

**Meeting: 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 11.00-13.00**

**Place: 1481-366**

**UN-meeting, LICS**

**Minutes**

*Present:*

*UN members:* Ethan Weed (chair of the meeting), Alexandra Kratschmer, Mina Almasi (stud. Rep.)

UN LICS

*Observers:*

Karsten Olsen (via zoom), Rebekha Baglini, Peter Bakker, Mikkel Wallentin, William McGregor, Jacob Steensig, Riccardo Fusaroli, Marc Malmdorf Andersen, Chris Mathys, Andreas Højlund, Kristian Tylén, Janet Frances Rafner, Charlotte Sandager Bilde (student guidance) Laura Bock Paulsen (stud.), Joshua Skewes (Head of Department), Camilla Mark Thygesen (SNUK minute taker)

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*Absent:*

*UN members:* Cordula Vesper, Emma Olsen (stud. Rep.), Ronela Beatrice Wagner Fredensborg (stud. Rep.)

## MINUTES

### 1. Approval of agenda and follow up on the minutes from last meeting (decision)

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

It was suggested to make the meetings shorter, not by removing items but by being more efficient. Ethan Weed UN chair will take this into account.

### 2. Briefings (orientation)

#### 2.1 News from the Board of Studies

Ethan Weed informed that the representatives from LICS were not present at the last meeting, so there were nothing to report.

#### 2.2 News from the Institute Forum

Kristian Tylén informed that the union representatives were present at the last meeting, and that the current economical situation was on the agenda.

Joshua Skewes, Head of department (HoD) informed that the school are looking at reducing educational activities, e.g. by offering fewer supplementary subjects. He also informed that the LICS department is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest department at the school, and that he do not expect that the department will not be effected that much.

### 2.3 News from the student guidance

The representative from the student guidance informed:

- It is a quiet period due to the exams.
- It had been a busy November due to applications to go abroad, since a lot of students have questions about this.

### 2.4 News from Student forum (fagrådet)

The representative from the *fagråd* at Cognitive Science informed:

- They have had a successful event for students about what work with after they graduate
- At the moment a machine learning company is working on a workshop for students that has python experience.

It was mentioned that it has been discussed in the student forum, that students in general wants to appeal for the opportunity to make study groups across classes (hold). This is not possible at the moment, and the reason is that it has been decided that students have to have their schedules planned and visible early before semester start, and that means that the classes are fixed, and cannot be changed. It was mentioned that cognitive science is a diverse study where people specialize in different things, so the students would gain from cooperating with each other. Besides that it would make the groups easier to make, and it will make the cohort more coherent. Group culture/dynamics has also been found to differ across classes. This can be a problem if the group culture has settled on values such as not wanting to attend class or not participating actively. By being allowed to shake up the groups every semester, these settled (and negative) group dynamics are likely avoided. For instance, a class with quieter students may benefit didactically from being placed with more students that ask more questions. Students argue that a more coherent cohort would not only benefit students academically but also socially as it would increase the network of the students. This makes it more likely for students to find others that they can form deeper relations with. From this social and academic perspective, this can be considered an initiative aiming to reduce drop-outs. Students would rather have the opportunity to form groups across classes than know their schedule in advance since students are used to planning other activities around their study, and not the other way around.

### 2.5 News from staff

It was informed that there has been a meeting in the FSU, where the current economic situation was also a big topic. The political reform suggested regarding the possibility of 1-year Master's degree programmes were also discussed.

### 2.6 News from the study administration

Camilla Mark Thygesen presented the newsletter from Arts Studier, which is publicly available at: <https://medarbejdere.au.dk/fakulteter/ar/til-undervisere-paa-arts/nyhedsbrev-fra-arts-studier/>

### 3. Removal of prerequisites (decision)

In May/June, the degree programme board (UN) was informed that a new examination order (eksamensbekendtgørelsen) will take effect on 01.09.2022, which contains major changes in the description of and requirements for prerequisites. On this basis, the department has been working to make changes to the academic regulations regarding the removal of the prerequisite requirements. The UN was presented with the suggested changes in the appendices.

The UN was informed that all teachers for effected courses has been included in the process with making the suggestions. It was also explained why these changes are necessary and that it is a mixture of changes due to a new examination order but also some decisions at the faculty.

Exams with synopsis are also being changed, since it has been discovered that IKK has been given time for reading the synopsis, but this should not be done any more. So they will not be given hours any more, and it has been decided to make the synopsis shorter.

It was mentioned that it has been experienced lately that students postpone their exams, and that the removal of the prerequisites might enhance this as well. It was suggested to look at the separate semesters and see if there are anywhere specific where students take the re-exam instead of the ordinary. Then it might be because the courses or exam forms are not working. This should be looked at in the evaluations and when revising the regulations.

It was mentioned that when the length of the group exams are changed for the courses with prerequisites, this should be done as well for the course "language through time" even though this course do not have a prerequisite, unless there is an academic reason for the difference.

#### *Decision:*

The UN approves and recommends proposals for changes to the academic regulations for consideration at the Board of Studies meeting in January. The mistake at BA Linguistics has to be changed, and the change of the length of the exam at "language through time" will be sent to the official UN members for written approval, since it was not included in the appendices.

### 4. Orientation regarding the discontinuation of the Master's Degree Programme in Cognitive Semiotics (orientation)

An evaluation meeting was held on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November regarding the discontinuation of the Master's Degree Programme in Cognitive Semiotics.

The special focus of the meeting was to secure the framework for a good discontinuation of the education. This includes a phasing-out plan (see below) and an assurance of the continued quality of the education, as well as the students' legal certainty, especially in relation to the offering of exams.

The academic environment has prepared an evaluation report which explains which actions are taken to support the above. The proposed actions are set out in a preliminary action plan which is subject to the vice-dean's approval.

HoD explained that the coordinator at cognitive semiotics had done a great job making the evaluation report and the plan for closing the degree programme. The main problem is if students miss the courses in the first and second semester, which are not offered again. But there has been made plans for this.

The Master's Degree Programme in Cognitive Semiotics are being discontinued as of **01.03.2026**.

The last teaching and exams offered under the degree programme are described in the following timetable:

<b>Courses:</b>	<b>Last teaching offered:</b>	<b>Last exam offered:</b>
Courses on the first semester	Autumn 2022	Winter exam 2025/2026
Courses on the second semester	Spring 2023	Winter exam 2025/2026
Courses on the third semester	Autumn 2023	Winter exam 2025/2026

**The Master's thesis** must be submitted for assessment no later than the 01.03.2026.

##### **5. Discussion about mentors sharing exams (discussion)**

Teachers experience that the mentors ask them whether or not they are allowed to share exam papers with the students. The UN discussed what they would like their policy about this to be, so that new mentors can be given clear instructions about when and whether it is ok to share assignments and exam papers.

The issue was discussed and different opinions were shared:

- It is never possible to control if the mentors do this or not.
- The process of making a paper and finding their own way to do it is important, and that might be ruined if the students share their papers.
- The UN/department should not have a role in this, since it cannot be controlled.

- If students see an exam paper they still have to think about if they want to do it similar or different.
- It is good that students can help each other with the formalities on how to write an assignment and do a project.
- The content of the assignments should of course be their own but students can gain knowledge about the form that they can use.
- Whether or not it is a good idea depends on the exam form and the questions asked. It should not be done for courses with portfolio exams where the description of the assignments can be very similar from year to year.
- Showing students a diversity of possible project can help inspire the students. But maybe this is done better in class, where teachers can show examples from student assignments, if students has allowed this.
- Reading exam papers and other student ´s projects are the same as reading extra articles, which are okay.
- There is the risk of plagiarism that students have to be aware of, even though they are not given the same exam questions as previous years.
- For very method heavy exams it is not good if the students share their exams and can copy from each other.
- Maybe students learn more if the mentors go through different exam papers with this, and explain how to do an exam project, instead of just sharing the papers with no explanations.

#### Conclusion:

HoD summed up the discussion concluding that the policy should be, that mentors can share exam papers for the courses where students do projects - so the home assignments that are not bound to a specific exam question. But it should not be done for portfolio exams and method courses.

It was mentioned that it should also be mentioned to the upcoming tutors, since they also talk to students about this. The mentors or instructors can be encouraged to help students in the smaller groups about how to make exam papers.

#### **6. Orientation about meeting with employers at Linguistic (orientation)**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> of November the department had arranged an event "Linguists in the wild" for both VIP and students where different possible employers attended and made a presentation of how they use their linguistic skills in their everyday work life. After the presentations there was a workshop for VIP- and employers representatives. Head of department informed that the day was successful, and there was a lot useful in put for the upcoming evaluation of the degree programme and revision of the academic regulations. Overall the discussions showed that the degree programme for linguistics is working well and overall contains the right subjects.

It was mentioned that the feedback from the students afterwards had also been positive, and it was suggested to make a similar event next year – maybe with the

possibility of adding of session where students can talk to the employers after the presentations.

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## **7. News from Head of Department (Orientation/discussion)**

Head of department informed of the following:

- If teachers have ideas for projects that needs funding but are not sure which grants to apply for they can talk to HoD.
- The unemployment statistics for the first cohort at MA Cognitive science are looking good. It is measured after quarter 2 and 3. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter (9 months) there is 0% students unemployed, which is very impressive. Linguistics are measured after the 7<sup>th</sup> quarter like other Arts educations. Cognitive science is different because it is an IT programme.

## **8. Issues for upcoming meetings**

### 7.1 Issues for upcoming UN meetings

### 7.2 Issues for upcoming meetings suggested for the Board of Studies

It was suggested to mention the following for the Board of Studies:

- The possibility for letting students create study groups across classes
- The lack of supplementary subjects in English for the international students. In general international students should be kept in mind, since they have limited opportunities for different courses.