

Departmental Forum Meeting: 7 December 2021, 14:00-15:00
2632(L)-242

Minutes

Present:

Niels Haldrup (Chairman, Head of Department), Sune Lauth Gadegaard (Deputy Chairman), Karin Vinding, Jonas Nygaard Eriksen, Timo Trimborn, Jonas Pilgaard Kaiser, Nicola Maaser, Yorge Hansen, Anja Zimmerdahl, Steen Andersen, Marcus Ernø-Heising, Mads Jakob Vieland Jensen, Kristoffer Holst Ibsen, Annia Hoffmeyer

Absent:

Zeynep Yilmaz, Helle Yde

Moderator:

Sune Lauth Gadegaard

Note taker:

Anne la Cour

Department of Economics
and Business Economics

Date: 07-12-2021

Page 1/3

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Approval of minutes from last meeting (26 October 2021)

The minutes were approved.

3. Election process

New members are Annia Hoffmeyer (replacing Charlotte Sparrevohn, TAP), Tobias Dreisler (replacing Marcus Ernø-Heising, student representative Oecon) and Stefan Hirth (replacing Jonas Nygaard Eriksen, Accounting and Finance).

4. News from HoD

Niels Haldrup (NH) provided a short status on the current situation regarding COVID-19. A valid Corona passport is now mandatory on Campus. NH informed that presently, there are no plans to change the format for the coming exams in January 2022, but this of course depends on the development in infection rates in society, and possibly new restrictions could be imposed over the next couple of weeks.

NH briefly informed that the application deadlines for the positions for associate and full professors have just passed. Shortlisting is applied for both vacancies, and hereafter the assessment committees will proceed with the evaluations. NH also informed that the deadline for the official call for junior positions (assistant professorships and postdocs) will be 17 January 2022.

The department management plans to invite all department members for a one-day event in the end of March next year, and NH gave a short description of the preliminary programme, which includes themes such as first-year student-dropout, ECON working environment and outreach. More information will follow in the beginning of the new year.

Lastly, NH commented on Aarhus University's proposal on the education relocations and reductions which were announced mid-November and later approved by the board. In this connection, NH also referred to the recently published newsletter from the University Management, in which the overall financial situation of the University is described.

5. Strategy for the department (according to the annual cycle)

NH referred to the ECON white paper 2021 (attached to the agenda) in which a number of strategic priorities are described. NH emphasised that the department must continue its focus on applications for prestigious funds. The department is very successful in terms of attracting students via our study programmes, but reducing the first-year dropout rate continues to be an important issue for the department to address.

Jonas Pilgaard Kaiser asked whether the assumption that 15-20 percent of teaching activities will be virtual in the future is a correct strategy. NH replied that only where it makes sense academically and pedagogically should online teaching activities be considered. Jonas Nygaard Eriksen asked whether virtual teaching should be regarded as additional lectures to the teaching plan. NH replied that online teaching should not be considered as extracurricular activities. Jorge Hansen asked whether the department had considered more initiatives in order to provide teaching staff guidance and training in creating good online teaching. Centre for Educational Development was mentioned.

As a follow-up on the issue of first-year dropouts, there was a brief discussion about possible initiatives to reduce this, which included suggestions like more student study spaces, a mentoring programme and a revision of how close exams are scheduled. It was also mentioned that the use of mandatory assessment assignments before exams have proved successful earlier. However, concerns whether this is or has been legally permitted is up for discussion at AU level.

Sune Lauth Gadegaard raised the question of how the department is going to improve the gender balance? It was mentioned that female role models – especially among young PhD-students are important. It was also mentioned that this is an ongoing process in accordance with the AU action plan for diversity and gender equality.

6. Post-corona survey follow-up

Sune Lauth Gadegaard provided a summary of the results from the post corona work survey conducted in late August. In general, the overall opinion is that there is no need for strict rules or a department policy stating a specific number of days on campus/at home. However, most DF members agreed that recommendations to establish a future "best practice" both individually and across the department could be beneficial as well as

providing employees with some guidelines and advice on how to communicate how to be reached if not in office physically on campus.

Page 3/3

7. News from the student representatives

Student representative, Oecon, Marcus Ernø-Heising, mentioned that among students there were concerns about the format for the coming exams and last-minute changes. From a student perspective, there was a feeling of lack of clear communication, especially with regard to the exams and what to do in case of sickness or isolation due to Covid.

8. Miscellaneous

Nothing to add.