

**Date: Wednesday, February 3, 2021, 16:15-18:30**

**Place: Online-ZOOM**

**Subject: Meeting, Academic Council**

**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), Hanne Lakkenborg Kristensen (HLM/FOOD), Ozgenur Coskun (OC/FOOD), Maria Holst Kjeldsen (MHK/ANIS)

Stine Munkholm Jespersen (SMJ/stud.), Anne Kirstine Heilskov Rasmussen (AKHR/stud), Frederik Both Rokkjær (FBR/stud.), Mette Nørtoft Thomsen (MNT/STUD)

Mie Lundgaard (MLU/Tech DKN), Brian Vinter (BVI), Hanne Vester Rasmussen (HVR/ADM),

**Absent with apologies:** Henrik Karstoft (HK/ENG), Lizzi K. Stausgaard (LKS/ENVS-TAP)

**Minute taker:** Ida Marie Gerdes (IMG/Tech DKN)

**Guest:** Finn Borchsenius (FBO) – Item 5; Jørgen Brøchner Jespersen (JBJ) – Item 7

**1. Approval of agenda and minutes from previous meeting (appendix) (AJ)**

Anne Jensen (AJ) welcomed to the first meeting in Tech Academic council 2021.

Approval of agenda: The agenda was approved.

Approval of minutes from meeting on November 25, 2020:

- Joint meeting with Nat
- Tech meeting

Both minutes were approved.

AJ mentioned that the idea catalogue resulting from the November ST AR meeting's group work on AU strategy on Sustainability and Climate was appreciated by the office that coordinates the strategy on climate and sustainability and that all good ideas are welcome.

**2. Welcome to new members and short introduction to the Academic Council (AJ)**

AJ welcomed the new PhD students and students.

All members introduced themselves and AJ presented the scope for the discussions and tasks in the Academic Council:



- The conditions for doing research, teaching and public consultancy at Tech (and AU).
- To ensure free academic practice.
- To ensure deliberation and participation of Academic staff – in collaboration with the Dean and the management.
- A special task in inspiring and advising the Dean.
- The council takes up novel and innovative topics for stimulating the conditions and the research at the faculty (basic structure, principles etc.).
- Discusses topics of a statutory nature and provides responses to consultations (e.g. on strategies and university policies).
- Confers formally the PhD degrees at the Faculty
- Approving assessment committees for hiring academic staff. An important task is for the members of AC to pay special attention to the proposed candidates for assessment committees at own departments.
- 5 meetings a year, and ad hoc meetings if necessary
- Annual 2-day seminar at Sandbjerg Gods with AU's other Academic Councils, the Deans and Rector.
- September: Joint annual meeting with Academic Council at NAT Faculty.
- Normally meetings are held in person in Aarhus and it is expected that members are well-prepared and participate actively in discussion, agenda setting, etc.

EHN added that he is looking forward to the physical meetings (incl. social events) and that he aspires for an open dialogue with the Academic Council both in regards to strategic aspects, advice/comments on the Faculty economics, research integrity and the working environment, research, teaching, business collaborations and public sector consultancy.

AJ thanked EHN for his open dialogue-approach to the Academic Council.

### 3. Status of the economy (EHN) – confident item:

EHN gave a confident update on the 2021 budget

### 4. Status of the corona situation (EHN)

EHN mentioned that the situation is mentally hard, particularly for the young newcomers, for those who live alone, and for staff and students who have children at home schooling while taking care of their research and teaching at the same time. Coordination takes a lot of time. It is expected that teaching will continue online at the least until Easter. Some labs and “critical” research functions have not closed down. Great admiration for how the situation and pressure is handled by the staff.

JM mentioned that the lock down gives problems and concerns for the PhD students in relation to taking PhD courses RIGHT NOW. There are not enough courses and not

enough available places in the courses and that it is necessary to allocate some resources for more courses. Especially, it is difficult in relation to wet lab courses and animal courses. BV, head of PhD school, remarked that he and the head of Nat's PhD school are looking in to the problem at the moment and that the money follows the PhD student, so it should not be a problem, and that it should be possible to upscale the current courses. EHN mention that the PhD students should also look into the national courses. AJ suggested that information on national courses and how to subscribe to them should be clarified.

The second part of the item (sharing experiences) was postponed to the next meeting in March.

Before going to item 5 it was decided to postpone item 6 to the first meeting in April.

#### 5. **Strategic ambitions and priorities (AJ/EHN)**

AJ clarified that the Dean wishes to involve both the departments but also the Academic Council in the process of making a new strategy for the TECH Faculty. The aim of the Strategy is to stimulate the Faculty to become a leading and visible, internationally highly recognized research institution. The Strategy must be linked and aligned to the overall AU strategy but also be based on bottom-up inputs from e.g. Academic Council. There has been a process involving staff from the departments in four focus groups developing white papers: Green transition, Digitalization, Entrepreneurship and Identity and profile. Identity and profile is linked with the postponed item 6 on the agenda, and will be addressed at the April meeting.

HL introduced the Green Transition White Paper (which was included in the meeting materials) and remarked that it was been a very interesting, intense, including and trustful process and that in the process the group covered the diversity of the faculty. HL also mentioned an idea that had come up on internal sabbaticals.

BjA presented his reflection on the Entrepreneurship White Paper: The white papers should be combined so they are all part of the same strategy, we should increase our visibility (marketing). It should also be more clear what kind of problem we want to solve for the society now and in the future and why we want to have more entrepreneurship – what is the purpose? We must also address what we don't want to involve in. BjA stressed that the definitions are very good and clear same goes for the dilemmas and it is important to focus on how we build up an incentive strategy to foster more entrepreneurship. However, it is unclear how it should be financed and how the balance between entrepreneurship and our other tasks should be.

ABP presented her impression of the Digitalization White Paper with a focus on what was missing: For the reader it would be good with more examples. ABP also mentioned that regarding open data it must be clarified what is in it for the researchers and

departments to make sure that they wishes to take part in the strategy. With regards to a shared and central data infrastructure management it was questioned how to ensure the data quality update etc.? The goal for such a data management infrastructure must be very clear and the departments must be involved.

AJ asked how we improve the white papers seen from your fields of expertise and how to embed the white papers in your departments so they become living strategies. AJ mentioned that in regards to the green transition we have a unique position but we must not focus solely on the faculty but also pay some attention to the society (people, politics) so the initiatives are recognized and prioritized. It is not only a question of implementation but also a question of identifying and thinking innovatively on which problems are to be solved.

JM commented (on green transition) that it is ambitious and interesting but the focus is on food and agriculture and the animal welfare part is missing and so is a policy perspective. HL commented that the exercise was to make a strategy for us at Tech. If we go too far into society etc. then it is not a Tech strategy. AJ commented that there as well is highly tech relevant topics and areas in cities, and in policy/planning/consuming with greener technology

EHN commented that he would take up the comments but also discuss the further involvement of the Academic Council in the process to come also in regards to the AU Strategy in the years to come – which agenda should we follow? EHN also mentioned other topics that the Academic Council could discuss, e.g. Twin Transition, education port-folio for the green transition and digitalization.

JM mentioned that in the Entrepreneurship White Paper only The Kitchen is mentioned as incubator hub, but what about the Agro Food Park? Also, dilemmas on open data vs. patents plus dilemma between independent research vs. collaborating with companies are missing as important dilemmas.

HL commented that during the process of making the white papers group members did involve their departments in different ways and that it is necessary that the departments find time for the implementation of the strategy and the white papers.

AJ suggested that all departments should discuss what is missing and how to implement the white papers and take ownership of the strategy.

## 6. Identity and culture (AJ/EHN): Item postponed

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## 7. Education report (Finn Borchsenius, vice dean for education)

FBO: Introductory remarks on the education report:

- Annual reports both for faculty management and other leaders for an overview and status of the education area and the quality of the educations
- A summary of all the quality assurance processes e.g. results and actions from the action plan from the previous year, results of the yearly status meetings for all educations and the results of education evaluation (run in 5-year cycles).
- The results are part of a joint AU education report for the AU management and the Board

A few observations were mentioned:

- Drop-out rate, the student's evaluation of the courses, unemployment rate, retention of bachelor students.
- Learn and make use the best experiences from the lock-down (educational IT and online education)
- Continue the close collaboration between Nat and Tech and set up fora in a more rational manner
- Draw the student's minds to their future career while they are still studying

MHK asked for the reasons for the decrease in unemployment. FBO commented that it is difficult to say, it can be due to a change in the labour market or local fluctuations and that all education continuously must look into this aspect and also look make a better integration between master students and the job market (projects).

HL asked for the reason for the red indicators when there is such a high demand for candidates from agricultural food scientist and engineers. FBO replied that there has been a big growth in the diploma engineers, and it looks like it is not a long term problem. After five years all have jobs, so it is more a question of getting the first job.

EHN commented that it is important to give the students entrepreneur-skills as the job market will change in the years to come and that is one of the reasons why entrepreneurship is one of the focus areas in the strategy. Likewise, it is important that we have expand collaboration with the private and the public sector. One of the problems are that most of the jobs within our fields are in the greater Copenhagen area. FBO added that it can be difficult to relocate, if you have a partner and both must find new jobs in a new place Aarhus at the same time.

#### **8. Amendments to the AU By-laws (vedtægtsændringer).**

AJ had prepared a draft for the consultation response which the council received before the meeting. The Academic council had no comments to the draft consultation letter from the chair. The response was approved.

#### **9. Consultation on AUs Erhvervs- og Innovationsstrategi**

AJ had prepared a draft for the consultation response which the council received before the meeting. Jens commented that it is a very good response AJ has prepared. The response was approved.

#### 10. PhD degrees since last meeting

No mistakes or discrepancies were found by the Council. The council decided to follow the procedures from the ST Academic Council where it is the head of PhD school who – on behalf of the Academic Council – confers the PhD degrees. The Academic Council will still see the lists of *degrees since last meeting*.

#### 11. Announcements

a) **Election:** The recommendation is that all members take the deadline into consideration – especially since the deadline for submitting candidate lists falls in the Winter holiday. Remember to find a substitute (*comment added after the meeting: Substitutes will only be activated if you are absent for a longer period of time, i.e. more than two months*).

#### b) Themes for future meetings:

Topics for future meetings should be send to AJ or IMG

#### c) The annual calendar has been updated.

d) **AJ thanked Inge Fomsgaard for her engagement in the council.** You have always been very well prepared for the meetings, engaged and valuable resource for the Council's discussions, ideas, critical role as well as nice atmosphere. It has been a great pleasure working with you.

#### 12. Any other business

JM suggested to discuss the role of the researchers and the university and how to contribute to public discussions.

HL commented that the item 3 was not transparent. It is not clear what had happend with the economy neither in the former merger into ST or the current division of ST into Tech and Nat. It is deeply worrying what has happened and it is not clear at all. EHN added that 2021 is a transition year, there are some clouds in the year to come but there are not any conclusions on the agreements regarding the splitting of the economy yet. EHN also wished that the Council advices the dean on the principles of the budget: How should the economy be used as a part of an incentive structure within the faculty, what is important to support? The Dean and Vice Deans would like to have this discussion with the Academic Council.

AJ thanked everyone for engagement and endurance during the virtual meeting.