

Date	Forum	Time	Place	Meeting #
20 February 2025	Academic Council	15:30-18:00	1525-626	01-2025

Participants	Eskild Holm Nielsen (Dean), Sabine Ravnskov (AGRO), Frants Havmand Jensen (ECOS), Hanne Lakkenborg Kristensen (FOOD), Karen Thodberg (ANIVET), Anne Jensen (ENVS), Thomas Lykke-Møller Sørensen (BCE), Charles Møller (MPE) Søren Wandahl (CAE), Björn Andresen (ECE) Emre Karaman (QGG), Louise Fischer Koue (TAP, QGG), Litle Dalsgaard (TAP, ECE), Anna Elisabeth Kristoffersen (PhD) Muhammad Mohsin Nawaz (PhD), Lærke Dueholm Jensen (student), Kira Gottlieb Køpping (student), Adrián Borbolla Muñoz (non-employed PhD student) Zakaria Hamdi (postdoc), Zahra Esfahani (postdoc) Brian Vinter (vice dean), Mie Lundgaard (chief advisor)
Apologies for absence	Ahmad Madary (TAP, MPE), Kim Kusk Mortensen (adm. centre Nat-Tech), Gertrud Lindberg Tefre (deputy head of administration)
Guests	Finn Borchsenius
Minutes	Ida Marie Gerdes

Item #	Time	Item and appendices	Owner
1	15:30-15:35	Approval of agenda (5 min.) (Appendix)	Anne Jensen
<p>Before approving the agenda, Anne mentioned that we have new student members in the council and bid them welcome.</p> <p>The agenda was approved, but the items were taken in another order due to guest participating in the meeting. However, the minutes will reflect the original order of the items.</p> <p>Anne informed the council that Eskild would have to leave for another meeting and that while he is away Brian Vinter will represent the Dean.</p>			
2	15:35-15:40	Approval of minutes (5 min.) (Appendix)	Anne Jensen
The minutes were approved.			
3	15:40-15:50	Welcome to new members (10 min.) (Appendix)	Anne Jensen
We all welcome two new members in the Council: Kira Gottlieb Køpping and Adrian Borbolla Monoz, Lærke Dueholm was re-elected.			

The postdocs have elected a new candidate; Zakaria Hamdi, whom we also welcome. Zakaria could unfortunately not be here today. For this period, post doc representatives are thus Zahra and Zakaria.			
4	15:50-16:05	Education report (15 min.) (Appendix)	Guest: Finn Borchsenius, Vice Dean for education
<p>Finn Borchsenius presented the education report. The education report is part of AU's and Tech's quality assurance system and is discussed in the Council annually (the slides are attached to the minutes).</p> <p>Bachelor: The drop-out rate in the first year is still above the acceptable limit (red), and will receive particular interest in the years to come. The way students evaluate the teaching is not very positive (yellow). The charts reflect an average of evaluations (both good and bad courses).</p> <p>Masters: We are doing well, with no alarming results that require action.</p> <p>The quality assurance processes are well-functioning, and all the educational programmes at Tech are overall in good shape Graduates are in high demand Both academic and social well-being are rated highly which is very positive</p> <p>Points to pay attention to: Some Master programmes have a challenge with unemployment, but the most critical ones no longer admit new students The indicator for teaching evaluation displays many yellow marks First-year drop-out is a continuous problem – and for some programmes a rising one which calls for action.</p> <p>An action plan has been made for 2025 (see attachment).</p> <p>The Council discussed that the way courses are presented in Brightspace is not what the students meet at the courses. This can be one of the reasons for the bad evaluations. Other problems can be too high a workload, or that the courses are experienced as difficult. All raised problems must be reflected upon. It was mentioned that the students we now have at the faculty programmes, belong to a new generation with another access track through the educational system than what we have been used to.</p> <p>Center for Educational Development has many courses/workshops on teaching etc. that can be utilized more</p> <p>Finn explained that the course evaluations are conducted by the students during the second last week of the semester and is discussed the week later – this is the best way to do them.</p>			
5	16:05-16:35	Masters degree reform (30 min.)	Guest: Finn Borchsenius, Vice Dean for education
<p>Finn started by saying that this is a very pervasive reform that will change what we do at the universities. (Slides attached). There are still many uncertainties as the reform is not fully implemented.</p> <p>30 percent of all master's programmes should be converted into one of the two models:</p> <p>75 ECTS masters programmes or professional master's programmes.</p> <p>There are different demands for the different faculties.</p>			

Due to demographic developments, the Government has decided that the percentage of people going to the university should remain the same and this causes the sector dimensioning.

There are different demands for the different faculties. At Tech, the demand is to transform 15% of our engineer educational programmes into *industrial master programmes* (master degree consisting of four study years, where half of the time is spent in company (2+2)).

Another way: One full year at university and two years part time employed in a company (this only applies for engineering educations).

All kinds of companies can be part of this. The company must offer the position, but you can not be forced to accept it.

Nat, BSS and ARTS cooperate to develop a concept/model as the demands for their programmes are difficult to fulfill within the current programmes. If the companies will pay for it, the 75 ECTS Master's can come back for another 45 ECTS so they get a 120 ECTS Master's degree. However, at Tech, we will only develop EKA (erhvervskandidater) – no 75 ECTS programmes.

There will be extra taximeter for the students that complete the short programme, they will therefore be offered more teaching

Finn explained that there will be no changes in the Cand Polyt, only in Cand.Scient programmes.

The administration is also looking into major administrative task in the handling this.

Finn thinks that this way of going into a company could be attractive. It is not yet clear how this will be evaluated. We must meet the demands regarding the number of industrial masters (in 2028: 5%, in 2030: 10% and in 2032: 15%).

Quality-wise this would be the same as the ordinary 120 ECTS programmes (with thesis, exam etc).

Sector resizing:

AU must cut down 10%

We have two problems:

- a) The number of admitted students were lower than expected and
- 2) An average admission baseline from 2018-2022 is used. We started up our Bachelor of Science Engineering Educations in 2019.

We are squeezed on our number of intakes. We will have no problems in 2025, but intake must be reduced from 2026 for the Bachelor of Science (see slides p.9).

All available seats across AU will be used.

The Council discussed the paradox in reducing seats within a newly prioritized area.

The changes/demands in the master's programmes can be solved via the industrial Master's programme.

Anne Jensen asked about the economic consequences for TECH of the reform. Finn answered that if we succeed with the industrial masters then we will not be as significantly limited as the number predicts.

We might be able to admit diploma engineers. We will be able to admit more international students.

The real issue here is if the diploma engineers cannot pursue a Master's degree at Tech which would be a real loss.

Charles mentioned that the two different models have been pitched to companies. The 1+2 was considered very positive, whereas the 2+2 model was not popular.

Anne thanked Finn for the discussion and presentation.

	16:35-16:40	BREAK w. sandwich	
6	16:40-17:10	Working group VIVE report (30 min.)	Søren Wandahl Anna Elisabeth Christoffersen
<p>Anne mentioned that almost a year ago, the Council agreed to set up a working group that, based on the VIVE report, would come up with proposals on how the faculty can best support a culture that does not tolerate harassment and ensures that if harassment occurs, the victim feels safe enough to approach the management.</p> <p>Anne gave the word to Søren and Anna.</p> <p>Søren started with a recap of why the work was started (VIVE report) and the conclusions from the report.</p> <p>The report points towards the structures at the universities, the employment situation at the universities, the culture and gender imbalance (limited number of women).</p> <p>The group had decided to broaden the perspective to include younger staff and also more DEI elements in the action catalogue.</p> <p>The actions were suggested within these different categories: Management actions Rules and procedures Training and education Culture Awareness</p> <p>A lot of DEI work is already going on, some of the actions suggested in the catalogue might be relevant for more purposes.</p> <p>The Council discussed how to understand “diversity actions” in this approach. Diversity actions should not be taken in order to have a certain balance of woman/internationals/young people etc. Diversity should be pursued not because of fairness but because all research shows that the more diverse groups you have, the better science the diverse group will produce and the better a research environment you create. To contribute with something new is a quality. Diversity is a resource.</p> <p>It was mentioned that more than one department knew of sexual harassment at their department, and hence, it also takes place at AU. Connecting sexual harassment and DEI is perhaps a bit farfetched but it is linked. Perhaps we must define diversity since diversity – and diversity work – should be different in DK than in the US. Our diversity problems in Denmark are different than diversity problems in the US.</p> <p>Dean Eskild mentioned that it should be considered how we – besides ensuring high-quality researchers – can build diverse groups and a psychological sound environment in hiring processes. We need to think about how we talk to each other, how we understand one another, how are we open to and aware of the different preferences each of us have.</p> <p>Anne mentioned that we now have diversity committees at all levels (AU/faculty/departments).</p> <p>Anna (online) mentioned that the reason why inclusion is mentioned is because she has discussed the topic with other PhD students. And many of them feel that they are ‘just’ satellites around their supervisor, and that they are not included in the Department. Thus, if they experience harassment or have any concerns, they rarely feel that they are in a position where they dare to reach out.</p> <p>Litte suggested that this could be a topic for the Sandbjerg seminar, and that diversity will be discussed at the AU conference March 10th.</p> <p>Brian mentioned that harassment often takes place among peers.</p>			

Little mentioned that at ECE they have had a process concerning DEI, where some resistance surfaced due to the topic 'sexual harassment'. We are generally lacking a proper language for discussing these issues in a sound and constructive manner. The statistics shows that there are less than 20 % women at the PhD level. There may be many reasons for this – one reason can be sexual harassment, but this is hardly the main reason.

Anne agreed that culture is an important part. The grey zones are grey zones. Actions can be understood in a very different way than what they were intended – or they may have sexual undertones but be excused with “I was just joking”, and such actions can change over time – and these are cultural aspects. This has changed in the last five years and is linked to DEI and AU's DEI attention and strategic actions.

Charles mentioned that we should focus on the culture and the good behavior.

Brian mentioned that the AU Research Committee has discussed this, and that the catalogue should also be presented to the faculty leadership.

Anne mentioned that it is important that we call it by its name, and not only mention that we strive for a good work environment/culture. It is easier to address if we put this out in the open.

The Dean mentioned that we would really like more to fill out the exit survey – because sometimes this is where people are truly honest. And that is important. We want an inclusive and psychological safe culture at Tech and achieving this is integrated in our strategy.

Sabine supported the idea that this (inclusive environment) could be a topic for Sandbjerg.

Adrian mentioned that we should have very clear procedures on what to do when sexual harassment takes place: Who to contact, etc. The young people might not feel safe in addressing the problem in their own group of researchers and/or PhDs or PostDocs. Perhaps a specified and impartial person to contact can alleviate this reluctance.

Mie mentioned that we have such guidelines. Søren mentioned that the formal procedures are in place, but we must be better at the informal level of actions concerning how to deal with sexual harassment and other DEI related issues, such that everyone are clear on how to handle it.

Little mentioned that we must maintain awareness of this at a daily basis.

Hanne mentioned that the procedures should be communicated since only a few are clear on how to manage situations with violations or risks thereof.

Eskild mentioned that the faculty's work environment committee (FAMU) has discussed the AU strategy. One of our visions should be to have a good working environment both physically and psychological. This must be supported by a strong collaboration between VIP and TAP, but also through leadership development.

Anna and Søren will update the catalogue. It will be circulated in the Council – please send comments. Michelle can be invited to talk about the DEI work.

7	17:10-17:20	AU strategy Consultation (10 min.)	Anne Jensen
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The Council has received the draft AU Strategy and has been asked to send in comments – only few did this. Anne mentioned the headlines for the response both for what concerns the Council (education, public advice) and also what we support (focus on sustainability, interdisciplinarity etc).

Björn mentioned that we must be sure that diploma engineer education is mentioned one way or another. Some actions should be more concrete. We should be a role model. The strategy is a bit of an echo of the University Act. The word graduates should be used instead of candidates.

If there is anything the Council does not approve of, comments should please be send to Anne.			
8	17:20-17:30	Process for Tech Strategy (10 min.)	Eskild Holm Nielsen/Brian Vinter
<p>Brian presented the item, and we also have a larger responsibility for the process. Once the AU Strategy is ready, the faculty should have a strategy as well.</p> <p>Brian stressed that we will not mention specific departments in the Tech Strategy.</p> <p>We are in a completely different place now than when we launched the Faculty. We grow and have large demands for our research, students and supervisory work from society.</p> <p>Over the first five years, we have passed one billion in annual turnover. We do very well. Our starting point was around 500 million. Our strength is rooted in a strong tradition and capacity for collaboration. We receive 36% of the EU Horizon Europe's soil mission grants which is impressive. The strategy process will be an iterative process and include several meetings. When the process is clear, we will appoint a committee that will address and assess pilot projects in the Strategy. Concrete projects are easier to understand and communicate. All departments are represented in the focus groups. It will be a bottom-up process.</p> <p>Mie added that implementation will be a significant role in the strategy and there will be follow-up on the individual items of the Strategy as well.</p> <p>The Dean added that we will maintain some of the same strategic actions and topical issues (e.g. meeting the students where they are) from the previous Strategy. We will build on what we already have. We will develop whitepapers for the different items.</p> <p>Academic Council will be included in the process. The Faculty leadership is always very open for comments and the Council is invited to reach out.</p>			
9	17:30-17:40	URIS update (10 min.)	Brian Vinter
<p>Brian Vinter explained that the University now goes into the 2nd round of implementing URIS guidelines.</p> <p>(URIS means: Udvalg om retningslinjer for internationalt forsknings- og innovationssamarbejde – in English: Committee on Guidelines for International Research and Innovation Cooperation.)</p> <p>The 2nd round concerns AU collaborations with countries that demonstrate a significant democratic deficit.</p> <p>There is a suggestion to conduct a very early screening of collaborative activities with URIS countries to secure at a very early stage that we do not engage with partners who disqualifies the approval. ECE, MPE and BCE conduct much research which fall within the spectrum of dual use. Hence, these projects and, additionally, projects that entail or produce information about important infrastructures are also fragile. The guidelines are the same, but to obtain the preapproval we ensure that no one wastes their time.</p> <p>At Tech (and now at the rest of AU), staff must bring a clean phone and PC when visiting 'risk countries'.</p> <p>In principle, all trips should be approved by the Head of Department. For travels to 'risk countries', approval is compulsory.</p> <p>CWT supports the procedure and reminds you to obtain the approval issued by Heads of Departments.</p> <p>AU equipment with information on must not enter the risk countries, travel kits can be provided – also for people going home for vacation.</p> <p>The council discussed high risk universities, e.g. 'the seven sons' in China, and the considerations that one should have before giving people from these universities access to AU.</p>			

<p>Brian Vinter also informed the Council about the new classification of rooms/labs/infrastructure. Three levels will be used: Secure (labs and computing, limited (for researchers with a lot of GDPR or with dual use projects) and open.</p> <p>An off-boarding procedure will be planned as well, to prevent data from leaving the university unlawfully.</p>			
10	17:40-17:45	PhD degrees since last meeting (5 min.) (Appendix)	Anne Jensen
<p>As it appears from the meeting material, 23 PhD degrees have been awarded since last meeting. The Council had no comments. Anne congratulated the PhDs.</p>			
11	17:45-17:55	Announcements Updated meeting plan Match point 2026 EU mission soil week (10 min.)	Anne Jensen Eskild Holm Nielsen
<p>The meeting plan has been updated. Anne also encouraged the Council to think about honorary doctors and if the Council thinks they should be awarded every year or every second year.</p> <p>The Dean mentioned that for 2025, MatchPoint is run by Nat and encouraged everybody to participate. This year it is about sustainability. Last year it was about cyber security. We will be hosting MatchPoints 2026 and 2027. And we would like to receive input for this. We are the Faculty that participates the least, so ideas on how we can make MatchPoint participation more attractive is indeed needed.</p> <p>MatchPoint is an annual event that brings together researchers, policymakers, industry leaders, and civil society to discuss and address significant global challenges. At Tech, we should act on and improve communication.</p> <p>In the autumn (November), we will have the soil week: AU will host a 'Presidency event' in collaboration with the Ministry of Green Tripartite (MGTP) and the European Commission (DG AGRI and DG ENVI). The topic is soil health and the implementation of an upcoming EU directive on monitoring and sustainable use of soils, and how multifunctional land use through the Green Tripartite can support this. The aim is to highlight AU's strong competencies in soil research and our engagement in EU cooperation under the EJPSoil partnership and Horizon Europe's Mission for Soil Health. Additionally, AU's contribution to research-based advice nationally and within the EU, including on lowland soils and indicators of soil health, will be showcased. High-level participation is expected, including the Danish Minister for Green Tripartite and the Danish organizations behind the agreement, as well as senior representatives from the European Commission. The goal is to inspire the view of soil health as part of multifunctional land use in Europe, supported by research-based government advice.</p> <p>The Dean mentioned that AU has received 92 M from forskningsreserven ('the research reserve'). All faculties have received 13 M BSS and Tech have obtained the remaining funds as these are the two faculties that receives the lowest amount of basic funding.</p>			
12	17:55-18:00	Any other business (5 min.)	Anne Jensen
<p>Hanne asked if AU is doing anything in relation to researchers under critical pressure in fact resistant countries. Brian mentioned that if we have contact with excellent researchers from</p>			

countries with that kind of leadership one can contact the leadership. But as a university, we so far align with the government guidelines on these issues.