

Annual Report Programme Committee Applied Mathematics

Academic year 2019-2020

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1 Programme Committee

1.1 Members

During the academic year 2019/2020 the program committee Applied Mathematics consisted of the following members;

Employees. Hil Meijer (Chair), Bodo Manthey, Gjerrit Meinsma, Aleida Braaksma

Students. Linda ten Klooster, Lavinia Lanting, Sem Geerts, Lotte Weedage

In addition, the meetings are attended by the programme director (J.W. Polderman in 2019, P.K. Mandal from March 2020), the bachelor coordinator (J. Timmer), the master coordinator (J. Schut). Ten Klooster also was education officer of Abacus. Braaksma, Lanting and Geerts were new members appointed in September 2019, and Katherina Proksch replaced Braaksma during maternity leave. During a meeting with the chairman, they were informed about the goal and the rights of the PC. Students discuss agenda items together before the meeting.

1.2 Communication

The staff represents the different groups within the department. Anything specific to a chair will therefore naturally be communicated within, to and from the chair. Students would discuss important items within the study association Abacus. They sent out an email as every year to recruit new members and to tell what the PC is about to all AM-students.

2 Meetings

We assembled eight times during the academic year. A major theme was the upcoming change in the AM-bachelor programme due to updated UT-wide EER rules, i.e. TOM 2.0. Also, on 26 February, we had a training course as a committee to reflect on our role and vision. Meetings after Monday 13 March were held online via BlueJeans because of the Covid19-pandemic. Because of more urgent matters, an additional meeting devoted to discussions about the bachelor curriculum on 31 March was initially cancelled but then rescheduled for 12 May.

Meeting	Main items
1 Oct 2019	First discussions on TOM 2.0, Updated description of Module 5
28 Oct 2019	Discussion Annual Report and Drafting Bylaws
19 Nov 2019	Language Code of Conduct and Course Evaluations
21 Jan 2020	TOM 2.0 Discussion on Coherence vs Integrated. Course Evaluations
3 Mar 2020	First meeting with new PD. Outline TOM2.0 roadmap. Evaluations Master Courses for the first time since long
21 Apr 2020	Input on proposed Master EER, Corona Measures Preliminary version of new TOM2.0 AM-curriculum
12 May 2020	Complete BSc-AM programme for TOM2.0
2 Jun 2020	Complete Bachelor EER and BSc module evaluations

3 Advices and Recommendations

Advices concern the right to consent, while Recommendations concern strong suggestions.

3.1 Asked

- 153 Documents with a framework for a test policy were discussed. These were of insufficient quality to be helpful for teachers to carry out test analysis. We recommended to not use these, and instead, we asked for extending documents with a clear implementation policy and motivation.
- 154 We gave a negative advice on a language policy, which we are asked to comment upon by the faculty board. As the proposed document was rather similar to an earlier version, we referred to our earlier advice [149], in which we outlined inclusive principles as a base for such a policy.
- 155 Conditional positive advice for the AM-Master EER; A few changes in the programme regarding courses offered. We raised the inconsistency in the name for the Internship (again!).
- 156 Positive advice on a new Master course Optimal Transport for the Data Science Track. Discussions by the PC led to a more applied instead of an abstract course.
- 157 Additional advice concerning AM-Master EER, now giving consent after changes.
- 158 Advice on Bachelor EER; we did not yet give consent. We agreed with the choice for modules to be coherent, and almost all modules were described clearly. Some issues were raised about Numerical Mathematics in module 6, and ADM and Algebra in module 7. In this advice, we agreed to include a new course Simultaneous Statistical Inference into module 11, but we did not yet have the final course description.
- 159 Additional Advice with consent for the new AM-Bachelor EER for 2020-21; issues raised in advice 158 were addressed in a satisfactory manner.

3.2 Not Asked

No unsolicited advices were given. Instead, we spent lots of time on TOM2.0 and reflecting on whether modules would become coherent or integrated. While initial plans were to keep modules integrated, we, midway the academic year, decided we favoured coherent modules instead.

4 Course Evaluations

Evaluation of the bachelor programme happens per panel meetings, once per quartile, as well as the institutional student evaluation (UT-SEQ). The latter does not come to the PC automatically. For the master, the programme management sent questionnaires for the evaluation of courses taught for AM to students, but the results did not reach the PC. It has been listed as an action point for discussions with the new Programme Director. The AM Master Courses' Evaluations were discussed in one batch in April 2020. Courses taught within Mastermath are always evaluated, though response rates vary. No significant issues arose, a few notable ones are listed below.

- Currently, Python is introduced in Module 7. AM-students, however, lack experience in comparison to CS students to use this during the project. There is a need to introduce Python earlier in the programme and to ensure that also AM students contribute to the project in Module 7.
- Discrete Optimization (Mastermath, taught by UT) We feel that employing MSc students for grading other MSc students can only be done with strict instructions, i.e. a grading model, and transparency towards students that the responsibility for all subgrades is with the teacher (examinator).
- Continuous Optimization was improved in comparison to the previous year, but there is plenty of room for improvements.
- Students experience Module 2 as difficult. The evaluations suggest that part of the problem is the scheduling of tests, with several different subjects tested in three days in a row. This seems an unnecessary complication and will be discussed for next year.
- Module 6, in particular the project, suffered from poor communication towards the students as the module coordinator changed this year.

5 Self-Evaluation

We had several additional meetings to discuss additional or urgent items, e.g. a lunch meeting to discuss the bylaws. The frequency of meetings seems to be better now. Some updates on urgent advices were done via email, and this seems to work out well. There have been many meetings with the chairman involved regarding TOM 2.0. It would be better for transparency towards the whole committee if these meetings are listed, and possibly better documented. For instance, the discussion between CS and AM on module 7 was mentioned but the process was unclear for most PC members. The advices on the EER both needed two rounds. We formulated them now as "No, unless" rather than "Yes, if". This style may lead to pressure, but on the other hand, it worked out as we received feedback quickly and achieved better EERs. Still, we need to specifically ask at the next meeting what has been done or will be done by the PD or other responsible person with the advice as an action point. Alternatively, we need to ask for written reactions rather than discussing oral comments. The latter point has received less attention due to a new PD during Corona.

We organised a training session for our whole committee to think about our rights, role and vision. This was a useful event, enhancing team spirit and improving the functioning of the PC.