



## NOTAT FRÅ PROGRAMSTYRE KNYTT TIL PROGRAMSENSORRAPPORT I ENGELSK LITTERATUR, MASTERNIVÅ FOR 2014

Dato for handsaming i programstyret: 15.04.2015

---

### Kommentarar frå programstyret:

Rapporten fra programsensor inneholder noen nyttige innspill. Beklageligvis finnes det også en rekke uklarheter og faktafeil. Programstyret besluttet derfor at noen av disse burde påpekes i notatet fra fagkoordinator.

- Programsensor har ikke funnet noen begrunnelse for at det ble tilbudt emner både på 10 og 15 stp. Forskjellen på de to emne-variantene burde framgå av vedlagte emneomtalen, som spesifiserer hvilket studieprogram emnene tilhører.
- ENG336 hadde dette semesteret ingen L-variant.
- Undervisningen i de to emnevariantene var ikke adskilt. De ekstra samlingene for Lærerstudentene tok for seg tilleggspensum, ikke sekundærlitteratur ("secondary material").
- Når programsensor har inntrykk av at studentene i 10 stp.- og 15 stp.-emnene "follow almost the same schedule of readings and meetings", har det sin bakgrunn at undervisningen faktisk var felles for de to emnevariantene, med unntak av ekstra undervisning for å dekke tilleggspensum for 15 stp.
- Mens programsensor refererer til "the exam options available to each student", hadde hvert emne kun en eksamensform, annonsert på forhånd, uten valg for studentene.
- Eksamensoppgavene gitt til skoleeksamen i ENG336 og hjemmeeksamen i ENG335/ENG335L var lagt ved, ikke eksempler ("sample exams questions" [sic]).
- Evalueringsformen for ENG337/ENG337L var semesteroppgave, ikke hjemmeeksamen slik rapporten hevder. Studentene arbeidet med oppgaven gjennom hele semesteret, ut fra egen

problemstilling, og uker uten undervisning var satt av til skriving og veiledning, slik det framgår av timeplanen.

- Rapporten etterlyser studentevaluering, og emnerapporten for ENG337/ENG337L oppsummerer både muntlig og skriftlig studentevalueringer, men disse ble av hensyn til studentanonymitet ikke lagt ved etter råd fra administrasjonen.

Fagkoordinator: \_\_\_ Željka Švrljuga \_\_\_

Dato: \_\_\_ 17.04.2015 \_\_\_

Sensor og evaluering: Emne Eng 335 and 335L (Hestetun), Eng 336 and 336L (Johannessen), Eng 337 and 337L (Vevle)

15 studiepoeng and 10 studiepoeng

Spring Semester 2014

The presentation of these three MA courses in the English section at University of Bergen are clearly laid out, and all three instructors presented the same material: a self evaluation of their course, the distribution of marks for exams; sample exams questions (except Vevle); reading lists; and schedules for each of the 8 weekly meetings; course descriptions, focusing often on the theoretical questions or reading/writing strategies employed in each course. The web presentations of each course are clearly state the requirements for the two forms of the course, and the exam options available to each student. Those students taking Eng 335L, 336L, and 337L follow almost the same schedule of readings and meetings as those in Eng 335 and 337 except for the additional meetings to discuss secondary material. This material is made easily available during the course. This seems to hold true for all these instructors as they commented in their self-evaluation. However since I was not presented any evaluation from the students, this may be clearer from a teacher's perspective than the students. Hestetun and Johannessen both mixed genres and periods in their courses and I thought presented their courses very effectively, but what I found confusing and often inconsistent is the reasons for the time between seminar meetings (no justification was offered). I would have like to see these periods of non-meeting listed as "reading weeks" and limited to no more than 7 calendar days between meetings for the sake of coherence.

Vevle's course was much more focused on one author, and the literary/theoretical problem of reading Blake's poems in a time of "revolutionary change". The course offered careful guidance through the readings and used the theoretical material effectively. I think however there needed to be more problematization of Blake's place within British Romanticism(s). Also I thought the use of the Blake archive a splendid idea involving students immediately in the visual and verbal richness of Blake's texts. English radicalisms during this period are quite complex and wonder if more time might be spent with Wollstonecraft. I also think there could have been more acknowledgement of the challenges of reading Blake as a visual and the verbal artist today as well as in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. I did not receive copies of Vevle's essay questions, but I was very impressed how engaged with the course material students seem to be, both the visual and verbal examples.

The marking in all three courses seemed entirely fair and the distribution of marks was interesting in 335 and 335L (very narrow but very few students in this section), and in 336 and 336L and in 337 and 337L. All demonstrated an effective use of the whole range of grades and each essay or exam was marked with care.

Generally these three courses are a strong set of offerings for MA students at Bergen. They kept the students focused on a literary figure as a way into a period in Eng 337, or in another course a cultural problematic is outlined and repeatedly investigated in challenging ways Eng 335, or in the third course a “new” theoretical investigation was being tested which would have challenged students concepts of nationalism and cosmopolitanism, Eng 336. Each instructor used the required arbeidskrav effectively. However, I did find some things *not quite clear* in the distinction between “L” and not L courses; and in the choices students can make in the form of their examination. I realize after reading the instructors’ responses that this was the first time 10-point courses have been offered in the Bergen English section and I know that there needs to be some settling in time. Therefore in what follows, I would just like to ask some questions and not propose full answers.

In Tromsø we have had only 10-point courses for a number of years so my experience recently is only with this model. First, I wonder why you make or keep the distinction between 10 and 15-point courses? I do not see in the descriptions or web material a real justification for the distinction between these two forms of each course. (I think the distinction on the undergraduate level is more clearly drawn in based upon my previous evaluations.) Also it would save teaching hour resources (more time for research or thesis supervision) if the section only offered one version of each course. In Tromsø, after two years of “discussion” with a reluctant administration, we offer at the MA level only one version of a course to lector and literature students. And all testing and evaluation of their work must be the same for both groups of students.

I think the idea of an oral examination at the end of a MA course, extends the seminar approach announced clearly in all three courses and is a very interesting idea. This might be considered a requirement in *one* of the three courses each year, but I realize its assessment is expensive. Another question might be should students at the MA level, who will be writing a thesis, take a school exam of 6 hours as a focus for evaluation and how do they get feedback? I found sustained differences in the sophistication and level of analysis between the school exam answers and those of the essays. Might the English section consider making essay evaluation the only option? This is not to suggest that Johannessen’s school exam was an easy one or that the marking was in any way less rigorous. Finally I would like to suggest that the home exam period might be two-weeks rather than one, given the word count requirement (see Vevle papers) and the complexity of the questions presented in two of the courses. Students might need more time to absorb all the reading required in these courses and to present their arguments and analysis more effectively in the home exams. Otherwise I find the historical logic of each course and their thematic presentation and use of readings, very well established and easy for students to follow. The combinations of readings are well balanced in terms of the canon(s) of American/British literature and culture while suggesting new avenues of inquiry.

The evaluation of the exams presented (3-4 examples for each course) was fair and the students seem to respond well to the questions they were set. I also found a generally high level of engagement with all the material in each course’s reading list as demonstrated by the varieties of responses to the home exam and school exams. The essays were thoughtfully constructed and read

by the outside sensors and the instructors well within the range suggested for A to C marks. The failing marks (F) were richly deserved. D and E marks are more problematic, especially in MA courses but again my own reading seems to confirm their use in the papers provided. Also most of the students engaged with both primary and second material well, but those students who wrote home exams demonstrated more use of resources from library and website data bases and thus were able to demonstrate skills they would use in thesis writing.

I wish to thank the three instructors for sharing their material with me. It must have been a challenging semester to introduce these new 10 study point courses, and for the students to keep up with the reading demanded of them. But I think everything will work out well in the future with this kind of strong beginning.

Stephen Wolfe