

Yearly report Board of Studies BSc/MSc CT/CE March 2016 - April 2017

Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geosciences

Delft University of Technology

This yearly report of the board of studies (BoS) Civil Engineering gives a succinct overview of the major topics that were addressed from 22nd March 2016 to 5th April 2017 (it covers the year Angelo Simone was chairman of the BoS).

Participants are student members representing student associations of the B.Sc. (Practische Studie) and M.Sc. tracks (disputen) together with the curriculum coordinators of the M.Sc.-tracks associated with the various departments. The chairman of the BoS and the Director of Studies (DoS) have a fixed informal pre-meeting the week before an official BoS meeting to discuss and finalize its agenda.

Major discussion topics

Discussion themes

- Open, online, blended education
The BoS has doubts about this endeavor. The lack of a business model, a feasibility study, and an implementation strategy might have consequences on its quality.
- The role of annotations
The implementation of annotations should be monitored and they should be advertised in a more active manner. The BoS does not have enough data to produce and interpret statistics. A summary of the thematic discussion will be available on SharePoint.

General

- Teaching and Examination Regulations (TER/OER) and Implementation Regulations (IR/UR)
The BoS stresses the need of a more timely communication of the documents and the necessity of a dedicated meeting.

Bindend Studieadvies (BSA)

Improvements on the BSA in terms of additional requirements for mathematics and mechanics courses were discussed. FSR did not agree with Welleman's proposal.

- Begeleide zelfstudie
Improvements to the begeleide zelfstudie in terms of logistic and implementation rules were discussed with Welleman.

Quality assurance

- National Student Enquete
The BoS questioned the statistics in the report. Without the full set of questions it is difficult to assess the outcome of NSE since some questions seem to be formulated in an ambiguous manner.
- Annual report educational quality BSc CEG 2014-2015
A discussion on high pass rates led to the suggestion of using more representative statistics.

- Alumni survey
The survey highlighted that a large percentage of alumni (41%) complained about the lack of focus on the development of intellectual skills (reasoning and reflecting). It is not known yet if this is an actual problem.
- Internal programme audit CEG
The board agrees that the document reflects the actual situation fairly well. Remarks, also related to the BSA, were sent to Welleman.

Curriculum

- New annotations Dynamics, Offshore Geotechnics, and Hydro-Geotechnics
Approved
- Approval M.Sc.-track Environmental Engineering
The last steps of the approval did not run smoothly (lack of protocol)
- Academic skills in curriculum
Although academic skills are incorporated in many courses throughout the programme, they are not clearly visible. This topic might become (part of) a discussion theme.
- Elective space in M.Sc.: Choice between internship and multidisciplinary project
The BoS disagrees with Welleman's proposal (the argument of duplicated learning objectives seems to highlight a problem in the design of the third year).

Towards a more efficient BoS

To streamline the functioning of the BoS and improve its visibility, several actions were taken:

- establish a permanent database of action points;
- made recommendations to the DoS available to all board members;
- introduce discussion themes of general relevance;
- stimulate the production of a protocol;
- require training for all (new) BoS members;
- introduce a discussion board;
- improve the BoS web-site

(<http://studenten.tudelft.nl/en/students/faculty-specific/ceg/education/board-of-studies/civil-engineering/>).

Recommendations

- Working with rules that are buried in official regulations or known only to few people might not be very efficient and surely precludes the employment of younger faculty members with little or no experience but with potentially good ideas and plenty of energy and enthusiasm. In this regard, a "booklet of instructions" where typical scenarios are discussed, analyzed, and translated into a protocol would help. Other boards would surely benefit from a similar booklet, and the accident with the approval of the new M.Sc.-track Environmental Engineering is testament to it.
- As stressed verbally by the chairman of the last Internal Programme Audit AES CT, procedural matters distinguish a professional organization from a family business. The procedure that led to the reappointment of Hans Welleman as opleidingsdirecteur CT does not help in that respect and sends a negative message to the OC CT (as if our opinion was neither needed nor important). We

- stress the necessity to follow procedures to streamline the workflow and to avoid discontent.
- A reliable online platform to share documents should be used instead of SharePoint. We experienced a series of technical issues, some of them (online editing) not yet solved.

Future actions

- Check the implementation of open, online blended elements (for all courses, not just the new ones).
- Monitor the annotations.
- Start a discussion on academic skills and how to better incorporate them in the programme.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the 'verplichte begeleide zelfstudie'.

Annex 1

Composition BoS:

- Chair: Dr.ir. A. Simone
- Structural Engineering: Dr.ir. G.A. van Nederveen and R. Spittka (U-base)
- Transport & Planning: Dr.ir. R. van Nes and S. Willer (Dispuut Verkeer)
- Geoscience and Remote Sensing: Dr.ir. D.C. Slobbe
- Geo-Engineering: Dr. P.J. Vardon and T.P.W. van Koelen (Ondergrondse)
- Water Management: Dr.ir. H. Spanjers and G. van der Zalm (Dispuut Watermanagement)
- Hydraulic Engineering: Ir. H.J. Verhagen and S.M.C. Lanphen (Het Waterbouwdispuut)
- Practische Studie: S. de Roda Husman and A.R. Brussee

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Annex II of the Yearly report Board of Studies BSc/MSc CT/CE May 2017 - June 2017
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This annex refers to the period covered by BoS meetings from 24th May until 14th June 2017 (final meeting of the academic year). This period of time the period during which Philip Vardon and Annerooos Brussee were interim co-chairs of the board, covering the period after which the Angelo Simone stepped down and prior to a new permanent chair being appointed for the new academic year.

A 'steady-ship' policy was adopted, where no changes to the way in which the board acted, the meeting schedule, etc. were implemented so as not to impede the new chair's freedom. Outstanding advice requested were completed and new requests for advice were addressed.

Main advice given / discussed

1. Annotations

Several new annotations have been proposed and the BoS decided it prudent to discuss whether these were appropriate and how best these could be used. Positive advice was sent to the Programme Director, to continue with the use of new annotations, but to limit the amount so not to confuse students/external parties. It was though prudent to monitor annotations to ensure that they are addressing the needs of our students, i.e. we should not have annotations with no students.

2. Regulations for the coming academic year

The regulations were reviewed, the main recommendations were:

- Implementation Regulations MSc CE:
 - Not to limit on the elective space regarding the internship and multidisciplinary project.
 - Add a procedure/article on the 'Double track program'.
 - Add a rule that the student can only start with an additional master thesis if the student completed 45 EC of the courses.
- Uitvoeringsreglement BSc:
 - Do not make the ethics part prerequisite to take the exam.
 - Implement the proposed rule to use complete courses for the BSA, but to take care that students do not fail their BSA with 44 ECTS points.

3. Discussion on new faculty regulations regarding the formation of the board of studies

Advice was given against focusing the regulations on the composition of the boards of studies numerically, but to focus on representation. At CT/CE we have a large number of MSc tracks, alongside a large BSc programme. This means that to be representative of the student/staff population a group larger than the proposed maximum 12 is advised.

Topics for discussion / advice in the coming year

An inventory of topics from the current board for possible discussion in the next academic year was made, these were:

- Better definition of the learning goals of Internship/MP/Additional Thesis to check whether there is overlap. Discussion about 20 EC elective space MSc.
- Skills within the programmes (soft, professional, research, academic).
- Feasibility of study programme, including time spend on thesis. Study feasibility related to EC/time spent.
- How to structure the broad offer (annotations, tracks, Honours Programme), how to make it clear for student and outside world.
- Study success, BSA, second year 'dip'
- Availability teaching staff with specific expertise, e.g. those with extensive design experience.