

Departmental Forum Meeting 1 November 2022, 14:00-15:00
2632(L)-242

Minutes

Present:

Niels Haldrup (Chairman, Head of Department), Sune Lauth Gadegaard (Deputy Chairman), Karin Vinding, Jorge Hansen, Anja Zimmerdahl, Stefan Hirth, Jonas Pilgaard Kaiser, Steen Andersen, Thor Donsby Noe, Christel Brajkovic Mortensen, Nicola Maaser.

Absent:

Tobias Dreisler, Timo Trimborn

Moderator:

Sune Lauth Gadegaard

Note taker:

Anne la Cour

Department of Economics
and Business Economics

Date: 01-11-2022

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1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Approval of minutes from last meeting (30 August 2022)

The minutes were approved.

3. News from HoD

Niels Haldrup (NH) began the meeting by giving a short status of the partial hiring freeze communicated in September by the senior management. NH referred to the [HoD newsletter](#) sent out a few weeks ago, in which it is stated that the hiring freeze will continue into 2023, and ECON will have an effective freeze of new hirings, except for job openings or extensions that are funded by external funds. The decision about openings at the full professor level (business economics) will be postponed until the summer 2023. Regarding openings at the associate professor level, advertisement is expected, but this will be dependent on external funding. Stefan Hirth asked about the prospects for junior staff on a tenure track contract. NH replied that these positions follow the standard procedure and timeline. NH informed that the management is currently working on the ECON White Paper 2022, and this will be on the agenda for the next departmental forum meeting in December. Lastly, NH informed that Centre for Educational Development (CED) is offering a new mandatory course 'Online and blended learning' for tenured faculty. The course aims at informing and developing the use of learning technologies in campus-based teaching. More information about the course will follow in the ECON newsletter, and follow-up on completion will take place at section level.

4. Annual cycle

NH referred to the appendix (ECON ØR 3 + 2023 budget) and repeated the various factors that affect the financial situation of the department as well as the university: soaring energy prices, rising inflation, lower intake of students and uncertainty about the future level of both the “taxametertilskud” and “grundtilskud”. NH informed that the number of faculty-financed PhD scholarships at Aarhus BSS Graduate School will be reduced. In continuation hereof, NH repeated the importance of including funding for PhD students in applications for external funding.

NH also reminded that 2022 will be the final year with full funding from DRDS to support research data infrastructure; in 2023 the grant will be significantly reduced, and from 2024 the grant funding will expire. NH also reminded that the strategic funding from the University (USM-midler) will expire this year, which means that DTMC will no longer receive funding. NH mentioned that the management team is looking into different initiatives that can strengthen the department’s revenues, e.g., offering short courses for companies and also increased focus on attracting more students for our programmes. Sune Lauth Gadegaard commented that it was important to consider a broad range of initiatives, including branding of our education programmes both nationally and internationally. Jorge Hansen asked whether the current budget is based on the assumption that the present level of the “forhøjede taxametertilskud” continues despite the fact that the future level is subject to great uncertainty. NH replied that this is the case and this financial item in the budget is very exposed to future political negotiations.

5. Follow-up on the focus points from WPA-22

Anja Zimmerdahl gave a short summary of the ECON WPA themes and focus points and suggested that a working group consisting of members from LSU and DF should contribute to identifying concrete action points as well as securing ongoing follow-up and evaluation. SLG and Christel Brajkovic Mortensen agreed to join the group.

6. Election and constitution of the forum

SLG reminded the members of the Econometrics and Business Analytics section and the Economics section that elections normally take place for the sections Econometrics and Business Analytics and Economics in November/December and are held in even years. Current members can run for re-election. The elections should be held before the first meeting in 2023.

7. News from the student representatives

It was agreed that SLG should contact Mogens Dilling-Hansen (director of studies, HA) and Malene Kallestrup-Lamb (ECON merc. coordinator) again to identify new members from the HA/cand.merc. programmes.

8. Miscellaneous

Stefan Hirth informed that the committee working on a proposal for “employee awards” had finished and the proposal will be sent to NH shortly.