

Prof. Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon (University of Iceland, [sgm@hi.is](mailto:sgm@hi.is))

### Personal involvement

1. Have you personally taught Microhistory at university level? What kind of courses they were? What was the students' response to this course or these courses?
2. These courses formed parts of what module or unit of education? Were they compulsory or optional for students?
3. In which languages have you taught these courses?
4. Do you think that there is interest from the part of students in being enrolled in an MA in Microhistory in English?
5. Do you personally intend to take part in teaching a joint international MA in Microhistory in English?
6. Have you got colleagues who would take part in teaching in a joint international MA in Microhistory? Who are they? Have they explicitly declared their willingness or you just suppose that they might participate?
7. Institutional involvement Would your university be interested in taking part in such a venture? (Please on this point base your reply on the responsible declaration of the relevant office or officer of your university. Eötvös University, for example, have a Vice-Rector for International Affairs.)

Yes! – After a long conversation with the Head of Division of Academic Affairs at the University of Iceland, I can fully state that the University of Iceland is interested in participating in an *joint programme* or *double degree* (cooperation between two university with their own degrees) with other universities.

8. If your university's attitude to such a programme is not outright negative, what framework would be acceptable for it? Does your university insist on giving an MA degree itself? Would it consider teaching courses that are part of an MA accredited elsewhere? Would it be part of the difficult process of the accreditation of a joint degree?

The University of Iceland already takes part in a number of joint programmes with international universities all over the world. These joint programmes have at least one thing in common; in each case a contract is drawn up which reflects both the needs of the programme and the specific legal demands made by the partner institute. By and large, one can say that the University of Iceland is very flexible – has a flexible structure and legal framework – to customize each programme to fit the partner institute. It is all based on negotiations and contracts made by those it applies to.

At the end of a study in a programme mutually run by the University of Iceland and some other partner institute, according to a specific contract, the students usually receive two diplomas, that is one from each university. In these cases the diplomas indicate that the received degree comes from two or more universities. In an appendix to the diploma the structure of the study programme is explained, the role of each university is stated and how the partnership was formed.

Individual Departments at the University of Iceland also have the right to authorize a degree in cooperation with other institutions. The degree is then formally provided by one institution (the main institute) but the nature of the relationship between the institutions clearly stated.

9. Does your university run English-language BA or MA or PhD programmes in History? Is there a chance that Microhistory be integrated into such a programme instead of establishing a full-fledged MA specially for Microhistory?

Yes! – The University of Iceland runs an English-language MA programme (and Ph.D. programme), which might become a partner for an international MA programme in microhistory. For example, a graduate programme in Medieval Icelandic Studies that deals with Sagas, Myths and Poetry in Viking-Age and Medieval Iceland, might become an partner for an international MA programme in microhistory. The know-how is there to be found and the legal structure is in place. – It might also be possible to run a programme like this one through the Department of History and Philosophy.

10. If your university is willing to try to embark on the accreditation of a joint MA degree or its own MA degree in Microhistory, what are the prerequisites of such a procedure in your country? Approximately how much time does it need?

I am not sure what this question is specifically about, but a contract would be signed between partner institutes after some negotiations about the details. It should not take a long time, since the model has already been developed.

#### Contents and formalities

11. If your university would teach courses of an MA accredited by another university or courses of a joint international MA, what tuition fees does it expect to receive?

No tuition, only a minimal registration fee which can be reduced down to one semester payment.

12. Are there any examples of a joint BA or MA programme at your university? What is its institutional framework look like?

Yes! – Again, the Medieval Icelandic Studies programme is a case in point. This is how it is structured:

The **Medieval Icelandic Studies Programme** (MIS) is a three-semester graduate programme resulting in an MA degree in Medieval Icelandic Studies from the University of Iceland. The credit system at the University of Iceland is the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System or ECTS. Full-time studies for one academic year count as 60 ECTS credits, 30 ECTS credits each semester.

The Medieval Icelandic Studies is a 90 ECTS credits' master's programme. The first two semesters consist of 60 ECTS credit hours of course work. The third semester is reserved for writing a 30 ECTS master's thesis. Ideally (but not necessarily), the third semester is a summer semester, enabling the completion of the programme in approximately 13 months (August–August) with a graduation in October.

<b>1st semester</b> (autumn)	<b>course work</b>	<b>30 ECTS</b>
<b>2nd semester</b> (spring)	<b>course work</b>	<b>30 ECTS</b>
<b>3rd semester</b> (summer)	<b>master's thesis</b>	<b>30 ECTS</b>

In addition, students will have the opportunity to take summer courses in subjects such as Modern Icelandic, manuscript studies, and archaeology.

Three separate faculties at the University of Iceland participate in the program and offer courses and thesis supervisors: The Faculty of Icelandic and Comparative Cultural Studies, The Faculty of History and Philosophy, and the Department of Folklore Studies at the Faculty of Social and Human Sciences. The **Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies** is a research institute that houses a large collection of Icelandic medieval manuscripts, visual and oral documents, as well as a research library in medieval studies that will be open to students in the program. The staff of the institute provide assistance and participate in teaching and thesis supervision. – Taken from the homepage of the program.

13. What makes an MA in your system of education? How many semester of teaching, how many courses and credits, how many seminars and lectures, and how is the writing of the thesis integrated into the studies? Which are the rules followed in giving marks to students?

It is either three or four semester programmes with 120/90 ECTS. Full-time studies for one academic year count as 60 ECTS credits, 30 ECTS credits each semester. – The grading scale is 0–10 with 5 as a minimum grade.

14. Does your institution has experience in or established practices as for building online courses into its curricula? Do you personally think that such courses might make a part of a joint international MA in Microhistory?

Yes and No! – It depends on what definition is used for – Online courses; The technology is available and it is practiced within the University system in regular domestic courses. The concept can be applied to international courses. See for example: Icelandic online.

15. According to you, which courses should form parts of a joint international MA in Microhistory? Which subject areas should not be omitted from the curriculum?

Required core courses, total of approximately 40 ECTS credit hours that lay the groundwork for further academic work in the field. In addition, students can choose from several elective courses amounting to (at least) 20 ECTS credit hours that would be taught at different universities.

16. Are you personally willing to teach any of these courses? Which one? And have you got colleagues in your university who are willing to teach any?

Yes! – For example, What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice! Also, courses on historiography, historical sources – the most relevant sources for microhistory – and issues like material culture, emotions and manuscript communities.

17. If so, would you teach an online course? Have you got experience in that? Is your institution technically prepared to make this possible?

Yes!

18. Could you be personally involved in teaching a course (for example an online course or an intensive course, as a guest lecturer or in any other way) even if your institution abstains from this future cooperation?

Not relevant for me! I could play the role of a guest lecturer wherever is needed. See further question # 16.

19. Which are the courses that your institution would be willing to take the responsibility for?

I do think we have the manpower to teach both core courses and several elective courses.

20. How such a curriculum should be put together from the point of view of the students? Should they travel from one participating institution to the other spending each semester in a different country? Or should they stay at their degree-giving mother university and leave for other participating institutions for intensive courses? Maybe instead of travelling, the widespread use of online courses should be advocated? Should travelling to other institutions for a semester be offered to students as optional?

It needs to be seen. Anything is possible. All above options are acceptable.

#### Other

21. Which are the financial schemes applied to student and teacher mobility in your institution? Can we use it for the purposes of running an joint MA in Microhistory?

Most of the programmes of this nature are connected to Erasmus. I am sure something can be worked out, depending on the nature of the contract between universities, when it comes to teachers mobility. A financial support for students is another matter which needs more work, but the Erasmus programme is most likely the best alternative.

22. Please add your comment which you would like to make but have not yet had the chance to do so.