



**Minutes from the extraordinary meeting in**

**Programme Committee for Global Health**

**Monday 31 March 2020 at 13.00 – 14.00 p.m. (on Zoom)**

**Attendees:** Karen Marie Moland (Head); Thorkild Tylleskär; David Lackland Sam; Bente Moen (Head of CIH), Stein Atle Lie (IKO); Sven Gudmund Hinderaker; Ingvild Fossgard Sandøy; student representatives: Olawale Adeosun, Pierina Benavente Velando and Kala Chand Debnath

**Secretary:** Linda Karin Forshaw

**Subjects for discussion:**

- Contingency plan for the autumn semester
- How many applicants we should offer admission
- Master thesis submission extensions
- Research proposal submission extensions

**Contingency plan for the autumn semester and how many applicants to offer admission**

Due to the uncertain epidemiologic and economic situation with the COVID-19, the Programme Committee should make a contingency plan for the autumn semester.

Karen Marie has discussed the situation with Eirik Dalheim at the Faculty, who thinks it is too late to apply to change the whole programme to online from autumn 2020, but if this is what the Programme Committee wishes, an application should be sent to the Faculty.

There are four different scenarios:

- To run the whole programme on campus
- To run the whole programme online
- To run the programme as blended learning (some students on campus and some online)
- To cancel the programme this year

The Committee also discussed how to organize the Master programme in the future.

Points that were made during the discussion:

- The Master programme was advertised as an on campus programme, so this is what people have applied for, but would they be willing to take a completely online master instead of on site?
- Plan A is that we should plan for normal circumstances and see how many are able to come.
- Plan B should be online until the COVID-19 issue is resolved.
- We should contact the University of Copenhagen who have already an online master.
- We should ask the Faculty if it is possible to shift to online if necessary (if the COVID-19 situation continues)
- The reason people apply for admission is that they wish to come to Norway to study because they found the Master programme interesting for a number of reasons and they would not like to do it online. However, if the current situation continues lots of opportunities will probably be cancelled and many students may accept if it was offered online.
- We could write to international applicants and ask if they can travel and offer admission to those who can.
- Nobody knows what will happen and difficult to answer the question above.
- Blended learning would be a MOOC-like situation with many attending but very few completing with the final master exam.
- Sceptical to a solution with blended learning because the focus is always on the people present on campus and the quality will be poorer for the online participants.
- If the COVID-19 issue continues one could start with online and run as normal later.
- To establish a small working group to continue to the discussion to develop the Master programme to more online solution. Three people were suggested: Bente, David and Karen Marie.

### **Decision**

The Committee decided to offer the same number of applicants admission as last year. If the COVID-19 issue is under control in the autumn the Master programme should continue on campus as usual, but online if necessary.

In the long term the Committee should plan how to implement more online teaching, or even the whole programme online. A working group consisting of Bente, David and Karen Marie will start discussing future possibilities.

**Master thesis submission extensions**

UiB has made a general announcement that all students are given a minimum of two and a maximum of four weeks extra to complete their master thesis. Karen Marie informed the Committee that all the students have received an e-mail about extension of two to four weeks, and if they need further extension this can be granted in special circumstances. CIH has traditionally been very flexible, and students have been allowed to submit their master thesis throughout the whole year. To ensure student completion within the set time, CIH has recently tried to be more strict on the deadline for submission. However, under these extraordinary times when students are struggling with their concentration due to a number of reasons, e.g. difficult economic situation due to loss of jobs; taking care of children now that kindergartens and schools are closed, we suggest to follow a flexible practice.

**Decision**

Students who need an extension of two to four weeks must inform the administration so this can be registered in the system. Those who need a longer extension must apply to the Programme Committee by sending an e-mail to the Head Karen Marie, with a copy to the secretary Linda. We will send an update to the students.

**Research proposal submission extensions**

First year students working on the proposals are in the same situation and experience difficult working conditions. We suggest to give them two to four weeks extension.

**Decision**

Students who need an extension of two to four weeks must inform the administration so this can be registered in the system. Those who need a longer extension must apply to the Programme Committee by sending an e-mail to the Head Karen Marie, with a copy to the secretary Linda. We will send an update to the students.