

Degree Programme Board (UN) Meeting Linguistics, Cognitive Science and Semiotics

18-09-2024 11:00 - 13:00

1485-316

Present:

UN members: Jakob Steensig (UN-chair), Alexandra Kratschmer (VIP), Ethan Weed (VIP SN-rep.), Victoria Engberg Lowe (stud. SN-rep.), Nina Vad Thomsen (stud. rep.)

Observers: Mikkel Wallentin (VIP), Andreas Højlund (VIP), Chris Mathys (VIP), Rebekah Brita Baglini (VIP), Riccardo Fusaroli (VIP), Lau Møller Andersen (VIP), Line Elgaard Kruse Danielsen (PhD Student), Ross Deans Kristensen-McLachlan (VIP), Anna Zamm (VIP), Marc Andersen (VIP), Anders Højen (VIP), William McGregor (VIP), Charlotte Bilde (student guidance), Joshua Skewes (Head of Department), Sabrina Bækkelund Hansen (department coordinator) and Lykke Kjerrumgaard Schelde (SNUK minute taker)

Absent: UN members: Anne Christine Vig Jensen (stud. rep.).

Item 1: Approval of agenda and follow up on the minutes from last meeting (decision) (11:00-11:05)

The UN are asked to approve the agenda and give any follow ups on the minutes from the last meeting, which has been approved in writing before the meeting. Previous minutes of UN meetings are publicly available at the UN web page:

<https://studerende.au.dk/studier/fagportaler/arts/kontakt/udvalgognaevn/uddannelsesnaevn/kommunikation-og-kultur/>

Minutes

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

Item 2: Briefings (orientation) (11.05-11.20)

2.1 News from the Board of Studies

2.2 News from the Institute Forum

2.3 News from the student guidance

2.4 News from Student forum (fagråd)

2.5 News from the study administration

- The Arts Studier Newsletter is publicly available at the teacher's portal at Arts:

<https://medarbejdere.au.dk/fakulteter/arts/til-undervisere-paa-arts/nyhedsbrev-fra-arts-studier/>

Minutes

News from the Board of Studies:

The vice dean of education has approved the schools guidelines for course evaluations. The new policy at the Faculty level gave an opportunity to rethink the schools procedure. The academic environment have received the guidelines. The Board of Studies focuses on formulating fewer and more relevant questions, but how the new questions are formulated is up in the open. The new questions will be discussed and approved in the fall semester and implemented from spring 2025. The new questions will be used in all evaluations, which is why the members of the degree programme board and the teachers present were encouraged to send ideas to Ethan Weed.

News from the Institute Forum:

Anders Højen presented the most interesting point which were a brief status on "dimensionering" and the plan for the educational landscape presented later this day. The Schools economy looks better than first anticipated due to the intake of international students how pay tuition.

Finally the new guidelines for working time registration requirement was mentioned:

News from the student guidance:

Charlotte Bilde is back as a student counsellor and she and Christian will take turns attending meetings of the degree programme board.

Charlotte Bilde briefly oriented the members present about a case pending at BSS which is linked to Arts as well. If there is any mention among students about the case and the teachers was asked to send the students to the student counsellors.

News from the Student Forum:

The head of department informed about the recent meetings which was very positive. At Cognitive Science the changes in the methodological courses seem to have improved the coherence. At Linguistics the focus have been on exchange for the bachelors and how to improvement the information for next year.

News from the study administration

The newsletter contained all the information from the administration. The secretary highlighted the changes to the study regulations which can be read here: <https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/faculties/arts/currently/single-news/artikel/changes-in-academic-regulations-as-of-1-september-2024>.

Item 3: End-of-term evaluations from the spring 2024 (discussion) (11.20-11.25)

The UN is to discuss the end-of-term evaluations from the spring 2024 and to give input to the Head of Department's summary report.

The Board of Studies (SN) has decided to continue with the simplified reporting format. Based on the discussion in the UN, the Head of Department is to write a summary report (approx. one page) on the evaluations from spring 2024 using the reporting format.

The summary report must be formulated in a way that is appropriate for publication on the AU website.

The report is to be written on the basis of the discussion in the UN. It is important that the UN discussion and the summary report relate to themes that are specific to the UN's degree programmes as well as to any relevant cross-disciplinary themes.

The report provides an opportunity to adopt a comprehensive, managerial perspective on the challenges/opportunities/best practices identified in the evaluations. It is therefore important to mention any themes that could be discussed across degree programmes in the Board of Studies (SN).

This work will hopefully result in suggestions for specific follow-up initiatives to be included in the action plans and/or inform annual collective didactic initiatives of the department.

These questions may be useful for the discussion in the UN:

- What can the department learn from the evaluations?
- What will the department/UN work with on the basis of the evaluations?
- What will the department/UN pass on to the Board of Studies (SN) for discussion?

The IKK evaluation policy may be found on the AU website ([here](#)).

The official UN members have before the UN meeting received the evaluation notes from each course in order to be able to qualify the discussion of the summary report using the information from these.

The Head of Department has received an e-mail from the Director of Studies Lars Kiel Bertelsen that no later than 4th October 2024 must the evaluation report be send to studieleder@cc.au.dk.

After the review, the Director of Studies forwards the reports to the Board of Studies.

Appendices:

3.1 Teaching evaluation report Cognitive Sciences S24

3.2 Teaching evaluation report Linguistics S24

3.3 Evaluation summary report from the Head of Department S24

Minutes

The head of department went through the evaluation memo which is written based on feedback from teachers, discussions at two evaluation meetings for each program, and input from the UN and Student Forum LICS. The head of department had summed up the main points of attention in the memo.

Regarding Linguistics

- There is an increasing tendency that students attend classes without completing the readings. This is a problem, because often class exercises are dependent on students having done the readings in preparation, especially in courses focused on grammatical topics.
- Students report in their evaluations that they feel courses could have greater coherence between course elements.
- The department should consider whether these two major issues may be related. It is well known that students are most motivated when courses have a clear structure and purpose

The head of department requests a discussion of this complex of problems in the Board of Studies.

- Feedback is an other mail focus point both in the evaluations and i the study environment survey (item 7)

Regarding Cognitive Sciences:

- A common issue in cognitive science is coherence across methods courses. Students report experiencing a misalignment in the content indicated for methods courses in the academic regulations, and the content actually taught in the course.
- The department has initiated a working group to develop the methodological courses so that the methods progression in cognitive science is more linear, pedagogical, and easier to follow. This working group has already been developed some solutions to this problem, and including joint curriculum development for all four methods courses. Students are already reporting improvements to the methods line in the student forum as a result of the implemented changes.

Alexandra Regina Kratschmer added an evaluation at the meeting, which will be read and incorporated in the memo.

The members of the degree programme board had nothing to add to the memo.

Item 4: Elections at AU (decision) (11.25-11.30)

The UN chair person informs about elections at AU in the autumn of 2024, and the UN discusses what can be started in relation to recruitment among students.

The students have received a mail from Camilla Mark Thygesen regarding the election.

Proposal for decision:

The UN should appoint a student UN member who can be responsible for setting up the election list for students.

Read more about the timeline for the election:

<https://medarbejdere.au.dk/strategi/universitetsvalg/tidsplan-2023>

Minutes

The students told about the preliminary steps in recruiting new member for the degree programme board. The chair thanked the students for having already initiated the recruitment process, as students are important in the democratic committee.

Both Victoria Engberg Lowe and Nina Vad Thomsen is running for re-election.

Decision:

Victoria Engberg Lowe and Nina Vad Thomsen are responsible for setting up the election list for students.

Next step:

The secretary will send an email regarding the election list to Victoria Engberg Lowe and Nina Vad Thomsen.

Item 5: Plans of action Årlig Status and assessment of teaching environment (ordinær uddannelser) (orientation) (11.30-11.32)

The study board representative gives a brief orientation about the status of the plans of action (årlig status) after they have been discussed by the board of studies and submitted to the director of studies for approval.

The head of department also provides information about the status of assessment of teaching environment action plans (UMV).

Minutes

Head of department went through the actions plans and told the members, that the action plans related to Årlig Status for Linguistics have been approved by the head of studies. Focus areas for the fall are: making sure that the internationals are feeling well integrated, continuation of the student social ambassador position and ensuring representatives to the Fagråd. The actions are ongoing in the coming year and will be revised again i spring 2025.

As for the action plans compiled for the assessment of teaching environment at the department the actions have been initiated. The Board of Studies are going to discuss the action plans on an upcoming meeting on the 25 of September. The board of studies discusses the plans of action for the teaching environment on the board's degree programmes with focus on disseminating examples of good practice and ideas for initiatives across the School.

There were no questions for the orientation.

Item 6: Follow up on the discussion on Inclusion of students with special needs in the teaching (orientation) (11.32-11.37)

The many and good discussions in the board of studies regarding inclusion of students with special needs in the teaching have resulted in a memo which the members of the board find attached (in Danish only). The discussions are summarised in the board of studies' minutes from the relevant meetings in spring 2024.

At department level, the head of department has decided that the academic environment should get inspiration on how to continue working to support integration. An inspirational event will be arranged for the academic environment with a consultant from CED, who is involved in the field on a daily basis. The board will be involved when the event has been held, so that they get insight into the reflections that the academic environment makes.

Appendix (in Danish only):

6.1 Udtalelse fra Studienævnet om studerende med særlige behov

Minutes

Ethan Weed presented the item and extrapolated on the study board's discussions and work to gather knowledge. The circulated memo contains all the knowledge generated during the process. Ethan Weed told that there is a student's wish to be better equipped to collaborate with their fellow students with special needs. The Chair asked the student counsellor if this was something they dealt with in their study group workshops. This is not the case, but it is possible for study groups to seek guidance and sparring from the student counsellors.

One of the degree programme board members asked if the Board of Studies have discussed the amount of time teachers spend on these students and how they could be compensated in the working time registration system. This focus is not a part of the discussions.

Item 7: Study environment survey (orientation) (11.37-11.47)

Brief presentation of the survey at AU level:

The Danish Student Survey is sent by the Education and Danish Agency for Science, Technology and Innovation to all students at Denmark's higher education. The responses were collected in autumn 2023, and a total of 10,800 students at AU (34.2%)

answered the questionnaire. At Arts, 37.4 % of the students responded. In last autumn's survey on the student part, the students, among others, were asked about topics that cover a wide range and include, among other things: well-being, feedback, time spent, contact with teachers, physical conditions, stress and loneliness as well as harassment.

Specific for the UN LICs due to upcoming discussion at the SN

The board of studies have a discussion of the study environment for the MA' students in September. This item on the agenda is preparatory for the representatives of the board of studies, so they can convey the conclusions orally to a more cross-organisational discussion in the board of studies and present points of attention from the degree programmes. The orientation will focus on the special academic and social challenges international degree programmes hold.

The head of department brings to our attention, that due to the degree programmes evaluation of the departments educations the surveys have been discussed at previous meetings, when the board discussed the actionplans in relation to årlig status (linguistics) and degree programme evaluation (CogSci). The insights from these discussions can be found in the minutes and reports as preparatory for the SN meeting in November.

Next steps:

The representatives of the board of studies (SN) convey the conclusions orally to a more cross-organisational discussion in the board of studies (SN) in both September and November.

Appendices for your orientation (in Danish only):

7.1 Kognitionsvidenskab, bachelor_SMU 2023

7.2 Kognitionsvidenskab, kandidat_SMU 2023

7.3 Lingvistik, bachelor_SMU 2023

7.4 Lingvistik, kandidat_SMU 2023

Minutes

Head of department introduced the reports and told that many points were in the action plans for both degree programmes.

The main points of attention on Cognitive Science (BSc and MA) are:

- Ensuring the student social ambassador position.
- Incorporate more feedback in teaching and communicate this clearly to the students. Written feedback is striven for, but not an option.
- The social environment is a focus point, and there will be send a mail regarding this soon. Discrimination must under no circumstances be part of the environment.

The main points on Linguistics (BA and MA) are similar regarding the social environment and regarding feedback on the Bachelor's programme there are talks about using collective feedback. Students on the MA experience career stress. They must be given a deeper insight into their career opportunities so that they feel safe about it. head of department will hold an career talk in the fall.

The members had no further points of attention than those mentioned.

Item 8: Issues for upcoming meetings (11.47-11.49)

8.1 Issues for upcoming UN meetings

8.2 Issues for upcoming meetings suggested for the Board of Studies

Minutes

None

Written orientations with opportunity for questions

Item 9: Course Evaluation Questions (orientation)

UN is informed that the departmental guidelines for course evaluations have now been approved by the Vice-Dean for Education. SN works in September and October on SN questions for course evaluation, which will apply to all programmes under the Board of Studies for a 3-year period. SN will decide on the questions in November. The questions are prepared on the basis of the Evaluation Policy for Arts and the new departmental guidelines. The guidelines and policies are attached for informational purposes.

According to the departmental guidelines for course evaluation, UN does not have the ability to formulate UN questions for the course evaluations. Instructors can add up to two course-level questions.

Appendices:

9.1 The departmental guidelines for course evaluations - IKK

9.2 Evaluation Policy – Arts

Item 10: Graduate survey (orientation)

The Danish Student Survey, the graduate part, is aimed at 1-2 years graduates. In 2020, AU conducted a parallel questionnaire survey for 5-6-year master's graduates. This survey is no longer being conducted.

The survey was carried out in autumn 2023 and was sent to 11,565 graduates at Aarhus University and 3,359 responded, giving an overall response rate of 29%. At Arts, the overall response rate is 32%. In comparison the response rate for MSc in Cognitive Sciences is 44% and for MA in Linguistics the response rate is 45%.

In 2023 and 2024, the department's degree programmes went through the programme evaluations. In relation to these processes the department and students have discussed and analysed the graduate survey in the best possible way in order to create relevant actions based on data received. Furthermore, the employer forums for both programmes discussed data and shared knowledge at their meetings in autumn 2023 and spring 2024. Therefore, the degree programme board will not discuss the surveys, but representatives of the board of studies will be able to request specific information from degree programme evaluation reports and current action plans if necessary in preparation for the board of studies' item in November.

Next steps:

The representatives of the board of studies (SN) relay the conclusions orally to a more cross-organisational discussion in the board of studies (SN) in November.

Appendices (only in Danish):

10.1 KA i kognitionsvidenskab_DIM 1-2 years 2023

10.2 KA i lingvistik_DIM 1-2 years 2023

Item 11: Information on changes to academic regulations published on 1 September the current year

All changes to academic regulations take effect on 1 September.

The degree programme boards will be informed of the changes to their own academic regulations taking effect on 1 September:

This may include the changes to academic regulations which have been requested by the degree programme board, and which have been approved by the board of studies and the Dean's Office. But other minor changes may also have been made if any unclarity are discovered during the year which could lead to misunderstandings or constitute a threat to the legal rights of the students. These unclarity may be discovered by either teachers or administrative staff while working with the academic regulations, and any changes will always be made in collaboration with the head of department and teacher concerned.

- BCs Cognitive Science 2020 – Bachelor's project – changes to the demands of individualization.
- BA Linguistics 2018 – section 2.1 – changes to the demands for the exam form "lecture participation".
- MA Linguistics 2020 – Typology – specification of the number of pages.

The degree programme board will be informed of general changes to academic regulations taking effect on 1 September.

See newsletter from Arts Studies Administration.

Item 12: AOB

To be formed at the meeting.

Minutes

None.