

Tech Academic Council, 2 March 2021

Meeting date: 2 March 2021, 16:15-17:45

Meeting place: ZOOM

Meeting subject: Extraordinary meeting Tech Academic Council

Attendees:

Attendees: Anne Jensen – acting chair (AJ/ENVS), Eskild Holm Nielsen (EHN/Dean Tech), Inge S. Fomsgaard (ISF/AGRO), Jens Malmkvist (JM/ANIS), Björn Andresen (BJA/ENG dpts.), Annette Baattrup-Pedersen (ABP/BIOS), Henrik Karstoft (HK/ENG dpts.), Hanne Lakkenborg Kristensen (HLM/FOOD), Ozgenur Coskun (OC/FOOD), Maria Holst Kjeldsen (MHK/ANIS)
Anne Kirstine Heilskov Rasmussen (AKHR/stud)

Brian Vinter (BVI), Hanne Vester Rasmussen (HVR/ADM), Ida Marie Gerdes (IMG/Tech DO secretary)

Apologies for absence: Mette Nørtoft Thomsen (MNT/STUD), Lizzi K. Stausgaard (LKS/ENVS-TAP); Stine Munkholm Jespersen (SMJ/stud.), Frederik Both Rokkjær (FBR/stud.), Mie Lundgaard (MLU/Tech DO)

Agenda:

1. **Welcome and approval of Agenda** (AJ) (2 min.) (16:15-16:17)
2. **Approval of Minutes** (AJ) (5 min) (16:17-16:22)
Approval of minutes from 3 February (appendix)
3. **Corona** (AJ/EHN) (16:22-16:37)
*Exchange of ideas (work life balance; General discussion and ideas on how to handle the situation - research, consultancy, teaching and well-being).
Postponed from meeting 3 February.*
4. **Economy** (EHN/AJ) (16:37-17:40)
Appendices: Follows
5. **AOB** (AJ) (17:40-17:45)

1) **Welcome and approval of Agenda** (AJ)

The agenda was approved.

2) **Approval of Minutes** (AJ) (5 min)

Minutes from 3 February approved.

3) **Corona** (AJ/EHN)

It was commented that the situation is harder than last spring for a lot of staff, students and PhD-students.

It was mentioned that it is important with other types of communication than zoom/teams meetings. Some have zoom meetings or walk and talk once a week with their students.



Some of the PhD students conducting experiments in the labs are now in a critical phase due to the COVID19 induced constraints on in-person presence at campus. This is a risk if the PhD students should finish in due time. The PhD students miss going to work, meet with colleagues and fellow students, and network. Another main concern right now is that new PhD students from abroad experience problems coming to Denmark. The PhD students inquired about the status of the duty work linked to all PhD fellowships, but it is the Heads of Departments that “owns” the “duty hours”.

EHN mentioned that necessary lab activities in relation to the educational part of the PhD is allowed. But it is not realistic that there will be any opening on this side of Easter. It is important to follow our students as well as our PhD students and do what we can for their well-being.

One of the students who could not be present at the meeting had sent a comment on the importance of opening the labs for the students.

4) Economy (EHN/AJ)

AJ initiated the discussion remarking that the faculty is facing financial problems but at the same time, we look into funding landscape that suits Tech well. Academic Council must advise the Dean on how to handle the situation.

EHN emphasized that it is a diverse message, where we have a large unfolded potential with respect to increasing external funding. EHN furthermore, noted how the situation for the engineering departments is different from the other TECH departments' situation, which have faced a 2% annual reduction required by the state authorities for years. EHN mentioned that he and Rector would write a feature for public media about the about the increasing demands for our research areas and the public sector consultancy and the decreasing economic support and cost-cutting requirements.

AJ mentioned four focus areas for the discussion: Funding, framework for the public sector consultancy, educations and buildings/rent.

The council had more a general discussion and comments on the situation. There is a widespread frustration about how things have been handled in the past and the situation and how the Tech departments ended in this situation. Especially because Rector initially stated that the split of ST would not cause dismissals and because Rector had been aware of the problem with the annual 2% reductions for many years without taking enough action to manage the situation. The priorities in the economic strategy in the cause of the ST Faculty split was questioned as was the different conditions for the Nat and Tech ‘inddæknings’-requirement. It was remarked that many colleagues in one of

our departments have a feeling of not being wanted and accepted at the university and it causes a lot of frustration and demotivation.

It was mentioned as an addition that we should discuss how we can raise the paradox that society wants more engineers for solving e.g. the climate crisis but no one wants to invest.

Funding:

EHN mentioned the options ahead of us within Research: A new Center for sustainable transition of agriculture, and a focus on Innomissions partnerships. It was also mentioned that it is important to take the leadership in EU funding, especially concerning Horizon Europe's focus on the twin transition of digital and green societal transformations and projects.

It was commented that many of the departments are ranked very high in an international research perspective and that this should be promoted. Furthermore, it was stressed that it is necessary to find another term for these departments the "public sector consultancy-departments" as the consultancy is only a part of what these departments do (suggestions: green departments or life science departments).

It was remarked that more support and resources for writing funding application is needed since this is very time consuming and that heads of departments should support this. It was suggested that a more structured, disciplinary qualified and systematic support for writing these kinds of applications should be developed.

Frame for public consultancy:

EHN commented that in re-negotiation the contract, the annual 2% cost-cutting requirement must end and will be included in the negotiations with the state agencies. Further, it was noted that also Tech should try to get more resources allocated to the tasks in consideration of the concomitant demands.

It was suggested to make a better business model for the consultancy tasks and that in the long run it is necessary to have a reorientation of the strategic development of the departments and another focus on funding so that we are not in the same situation in five years.

Education:

The potential for collaboration across the departments is vast and the focus groups in the strategy process showed a great interest from all sides in exploiting and enhancing collaborations on research, funding and education across

the Faculty. When it comes to education we should take advantage of the experience and of the interest and energy shown in the focus groups but it is an investment and right now it seems difficult because of the situation. However, the Council saw educational perspectives for green growth and transition, and including the focus on the double transition of green and digital societal transformations, and expressed a genuine wish for offering more green educations at the faculty.

The council decided to make written proposals for the four themes since the meeting ran out of time.

AOB (AJ)

Next meeting in the new Academic Council is in the middle of April. AJ encouraged member to ask their colleagues to remember to vote in the election.

AJ reminded the Council about the conference om March 8 about gender equality.

AJ and EHN thanked Henrik and Inge for their efforts and work in the ST Academic Council and in the Tech Academic council.
