

## General remarks, guidelines and suggestions for students on the TT study programme

### General remarks and guidelines related to the programme

- ◆ The each **semester lasts 12 weeks** and therefore, as all the courses within the curriculum are one-semester courses, professors/tutors have to deliver the planned content within the above mentioned time frame (12 weeks).
- ◆ Each professor should also provide you with a **short syllabus** of his/her course and post it on the course webpage on the Moodle e-learning system, for you to be able to know and understand what are the key features for a certain course (*what are the learning outcomes of the course, what is expected from you as students on the course, which assessment methods are going to be used, how exams will be organised etc.*).
- ◆ Number of ECTS credits assigned for each course is indicating the **student workload** \*. The total amount of time that students are expected to spend studying is typically denoted by the volume of credit attached to the course (3/4/6/7 ECTS credits).

*\*Workload indicates the time students typically need to complete all learning activities (such as lectures, seminars, projects, practical work, self-study and examinations) required to achieve the expected learning outcomes.*

*The estimation of **workload is not based on contact hours only** (i.e. hours spent by students on activities directly guided by a professor/tutor). It includes **all learning activities** required to achieve the **expected learning outcomes**, including the time spent on **independent work**, compulsory work placements, preparation for assessment (exams, or preliminary exams) and the time necessary for the assessment. So, the workload is made up of time spent in **structured learning** and teaching sessions and time spent engaged in personal study (independent learning).*

- ◆ Information related to the learning activities mentioned above:

*The “**contact**” sessions (lectures/seminars) **can be held “online”** by your professors/tutors at scheduled time or **can be recorded in advance** and posted as **pre-recorded lectures**. However, as you are so dispersed around the World, throughout different time zones, that makes it almost impossible to organise scheduled “live” sessions that would be suitable to all, or at least to majority of students. Therefore, for now, professors will mainly stick to the pre-recorded lectures, and for now we’ll leave some “live” sessions for the practical part of the programme. In the practical part of the programme when we’ll gather all together at a same place we also plan to engage some quality lecturers not only from the TT world, but from generic sport science fields as well.*

Throughout the duration of the courses, professors are advised to plan and schedule **time for consultation hours with students** (on a week or two week basis), time when they should be available for “one to one” interaction (e.g. on Skype) and you should use that time to gain some additional information you’ll be interested to know about a course, and also to receive feedback on your work or ask them to provide you with some help in case you need any.

\* Since you are coming from different corners of the World and different time zones, I’ve also advised the professors to change the scheduled time of their consultations from time to time (on a week or two weeks basis) to give equal chances for all students to approach them. Or, to try to find a fixed time that would be suitable to all students.

Beside the time scheduled for consultation, **email communication/interaction via e-mail** is also an important element of contact time between you and your professors, and is regarded as “one to one” non-scheduled contact time. It could and should significantly contribute to your learning (by providing you with information, instructions and tasks, feedback etc.) and professors should answer your emails within a reasonable period of time.

Higher education is generally distinguished from primary and secondary education by its focus on **independent learning** and the majority of student workload on the programme will come in the form of independent learning, which will usually be guided by your professors/tutors (e.g. reading the materials provided or advised by the professors/tutors, preparation for scheduled sessions, preparation for assignment tasks, revision etc.). So, it is expected from you to **learn independently** from materials provided by your professors (in different formats - PPT/pdf/ pptx, xls, mov, flv, etc.), and to follow their guidance while doing so.

The amount of independent study time that students on a particular course will be expected to undertake will vary between courses. It will partly depend on the structure of the course itself (e.g. is it specific-practical or generic course) and on how professors in charge of the course have decided to structure their course according to the learning outcomes previously set.

- ◆ The official grading system that is used for the **summative assessment** is expressed as follows:

- 5 – Excellent (best possible grade)
- 4 – Very good (next highest)
- 3 – Good (indicates average performance)
- 2 – Sufficient (lowest passing grade)
- 1 – Insufficient (failing grade)

Beside the summative assessment, resulting in a final grade professors can also use **formative assessment methods**, with the aim to provide themselves with the information they’ll need to improve the learning process while it's happening and help to shape your learning and aid your progress throughout the course.

- ◆ The **official names of courses**, in the way they’ve been written in the official curriculum, are **not ideal**, to say at least, in a sense that their names don’t

correspond well with the content professors have had in mind and planned to deliver. Therefore, some of the professors may unofficially rename their courses.- e.g. professor Damir Sekulić has unofficially renamed his course, in the learning materials he provided you with on his course web page, from “Basic Kinesiological Transformations” to, in case of his course, much more appropriate “Basis of Training and Conditioning (In Sport and Exercise). I am only mentioning it for you not to be confused if you have noticed it.

- ◆ You should be aware that the **age range** of this group of students is really wide and that the **level of prior knowledge** the students possess vary significantly within the group. You are coming from different age categories and different educational backgrounds, and the only thing you all have in common is passion for table tennis. Therefore, as the group is heterogeneous in its nature, you should understand that it is not always easy for a professor to find a right approach from the start of his/her course and to be spot on in addressing educational needs of each of you. It will take some time before professors get to know you a little better and manage to adjust their lectures to the level that will be appropriate and suitable at least to majority of you, if not to all. So, if some of you won't be satisfied with some classes and lectures at the beginning of a certain course, whether you consider them to be too demanding or too simple for your level of knowledge, give some time to your professors to get to know you better and know what they can expect from you as students. Moreover, provide them with some feedback during consultation and help them to address better your needs.
- ◆ At this beginning of the programme we can also expect certain **terminology issues to occur**, as professors need some time to coordinate between themselves and try to adjust the professional terms we are going to use, with the aim to use common, internationally acceptable, professional language. It would be nice not to confuse you by talking about the same thing, but using a different term. Although, professors will be in touch and they will try to avoid such issues, we also expect you to provide us with the feedback if you note any discrepancies regarding terminology usage.
- ◆ You should also be aware that although the majority of you are **fluent in English**, from what I have concluded, based on the email communication we've had so far, there are a **few cases** where some **language issues** might occur. Anyhow, I believe that the level of the English language proficiency of all the students is sufficient enough to enable you to follow classes and to communicate with your professors and colleagues in both written and spoken English. It is not that important if the quality of your written or spoken language is not on the highest level grammar-wise, as long as we can understand each other.\* Professors are not native speakers either and we won't primarily assess your English language proficiency, but the knowledge you'll show during classes. So if you are able to communicate with us, follow the pre-recorded lectures and read the materials posted on Moodle web page for each course, you'll do just fine, as it should be more than enough for you to successfully participate in the programme. If it shows up not to be the case, you'll drop out

eventually, not because we want to kick you out, but because you won't be able to follow the lectures.

*\*In the second semester of the first year of the study programme students are also going to have an English language course, where a professor can/will also work individually with those students who may need some help regarding language issues. Of course some of our native speakers like Steve or some of the other very fluent English speakers can skip this course (except the exam itself) and use the spare time for being more engaged in other courses within the second semester.*

- ◆ Exact dates for 7 days of the first practical part of the programme, which is going to be held in Split in June 2017, are still to be precisely determined. Before the exact dates are conclusively determined, I will also consult you, as students on the programme, and ask you to provide me with some info related to the schedule of the most important table tennis events in your national and continental TT calendars for June 2017, before making the final decision.
- ◆ Some important general information on the study programme you should know, can be found in the document *TT study – basic info for students*, published on the programme's Moodle web page in the box named TT Study – Important information on the right side of the screen.

*Suggestions and advice on the teaching/learning process for students regarding the 1<sup>st</sup> semester classes ...*

- ◆ Within **the first semester** you'll receive instructions in four generic and two more specific table tennis related courses.

At the beginning of the first semester I would advise you to **concentrate** on two courses, ***“Fundamentals of Kinesiology”*** (teacher Irene Faber) and ***“Basic Kinesiological transformations”*** (teacher Damir Sekulić), as I find these two to be essential to you for being able to successfully attend other courses related to sports science, which are following taught. Moreover, as some of you probably won't be familiar with even some **basic sport science and medical terms**, these two courses should also provide you with basic **professional language tools** that would enable you to follow and understand lectures, not only for these courses, but for classes you are going to follow later on as well.

Parallel to those two courses I believe that, without any further problems, you can attend the courses ***“Fundamentals of informatics”*** (teacher Michael Fuchs) and

**“History, Rules and Organisation of table tennis”** (teacher Goran Munivrana) as those two are not directly related to sport science and, as are given 3 ECTS credits only, they are less demanding in terms of the student workload.

The classes on the second course that I am in charge of **“Anthropological analysis of table tennis”** are only going to start in 6 or 7 weeks since the beginning of the first semester, following the completion of the scheduled lectures on the course **“Basic Kinesiological transformations”**, which is run by professor Damir Sekulić. By then you should be more familiar with sport science language and terminology, which would make it easier for me to start with the course at that point. It will also make it easier for you as with all the other professional obligations majority of you already have, it would be difficult for you to start with all the courses simultaneously.

The last course within the first semester is **“Functional Anatomy”** (teacher Gabriela Ochiana) and I would leave it to you to decide can you start with it at the beginning of the semester or you’ll leave it for latter stages of the programme.

- ◆ What I believe to be important for you, if you want to be successful students on the study programme, is to have a steady **learning continuity**. The fact the programme is predominantly run “online”, and you don’t have to physically attend the classes is both an advantage of the programme ( as you can plan your learning activities to suit your daily schedule) and its main disadvantage (as nobody is pushing you and time can fly by pretty quickly). Therefore, for this kind of programme certain amount of **self-discipline** is required and although you don’t have to spend a great number of hours daily on the learning process itself, I would warmly advise you to have certain continuity.
- ◆ I would also advise you to use all benefits of modern technologies (like Moodle mobile application, which you can download from your App Store), which should enable you to effectively use your time for learning, even in some situations which you usually wouldn’t have considered as a stimulative learning surroundings (e.g. while waiting on airports, at the dentist’s... etc. 😊)
- ◆ For all the questions you may have for me as the Head of the programme, and which other students might find useful as well, I strongly recommend using the Site blog. The same should apply for each of the individual courses where I strongly advise you to use the News Forum for all the questions about a course you may have for the professor in charge of it and which other students might find useful as well. Any other correspondence you wish to keep private can be sent to one of our official email addresses.

I probably forgot to mention certain details related to the programme, but, as I have said in my address letter, this is not intended to be some kind of official TT study manual, but more of a collection of some of my thoughts I wanted to share with you with the aim of providing you additional information about the programme you might find useful in the near future.

Anyway, everything I forgot to mention in those unofficial guidelines I've provided you with, will pop out eventually at some point of time throughout duration of the programme and we'll deal with that as it comes.

For now, I just wish you to enjoy your studies and I hope that together we can make this study become what I and the other organisers of the project intended it to become from the start.

Best regards,

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