbeleid uit 2012. Daarnaast vragen de veranderende context en nieuwe uitdagingen binnen de samenleving en het hoger onderwijs om aanvullingen. Dit heeft geresulteerd in vier ambities voor het UvA onderwijs, die hieronder vetgedrukt gepresenteerd staan. We vragen u om te reflecteren in hoeverre uw school/college de ambities van de UvA-gemeenschap vervult en waar er nog kansen liggen. De kernbegrippen bieden u verdere handvatten voor het uitwerken van de tekst. Besteed in ieder geval aandacht aan de onderstreepte begrippen. Raadpleeg voor meer achtergrond de onderwijsvisie <link>

Ambitie 1: de UvA richt zich op de ontwikkeling van gemotiveerde en ambitieuze studenten door het aanbieden van kwalitatief hoogwaardig en innovatief onderwijs.

Kernbegrippen:

- Studiesucces
- Activerend onderwijs/Blended learning
- Innovatie
- Differentiatie (o.a. honours, schakelonderwijs)

Ambitie 2: De UvA is een brede onderzoeksintensieve universiteit die studenten opleidt om met kennis en kunde te floreren in een steeds complexere wereld.

Kernbegrippen:

- Onderzoeksintensief onderwijs
- Invulling keuze- of minorruimte (mobility window o.a. minor, stage, exchange)

- Academische vorming/21st century skills
- Disciplinair en discipline overstijgend onderwijs

Ambitie 3: De UvA streeft ernaar een open en diverse gemeenschap te zijn waarin alle studenten zich thuis voelen en gelijke kansen krijgen.

Kernbegrippen:

- Toegankelijkheid (selectie bachelor en master)
- Taalbeleid (curriculumkeuzes en geboden taalondersteuning)
- International classroom
- Studiebegeleiding
- Diversiteit en inclusiviteit

Ambitie 4: De UvA belegt de verantwoordelijkheid van het onderwijs zo dicht mogelijk bij docenten, met veel aandacht voor ondersteuning, kennisdeling en docentprofessionaliteit.

Kernbegrippen:

- Docentprofessionaliteit
- Kennisdeling

I am addressing this point by responding with my own educational vision, written to orient my work as teaching director and revised annually. It is my personal vision, yet informed by ongoing discussion with the program directors of the GSSS. The text explicitly engages with the key points formulated in the UvA's vision document as well as (in the appendix) in the *Instellingsplan 2015-2020*, and positions the GSSS in relation to them. Embedded in this vision are two GSSS policy documents formalizing consensus in the Board of Studies, i.e. explicitly supported by all program directors.



Educational Vision of the Graduate School of Social Sciences (GSSS)

– version February 2019

What is the GSSS?

The GSSS is the institute responsible for providing graduate education in the social sciences at the University of Amsterdam. This means first and foremost running our master's programs. We have eight one-year master's programs – in Political Science, Conflict Resolution and Governance, Sociology, Urban Planning, Human Geography, International Development Studies, Cultural and Social Anthropology, and Medical Anthropology and Sociology. Next to that, we also have three two-year-long research master programs – in International

Development Studies, Social Sciences, and Urban Studies. To enable students to join our programs who do not yet quite qualify in terms of previous education, we offer different pre-master programs and preparatory courses. In this manner we put considerable effort into accessibility. On the other hand, some of our programs are selective. But in their different ways, both selective and non-selective programs consistently aim at **high quality** and at motivating students to do their very best.

Our programs belong to four different disciplinary departments: political science; sociology; anthropology; and geography, planning, and international development studies. Some of them, especially but not only the Research Master Social Sciences, work across various social science disciplines. At the GSSS, we believe in the value of **multi-, cross- and trans-disciplinary** research and teaching and actively support it.

Aside from the day-to-day management of our teaching programs, the GSSS is also part of the larger governance structure of the University of Amsterdam and the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences within it. This means that we are a conduit for and actively contribute to ideas for how to improve the education we provide that come from both above (the university and faculty levels) and below (the departments, the staff and students). In this larger structure, we strive to optimize the way in which we function as a unit within the university and faculty as well as to represent our staff and students and their interests within them. In this process, we orient ourselves primarily by the satisfaction of our students and staff. The university is for them. And we have learned that their satisfaction depends not only on offering high-quality and interesting teaching programs but also on giving staff and students strong voices within the governance structure: we are committed to a careful process of **decentralization and democratization** that grants meaningful powers and autonomy to those who do the primary work at the university: the teachers, the researchers, and the students.

Diversity

Students entering the Graduate School already have experience with what it means to be a student, to work towards and to obtain at least an undergraduate or even a (previous) graduate degree. They have that in common. But beyond that, they are a diverse crowd, and that is how we want it. All of the groups sketched below are equally welcome, and it is the very diversity of the student (as well as the teaching) body that helps make studying at the GSSS such an intellectually stimulating and socially rewarding experience.

Most of our students have completed an academic bachelor degree in the field in which they go on to study for the Master, or in a related one. Those students tend to experience a relatively high degree of continuity in the expectations they have as well as those they face regarding the content of their studies and the performance criteria applied to them. Some others have their academic background predominantly in another, less or even non-related field – those students have had to invest in extra preparation for their Master's program in some variant of pre-Master training. Their learning curve has to be steeper, if they want to achieve at the top in their new specialization. Some students have backgrounds in two or even more fields. This facilitates multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinarity and breadth of intellectual formation. For those students especially, the challenge tends to be to strike the right balance between breadth and depth, and choose the place to go deep that is right for them.

Some students come from a vocational education background. They are the best young exemplars of life-long learning and have demonstrated strong motivation by being admitted to the Graduate School. For them, the main challenge tends to be to continue to quickly internalize and adapt to the specific performance criteria applied in the university environment.

Many of our students come from UvA Bachelor programs. They are familiar with the city, the institution, and its unique culture. They may also already know relevant people and locations and are able to navigate practical challenges around campus and city life easily. That helps. Others come from locations elsewhere in the Netherlands. Amsterdam can be quite a shock. As can the UvA – it is huge, and learning how it functions takes time. And many and increasingly more of our students come from abroad, which presents greater challenges but enriches the educational experience we can offer enormously (see also section on internationalization).⁴

⁴ Our students (and our staff) are of course also diverse in a variety of other ways. We welcome this diversity and treat any accusations of discrimination very seriously. In addition, we strive to improve the accessibility of our physical and virtual study environments to persons with disabilities and employ a range of measures to support such persons in their studies.

Policy on Diversity in Academic Performance

As adopted by the GSSS Board of Studies, June 26th 2018

The GSSS offers eight one-year master programs and three research master programs. Within all of them, diversity within the student population is an issue. We use admissions criteria to try and ensure that students possess academic experience (*habitus*), sufficient previous background as concerns both the substance of their field of study and social science methodology, and sufficient English language skills. We also offer various forms of pre-master preparatory programs to help students meet these criteria. Still, given that our students come from different academic (and vocational) backgrounds and all parts of the world, diversity in the classroom remains high. This can be an asset, as students can learn much from each other, but it is also a challenge, for our teachers and our support staff.

We can identify a few general trends: Many programs report that students without a bachelor degree in the discipline of their master program tend to perform less well. Also, we nowadays see that Anglo-Saxon students tend to lack active research experience and have some catching up to do in this regard. There are furthermore students who perform less well not because they lack previous knowledge or aptitude but because they do not or cannot put in the work, often due to personal circumstances. We do not define any students as “weak”, but it is certainly the case that some students struggle at some time or structurally within their program, some drop out along the way, some fail to graduate, and some graduate with results they find disappointing.

What then do we do about students who struggle to succeed? First, it is important that once we have admitted students to our programs we do not take the attitude that they should not have been. We rely on our admissions process and take the position that all our sitting students belong into their programs. This means, second, that we see it as incumbent upon us to support students who struggle. On the one hand, our students are adults and have to do their part to complete their studies successfully. On the other hand, we put significant resources into supporting each individual student in the process. To this end, we offer some remedial courses, we provide ample study and academic advice, and we are embedded within a university-wide pastoral support structure (e.g. student psychologists). We enforce the rules on students’ rights to resits. At course level, students are often supported individually or in separate groups with extra reading and extra tasks, whether it be to catch up or to provide an extra challenge for those who want to go further. The latter practice allows those students who can and want to to achieve performance above the level of program goals. Strong students can also pursue graduation *cum laude*, which requires that the weighted average grade must be at least 8.0 prior to any rounding, none of the courses receive a grade lower than 7.0, the master thesis is graded with at least a 8.0, and the master’s degree is completed within the nominal time of study. Last not least, our examinations committees can be approached to request formal extensions and exemptions, and grant (or deny) them based on clear rules discussed, and sometimes formally co-decided upon, with student representatives every year.

We are overall content with the results, as we can see that graduation rates for both on-time graduation and graduation within the nominal time plus one year have been consistently improving over the years (see table below; figures for one-year programs only). We now exceed our target of 90% graduation within nominal time plus one year, also in the research master programs; moreover, the majority of students who take longer than the nominal time take only a few months longer. The drop-out rate lies at an acceptable level of 6-7%. Cum *laude* percentages are similar in non-selective programs, but tend to be higher in the selective programs.

Graduation rates in one-year master programs of the GSSS (source: UvAData)

Startjaar	Cohort	12 maanden (%)	24 maanden (%)	36 maanden (%)	Nu diploma (%)	Nu actief (%)	Nu uitval (%)
10/11	745	42.4	82.3	88.9	90.7	0.1	9.1
11/12	702	50.9	83.6	90.9	91.6	0.1	8.3
12/13	605	62.3	87.1	89.3	89.6	-	10.4
13/14	607	66.4	88.1	90.4	90.9	0.2	8.9
14/15	648	60.0	85.8	88.7	89.0	1.4	9.6
15/16	662	65.0	91.2	-	91.8	1.7	6.5
16/17	656	67.2	-	-	81.7	11.4	6.9
17/18	569	-	-	-	-	93.8	6.2

Internationalization

“Internationalization is not a separate activity or goal in its own right but is completely interwoven with teaching and research and contributes to the strengthening of the quality of both.”⁵

It is a truism that international mobility is increasing and becoming ever more important for a successful work life among the highly educated.⁶ To do well on the labour market, our graduates don’t necessarily have to go abroad – although that may also be the case, but they have to at least be able to work together with people from other countries, to be able to deal with differences in language, cultures, and customs, to understand and be able to function with the human and social diversity that exists beyond (and indeed within) their home country. One of the key benefits of studying in an “international classroom” (i.e. to study with students and also teachers from different countries) is the practice it provides in doing so. Vice versa, for the many foreign students and teachers coming to us, their study and work in Amsterdam mean a significant broadening of their horizons. This is a win-win situation. While together at Grad School, our students build up international networks which may support them a lifetime – a process we in turn support with our policy to actively maintain relations with and among our alumni.

Another important benefit of the “**international classroom**” is that rather than only reading about perspectives from e.g. the global south or the Middle East, you can actually have them present in your conversations. We firmly believe that for understanding events or processes that involve other human beings, it is important to study their perspectives and to learn about the social contexts in which those events and processes unfold. International students (and teachers) help us with that, because they bring us into contact with their perspectives and social contexts. This is how “the presence of international students contributes to a more ambitious study culture. In this way an important impulse is provided for improvement of the quality of teaching.”⁷ While some political forces in the country might want to work towards closing the Netherlands off from (much of) the world, institutions of higher education, the UvA among them, are at the forefront of the opposite trend: We help open the country to the world, and the world to Dutch citizens. If you don’t like to meet people from elsewhere, don’t want to learn about the world outside what is familiar to you, our Graduate School is not for you.

⁵ VSNU, *Gezamenlijke Visie Internationaal*, Den Haag, May 2014, p. 3.

⁶ For evidence see e.g. Researchcentrum voor Onderwijs en Arbeidsmarkt (ROA), *De arbeidsmarkt naar de opleiding en beroep tot 2018*, 2013.

⁷ VSNU, *Gezamenlijke Visie Internationaal*, Den Haag, May 2014, p. 15.

Many of our academic staff members also come from outside The Netherlands. That is because the UvA and its social science departments are highly reputable and their conditions are attractive enough to draw top scholars from around the world. And it is the best scholars and teachers we want. The diversity they add also strengthens the benefits of internationalization, as laid out above. To make internationalization possible, the language in our graduate programs is English. We have a long history of teaching English-language programs and staff with excellent (if not native) English-language capacities. Our entrance criteria for incoming students also help ensure a high level of English in the classroom. In this manner, also our language policy is an important aspect of preparing students for successful careers – there are after all few good career opportunities imaginable nowadays for which good English is not a prerequisite.

In sum, we offer an academic environment that is not only open to the world but that actively brings the world into our classrooms. We support international mobility of our students and staff. And we believe that this benefits our students greatly later in life, as they become accustomed and equipped to operate in diverse and international environments.

Policy on Research-Intensive Teaching

As adopted by the GSSS Board of Studies, June 26th 2018

The GSSS offers eight one-year master programs and three research master programs. In all of them the teaching is **research-intensive**. What this means to us concretely is a) that our teaching contributes self-consciously and consistently to students' passive and active research competence and b) that it does so by drawing on teachers' and students' own research activities. To develop their passive research competence, students hear and read about and discuss the research of others, develop their understanding of the many ways in which social science research can be conducted, and train to evaluate research quality, responsibility, and relevance. To develop their active competence they conduct research themselves, individually and sometimes in groups, receive feedback from teachers and sometimes peers, and iteratively develop their skills further. Teaching always draws on the research competences, and where appropriate on the research production, of teachers and makes use of the research experiences of students (through feedback and guided reflection). In this way, teaching and research are tightly interwoven in our programs.

1. What do we expect of students beginning our programs?

All of our programs have relatively high expectations concerning students' passive as well as active research competence when they begin. Of course, student beginning our programs have already earned a bachelor's degree (or equivalent) in the same or a related field. In addition, all programs ask incoming students to have completed a minimum of 20-30 EC of coursework in social science methodology. Students who come close to fulfilling this requirement, and are otherwise eligible to join the desired program, are offered a comprehensive methodology crash course to catch up in the summer, just before beginning their master study. Students in *Cultural Sociology and Anthropology* and in *Medical Anthropology and Sociology* are instead offered an on-line methodology course focused specifically on methods characteristic of those fields as taught at the GSSS. Additional remedial teaching and resources are also available and recommended to students who want to close specific gaps in their previous education.

In addition, several of our programs are selective (*Medical Anthropology and Sociology, Conflict Resolution and Governance, International Development Studies, Research Master Urban Studies, Research Master International Development Studies, Research Master Social Sciences*). All of those programs select *inter alia* on the basis of GPA and of a writing sample, both of which are further evidence of incoming students' research qualifications.

We therefore expect our student population to already possess a level of research competence, both active and passive, as can be expected of bachelor graduates in the social sciences. This includes passive familiarity with a broad range of epistemological and methodological approaches and methods, with the role and use of theory in empirical research, and with considerations of research design and ethics, as well as active familiarity with designing social science research, applying selected methods of data selection and analysis, and communicating research results in writing and orally.

2. What do we teach our students, and how?

All our programs ask students to conduct their own individual research projects and write them up in the form of a thesis, as the capstone of their master study. In this process they are guided by a supervisor yet autonomous in their choice of research interest and able to demonstrate their aptitude and skills while continuing their learning process. Passive and/or active research competence is additionally strengthened in all other components of the curricula, by means of reading, assignments, papers, presentations, and discussion. Feedback by teachers (and sometimes also by peers) is crucial in this process. The programs of course differ as concerns the specifics of teaching methods and content.

Both our one-year and our research master programs equip students to be researchers. The difference between these types of programs is one of degree, not of principle. The two-year research master programs are all selective, attracting especially high-performing students, and allow for more time than the one-year programs to deepen both substantive knowledge and research skills. They are thus arguably able to achieve learning outcomes that go beyond the Dublin descriptors for master's degrees.

Our research master programs also tend to attract proportionally more students who at least consider doing a PhD and allow more time to instill in students the habitus of the academic. That being said, *all* our programs prepare students for research careers either in academia or without, as academically trained professionals. Graduates from all our programs are regularly able to gain PhD positions, while the majority of graduates in all programs go on to pursue a broad range of other careers, most often involving at least some research-related tasks.

3. What does research-intensive teaching deliver for our graduates and teachers?

Our graduates are able to understand, analyze, and evaluate social science research designs, processes and outcomes, at a minimum within their own fields of study but usually across a broader range of social science fields. They are furthermore able to design and conduct own research projects independently, in a competent and responsible manner, and to communicate their findings in writing and orally to both specialized and broader audiences.

Compared to teaching in the bachelor programs, where large parts of the curricula are compulsory and basic, teaching in our master programs generally aligns more closely with teachers' own research interests as regards both substance and level. For most courses and thesis supervision arrangements it is fair to say that teachers engage the students with their own specific area of expertise. This means that we achieve maximum pay-off for education from our strengths and resources as a research institution and can provide students with high-quality and cutting-edge programs. It also means that we allow teachers to reflect on their own research, hone their relevant skills, and strengthen their professional motivation, by teaching by means of and about their own research. We thus capitalize on the unique advantages of being a graduate school within a top research university.

Challenges and Opportunities

All our graduate programs are of top quality. The results of the regular (re)accreditation examinations, student evaluations, research performance and reputation of our teaching staff, and outcomes of a whole range of measures of quality control we have in place are all evidence to back up this claim. The main responsibility of the director of the Graduate School is to keep it so. But that is hard work. Four challenges in particular make it difficult to keep up top quality in teaching.

First, the very diversity of the student and teacher body described above challenges those who design the programs and courses to accommodate diversity while simultaneously being rigorously fair and applying the same high standards to everyone. Our program directors, program teams, and teachers, backed up by the Examination Boards and Teaching Committees, do a fantastic job with that as a rule, and I am extremely proud of the work they do. In addition, we work hard to qualify our teaching staff optimally for the international classroom by means of didactic and language training and by facilitating not only student but also staff **mobility**.

Second, our one-year Master programs operate with a constraint of 60 EC and one year of regular study duration. There is so much that our teachers want to teach and that our students want to learn, but only so much that fits into these constraints. This means that important choices have to be made and constantly reconsidered about what goes and what does not go into our programs and courses. Much work goes into that process, because we care deeply about optimizing students' education in the time we and they have available.

Third, our efforts to offer the highest quality of graduate education in our fields also push us to keep abreast of the latest technological developments and didactic insights that can be relevant for our teaching. The aim to make the most of the time and resources we have to allow our teachers and students to learn from each other is leading us to explore the manifold possibilities of **Blended Learning** – the combination of online digital media with traditional classroom methods. We do not explore these technologies just because they are trendy, or because we fail to see how important real contact between teachers and students is. We do so because and to the extent that we find them to enrich and improve our students' (and teachers') learning experience and/or student assessment. For example, if we can use online technologies to enable students to track their own improvement in certain skills over the course of the whole program, or to enable them to discuss course content with each other also outside the classrooms, these seem like great ideas and we support their implementation. We embrace innovation because it is true that "if we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow."⁸

Fourth, while we would rather have limitless resources to offer our programs, we don't. Teaching institutes like the GSSS get money for delivering study credits (ECs) to students and for handing out diplomas, but the Dutch government and the central university management say how much that is going to be, and, naturally, resources are limited. Teaching programs may not be too small – otherwise they become too expensive. But programs also must not grow too fast – otherwise they become more expensive too quickly (before they can get cheaper again). There are many factors that go into the costs of a program, from how expensive the teachers are (full professors cost more than assistant professors, for example), via how nice the rooms are which we rent to teach in (which is of course an absurd situation to begin with), to how much individual attention students get. In the end programs must not be too expensive to run – otherwise we have to shut them down. This means that a lot of people have to work hard to design programs in an efficient way, which still protects our high expectations of quality. It also means that in fact a lot of the teaching staff (and also support staff) do a lot of things for free, because they care about providing top quality teaching. This is something to be proud of: at the GSSS we collectively do our very best to provide top-quality academic education even under financially difficult conditions – and we succeed. But it is also something to carefully monitor and actively limit. The work pressure and work stress experienced in our departments are high and must not get higher.

Didactic vision

*The Netherlands offer a "teaching and research culture in which freedom of expression, intellectual independence, curiosity, and the right to raise critical questions are central."*⁹

Social Sciences at the UvA offer an intellectual environment that is extremely vibrant, cutting-edge, and high-quality. This becomes immediately obvious if you go practically anywhere else and compare. One important feature of the UvA's broad vision on teaching and research is to maintain a close link between the two. Our teaching programs are **research-intensive**, both in the sense that the research skills and activities of our staff inform our teaching programs and courses and in the sense that we teach our students to themselves become able to perform scientific research at a high level upon graduation, whether this be in an academic or any other public or private sector work environment. After all, as John Dewey put it, "Scientific principles and laws do not lie on the surface of nature. They are hidden, and must be wrested from nature by an active and elaborate technique of inquiry."¹⁰ We teach those techniques. The strong basis in research of our teaching is supported by the excellent research performance and reputation of our scientific staff, as evidenced every year in the reports issued by our research institute, the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research.¹¹

⁸ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, New York: Macmillan Company, 1944, p. 167.

⁹ VSNU, *Gezamenlijke Visie Internationaal*, Den Haag, May 2014, p. 12.

¹⁰ John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1948), p. 32.

¹¹ E.g. the last AISSR Annual Report of 2016.

The UvA also has a reputation of being **progressive**, and it is well deserved: We are normatively committed and political, in the sense of reflecting on the broader societal purposes to which our teaching and research can and should contribute, and acting on those reflections. We analyse societal challenges and opportunities, and design and conduct research to address and take advantage of them. This is pragmatic, action-oriented academic research, even where it may simultaneously be theoretical or fundamental.

Similarly, broad aims of all our teaching are to help educate critical and active citizens, who are able to pursue their own ideals, ideas, and interests in society and who are less likely than perhaps others to fall prey to demagogues or dogmas. We teach critical skills: the abilities required to assess incoming information in such a way that we can master it, instead of it mastering us. We provide an **open and pluralistic** learning environment, in which extremely broad ranges of ontological, epistemological, methodological, and theoretical approaches are given fair hearing, so that our students can develop broad horizons, intellectual versatility and the ability to communicate with diverse scholarly communities and other audiences as well as the broad background required to make their own, more specific choices in a well-reasoned way. If there is an ideal GSSS graduate, then she is ever curious, ready to challenge conventions and received wisdom, ready and able to think across disciplinary and other scholarly boundaries, able to function in diverse scholarly and work environments, and keenly aware of the societal relevance and implications of her work. This fits in neatly with the UvA-wide Vision on Teaching, which asks us to educate our students for a world in which knowledge is no longer certain and in which they should be alert for opportunities to apply their critical thinking skills.¹²

Our place in society

“Anyone who has begun to think, places some portion of the world in jeopardy.”¹³

In my view as teaching director, the university should be open to society and should function as a **knowledge commons**, as opposed to an ivory tower. What does that mean? For the research done at the university it means that we should always consider its utility for societal purposes and seek to actively link up and work with the world outside the university to find out what it may need from us, and what we can do for it. For our teaching, it means that we do not want to create a detached elite, but graduates who are brought up with this same ethos: graduates who are motivated and prepared to put their knowledge, insights, and skills to work in ways that have normatively defensible and practical effects in the real world. Our vision of teaching aligns with that of John Dewey, who held that “education is a social process; education is growth; education is not preparation for life but is life itself.”¹⁴

To achieve the goal of the open university, we take a number of measures. One is to regularly bring people from outside the university into our programs to interact with our students and staff. This serves a number of useful purposes simultaneously: it lets us learn about the needs of practitioners, for example city planners or social workers, and can thus guide us towards useful research topics; it can give our students ideas for possible future careers; and it lets us meet people to integrate into our networks – possibly the person who once gave a guest lecture in one of your courses might be the one to offer you an internship or a job later on.

So we try to bring the outside world to us. But the other way around, we also need to bring ourselves to the world and demonstrate our value. Many of our programs contain elements for which students leave the campus and go out for fieldwork or other kinds of off-campus activities, sometimes right here in Amsterdam, sometimes half way around the globe, sometimes for a few days, sometimes for half a year. They are our junior ambassadors, because they help us let the world know what we do at the UvA and what the things we do might be good for. It is important to let society know that and how the knowledge created at the university through teaching, research, and the learning they both foster is useful and important. Why else, after all, would taxpayers want to finance the public universities?

¹² Universiteit van Amsterdam, *Onderwijsvisie* (universitaire beleidsnotitie), 2012. Of course our individual programs each have a list of more specific ambitions to add to those very general didactic goals.

¹³ Attributed to John Dewey. Time and place of the statement unknown.

¹⁴ John Dewey, *Experience & Education*, New York, NY: Touchstone, 1938.

Behind these ideas lies a vision of the university as a knowledge commons.¹⁵ The “commons” is a general term for shared resources in which each stakeholder, in our case all of society, has an equal interest.¹⁶ In other words, the university is not just for the people who research, teach, and study there. At the university, collective goods are being produced in the form of knowledge, insight, and skills which are not only useful for the individual which acquires them but which can and should be useful for the society in which that individual lives and works more broadly. That is why our societies fund us. And it has two important implications, in my view: One, the university as a knowledge commons deserves protection. This means in particular that the value of the activities that take place at universities should not be judged by market logic, at least not exclusively so. Universities, research, and study programs should not be judged the way businesses are judged on the market and left to go bankrupt if they fail to be profitable. For example, fundamental research in medicine, which does not immediately deliver pay-offs but only might do so later, when its results become applied, must remain supported. And closer to home in the GSSS: Social scientific research that criticizes current conditions can easily appear irrelevant or even offensive from a societal mainstream point of view. But critical social sciences are vital for maintaining an open society, for speaking truth to power and developing alternative ways of thinking and organizing ourselves. Even if we cannot see how they deliver practical or marketable conclusions in the short term, they must be supported for the sake of the long-term health of our societies – indeed this is our very calling.

But it also, vice versa, demands something of us, and this is the second implication: We have to do our best to really produce collective goods (as opposed to focusing single-mindedly on our particular interests). This means we have to keep ourselves actively informed about societal needs, we must not enjoy the privileges of sitting in an ivory tower with the windows closed, but rather expose ourselves to and learn by continuous interaction with society-at-large.

What does that mean concretely? In the coming years will work to expand and make better use of our international network of alumni and friends of the social sciences at the UvA. The interactive online platform we will use to provide a virtual home to this network will provide the contact data needed to bring in people from the outside world to give life to the open university. But it will also be useful for gathering input from our network for improving our research and teaching priorities. For example, the network can help us inventory once a year which are the most important societal challenges – at home and around the world - at that time. Then we can inventory internally what we are doing to address those, in both research and teaching. And then we can let the world know that and how we are doing that, getting word out in a variety of media. The point of such activities is to connect research and teaching more closely with both the challenges and the opportunities that exist in the societies around us. This helps motivate both students and staff, it makes clear to us why we are putting in the effort, and it supports the status of our education and our expertise in society – which is important for our survival and the job prospects of our students.

I see the vision of the open university and the knowledge commons as absolutely vital for our students, because it a) allows them to see what they are actually doing when studying social sciences and what good can come of it, but also b) by establishing closer interaction with people from outside the university and the labour market more generally, shows them how they can go further after graduation. It is preparation for the field of work, professional orientation in the best sense.

Lifelong Learning

“The most important attitude that can be formed is that of desire to go on learning.”¹⁷

The GSSS not only houses all master’s programs in the social sciences, it also holds responsibility for the teaching of our PhD students. As the Association of Dutch Universities also affirms, we find it important that PhD students “are given the room to independently give shape to their research and that next to this freedom they are also given sufficient opportunities to develop.”¹⁸ This occurs inter alia through the courses and

¹⁵ I have been inspired in my ideas by Willem Halffman, “De universiteit als kennismeent,” in J. Van Baardewijk and A. Verbruggen (eds.), *Waartoe is de universiteit op aarde?* Meppel: Boom, 2014, pp. 141-148.

¹⁶ For example, wikipedia is the result of the production and maintenance of a common good by a contributor community in the form of encyclopedic knowledge that can be freely accessed by anyone.

¹⁷ John Dewey, *Experience & Education*, New York, NY: Touchstone, 1938.

¹⁸ VSNU, *Gezamenlijke Visie Internationaal*, Den Haag, May 2014, p. 12.

workshops we offer together with the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research, in which the research activities of our PhDs and staff are housed.

The GSSS also hosts our Summer Programs Office, which offers an inspiring range of intensive summer courses in, across, and beyond the social sciences to students from all over the world (including Amsterdam) and at all levels. We have also housed (until January 2019) the Amsterdam Advanced Graduate School, now UvANext, which is our institute for post-initial education. This means that courses are offered here for persons who had already completed their education and begun to work, and now seek to develop themselves further and learn something new. This institute is expanding. Its activities, alongside the close networking with our alumni, will be important for establishing the closer relations we want to have with the world of work, in the city of Amsterdam and (far) beyond.

In sum, while our master's programs are at the heart of the GSSS, they are part of a larger structure in which we seek to put our students on a path of life-long learning, keep in touch with them, and actively strive to connect the worlds of research, teaching, and professional practice in all our activities.

Priorities for the coming years

- **Intensifying cooperation between our programs and the world of work and society at large**

Our programs can still improve the way in which they orient students towards the labour market and the wider world, for example by including in the curriculum moments and ways of gaining work experience alongside the study; by incorporating more project-based learning elements that send students out of the university and into the field to gather experience and implement what they have learned in the classroom; or by combining elements of post-initial and initial education, bringing together students with and without work experience in the field. This sort of cooperation also feeds information back to our programs and staff about the needs out there in the world of work and society which our teaching and research should address.

- **Improving transparency of selection to our programs**

Given the increasing diversity of our student population, including by means of internationalization, combined with the limited capacity for growth of our programs and the need to maintain high quality standards, it is becoming crucial to maintain transparent and well-justified procedures for advertising our programs and for the admission of students. It is important to ensure that "potentially talented students are not scared off, but will be selected on the basis of their talent and potential study success (instead of a precise fit with previously defined admissions criteria)." ¹⁹

- **Improving mobility and flexibility for our students**

It is difficult for one-year programs to allow time for study abroad (or internships, for that matter). But some things can still be done, for example by expanding cooperation with partner universities, setting up more double and joint degree programs (like the European Master in Labour Studies, of which we proudly form part), and including at least small mobility windows in our programs. Several of our programs have also begun to allow for so-called flex-study, which allows students who do not want to or cannot follow an entire study program to pay per course. We will continue to evaluate how this works and might expand the practice to other programs accordingly.

- **Expanding summer and post-initial programs**

We will work to expand both our offer of summer courses and relevant programs of UvANext. This will serve to attract possible new students and intensify and broaden our contacts with alumni and the wider world beyond the university.

Concluding

I am privileged to have taken over an institution which works well, a social science graduate school with a vibrant intellectual climate, well-designed programs, committed and highly qualified staff, and a wonderful mix of inspiring students. The challenge for the years to come is, next to addressing more specific priorities such as the ones laid out above, to keep the quality of our programs high, our operations sustainable, and our staff and students happy. I welcome any and all ideas and advice on how to achieve those shared ends.

¹⁹ VSNU, *Gezamenlijke Visie Internationaal*, Den Haag, May 2014, p. 194.

Appendix: UvA Strategic Goals & the GSSS

UvA-wide educational policy is outlined also in the general policy document *Instellingsplan 2015-2020: Grenzeloos nieuwsgierig* (2015). The main goals and complementary strategies outlined in that document that are specifically relevant to the GSSS are summarized here, alongside our responses to them.

1. The general educational goal: All educational programmes challenge students to optimally develop their talents. Central to all teaching at the UvA is academic education.

1.a To achieve this goal the teaching is research-intensive, characterized by a close link between teaching and research. Staff appointments combining teaching and research are a fundamental prerequisite to this purpose. (p.6)

GSSS: This is a fundamental part of the mission of the GSSS: Our programs are linked with the research at the AISSR and the tenured staff is active in both teaching and research; all our programs train students to acquire research and other academic skills pertinent to a broad range of professional careers.

1.b. Selective admission to master programmes is utilized at the UvA. For every bachelor there is the possibility to enter a master within the broad context of the Dutch universities and the LERU partners. (p.8)

GSSS: All our master programs know entry prerequisites related to previous education. The completion of a CSW bachelor program is considered excellent preparation for entry into our (and of course other universities') related master programs. Master programs (or tracks) with a limited number of positions for enrolment also use selection, meaning additional criteria for admission, such as grade levels or writing samples. We are working on further increasing the transparency of and optimizing those selection processes.

2. A better match between the offering of master programmes and social demand will be strived for.

2.a To maintain a broad range of master programmes coordination with partners in Amsterdam and within the LERU will be strived for.

GSSS: We offer a wide range of programs, more classic and disciplinary as well as unique and highly specialized programs and tracks. In doing so, we work with many partners. In the coming years we will explore further opportunities for dual and joint programs.

3. More master programmes acquire the special NVAO credential for Internationalisation. This will result in more joint degrees with international partners.

3.a The UvA will expand its scholarships programme by using funding from the UvA-Holding and attracting funds from businesses and alumni. (p.8)

3.b A project will be developed for securing the special international accreditation by the NVAO. (p.9)

GSSS: Scholarships are important to ensure that highly talented students from all over the world can enter our programs. Truly global participation is important. The GSSS will continue to consider the possible gains of an international accreditation by the NVAO. In the recent past the (limited) advantages have been regarded as outweighing the required efforts and costs.

4. The UvA stimulates incoming and outgoing international student mobility.

4.a The Summer School programme will be extended to this purpose, enabling international students to experience our offering of programmes.

GSSS: Study abroad does not fit within our one year programs. Many of the programs do, however, include fieldwork abroad (obligatory in M IDS and RM IDS), and in the research master Urban Studies students do part of their coursework (one semester) abroad.

The substantial influx of international students in our programs and the conscious aim to create an international study environment provide students with an 'international context at home'.

There is an established, ongoing, and increased offering of Summer Courses organized by the GSSS. This is regarded an important asset.

5. Evidence based ICT innovations will be integrated in the educational policies.

5.a The ICT policy becomes partially supportive to the teaching practises.

GSSS: We have an active and high quality ICTE staff. Integration of and experimentation with ICT in education is actively supported.

6. The UvA will develop a modular programme fitted for life-long-learning.

6.a The online courses developed for *blended learning* curricula will be used to this purpose.

GSSS: We are at the forefront in the development of life-long-learning as initiators of the Amsterdam Advanced Graduate School, which started its pilot phase in Fall 2016.

7. The inflow of international master students will increase to 30 percent. (p.29)

GSSS: As we have already achieved this goal, our aim is not just to further increase internal enrolment to 40 percent, but also to ensure a broad international and intercultural mix of students for a truly international setting in our courses.

8. Alumni are able to continue their studies at universities ranking in the global top 200, or to have an international career. (p.29)

GSSS: Our students enrol on a regular basis in PhD programs at other renowned institutes, and many of our alumni (including Dutch alumni) study abroad.

9. The UvA provides an engaging academic environment for students.

GSSS: See the vision statement above.

Key Performance Indicator for the master programmes is the successful completion of the programme within the standard time frame plus one year of 90% of the students. (p.9)

GSSS: Our programs achieve very high completion rates of sometimes even over 90 percent. We do not, however, consider this a proper target to consistently strive for, since doing so would force us to make too many compromises with respect to quality. Moreover, for smaller GSSS master programs the impact of just a few students dropping out for reasons unrelated to the program can make it impossible to achieve 90%. The GSSS has therefore agreed with the FMG to use 80% as the structural target. This in no way implies that a high drop-out rate is accepted at the GSSS, but rather that a more qualitative assessment of our programs' success is undertaken.

1.4 Wetenschappelijk integriteit

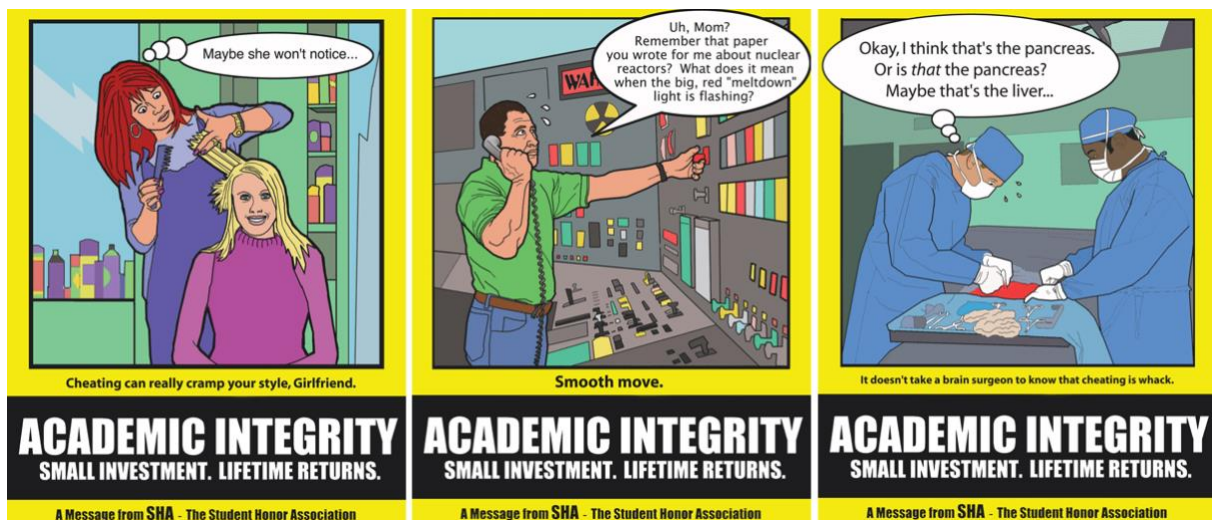
Beschrijf hier hoe wetenschappelijk integriteit is ingebed in het onderwijs. Welke onderwerpen komen op welk moment in het curriculum aan bod?

It would go too far here to describe where and how scientific integrity is embedded in the curricula in all eleven of our programs. Generally speaking, it receives sufficient attention in all our programs. The various elements

of scientific integrity are treated within many courses, but also in the programs' introduction/information meetings and in the annual academic integrity lecture given by the director of the Graduate School to the incoming master's students.

In addition, the College and Graduate School of Social Sciences have official *Guidelines for the Ethical Review of Research Conducted by Students* (document available upon request). The ethical aspects of students' research are monitored by their thesis supervisor (or the teacher of the relevant course). The thesis supervisors have all been granted examiner status by their respective Examination Board, and all have PhDs; they can judge on these as well as on other aspects of the quality of students' research. The supervisors are quality checked and supplemented by the Examination Board and the AISSR Ethics Committee, as follows: In case of doubt, the Examination Board is consulted, which can further upscale the issue to the AISSR Ethics Committee. The relevant rules are communicated in the thesis guidelines, and made explicit in the evaluation in the thesis assessment forms. Keeping confidential data confidential and safe is part of research ethics, but we have no extra guidelines on this issue. This is something we want to develop in the coming year.

Ethical clearance for research abroad, where needed, is granted by the Examination Board, in more demanding cases by the AISSR Ethics Committee. As for safety aspects involved in fieldwork abroad, the supervisor also assesses safety-related aspects. If in doubt, no permission is granted. An additional rule is that permission is not granted if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has advised against non-essential travel (code red). If a student is already in a location as it turns red, she must leave it. The Examination Board decides in case of dispute.



2. Jaarplan academisch jaar 2019-2020

Het jaarplan blikkt vooruit op het academische jaar 2019-2020. Daarin geeft u aan wat uw ambities zijn voor het komende academische jaar en hoe u zich daarop voorbereidt. Beargumenteer daarbij ook welke doelen prioriteit verdienen om uw opleidingen verder te verbeteren en in te spelen op nieuwe ontwikkelingen/beleid. Het jaarplan is een belangrijk aanknopingspunt voor het voortgangsoverleg tussen u en de decaan.

2.1 Ambitie academisch jaar 2019-2020

Hier heeft u de ruimte om de ambitie van uw school/college te formuleren. Deze ambitie mag wat abstracter geformuleerd zijn dan de concrete doelen die u hieronder voor 2019-2020 opstelt. Refereer eventueel naar een meerjarenambitie volgens uit een meerjarenplan.

On a higher level of abstraction my ambitions have already been formulated in my educational vision above. More specifically, I have four main goals for the academic year 2019-20:

1. Continuing the process of creating greater clarity about and improving admissions/selection procedures for all our programs; this also involves some streamlining which will improve the efficiency of and reduce the risk of error in our admissions processes.
2. At the other end of our programs: completing a process, begun this year, of sharing best practices around thesis supervision, thesis deadlines, thesis defenses, and graduation and other end-of-study events; also this will bring with it some streamlining and improvement of economies of scale, e.g. by organizing graduation ceremonies and end of study conferences for clusters of programs.
3. Ensure that collectively the programs of the GSSS remain within budget. This will require us to a) further improve the teaching planning process, i.a. by providing timely and reliable data on expected income to our PDs; b) look at each program individually to identify ways of saving on cost while maintaining high quality.
4. Intensify cooperation between our programs and the world of work and society, by mobilizing and making full use of our renewed Advisory Council, by intensify connections with our alumni and involving them more in labour market orientation and preparation for our current students, and by more generally keeping interaction with society high on the agenda in all our programs.
5. In connection with the above, work to make more obvious to the world outside the university how the work done in the Social Sciences, by both staff and students, is of great practical importance and societal value.



Article in the *Financial Times*, Jan 9th 2019: "Europe Shaken as Political Systems Splinter", citing UvA political scientist Sarah de Lange

2.2 Kansen en verbeterpunten academisch jaar 2019-2020

Benoem op deze plek de belangrijkste aandachtspunten voor verbetering waar u zich komend jaar op wilt richten. Daarnaast kunt u kansen die zich aandienen identificeren en aangeven hoe u verdere invulling geeft aan beleidsontwikkelingen.

This has already been addressed per program above in section 1.2 and more generally in other sections of this report.

2.3 Actiepunten 2019-2020

De actiepunten die u hier stelt haken in op de geïdentificeerde ambitie, kansen en verbeterpunten die hierboven zijn geïdentificeerd. Probeer te komen tot concrete (bij voorkeur meetbare) maatregelen, zodat u het effect ervan op een later moment kunt evalueren.

This has already been addressed per program above in section 1.2 and more generally in other sections of this report.

In addition, based on my reflections here I can identify two points which are not yet on the agenda and which I believe could usefully be addressed at the faculty level, i.e. by the FMG domains in cooperation:

1. Internationalisations seems to create a push for higher grades, as international students tend to be shocked by the results they obtain in the Dutch system and the Dutch grades might also threaten their future careers. This is a broader issue which should be discussed and about which some guidelines could usefully be developed at the level of the faculty.
2. The GSSS is considering creating a yearly special event about the labour market for Research Master graduates. This can probably even more usefully be a faculty-wide event, to be organized in cooperation by all Graduate Schools in the FMG.

3. Kwaliteitsafspraken

Below I present an overview of the preliminary plans for use of the quality impulse funds in the programs of the GSSS. The plans still need to be finalized with the program directors and a full report written for the faculty to review.

	Budget		Plannen
	uren	OF kosten	
MAS	73	€ 5.591	Externe scriptiebegeleiding door experts (gebrek aan inhoudelijke expertise en fte in huis)
Culturele Antropologie	202	€ 13.601	Trackontwikkeling visual anthropology en track coordinatie applied anthropology
RESMA Social Sciences	159	€ 11.938	Curriculumherziening en actie stress reductie voor studenten
Sociologie	290	€ 21.761	Curriculumherziening inclusief aanpassing track structuur
Politologie	645	€ 47.300	Graduation conference (GSSS breed)
Conflict Resolution and Governance			
Sociale Geografie	537	€ 40.953	Curriculumreflectie (in kader van breder project "The Future of Urban Studies at the UvA")
Planologie			Externe scriptiebegeleiding door experts (gebrek aan fte in huis)
IDS			Externe scriptiebegeleiding door experts (gebrek aan fte in huis)
RESMA IDS			Externe scriptiebegeleiding door experts (gebrek aan fte in huis)
RESMA Urban Studies			Werving studenten (instroom is te laag)



✓

24 NOV. 2018
WEG MET HET LEENSTELSEL

✓

14 DEC. 2018
TEGEN DE AFBRAAK

14 MRT. 2019

INVESTEER IN ONDERWIJS

WIJ ZIJN ER WEER BIJ!
— DE NATIONALE ONDERWIJSSTAKING

15
MAART