

Minutes of Departmental Forum Meeting, 5 February 2019

Participants: Niels Haldrup, Sune Lauth Gadegaard, Jan Bentzen, Jonas Nygaard Eriksen, Trine Munk-Olsen, Karin Vinding, Astrid Würtz Rasmussen, Nicolaj Mühlbach, Kristoffer Pons Bertelsen

Student members: Kasper Selmar Pedersen, Anders Clausen, Katrine Studsgaard Albrektsen

Excused: Martin Møller Andreasen, Gustav Corty Dam, Benjamin Liengaard, Charlotte Sparrevohn

Moderator: Sune Lauth Gadegaard. Note taker: Anne la Cour

1. Approval of the agenda:

The agenda was approved.

2. Approval of minutes from last meeting (4 December 2018):

The HoD suggested that the word “biased” (page 2) was changed due to the connotation of the term. This was approved.

3. Information from HoD:

- The HoD informed about the upcoming workplace assessment 2019 – also referred to as WPA. End-February all employees will receive a questionnaire survey concerning the physiological and physical work environment at AU and more specifically the department. The HoD asked all DF-members to encourage department colleagues to complete the questionnaire in order to archive a high response rate and identify any issues that should be addressed.
- The HoD informed about the process for the local salary negotiations 2019. As announced via e-mail, an electronic application form is available in the period of 1 February - 22 February 2019. The salary negotiations are expected to end in June 2019.
- The HoD informed about rector’s visit on 1 March and urged DF-members to remind colleagues about the visit and ensure a good attendance. Also, DF-members were encouraged to send suggestions for issues to be addressed at the meeting.

4. Quality in teaching and supervising – course evaluation at BSS

The HoD gave an introductory account of the evaluation process that is carried out by CUL – Centre for Teaching and Learning. Files concerning the evaluation of the department’s study programmes have been sent to all DF-members. An assessment of the educational quality is an important element in the development of high quality teaching and learning environments at the department and Aarhus BSS. Also, an evaluation of courses and study programmes is part of the work of the respective boards of studies.

Following this introduction, different issues concerning teaching and course evaluation were discussed. Both students and teachers raised questions about the follow-up procedure on course evaluations. Who defines good teaching? And who is responsible for a follow-up procedure? In addition, it was mentioned that the importance of teaching evaluations can be unclear for PhD students. The HoD mentioned that the issues raised would be discussed in the management group.

The HoD also added that new funds from AU have been earmarked for Educational IT (EDU-IT), and these are part of Aarhus University's digitisation initiative. The funds are intended for software and hardware for projects on the use of digital learning technologies in teaching in 2019.

In connection with the discussion about course evaluations, the HoD also informed about the possibility of introducing a department prize for teaching and supervision. This is a way of including course evaluations in a more structured manner and emphasize the importance and appreciation of teaching quality at the department. The DF members generally supported the idea, and it was also suggested that other department prizes were introduced.

Lastly, it was mentioned that the lack of study space and group rooms at Fuglesangs Allé is still a problem, especially during exam periods. In addition, the guidelines for the booking system 'Resource Booker' also has a number of limitations - both in terms of the duration of bookings and the number of days available for booking. The HoD ensured to forward the issues concerning study spaces to BSS building service and the dean's office for Education.

5. White Paper extras

The HoD informed that topics addressed in the ECON White Paper will be discussed at the coming DF-meetings. Also new topics will be added – including the plan of introducing "section councils", which was mentioned at the departmental meeting in Horsens in November 2018. The HoD encouraged DF-members to give feedback on this initiative as well as to suggest topics for future agendas.

6. Information from student members

It was mentioned that a change in the exam form from an oral to a written exam in a specific course (oecon) has resulted in a drop in the GPA by 2.5. Subsequently, there was a discussion about the variation in exam forms, and how it can affect grading in general.

7. AOB

Nothing to add.