

Annual Report Programme Committee Applied Mathematics

Academic year 2020-2021

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1 Programme Committee

1.1 Members

During the academic year 2020/2021 the program committee Applied Mathematics consisted of the following members;

Employees. Hil Meijer (Chair), Bodo Manthey, Gjerrit Meinsma, Aleida Braaksma (till Jan 2021), Frederic Schuller (from March 2021)

Students. Lavinia Lanting, Sem Geerts, Linda ten Klooster, Lisa van Dissel

In addition, the meetings are attended by the programme director (P.K. Mandal), the bachelor coordinator (J. Timmer), the master coordinator (J. Schut). Anouk Beursgens attended the meetings in her capacity as educational officer of the study association Abacus. Van Dissel was a new member appointed in September 2020, and Schuller stepped in when Braaksma decided to step down. 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 seven times during the academic year. All meetings were held online via Teams because of the Covid19-pandemic. A major theme involved discussions on Corona measures and how to keep students motivated. Regarding content, mostly the new AI4health track and the related new courses were discussed.

Meeting	Main items
15 Sep 2020	Corona measures, course evaluations
17 Nov 2020	Approval of Bylaws, Course Evaluations
19 Jan 2021	Online proctoring and WSV-money
2 Mar 2021	Online proctoring, Evaluation master courses
20 Apr 2021	AI4Health courses, Master EER
11 May 2021	AI4Health courses, Master EER
1 Jun 2021	Complete Bachelor EER and BSc module evaluations

3 Advices and Recommendations

Advices concern the right to consent, while Recommendations concern strong suggestions. Some advices were asked for the program director as indicated below, while others arose from evaluations or discussions.

- 160 (asked) Positive advice regarding the proposed bachelor-level elective Simultaneous Statistical Inference with minor comments on the description and entry requirements.
- 161 The course evaluation showed that students were watching how the language R was used in a statistics course. We believed the educational format should be changed so that students actively work with R as programming is a skill students learn by doing.
- 162 (asked) We gave a positive advice for the course Capita Selecta – Statistics. Such a new course was necessary on the one hand as it replaced another course for which the teacher had left the department. On the other hand, the course proposal was not entirely convincing. Learning goals and materials were sufficient after incorporating feedback, but the examination required attention and this should be evaluated afterwards.
- 163 (asked) To provide students some relief during the pandemic regarding the binding study advice (BSA), the programme proposed to relax the rules for a positive BSA a little. We supported this and gave a positive advice.
- 164 (asked) Several new courses were proposed in relation to the master track Mathematics of Data Science (MDS) and AI4Health. Some course descriptions were not good enough and we gave a negative advice for these with issues we wanted to see improved.
- 165 (asked) A new master track AI4Health was proposed, similar to the MDS track but with a focus on applications. We gave a positive advice to include this track into the new Master EER. We also agreed with adopting the abandoned Mastermath course Finite Element Methods as a local AM course, and the changing the course name Optimization Modelling to Mixed-Integer Optimization.
- 166 (asked) We gave a positive advice for the AM-Master EER. We only some minor issues were wording could be improved.
- 167 (asked) The course descriptions related to the AI4Health track were updated addressing our comments in 164 satisfactory, and we gave a positive advice.
- 168 A recurring comment in the course evaluation of Linear Optimizations points at the book. Students complain the book is expensive, but hardly used by them. We stressed that the programme should address this situation.

169 (asked) The PD proposed to continue the soft separation from bachelor to master, i.e. students may start following master courses before having obtained the bachelor degree. In light of the pandemic we agreed with this proposal.

170 We gave a conditionally positive advice on the AM-BSc EER. We required improvements for Cum Laude and Exemptions, and suggested that the evaluation cycle and description for module 12 were rewritten to reflect the actual situation.

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 Abacus educational officer added quite some useful insights regarding course evaluations. Courses taught within Mastermath are always evaluated, though response rates vary. The most important issues are listed below.

- Two course evaluations pointed at irregularities with the examination, i.e. oral exams not conducted according to the rules. In one case, this was not investigated further due to health issues of the lecturer. In the other case, there was a considerable dispute with the programme Applied Physics on the language used during an exam, which still has not been settled.
- Communication towards students by the lecturers of Scientific Computing and Spatial Statistics could be improved.
- A teaching activity for the Bachelor's assignment got cancelled. In the previous year (19-20), a lecture of Reflection on Mathematical Research I was cancelled. In both cases, the communication to students was not optimal.

5 Self-Evaluation

The frequency of the meetings was good, but the meeting day became inconvenient for one member. Moving to another time appeared impossible, so she quit the committee. Also we finally adopted the Bylaws. The advices for new courses took some time, but as this process was initiated in time, this process was done carefully without too much pressure.