

Meeting date: 13 April 2021, 16:15- 18:45

Meeting place: ZOOM

Meeting subject: Academic Council

Attendees: Anne Jensen (AJ/ENVS), Eskild Holm Nielsen (EHN/Dean Tech), René Gislum (RG/AGRO), Jens Malmkvist (JM/ANIS), Björn Andresen (BJA/ECE), Annette Baattrup-Pedersen (ABP/BIOS), Hanne Lakkenborg Kristensen (HLM/FOOD), Søren Wandahl (SWA/CAE), Thomas Lykke-Møller Sørensen (TLMS/BCE), Martin Heide Jørgensen (MHJ/MPE), Emre Karaman (EKA/QGG), Ozgenur Coskun (OC/FOOD), Maria Holst Kjeldsen (MHK/ANIS); Ahmad Madary (AMA/TAP); Stine Wendelboe Bjorholm (SWB/TAP); Louise Fischer Koue (LFK/TAP), Stine Munkholm Jespersen (SMJ/stud.),,

Brian Vinter (BVI), Ida Marie Gerdes (IMG/secretary)

Apologies for absence/absent:

Anne Kirstine Heilskov Rasmussen (AKHR/stud), Frederik Both Rokkjær (FBR/stud.), Mie Lundgaard, Hanne Vester Rasmussen.

The Dean opened the meeting and welcomed all new members to the council. The Dean remarked that the administrative/legal language (Forvaltningsproget) in Denmark is Danish, so therefore some of the documents presented in the council will be in Danish, but that we will do our best to translate documents to English.

1. Approval of agenda

It was decided to take the introduction round before the election of chair.

2. Introduction round

All present introduced themselves by name and department.

3. Election of Chair

Senior researcher Anne Jensen, Department of Environmental Sciences was elected as chair.

4. Approval of minutes from meeting 2 March

The minutes will be approved by e-mail.

5. Introduction to Academic Council and approval of rules of procedure

All members were introduced to the tasks of the council:

- To secure the conditions for free research
- to advise and inspire the Dean on matters of academic relevance
- to raise issues of high importance for academic work, research, public sector consultancy and education
- to award PhD degrees



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- to approve assessment committees (notice the 3 days deadline)

Academic Council must also advise the Dean about the budget, strategy, innovation and development of education/teaching and must also appoint members to different kinds of committees. All members are welcome to suggest items. Members are obliged to participate. Minutes are public. Confidential matters must be kept confidential. Academic Council is also invited to a seminar at Sandbjerg Gods in September with the other Academic Councils, Deans and Rector.

6. Budget – follow up

AJ collected all the inputs and will circulate the documents to the members of the council.

EHN summarized the process since last meeting, where there have been negotiations about different areas from senior agreements to savings on buildings. Unfortunately, we will still have to dismiss people. The Dean is aware that it is a tragedy with large consequences for the individual employee. The dialogue with the Heads of Departments and the union representatives has been very constructive and everyone have worked hard for minimizing the number of dismissals. Around 1.5% of the staff will be affected. This number is lower than anticipated.

It was mentioned that it is difficult for the new engineering departments to suggest preventing actions when their budgets were not ready and that this has been frustrating.

EHN noted an unbalance between the income of the engineering departments and the expenditures of 8M which induced a saving demand and cut in the expenditures for each engineering department. EHN also stated that a plan for relocation labs etc. will be ready hopefully within app. a month, which will make it more easy for the involved departments to plan installment of new equipment etc.

EHN mentioned that there has been a very promising meeting at Foulum Campus with members of the Danish Folketing and that there probably will be meetings in our Sjælland campus as well. These visits bring the problems with the 2% annual costs cut (“omprioriteringsbidrag”) on the political agenda and into the national budget negotiations (finanslovsforhandlinger) in the Folketinget. For the public sector consultancy, the annual 2% cost cuts is not sustainable for the future in the long run. However, the Faculty strategy laid down for the financial situation should ensure balancing budgets for at least 3-4 years. There is an unfolded potential for the future funding situation and a hope for the outcome of the budget negotiations in Folketinget.

The Council stressed that the online teaching must not be a way to save money.

7. Corona 15 min.

It was decided to discuss the reopening in this meeting and on the next meeting discuss the learnings from the lock down.

The plan is to get the students back into the campus for e.g. lab work. The 2 meters distance requirement for keeping the CV19 contagion down limits the possibilities for further opening. It is important that the PhD students return physically to their departments, also for meetings with supervisors. There will be test facilities at all campuses.

It was commented that it is important to prioritise study halls and places where the students can meet. It is important for the quality of the education and the mental health of the students. The communication must be very clear, so the students know what they are allowed to do and what is not allowed.

It was mentioned that when things get more normal over the coming months, social and scientific events should be supported among staff and students.

8. AU Strategy - Action plan 2022

EHN went through the Strategy of Aarhus University and its 6 main areas and asked the Council for input/comments. The final action plan will be adopted by the Board in December so there will be further options to comment it.

The comments were systematised after the meeting so they fitted into the themes of the Action Plan:

Handleplan til kerneopgave 1) Forskning af højeste international kvalitet:

Indsats - Opnå flere kvalificerede ansøgere til faste stillinger (indføring/fortsættelse af dispensationskrav til ansættelser, hvis der er under 4 kvalificerede ansøgere.):

There was a discussion of quality vs quantity, and it was mentioned that it could be problematic for niche research areas in need of *the* professor. It was mentioned that the Dean or Vice Dean could grant an exemption for the rule within, but that mobility and competition is necessary and beneficial and that broad calls for positions can attract qualified candidates even for niche research areas.

Indsats - Øge hjemtag af nye eksterne midler:

The suggestions about "interne peer reviews på ansøgninger" and "systematisk afklaring af relevant målgruppe for finansieringskilder/calls" was supported with a wish for procedures and structures to ensure higher and more substantial quality of proposals, and equally for more strategic and targeted support for e.g. interdisciplinary proposals.

Indsats - New measure suggested (under forskningsmæssige gennembrud):

The Council suggested including a measure about strengthening the basic research to get a better balance between the applied science and the basic research and to obtain more freedom of research. The Dean mentioned that we should not have an initiative

that favors one kind of research, but that we should focus on strengthening and conducting excellent research. Furthermore, EHN stressed that you experience the largest freedom of research as PI.

Indsats - Karriereudvikling for PhD studerende og yngre forskere (ny).

There was a comment on what the strategy is for our youngest talents and that we should do more to promote our own talents. EHN mentioned that the Strategy is that the youngest talents should go abroad.

Handleplan til kerneopgave 3) Forskningsbidrags til samfundets udvikling og velfærd:

An initiative about career paths (and merits) was asked for the public sector consultancy area, but the Dean mentioned that this should be on a more generic level and include all and not be part of this action plan for AU.

It was suggested to have an initiative about mobility with other institutions in order to sustain and create networks etc.

General comments:

- The strategy for equality and diversity should be more reflected in the AU strategy as well
- Climate change is not mentioned
- Sustainability in the broader sense of the word is not mentioned
- Idea: Mobility across the faculty for senior staff (outside this strategy)

9. Co-operation across departments and faculties

It was decided to form a small working group to prepare a discussion on how we can strengthen, support and foster a better collaboration across the faculties.

Thomas, Ozgenur and René were appointed for the group. The Council expressed thanks for their willingness to contribute to the work.

10. Evaluation of centers

BV explained that there will be an international evaluation of the interdisciplinary centers with a focus on added value. Since we look into a future where interdisciplinary work is increasingly important, we need to find out what works and what doesn't work.

The council had no comments for this.

11. Action Plan for Gender Equality (implementation and follow up)

The Council has two tasks: To give input on the development to EHN and to discuss how Academic council can contribute to the larger agenda of diversity and change of

culture at the faculty. It was decided to take the debate at a later meeting where it is important to discuss how we create a work culture that promote diversity, and what can be actively done by the leadership.

The Council commented that the recent development in equality among genders and the numbers are very disappointing. The Council further stressed that it is necessary for the Faculty management to intervene, considering that there is a 100% male dominance in all the top management positions appointed at the upstart of the Faculty.

12. Election of two Danish speaking substitutes for “Praksisudvalget” and Candidates for “Udvalg for videnskabelig uredelighed”

Hanne Lakkenborg can no longer be substitute since she is section leader. Mathias Neumann Andersen (member) has left Praksisudvalget because he is section leader as well. Niels Bohse (substitute) has agreed being a member until August. Jens Malmkvist was suggested as member for Praksisudvalget as of September 1. The committee didn't suggest any more substitutes at the meeting.

There were no suggestions for Udvalget for videnskabelig uredelighed at the meeting.

13. PhD degrees since last meeting

22 degrees have been awarded since last meeting. There were no comments for this item.

14. Announcements

Maria will go on maternity leave in May
One student has left the council

15. AOB

No comments
