

## **Evaluation report: 2019, Fall**

### **Course code and name: SAS2A (Scandinavian Literature - 19th Century - Scandinavian Area Studies)**

#### **About the course:**

The course, which is worth 15 ECTS credits, deals with 19<sup>th</sup> century Scandinavian literature, with a special focus on the period 1870-1900. It is intended for foreign exchange students at the undergraduate level. All texts are read in English translation and the course is taught in English. The course consisted of twelve two-hour lectures, all of which were taught by the course coordinator, as well as a guided tour of the Edvard Munch exhibition at Kode.

This fall, 16 students were enrolled in the course – four men and twelve women, coming from countries such as Germany, France, Italy, Poland, the Netherlands and the US, among others. This number is slightly above average. About 10-12 of the students followed the class regularly, whereas the rest attended more sporadically. As is usual for the SAS courses, the student group was quite homogenous, both in terms of language skills and scholarly background. Whereas several of the students were either native English speakers or nearly fluent, others were at a lower level. In addition, while several students were working on a BA degree in Scandinavian studies and/or had a background from other types of literary studies, others had their backgrounds from very different fields.

Of the 16 enrolled students, 15 submitted the seven-day take-home exam and completed the oral exam. The former counts for 2/3s of the final grade, and the latter for the remaining 1/3. This semester, one student received an A, six a B, seven a C, and one a D.

#### **How the course was evaluated:**

During the last lecture of the semester, an evaluation form was handed out in class. The students then filled out the form during the break, before handing it in before leaving. Twelve students handed in the form. The evaluation was anonymous.

#### **Course coordinator's comments:**

For the most part, the impression gained from the evaluation reports is that the students were quite pleased, even though all in all, they were somewhat less enthusiastic than previous students have been. When asked about the quality of the teaching, three answered «very satisfied», seven answered «satisfied», and two answered «neither satisfied nor dissatisfied». Several of the students also pointed to the course coordinator's enthusiasm for the material on the curriculum as a positive aspect. When asked about their satisfaction with the weight given

to the various topics that have been taught, two answered «very satisfied», four «satisfied», five «neither satisfied nor dissatisfied» and one «dissatisfied». Of the six students that answered “neither...” or “dissatisfied”, several explained that, in their opinions, too many of the texts on the curriculum dealt with the same topic, namely women’s emancipation and the relationship between the sexes. In retrospect, as course coordinator, I agree with this assessment, and in the future, I will ensure that there is a better balance in the curriculum between texts that deal with this topic and texts that deal with other topics of equal importance to Scandinavian authors in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In addition, almost half of the students remarked that there was too much material to read, whereas two also claimed that sometimes, we didn’t have enough time to discuss the different texts on the syllabus thoroughly in class. For these reasons, in 2020 I will try switching from twelve two-hour lectures to eight three-hour lectures. The intention is thereby to slightly reduce the number of texts on the curriculum, while giving us more time to discuss the remaining texts. Also, the students will have better time to prepare for the lectures dealing with the longest texts, such as the novels on the curriculum. Hopefully, this will have a positive effect and help contribute to a better learning outcome for the students.

Bergen, December 19, 2019

Anders M. Gullestad