



Programrapport

Programmets namn: Master in Library and Information Science: Digital Library and Information Services	Ladokkod: BMDD117h & BMDD117h1
Antal högskolepoäng: 120	Årskull: 2017
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Kommentar kring svarsfrekvens i studentvärderingen

This report is based on the following material:

A student evaluation questionnaire which was made available during the last weeks of the spring semester 2019. 5 of 32 students who had access to the questionnaire have filled it out. The low number means that it is difficult to generalize to all students' views of the programme based on the evaluation. However, some issues which came up may introduce interesting ideas or confirm previous student evaluations.

Course reports from all courses attended by the students in BMDD117h except for Technologies for digital libraries 2 and the Master's thesis course (which is not yet ready).

A discussion with the teachers in the programme at a meeting on September 26, 2019. A draft of the report was distributed in advance.

Statistics of teachers who have participated in the various courses.

Basic statistics from Ladok on registrations.

This programme report is very basic as a thorough evaluation of the programme has been conducted in preparation for future revisions of the programme: "Report of the Evaluation of the International Master's Programme in Digital Library and Information Science, Distance". The report contains ideas for how they programme may be developed, and this report primarily refers to those ideas.

Analys av:

Studenternas möjlighet till ansvar och delaktighet

Students can make their voices heard in course evaluations for each course. In general, very few students fill out the course evaluation questionnaires, which means that they form an unreliable basis for making assessments about the students' views of the courses and program, although they can be an indication and a source to identify some issues to address further.

Students also communicate with programme and course coordinators both online and during the residential weeks.

Students have the right to be represented in the Programråd, and Swedish-speaking students were invited to volunteer as representatives. However, no student could take on the task. There is since 2019 a student representative from the Bachelor's programme on the advisory board.

Innehåll, undervisningsformer, examination och progression

Overall, the students who have replied to the questionnaire seem fairly satisfied with their studies. It is, of course, desirable that the students should overall be highly satisfied with their studies, which means that there is room for improvement.

How, in your opinion, does the educational program you are now finishing relate to the learning outcomes of the program?

Fairly relevant: 3

Highly relevant: 2

How does the program relate to the expectations you had on it when you started the program?

Fairly different compared to my expectations: 1

Fairly similar compared to my expectations: 4

A comment pointed out that the student doubted his/her own ability to succeed with the technologically oriented courses, but ended up finding them both easy and fun. The student suggests talking about these courses in a different way so as not to scare off people who have not worked with these issues before.

Overall, what is your impression of the pedagogical design in the courses and the program?

Has worked fairly well: 4

Has worked very well: 1

One student commented that some of the instructions, e.g. of assignments, in PingPong could be better described. One student also commented on the fact that Swedish and English was mixed in the discussion forum of a course which was offered to both DLIS and MADI students.

The importance of the residential week for students who need to catch up on their math skills in order to follow the course content in the Information Retrieval 1 course was highlighted in the course report.

In some of the course reports (Interaction Design, E-books) students pointed out that they found it problematic to study two courses in parallel. This is a viewpoint which has been brought up by previous students as well. A similar comment came up in IR2, where a student expressed that IR2 and the methods course could be better aligned with each other (although the methods course is also studied by MADI students, who do not take IR2). This could perhaps to some extent be facilitated by a better coordination of exam dates etc., although this was not explicitly pointed out as the main problem in this programme (but was in the MADI evaluation).

There were also comments in a couple of course reports (IR2, Interaction design) on group work, offering the view that this can be difficult to achieve in (primarily) distance studies. This is something which course coordinators can consider in the future, especially with regards to students who do not follow the normal study plan and may find it difficult to conclude group-based assignments after the course is finished. At the same time, there are sometimes benefits to group work from a pedagogical perspective.

To what extent have you experienced that there is continuity and progression between the courses in the program? Have you been able to use what you learn in one course in courses that followed it?

To a fairly high extent: 3

To a high extent: 2

The answers indicate that this has not been a big problem for the students who replied. One student provided a comment on this question: "Concepts, issues and technological aspects were gradually introduced and made sense during courses, especially as we had to argue and explain them during assignments and exams."

This indicates that at least some students actually perceive a progression in the courses, which is encouraging.

How satisfied are you with your education?

Fairly satisfied: 4

Very satisfied: 1

When asked to mention something the students have appreciated with their education, students mention both that it has introduced them to a number of knowledge domains they were not familiar with before and which they are now passionate about. One student mentions the master's thesis course as particularly rewarding. There are also comments indicating the student is pleased with the pace of the courses, e.g. number of exams and time between them, as well as with helpful teachers.

When asked how the programme could be improved, one student asked for more online meetings in all courses, especially offering possibilities to ask questions about and get feedback on assignments.

Another student expressed frustration with the master's thesis course, especially with the requirements in relation to the time offered to do the work. The student suggests combining the master's thesis work more closely with the methods course, so that the work done in the methods course can be more clearly used to contribute to the thesis. We may note that another student was very satisfied with this course. We could perhaps come to terms with the problem with few students finishing their master's thesis on time if students' topics proposals for the thesis were approved early in the fall semester and a supervisor was assigned during the methods course.

Forskningsanknytning

Based on the course evaluation, students seem to have the impression that the education made use of theory and research. In response to a request early in the programme for learning more about research conducted at SSLIS, a session was introduced during one of the residential periods where some LIS researchers presented their work.

To what extent has theory and LIS research been integrated in the courses, in your opinion?

Fairly substantial extent: 3

Substantial extent: 2

One student asks for more examples of LIS theory and methods in the methods course. Furthermore, the conclusion from the Information Retrieval 2 course is that although students have increased their knowledge of research in the area, they have not to a satisfactory degree developed their ability to use the course content for research.

Resurser

The programme contains ten courses, all of which are core courses. Six are 7.5 credits, three 15 credits and one 30 credits. The courses had all in all nine course coordinators, six of which had a PhD.

Apart from the course coordinators, the students meet a number of teachers in the courses. This includes a large number of teachers who are involved as supervisors or examiners in the master's thesis course. The number of teachers involved in the courses (according to TFU) were as follows:

Term 1	≥10 h: 5 (2 of whom are professors)	<10 h: 1 (none with PhD) [One course, IR1, is not listed]
Term 2	≥10 h: 19 (12 with PhD, and 1 prof)	<10 h: 6 (6 with PhD)
Term 3	≥10 h: 11 (9 with PhD, and 2 prof)	<10 h: 5 (5 with PhD)*
Term 4	≥10 h: 17 (13 with PhD, and 2 prof)	<10 h: 0

* Based on the assumption that there was a joint course budget for the methods course for both DLIS and MADI.

To what extent have you been able to devote the time necessary to finish assignments and courses?

Limited extent: 1

Fairly substantial extent: 1

Substantial extent: 3

One comment in the student evaluation points to something we have come across many times and also see in personal communication, namely that many of the students work or raise a family at the same time as they conduct their studies. This means that they are not always able to devote the time expected in a week to their studies. This has consequences for how many courses students take in a year (many follow an individual study pace after consultation with the programme coordinators or on their own).

In Ladok, the number of registered students, if re-registrations and similar are excluded, were 35 in fall 2017 and 16 in spring 2019 (term 4). In August 2019, four had graduated. The corresponding figures for the groups which began in 2016 were slightly higher in terms of registered students in the first term (38), but with slightly fewer students registered in the fourth term (13) and only two had graduated that term. This indicates a recurrent problem with student completion in the programme, which, nevertheless seems to have become slightly better for the 2017 group compared to the previous two years.

Användbarhet och förberedelser för arbetslivet

The answers to the questions that are relevant for this topic are very varied, although especially the answers to the second question indicate that there are perhaps some limitations to the degree to which the students have perceived a relation between knowledge of the professional field and knowledge they have gained through their education. One student, in a comment, suggests that some type of more practical field work be included in at least one of the courses, and gives the example of visiting an organisation to do observations and interact with staff and users and to discuss this in a seminar.

To what extent has knowledge about/from the professional field of e.g. digital libraries been integrated into the courses, in your opinion?

Limited extent: 1

Fairly limited extent: 2

Fairly substantial extent: 2

If you work professionally within a field of relevance to the program, have you had any use of your studies and the courses in your professional capacity?

Limited extent: 1

Fairly limited extent: 1

Fairly substantial extent: 1

Don't know/not professionally active in relevant field: 2

In a couple of cases (DigTech1, Interaction Design), course reports also mention that students have requested clearer connections between the course content and the library sector. It has not always been clear to them how the skills they learn will be implemented in their future professional activities.

Övrigt

Eventuella förslag till förändringar

Some suggested changes to the programme can be made. However, a thorough work has been done in the “Report of the Evaluation of the International Master’s Programme in Digital Library and Information Science, Distance”, and this is only to be considered a complement to the suggestions made there.

Coordinate work in parallel courses

Course coordinators of courses running parallel to each other are encouraged to try even harder to coordinate the courses to ensure that work loads are distributed more equally between the courses and that any existing synergies can be exploited. Furthermore, coordinators are encouraged to consider that there are sometimes also courses in the MADI programme to consider.

More examples from and interaction with digital library organizations

Teachers are encouraged to use examples from digital libraries and digital library organizations where suitable and possible, to help students better translate between their education and professional activities.

Furthermore, programme and course coordinators should consider if there is a good place in the programme to include some kind of “field work” or other activity which would require students to do visits or observations to digital library organizations and to analyse these as part of their education.

Better visibility of theoretical perspectives and LIS research

Further work should be done to make theoretical perspectives and LIS research more visible to the students. This can include explicitly mentioning (in PingPong or lectures) how research is used in the course, including when especially Swedish LIS research is used, e.g. as course literature. The students may also need a better overall understanding of theoretical perspectives and how research included in the courses aligns with various theoretical perspectives. How theoretical perspectives and research can be used in professional activities also need to be better illustrated. A teacher meeting focusing on these issues will be arranged, in collaboration with the MADI programme.

Mathematical and technological knowledge

The courses which build on and/or develop mathematical, statistical and/or technological knowledge need to be considered together in order to ensure that they help the students develop a good understanding of these issues, which can help them successively progress through the courses. The fact that students have very different pre-understanding when they start the programme needs to be taken into consideration. A half-day workshop with the teachers concerned will be planned in collaboration with the MADI programme.

Online meetings

Course coordinators are encouraged to consider more online meetings and, if possible, follow-ups of examinations, where suitable. At the same time, we are aware that this is desired by some students whereas other students prefer as few scheduled, synchronous events as possible.