Meeting on the future of the pre-master course in statistics 09/10/2014

## Attendance: Andrea Haker, Tom van Engers, Natasa Brouwer-Zupancic, Andre Heck, Max Cohen (Sowiso), Riccardo Fanciulli

## General design of the course

The course should be available as early as possible in the students and it should be announced already at the time of accepting the students to the programs.

The Diagnostic Test should be made available for the first month (duration limited, but can be discussed), it should be made of one single attempt and a definite duration after opening it (2-3 hrs, depending on the test). The test should have N distinct parts each corresponding to a section of the course. The results of the diagnostic test will be at two levels: 1. Aggregate level: the aggregate score giving pass/fail decision. 2. Specific level: a score with pass/fail for each of the N topics.  
Together with the Aggregate and Specific score, the students should also be able to see a stat (percentile scale) of the course from the previous years.

Only after taking the diagnostic test, a student will be allowed to access the material of the course. The student will then be able to see all topics (and their quizzes), but, based on the results of the diagnostic test (at specific level), the student will be asked to work on the specific topics that showed deficiency. The other topics will be still available for work on a voluntary basis. Ideally Sowiso (SWS) could have a green/red signal next to each topic and such indicators should be linked to the results of each student’s diagnostic test.

At the end of the course the Final Test will be administered. Access to the final will be conditional on having passed the tests of the topics where deficiencies had been shown by the diagnostic test. This test will be available for a week. Once the student will have opened it, he/she will have to finish within a specified time (2-3 hrs..)  
Issues about the possible cheating opportunities have been raised and still need to be addressed.

The entire course design, along with the advantages of passing the final or the diagnostic test earlier on, will have to be clearly specified early on in the summer at the opening of the course.

## Course management/organization

The course should have a site (Blackboard (BB)) where, from the time of opening of the course, the following information is stated:

* Timeline of the course (time windows and duration for the two tests, webEx meetings)
* List of topics (expected time to over each and expected knowledge per topic)
* Explanation of the course design (conditional access) and advantage of passing the diagnostic test or the final test.

A FAQ page should be set-up to take care of the issues that came up this year. Login issues…

This information should all be available before the diagnostic test.

## Login issues

It seems impossible to do without external (non-UvAnet-linked) accounts for this population of new students.

A promising idea seems to be the following:

One person (Walter …) will be in charge of creating both BB and SWS accounts.  
The accounts (at least the SWS one) should be linked to the students ID number which they receive immediately upon acceptance.  
These accounts will be active until the final is over. After that they may be removed.  
The students will then be enrolled in “research methods” and similar courses which will be automatically linked to another version of the course (with no memory of the previous test results etc.)

On the SWS side, we asked if it’s possible not to be redirected to the UvAnet-linked SWS login page after two failed attempts (as, confusingly, was the case this summer).

## SWS: requests/wishes

* Reporting of test grades at aggregate and per-topic level (for diagnostic test)
* Flagging each topic red/green based on the results of the diagnostic level at specific per-topic level.
* Conditional access of the final test conditional on all topics having a green light (topic test passed)
* Separate test availability from the test duration once the test is opened by the student.
* Ability to assign separate weights to each question
* Treating students test separately (if need to re-administer test to someone, for example)