

Meeting: 21st April 2021 at 11.00-13.00

In Zoom

UN-meeting, LICS

Minutes

Present:

UN members:

Ethan Weed (chair of the meeting), Alexandra Kratschmer, Cordula Vesper

UN LICS

Dato: 21.04 2021

Observers:

Johan Keller Jensen (student representative), Peter Thramkrongart (student representative),
Helle Skjøth Sørensen (student representative), Jan Rijkhoff, Kristian Tylén, Peter Bakker,
William McGregor, Mikkel Wallentin, Mads Jensen, Karsten Olsen, Riccardo Fusaroli, By-
urakn Ishkhanyan, Chris Mathys, Rebekah Baglini, Daina Crafa, Jakob Steensig, Ross Deans
Kristensen-McLachlan, Kristina Duun (student counsellor), Joshua Skewes (head of depart-
ment), Sabrina Bækkelund Larsen (Department consultant), Camilla Mark Thygesen (SNUK,
minute taker), Mathilde Andersen (CED)

Side 1/6

1. Approval of agenda and follow up on the minutes from last meeting

The agenda was approved, and there was no follow-up on the minutes from the last meeting.

2. Presentation of CED (presentation and discussion)

Mathilde Andersen from Centre for Educational Development (previously CUDIM at Arts), visited the meeting and gave a short presentation of the newly formed CED.

CED is the joint center for University pedagogics. The AU EDU-IT unit has also become part of this new center. CED's purpose is to support the academic environments in transforming the AU strategy regarding education into reality. Some of the key focus points for the collaboration between CED and the academic departments at the university are: how to support student's transition to the university, innovation in teaching based on digitalization, and curriculum development.

If teachers have any questions that CED might be able to help with, they are welcome to contact anyone at the center. Mathilde Andersen and Tina Bering Keiding are the former Arts contact persons, but it is okay to contact any of the others as well.

CED offers many different courses and workshops that teachers can attend, for example Introduction to Brightspace. If a department finds it necessary or desirable, CED also offers tailored collaborations within specific topics that are relevant for the department.

Questions and comments from the UN:

- It was asked if there are any resources that the teachers can access if they cannot attend the workshops for example. Mathilde answered that there is an online

resource with all the information needed, and that they are currently working on making it more consumer friendly and easier to use.

- It was asked if CED offers an introduction for new staff coming from outside of Denmark regarding the norms at the university and the Danish norms of teaching. Mathilde answered, that they do not have anything specific at the moment, but the Head of Department can contact CED, and they can make something that is relevant.

It was mentioned that last year, in collaboration with VEST (Arts Studier), CED made an introduction course for BA students, and they are now working on an introduction course for international students and MA level students, which will be available from August.

- Head of Department asked about feedback, since this is a topic that comes up every year in the teaching evaluations. The department uses a lot of peer feedback, but the students are asking for more supervisor feedback. It is not economically feasible to provide this to the amount that students ask for. It was asked if there is any research on the right prioritization between types of feedback. Mathilde answered that in general the effect of feedback is well documented, and that it is a good idea to mix different types of feedback.

More information about feedback can be found here: <https://educate.au.dk/en/focus-areas/feedback/>. If any other questions come up, teachers are always welcome to contact CED.

3. Briefings (orientation)

3.1 News from the Board of Studies

Ethan Weed gave the following orientations:

- At the last meeting the evaluation reports were discussed.
- Representatives from LICS had brought up the discussion from the last UN meeting about the third semester. It is difficult for international students to find internships, and there are not that many other options for them at the third semester.
- Discussion of the reorganization of the faculty had been an item on the agenda as well. The focus of the coming discussion at the Board of Studies will be how to strengthen the role of the Board of Studies and the relationship between the Board of Studies and the UN, and not the larger issue of internal reorganization at the institute level. The prospects for any change can be used as an opportunity to discuss what a board for studies should be and how they would like it to be in the future.

3.2 News from the Institute Forum

Kristian Tylén informed that there has been an extra Institute Forum meeting about the organization of the faculty, and they have drafted a hearing answer. It is very much aligned with the sentiments expressed at the recent institute meeting. There are a lot of different issues to mention; in general the analysis

of the faculty management does not match the problems that the institute forum sees. Overall, the institute forum does not think that the best solution would be to form a fourth institute.

3.3 News from the student guidance

Kristina Duun informed about:

- Semester meetings have been held. It has been going well, but there are some concerns from the 2nd semester students at the MA programmes. They would like to have more contact to their thesis supervisors. They feel isolated sitting at home, and are a bit nervous about the upcoming process with their thesis.

Head of Department suggested a short meeting between all supervisors and 2nd semester students, so they can see each other. The UN agreed to this, and Josh, Ethan and Kristina will set it up.

- A career event is coming up for linguistics and semiotics students.

3.4 News from *fagrådet* and student forum meeting:

There was no news from the *fagråd*.

Update from student forum at the department:

There had been a discussion about how things are going at the different programmes. It is been difficult to start up new programmes with a lot of new staff while everything is online. The design of the MA linguistics programme was also discussed at the meeting. These discussions will probably lead to an evaluation of the MA programmes at the department.

3.5 News from staff

There was no news

3.6 News from the study administration

- The Arts Studier Newsletter is publicly available at the teacher's portal at Arts: <https://medarbejdere.au.dk/fakulteter/ar/til-undervisere-paa-arts/nyhedsbrev-fra-arts-studier/>

4. Annual status review 2021 (discussion)

Head of Department presented the process for this year's annual status review, which contains a general discussion at this meeting, and then an official approval of the action plans in the meeting in May. Head of Department started with an introduction from his point of view, and then the UN gave their comments.

It was explained that the data in the appendices are for the students from the class of 2019 for the BA programmes. This means that the first-year dropout is from a regular semester, not a corona semester.

First year dropout:

Overall the data for this indicator look good. Cognitive Science and Linguistics BA have a yellow indicator, but the Head of Department does not see it as a major problem. However, it is expected to be a problem next year due the data from the corona period. This might raise concerns, but it was mentioned that on the other hand there will probably be a large dropout all over the university.

Head of Department presented two different ways of dealing with dropout rates:

- Trying to keep students in the programme
- Working on better recruiting to make sure it is the right students who are enrolled.

Head of Department is in favor of the second model, since it should be okay for students to drop out, if they find out that they have chosen the wrong education. Head of Department and the UN do not think that the current dropout rates give any reason for further actions besides the ones already established at the department. At linguistics MA, the small number of students means that even one or two students dropping out can affect the indicators.

Unemployment:

The data indicate problems at both MA in Cognitive Semiotics and Linguistics. There are no data yet for Cognitive Science. Due to the time-lag in the statistics, it is difficult yet to see the effect of already established initiatives, e.g. in the new academic regulations. There are already many long-term actions in place, and Head of department think these actions should continue, and is not really any need for other actions, since the department is still waiting for the current actions to take effect. The UN agreed with this analyses.

It was mentioned that a lot of the other degree programmes also have a red indicator for unemployment. This also suggest that there is no need to overreact to this problem.

It was mentioned that Cognitive Science is under IT-vest and they have other benchmarks for this.

Study intensity:

Study intensity also has a red indicator for some of the programmes. The issue has been discussed before, and might still be a problem of getting students to fill in the questions correctly. Students might be confused about what is included as student activity. It should be mentioned to students what is included in these activities, e.g. networking outside the university could be seen as included in this. It was also mentioned that the answers to these questions will also be different according to the time the question is asked – exam period vs. start of the semester. Cognitive Science MA does not seem to have this problem, even though students here say that they could manage a higher workload.

The best way out of this problem would not be to just add reading material.

It was mentioned that since the workhours of the students are not always gathered between 8-16, it can be difficult to count., e.g. if students take a bbreak during the day, and then study again at night again. Students might forget how many hours they actually spend.

It is important to remember that the exams are included in this. Portfolio courses might have higher intensity during the semester. It is hard to measure this indicator due to these different factors, but it is still a politically important measurement.

The other indicators look fine, but it can be expected that there might be problems here as well next year due to corona.

Head of Department will make the action plans on the basis of this discussion, which will be presented at the next meeting for approval.

5. Commencement of studies exam on Master's degree programmes – pilot project

Ethan Weed introduced the topic and the current commencement of studies exams. The topic was discussed with the conclusion that there was some confusions about the current models for commencement of studies exams. It was mentioned that the people present at the meeting would like it to be the same model for all three programmes.

Head of Department will look into this after the meeting, and find the best solution for all three programmes involving the members of the UN and Camilla Mark Thygesen.

6. Evaluation of courses (decision)

Head of Department presented the topic and the suggested changes:

The suggested change is:

- 1) To continue to only require full final evaluation reports for courses falling under the IKK policy
- 2) To reinstate the policy that all courses are evaluated on blackboard/bright-space

The people present at the meeting supported the idea. Ethan Weed will follow up with the official members of the UN.

7. News from Head of Department (orientation) – postponed for the next meeting

(1) INFORMATION – SPECIALE

- Orientation about the process for students applying for thesis

(2) UPDATE – POSITIONS

- IKK – Assistant Professor in Cognitive Science (no update)

(3) UPDATE – LINGUISTICS EXAM LANGUAGE

(4) INFORMATION – INTERNATIONAL MENTOR IDEA

(5) INFORMATION – WEBPAGES

(6) DISCUSSION – CORONAVIRUS UNCERTAINTIES & REFLECTIONS ON SEMESTER-START

8. Issues for upcoming meetings

11.1 Issues for upcoming UN meetings

11.2 Issues for upcoming meetings suggested for the Board of Studies

9. "Rondvraag" (short questions/comments before the closure of meeting.)