FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

LUND UNIVERSITY

Progamme evaluation of Master Programme in Global Studies, Master Programme in Development Studies and Master Programme in Social Studies of Gender: Statement from external expert group

Assignment and external expert group

The assignment of the external expert group (see composition below) has been to evaluate the Master Programme in Global Studies, Master Programme in Development Studies and Master Programme in Social Studies of Gender. The evaluation is based on Lund University's eleven criteria for quality enhancement, with support from the Faculty of Social Sciences' instructions[1]. The assignment includes raising the strengths, challenges and development opportunities of the learning environment and the programme/programmes.

Prior to the evaluation, the expert group were given access to LU Box with a large number of documents from the department and the faculty, including the department's self-assessment and input of students.

On (June 8th and 9th), a site visit was conducted (see the programme in appendix).

The external expert group:

• Prof Isabell Schierenbeck, School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg (chair of the expert group)

• Dr Yasmin Gunaratnam, Departmemt of Sociology, Goldsmiths University

• Dr Andrew Neal, Politics and International Relations, School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh

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[1] *Instructions and procedures for programme evaluations by external experts at the Faculty of Social Sciences* (2019-09-19, reg. no STYR 2019/1232) and *Instructions for external experts regarding programme evaluation at the Faculty of Social Sciences* (2019-09-19, reg. no STYR 2019/1262)

The main strengths and challenges of the learning environment and programs, and the external expert group's reflections and recommendations for development programme, and the external expert group's reflections and recommendations

1. That the actual study results correspond to learning outcomes and qualitative target

General syllabus, programme syllabi

The structure of the programmes serves their intended learning outcomes (ILOs) well. A cross-programme compulsory methods course runs alongside the main thematic 'profile' course for each programme in Term 1, further methods and profile specialisation in Term 2, plus a wide range of external courses in Term 3. The programme ILOs are reflected in the course guides, content, teaching and learning techniques, and range of assessments. The methods courses, profile courses and elective courses certainly meet the programme goals of developing broad and specialised knowledge of the field. The programme syllabus for Development Studies differs slightly from the other two programmes under review in aiming to prepare students for professional development roles; in our site visit we heard that teachers on this programme have good professional links and experience of the development sector and offer good advice in this area.

Course syllabi, report on forms of assessment, plus analysis

A notable strength of the programmes and their widely varied forms of activity and assessment is the extent of support given. There is an impressive level of detail in the course guides about the working of individual course components. For example, peer teaching and group work are accompanied by pre-set themes to choose from, lists of examples, supporting literature, and point-by-point guides on how to prepare, well in groups, plan the sessions, and do peer review. Having the bulk of the grade assessed by a substantial final paper in each course could present a risk for students, but the courses offer extensive preparation for the task, including advisory seminars for peer and teacher review of students' ideas for their papers.

In our site visit we heard that this style of teaching is intense for the students. It presents a steep initial learning curve and requires careful time management equivalent to a full-time job. However, students welcomed this and got used to the demands quickly. They appreciated the wide range of different skills they learned and practiced, including public speaking, team work, peer reviewing and peer teaching.

Central to the three programmes in Term 1 is the core methods course 'SIMM51 – The Social Scientific Research Design and Process'. Much thought has gone into the design of this course and the way it serves the ILOs, particularly the six 'Thesis Tracks' which serve the broad thematic research interests of the three programmes. However, the course remains a challenge due to its size, the diversity of the student cohort and the large number of

teachers required. As the programmes have grown, so have numbers on this course, particularly with a 'Covid bump' in 2020-21. Students with political science or social science backgrounds may find the material too basic, while those from other academic backgrounds may find it too challenging. The variety of teachers from different departments means that how students experience the course may not be as consistent as it is with more specialised methods and profile courses. Although there is pedagogical value in teaching a broad range of quantitative and qualitative methods and research design possibilities, there remains a question about how useful these are in the thesis component of the programmes (more below). In our site visit we were pleased to hear that the programme directors, Graduate School Director and Methods Director are working on ways to differentiate the core methods training for student needs and to evaluate the alignment between what is taught and what students need and use later in their theses.

Report on progression, plus analysis

One of the main challenges is to assure progression between different courses/terms. This seems to be less of a challenge in the methods courses due to their "progression scheme" using three levels (great idea), as well as the field courses as described in the documentation. However, it is less clear from the course syllabi how progression is assured in the profile courses.

Examples of theses

The GS invests time and resources into thesis preparation with the methods courses (including thesis tracks), thesis preparation seminars and programme director consultation with students over their initial ideas. However, ultimately the GS does not have enough control over the thesis process. The GS does not allocate thesis supervisors or examiners to students; rather this is done by students' home departments. This means the GS cannot ensure alignment between its thesis preparation work and the expectations of supervisors, or exercise quality control over the entire process. The GS administrators also have to work hard to coordinate with departments over the thesis process and make sure the different departmental requirements for the thesis are communicated effectively to all involved. It also means that students are allocated their supervisors later than students doing Master's programmes in other departments. We saw a sample of nine theses with a full range of (pre-selected) grades from the five-year period under review. We found that the higher graded work was of good quality, although we were surprised to find the methodological and ethical reflections in the thesis to be a little underdeveloped, especially in light of the extensive methods training (which includes reflections on ethics) discussed above. With the lower graded work, we could see the issues highlighted by the examiners, but were nevertheless concerned that problems in the theses could have arisen because of a mismatch between expectations of the students, the supervisors and the examiners, for example with strong criticisms of students' research design choices. Similarly, we heard that examiners with different disciplinary backgrounds may have fundamental disagreements with the premises of other disciplines or debates, for example gender studies.

Strengths: Strengths include the diversity and quality of courses on offer, including methods courses, profile courses and external courses. We also commend the variety of teaching and assessment methods which are both challenging and rewarding for students.

Challenges: Growing student numbers present a challenge for staffing and the continued development of large courses (especially the Level 1 methods course) to meet students' diverse needs, although numbers may settle as the pandemic subsides. The main challenge is the thesis component of the Master's programme, specifically the lack of control of the GS over the process.

2. That the programme focuses on students'/doctoral students' learning

This is a wide-ranging domain and connected to other parts of the self-assessment. The GS has focused on 3 main aspects:

Supplemental Instruction (peer assisted learning)
The Graduate School's commitment to and interest in SI is commendable, as is apparent in your "Mentoring at the Faculty" report (2019), which included the perspectives of teachers, programme coordinators and students. We note the recognition given to learning and engendering belonging addressed through the convening of extra-curricula activities, as described in the notes by the Programme Directors of Gender (p.37) and Global Studies. These are initiatives that can facilitate peer-to-peer learning but may not be as visible/measurable as the SI system. We noted in the field visit that a student who had attended IS sessions in the last academic year found them helpful, but that there may have been some level of 'zoom fatigue' that affected attendance at the sessions.

Thesis Preparation Track (running across terms 1-3)
As detailed in the References Documents, the track is aimed at equipping students with the academic skills necessary to prepare them for writing their Masters thesis (however, see above comments on supervisors and examining). This is especially important with regard to widening access to graduate education and has the potential to also explicate the 'hidden curriculum' of academic success, such as learning critically about what constitutes academic writing, tone and analysis. The track combines organised sessions with a variety of non-scheduled activities such as workshops and individual appointments. Because the track is coordinated by an academic and a librarian, there are enhanced opportunities to also ensure that students are able to access relevant study materials.

Course Guides
The rationale for, and benefits of, comprehensive course guides are well articulated and includes the relationships between guides and the GS programmes' Canvas sites. The example course guide (in the Reference

Documents) shows clear and understandable learning outcomes and offers students an accessible overview of a course. At the moment the outcomes are not linked explicitly to employability but could help students to identify skills gained when applying for jobs and more advanced study. The appendices on plagiarism and complaints are valuable and it was good to see that information about complaints is included in every course guide and in the student handbook. However, during the field visit there were concerns raised about the transparency of the complaints process. It was not clear how the outcomes of complaints were communicated to students or how changes were made to processes and practices as a result of student concerns and complaints. We note that in the Gender Studies progamme, the Director has established a workshop ("The Classroom as a Contested Space") to enable student concerns to be addressed within a feminist pedagogical framing. This is an example of innovative efforts to bring together relevant intellectual discussions with practice in a way which may enhance experiences of teaching and learning and may enable the raising and resolving of student concerns before they reach the status of a formal complaint.

Strengths: What is striking about the programmes is the value given to peer-to-peer learning and supervision opportunities, as well as the co-creation of the curricula and design and evaluation of assessments (described in the notes from the Directors of the Development Studies (p. 37) and Global Studies Progammes (p. 38). There seems to be a good follow-through of student-centred learning from the framing of learning outcomes to multiple forms of assessment which demonstrate achieved learning outcomes. Because the GS programmes use a variety of assessments, many innovative, these could have been included in the highlighted aspects of the self-assessment (probably as, or more, important than the course guides). Students spoke highly of the different forms of assessment and teaching, which they described as offering 'a higher level of critical learning' and as one student commented 'I was learning with out realising I was learning'. Documenting the variety of assessments will enable the GS to better evaluate the relationships between mode of assessment and student attainment.

Challenges: We note the concern about the lack of student take-up of auxiliary learning opportunities (opportunities that can be particularly helpful to weaker students) and that take-up may have been adversely affected by the pandemic. Some universities, such as those in North America can offer incentives to students to make use of academic support services as well as SI, for example, as percentage points added to the grades. These initiatives seem to be more appropriate for undergraduates, but other options to encourage students to take up opportunities are asking students to append a short log of their meetings with SIs or take-up of English proofing opportunities as a part of their assessments. We note that the comments about the low take of English proofing opportunities for students who could benefit from the support are in tension with the use of English as enabling equity described in the self-assessment of internationalization (see below).

3. That the programme is based on a scientific and/or artistic foundation and proven experience

The programme syllabi and course syllabi are sufficiently based on a scientific foundation. They are reflecting thorough knowledge of the different subjects as well as current debates within the field, but also more applied approaches when necessary.

Most staff are active researchers. The research interests of the teachers are considered an important asset in all three programs and the link between research and teaching is stressed. In particular GGS emphasizes in the self-evaluation that the readings and the topics in the programme reflect the research interest of the teachers. During the site visit the differences between the programs was further elaborated upon with profile courses in GD and GS being less about "teaching your research" in comparison with GGS, while all three programs being clearly research based, looking for cutting edge and updates text books on for instance contemporary globalization. The programme directors also stress the aim to have staff teach the methods they apply in their own research in the different methods courses/modules.

Publication lists for teaching staff
The publication record of the teaching staff, course conveners and programme directors are solid, but with (naturally) differences between staffing categories and individuals. During the period 2018-2020 individual staff published 5,7 (median 4) and course coordinators 6,9 (median 5) academic texts. Biometrics is risky to interpret especially across subjects and disciplines, but evaluating some of the more detailed publication records listed for individual staff suggests, again, that staff at GS are active researchers with fairly strong publication records considering their academic career stage.

Staff category for teaching staff
GS has an overall junior academic staff - post docs, graduate students and researchers with temporary positions. The different staff categories are unevenly distributed in the program. Seniors do about 25% teaching and about 40-60 % supervision and examination. We consider the number of junior staff overall positive, but nevertheless see some challenges related to this. Some of those challenges was also reflected upon in the self-evaluation and during the site visit. There is an overall challenge to 'keeping' the staff in the programs; to have stable and more predictable staffing.

First, GS is an excellent opportunity to gain teaching merits for junior staff who do not hold permanent positions in a department. Also, since all the programs at GS are in English the School is also an important opportunity for new recruited international staff to gain insight and experience from teaching in a Swedish setting. However, the junior and international recruited staff do not necessarily have the same experiences and track record of teaching. This demands more comprehensive and elaborated administrative procedures and guidelines (which are in place).

Second, the importance of being affiliated with a department at Swedish universities for research funding, promotion etc. is an additional challenge. Junior staff constantly aspire for permanent positions in other settings which makes staffing less predictable and stable.

Third, another topic that was reflected upon in the self-assessment and during the site visit is that teachers are sometimes needed in their 'home department' on a rather short notice. Teaching staff at GS is coming from an impressive number of departments allowing for interdisciplinary programs and teaching. However, this is a challenge for the planning of teaching resources that sometimes is done in a rather ad hoc and 'gap-filling' manner. This is not necessarily good for teaching quality, 'institutional memory', and coherence in and between courses and programs.

Strengths: GS is based on a solid research foundation. Teachers, course conveners, and programme directors are active researchers with solid publication records, to a large extent teaching their research topics, methods and research approaches they apply in their own research. The teaching staff is very diverse (subjects, methods), academic junior and international. This is an asset, and in general teachers are considered highly competent (according to course evaluations and site visit). The management and administration at GS are impressive and essential for bringing together the eight different departments in the programs. The administration offers extensive services to the teaching staff to consolidate and stream-line courses, course guides, etc. but also to make teaching at GS more attractive.

Challenges: We note the lack of continuity in staffing as a challenge for GS. We understand the difficulties combined with staffing and the short-term changes due to (successful) research funding, new appointments and recruitments, and the need both at GS and the different home departments. We consider the sudden shortcomings in available teaching resources and, as a result, the 'gap-filling' of adequate teachers in the program, as counterproductive and working against pedagogic quality (for instance coherent teaching teams, assessment criteria, feed-back procedures, etc.) and development of the programs as a whole.

4. That teaching staff, including supervisors, have appropriate expertise in terms of subject, teaching and learning in higher education and subject teaching as well as other relevant expertise, and that teaching capacity is sufficient *(this is partly overlapping with under 1 and 3, and therefore dealt with there instead)*

Teaching resources and members in Teaching Academy
GS has an impressive pool of teachers to draw from, both with regard to specific topics and theoretical backgrounds, but also methods skills. However, as pointed out above, there is also certain constrains and challenges with such a diverse and, at times, volatile teaching staff. One important challenge is coherence in teaching style, assessments, feed-back, etc. in

broadly similar terms to what we have discussed previously with regard to theses supervision and examination. There is a discussion in the self-assessment about higher education training (and lack of) among staff at GS. Lund university has 5 hec as a minimum of mandatory higher education training for teaching staff. In addition, the departments have their own requirements (if we understand it correctly). There exists also a possibility to apply to the Teaching Academy (TA), which seems to be an excellent recourse for teachers. Obviously, this is of great relevance to GS. However, few of the staff have applied to/is part of TA according to the documentation. One reasons for this is that TA is open only to permanent staff, but it appears that few senior staff took part in TA.

Number of teaching/planning hours per course
The number of hours for teaching and planning courses seem reasonable, as does the number of hours allocated for supervision and examination. We note that method courses wisely are allocated more hours than reading course. In addition, there are extra hours for coordinators, first time running a course, and development of a course.

Education development projects
Teacher Time is sent out on a regular basis. Reports are frequently done and distributed to staff for discussions, for instance comparative studies on other GS, or evaluations and reflections on different parts of the programme from other forums. In addition, there are in-house method workshops, to foster a coherent understanding and methodological approach among teachers. An interesting approach is that two of the methods courses are also open to teachers. During the site visit some of the staff raised the possibilities of expanding those workshops to include reading different theses and joint assessments, gradings and feedback. We see this as an important future task as part of education development.

Strengths: The teaching staff has appropriate expertise, they are research oriented, many are active researchers and they have a least 5 hec mandatory higher education training (we assume, though we did not find any statistics on this in the self-evaluation). The teaching and planning hours are reasonable, and together with extensive administration support the hours assigned the different tasks allow for teachers to carry out their work without time constrains.

Challenges: 5 hec/5 weeks mandatory training is hardly sufficient if you are a junior and less experienced teacher. We consider, in particular, the fact that only permanent staff can apply for TA a specific challenge to GS, since GS is depending to a great deal on junior temporary staff (albeit very engaged and prosperous staff).

5. That the programme is to be relevant for the students and doctoral students and meets the needs of society

The data in "Statistisk rapport" and alumni figures are quite old and less useful compared with the rest of the material and documentation compiled for the evaluation. We decided to bring the relevance of the programme up during the site visit with teaching staff, students and alumni representatives (both from GD). The student and alumni representatives stressed the scope of relevant skills embedded in the programme that prepares the students professionally. This was also evident from some of the comments in the programme evolution report. Seminars are regularly organized on top of ordinary lectures (less so during the pandemic). They are open to the wider society and gives an opportunity to interact and connect with relevant stakeholders and societal actors. The students also stressed that they find the different teachers and coordinators well connected to relevant stakeholders and other actors, and willing to suggest how to proceed with contacting those for field studies, internship, thesis writing or future work.

The GS Alumni Association (2020) is a very valid and important student initiative. The student representatives were very appreciative about the strong support they identify from GS management and teachers, and the GS management was equally positive about the imitative as such. We consider GS AA especially promising since it is driven from below, and just want to emphasize the importance to keep it student-drive. The objectives listed are a good starting point. The alumni service is arranged jointly, much more cost efficient than in departments with only 1-2 MA programs. Since PhDs are increasingly part of the courses it makes even more sense from the management and faculty to support the initiative.

Strengths: The programs are relevant for students and meet the needs of the students. The variety of skills (critical thinking, peer-reviewing, peer-teaching, etc.) acquired during the course work is useful professionally, and the teachers are well-connected and informed about potential external actors and stakeholder relevant for students to be in contact with.

Challenges: The alumni programme is a great student-led initiative, in need of continuous funding and support from GS or the faculty to be able to build a relevant and up-to-date support structure (database, online platforms, mentorship programme etc.). In particular, it needs administrative support to figure out the implications of GDPR restrictions for an alumni program. A solid support structure with permanent support staff/administrative staff at GS is essential since the active students will differ over the years.

6. That the students and doctoral students have an influence on planning, implementation and follow up of the programme

The self-assessment document describes how ideally each programme would have a student representative on the graduate school board, but that these positions proved impossible to fill in 2020. There are also programme representatives who communicate with programme directors, and an annual quality dialogue group involving the student union. Course representatives

are mentioned as being desirable but not yet practical, given the problems of recruitment to these positions.

Strengths: There are an impressive set of procedures for ongoing programme and course evaluation, with course wrap-up meetings and course epitaph documents that discuss evaluation findings and planned changes. These in turn are lodged with the Graduate School Board (which ideally includes student representatives) for review, reflection, and institutional memory. These procedures seem comprehensive, with ample opportunity for noting of concerns, discussion of solutions, and monitoring of progress and development over multiple course iterations. We see a strong organisational basis for course evaluation and representations from students. Moreover, the GS and GS Director are working hard to foster a culture that reduces the risks and barriers to (particularly less privileged) students making representations and complaints. For example, the GS has provided support to ad hoc student groups such as 'Gender Toublemakers', and a new 'Gender Equality and Diversity Group' organised by the Programme Directors.

Challenges: Despite the external student perception of Sweden as a place with a rich culture of student representation, in practice the level of this activity is below ideal. The pandemic has probably quelled this further because of the difficulty of meeting and 'Zoom fatigue'. Furthermore, it is not always clear that processes involving student representation or complaints necessarily result in visible and transparent change.

7. That an appropriate study and learning environment is available to all and includes a well-functioning support system

The GS as a whole works hard to foster an excellent learning environment. In its self-evaluation the GS has identified specific challenges arising from its largely 'virtual' nature, with many of the estate and staff resources controlled by other departments or sections of the University. We have addressed this issue in section 1 above with regard to thesis supervision and examination in particular. Nevertheless, we are impressed by the GS learning environment and student support structures. During our site visit we heard ample evidence of a culture of support for the needs of a diverse student body, such as international students with greater financial challenges, visa issues, language support needs, students with children, and a recognition of the barriers some diverse students face in requesting and accessing support. The support staff in particular deserve recognition and praise for their commitment to the students while operating under a high workload, helping them with - among other things - course electives, direction to additional support services, and access to online study portals. In normal times the GS has provided social events for students but of course these have been curtailed of late.

Strengths: The GS support staff provide a wide range of services that go beyond typical administrative duties. For example, they offer extensive support to course teachers in helping to create, develop and populate online learning environments (Canvas) in a way that other departments would not

necessarily do. They also mediate between the GS, students and other departments, communicating requirements and expectations between all parties, which can at peak times be an intensive task. We heard good evidence that programme directors and teaching staff are working hard to foster an inclusive and democratic learning environment, paying special attention to addressing concerns about disruptive students, for example. We recognise that the study support centre has been proactive in addressing diverse student needs, providing additional learning and language support in a way that is integrated with the programmes and not just remedial. This appears to us as being of immense value and should be defended as a key strength.

Challenges: Growing student numbers and some staffing retention issues among the support staff have posed challenges during the review period, although we are encouraged to see more permanent contracts for support staff. There remains a risk of students 'falling through the cracks' of student support without provision for periodic check-in meetings with students. Support staff should continuously appraise their methods of communicating with students, as they are. Given the vital and extensive roles that the support staff perform, current staffing levels mean there is little spare capacity to cope with staff absences or other contingencies.

8. That there is continuous follow up and development of the programme

Procedures for evaluations
Overall, the procedure for short-term and long-term quality assessments are well organized and in place. It is quite comprehensive, but then again it is a GS with multiple departments and institutions involved. Board meetings, planning retreats, course syllabus committee group, quality dialogue takes place on a yearly basis (or more frequently).

There are clear instructions and guidance of how to initiate, plan, and go about the establishment of new courses (detailed, clear). There are equally clear routines and guidelines for course evaluations and course reports. Course syllabi must be revised after, at most, five years. Also, for syllabus revision there is a clear strategy in place.

The organization and detailed guidance are impressive, and certainly helps develop the programmes. One caveat is if there might, occasionally, be a need to do things differently in a certain course and programme. One concern is that this is less likely in the current framework since the system in place is quite rigid and does not allow for variations. This is also raised with regard to student evaluations in the self-evaluation and during the field visit with respect to course literature. We got the impression that it is rather hard from a student perspective to have impact on the course syllabus, but also for teachers to make more substantial changes to the courses since the idea is to have them streamlined to a certain extent.

Strengths: Very clear structure of course and programme evaluation as well as guidance for how to follow up and develop the programmes.

Challenges: The overall issue in this part of the evaluation is the trade-off between well-organized, structured and rigid/detailed instructions and guidance and the room for creativity and flexibility as part of knowledge production and learning. The student evaluation fatigue raised in the self-evaluation is one example. One alternative is for oral course evaluations at the end of each course, with joint discussions with the teacher or course convener, and reflections summed up and included in the final course report.

9. That internationalisation and an international perspective is promoted in the programme

The GS's approach to internationalisation can be further contextualised against the findings of the national Inquiry on increased internationalisation of higher education institutions (U2017:02, https://www.government.se/48fc30/contentassets/4df6aeabd2bd4f5dbbf692 10f786e133/internationalisationagenda.pdf) that began in March 2017 and was chaired by Dr Agneta Bladh. Significantly, the Inquiry report (2018) included attention to both research and teaching within its understanding of internationalisation in Swedish universities, using the concept of "comprehensive internationalisation" (p.8).

A broad point with regard to these discussions is the tensions between internationalism as a part of income generation (attracting larger numbers of international students, as well as staff) and academic metrics (such as the numbers of grants and publications internationally co-authored) and internationalism as a pedagogical aspiration, connected to commitments to equality, anti-racist and decolonising imperatives (see notes from the Programme Directors of Development Studies p.63 and Social Studies of Gender, p.64). At the moment, the GS is well placed with regard to the former aspects of internationalisation. We noted during the field visit that:
i. the use of English in GS programmes has led to a greater diversity of teaching staff than in departments.
ii. students outside of the EU often face problems with visa applications (including having to reapply during their period of study) that can have an adverse impact on their studies and lead to anxiety.
iii. the Study Centre is a crucial support for students from non-traditional backgrounds
iv. teaching staff were aware of student concerns about the reliance on English language texts and the need to encourage students to work with non-English resources.

Strengths: The sample theses demonstrated a lively engagement with a range of national and cultural contexts. We also note that the use of English in teaching may have contributed to a greater diversity of teaching staff in the GS.

Challenges: A risk is that the more broadly based commitments to internationalism confuse/erode other social justice-oriented understandings of the challenges of internationalisation (see above) that take account of

structural and historical inequalities. For example, the concern raised in the self-assessment that the number of scholarships open to students from low-income backgrounds and countries will be important in creating a better alignment between internationalisation and equality of access.

More specifically, we note that "Intrinsic internationalism" has been operationalised in promotion and support for the widespread use of English as a lingua franca medium. This is a complex issue with regard to broader decolonising education discussions (as pointed out by the Gender Programme Director), which are actively promoting the use of non-European languages and reading within curricula (recognising that the dominance of English globally since the 18th century is a part of colonial histories and "linguistic imperialism"). Rather than internationalism being 'intrinsic', a more generative approach might be for the GS to more strongly take account of the tensions and challenges of internationalism (in the different registers that are suggested by the Programme Directors), rather than as something that can be read into certain demographic trends. We suggest that the GS further explores with students how to recognise and make use of non-English literatures and debates in their work (perhaps through the new Gender Equality and Diversity Committee which we understand is a potential point of liaison between departments and the GS).

10. That gender equality and equal opportunities perspectives are integrated in the programme

This self-assessment on 'equality perspectives' tends to give primacy to gender, which we understand as also reflecting the Swedish policy context (the Swedish Higher Education Act and Associated Higher Education Ordinance).

Strengths: Faculty data for permanent staff suggest a healthy gender balance between the binary categories of male and female and we note that your administrative systems do not allow non-binary self-identifications. The GS course syllabi also suggest that matters of gender and to a lesser extent sexuality, race, ethnicity and indigeneity are included in curriculum content. The theses demonstrated that students have a good working knowledge of in/equalities concerns. Nevertheless, as noted above, ethics and methodology were areas in which students were less adept at drawing out and applying the implications of equalities concerns within their projects.

Challenges: Disability (and the related areas of critical disability and 'crip' studies) do not seem to be as integrated into curricula, although disability support for students is highlighted in the Student Handbook. The note from the Director of Gender (p.67) draws attention to an important aspect of teaching on issues of injustice and equality, concerning the greater intellectual and emotional labour that equality informed teaching demands (sometimes referred to in feminist pedagogical discussions as attentiveness to 'didactive discomfort'). We recognise the innovation of the workshop on the 'Classroom as a contested space' in the Gender Studies Programme. Taking account of increasing attention to racism (highlighted by the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020) a challenge for the GS will be how to convey a more intersectional approach to equality.

11. That subject-relevant perspectives on sustainable development are promoted in the programme

We note the University 'Sustainability plan 2020-2026'.

Strengths: As pointed out by the GS Director and Programme Directors in the self-evaluation document, many of the aims of the university plan are articulated in the content, ethos and practices of the Development Studies, Global Studies and Social Studies of Gender Programmes. For example, we consider that all three programmes do indeed 'contribute to promoting, spreading and deepening a positive understanding of other cultures, ideologies and frames of reference for human behaviour.' As discussed above, the GS is also proactive on gender equality, equal opportunities and diversity issues.

Challenges: In the GS self-evaluation and in our site visit, we saw little evidence that organisational changes are planned or underway to reduce the GS's own environmental impact and improve sustainability. Many universities and departments around the world are, for example, reviewing their research and conference travel policies, energy use, investments and pensions (oil divestment), consumption practices (e.g. paper use, discouraging bottled water, promoting more sustainable catering choices), and commuting practices. While some of these challenges may pose quite fundamental questions for academic and student life (such as the need for international travel for study, research and conferences), others could be addressed fairly easily through modest policy changes.

The external group's summarized views and recommendations

We want to acknowledge the extremely useful and well-prepared material and documentation we received ahead of the evaluation. It was very informative and comprehensive, and put together in an easily accessible manner. The fact that it was not online (solely) but in print and sent to us by mail was not only greatly appreciated in a period of (due to covid) online/zoom fatigue, but it also gave a quick and comprehensive overview of the three programs that is not as easily received in an online system. The printed documentation clearly made the evaluation easier to carry out and had a positive effect on the quality and preparedness for the field visit. We will recommend that our home departments look at the material from GS as part of our own forthcoming evaluations.

GS – the programs in Global Development, Global Gender Studies, and Global Studies – is well-managed, based on scientific foundations, with highly engaged students, teaching staff, programme coordinators and

administrators. The students gain relevant knowledge of global challenges and topics, current academic debates, practice and skills in a variety of methods of importance to future professional and academic careers.

Nevertheless, we have a number of overall recommendations covering three themes: staffing, programme and course content, and support system. Below we summarize our recommendations:

Staffing

We suggest the GS urges the faculty to expand and develop a teaching programme for temporary staff (PhDs, post docs, and researchers), since all departments could benefit from this. We also would like to see GS encouragement for them to take part in the Teaching Academy, or to develop some kind of internal mentorship programme for fixed-term contract teaching staff, headed by a more senior scholar.

Programme and course contents

Theses: Supervisors' pool and theses examination committee
We strongly support GS efforts to develop its own pool of dissertation supervisors and harmonize examination processes though an examination committee. We understand that university regulations give primacy to single examiners and do not allow double marking; however, we encourage the development of a GS-led cross-departmental thesis examination committee to harmonize expectations about research design and marking criteria. We recommend the GS looks into other departments at LU, but also for instance the School of Global Studies, GU, and their work with double marking.

Ethics and safety
The method courses deal with ethical and methodological dilemmas, as well as positionality. However, there seems to be a gap between the ethics learning during the course work and the applied ethics during the theses work. We see this as a challenge not least because of an increasing focus on ethics and research safety (for students, interlocutors, research subjects, etc.) globally in academia as well as in other professional settings. Since thesis supervision is handled by various departments with different ethics guidelines and practice, we recommend that GS takes the initiative to establish comprehensive ethical guidelines for GS together with the different departments, as well as a "GS ethics committee" to peer-review thesis projects. Also, the administration ought to establish proper processes for safety procedures and guidelines for students going into field work with vulnerable populations or in risky settings.

Methods course (first year)
As noted above, we recognise that the GS is already addressing the challenges of the methods teaching and the need to develop more specialist courses for those students with relatively advanced methods knowledge and experience. We very much support this development and feel it will enhance student experience.

Support systems

Theses: English proofing
We consider the lack of take-up of English proofing a challenge for the program. We suggest GS to explore options to encourage students to take-up of English proofing opportunities as a part of their assessments, in particular theses writing.

Academic support center

During the field visit we realized that the ASC is about to limit its support service to students and LU staff. The ASC service and its continuous outreach into the learning environment (rather than a more limited responsive model) is an important and extremely valuable asset. We see it as a major challenge for all programs at GS if support ASC is reduced, especially since the programmes are wholly in English and some of the students struggle with English skills, particularly those from working class backgrounds and from the Global South.

Administration

There were unexpected expenses due to the pandemic as GS rapidly adjusted their teaching according to the new circumstances and digital requirements. The adjustments were costly and required the use of assets that were planned to be used for other developments project at GS.

The administration has a core role in all departments, but in GS they are crucial due to the important and demanding coordination support needed, but also because of the rapid growth in the number of students, courses, and programmes at GS. Any cuts, instabilities or lack of capacity in administrative support would pose a risk to the GS, and therefore is important to continue support for increased permanent staffing over fixed term contracts. We want to highlight this in the final remarks and point to the fact that the administration is currently handling many different tasks in addition to coordination. One concern we have is the role of counselling support (due to stress, mental health issues) that seems to be a significant part of the programme administrators' work. We understand that this is a familiar structure of support in other Swedish university departments, but considering the vulnerability of some of the students (particularly those with visa and migration issues), the GS might want to look into hiring a person with a professional background in student counselling.

Complaint processes

We support the rationale of the GS to prioritise addressing and resolving student concerns promptly and 'locally' (within courses) before concerns escalate into formal complaints. However, we also suggest that the GS further explore how to enhance the transparency of the process and how outcomes and associated changes are communicated to students.

Appendix: Programme for site visit

LU Zoom meeting: https://lu-se.zoom.us/j/65195960158?pwd=Z29EMzBNYVFBK2Ewc3gvQWlPOHdXdz09
Meeting ID: 651 9596 0158
Password: 889207

Each session will take place in the same 'Zoom room,' which means that the same link and passcode will work for every session. In order to ensure that the meetings run smoothly and that privacy is afforded to the review panel, we will follow this procedure:

I will be present in the main Zoom room and admit attendees as they join the meeting. When meeting attendees have arrived, I will assign them to the same breakout room, which is where the meeting will proceed. I will remain in the main Zoom room. This way, I will not be able to access conversations or written chats in the breakout room, but if necessary, you can invite me into the breakout room for technical support (by tapping the 'ask for help' button), or you can leave the breakout room to have a conversation with me in the main room.

If you believe you will need to use features of Zoom software, such as screen sharing, that are not available to regular call participants, it would be helpful to notify me in advance.

It will be important to keep to the schedule. This means that you should plan to arrive 5-10 minutes before your session starts.

You have already received the agenda from Mikael Sundström, Director of Studies, but I've listed it here, as well (all times shown in CEST / UTC+2):

June 8	
09.00-10.00	Programme management • Mikael Sundström (Director of Studies, Graduate School) • Annika Bergman Rosamond (Programme Director, MSc in Global Studies) • Marta Kolankiewicz (Programme Director, MSc in Social Studies of Gender) • Anne Jerneck (Programme Director, MSc in Development Studies)
10.00-10.15	Break
10.15-11.00	Student(s) + alumn(s): • Ghadeer Hussein (current student) • Laura Blažkova (recent alumn)

11.00-11.15	Break
11.15-12.00	Graduate School administration & study advising (names tbc)

June 9	
09.00-10.00	Teaching staff representatives: • Annette Hill (professor, Media & Communications) • Shai Mulinari (senior lecturer, Sociology) • Catia Gregoratti (senior lecturer, Political Science) • Maja Sager (senior lecturer, Gender Studies)
10.00-11.15	Break + The external expert team works in private session
11.15-12.00	Feedback to programme management (Director of Studies, Programme Directors)