



MINUTES OF MEETING

9 APRIL 2024

Forum Study Board for Social Data Science

Meeting date 9 February 2024, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Place Room 1.1.12

Members:

Nikolaj Arpe Harmon, Samantha Dawn Breslin (From 1.10PM), Rosa Ellen Lavelle-Hill, Andreas Bjerre Nielsen (Chair, from 1.05PM), Gregory Eady, Kaylie Clark, Csilla Duray (Vice-chair), Semra Yuksel Gyuvén, Sofia Noor Steensma, Janis Beginen.

Attendees:

Kristoffer Langkjær Albris (Head of Studies), Friedolin Merhout, Kristine Hemme (Academic Officer and Student Counsellor), Signe Staun Kelly (teaching and Exam Coordinator), Rikke Bechmann Truelsen (Administrative Staff), Sidse Gutfeld Overbeck Ærstrøm (Programme Coordinator)

Agenda

1. Approval of agenda / Andreas (5 minutes, 1:00PM-1:05PM)

Decision: The board must decide whether to approve the meeting agenda.

Decision: The board approved the meeting agenda.

2. Constitution of the new Board / Andreas (10 minutes, 1:05PM – 1:15PM)

Welcome to new members of the Study Board. A quick round of introduction.

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Decision: *The Study Board must elect a Vice Chairperson amongst the student representatives. The Vice Chairperson helps the Chairperson in the organisation of the board's work.*

Furthermore, the Study Board must set up a sub-committee for credit transfer and exemptions. The sub-committee should consist of one student representative and one representative amongst the staff.

Decision: Everybody introduced themselves, and Csilla was unanimously elected vice-chair for the Board of Studies. Furthermore, the study leadership thanked Kaylie for her work as Vice-chair in 2023.

Nikolaj was elected as staff representative for the sub-committee for credit transfer and exemptions. Semra was elected for the sub-committee on the student side. It was pointed out that Semra is working as a Student Assistant for the programme, and she was made aware that she should declare herself disqualified in cases, where she has been involved in a student's case in her role as student assistant. It was clarified that the subcommittee hold the decision-making authority in cases presented to them. The committee can, however, consult teachers in course specific matters, as long as they comply with the GDPR rules, and do not share personally identifiable data.

3. Plan for the work of the study board in the coming semester / Andreas (5 minutes, 1:15PM – 1.20PM)

Decision: *the members of the board should decide whether to approve the drafted plan of items for the spring Study Board meetings (see appendices 3.1 and 3.2).*

Decision: The drafted plan (appendix 3.2) was approved by the board, and it was clarified that the items presented in the plan represent the mandatory items (cf. appendix 3.1). Additional items can be added.

4. Processing of exemptions and decision on a common procedure for exemptions / Rikke (15 minutes, 1:20PM – 1:35PM) CLOSED DOOR ITEM

Decision: *The board must make a decision regarding an application for exemption. (Indstillingsark SN 09-02-2024)*

Orientation and decision: *The board must decide whether to approve the suggestion for a common procedure for exemptions (see appendix 4.1).*

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Decision: The board made a decision in both cases.

5. Reform of the Master's programmes. / Kristoffer (5 minutes, 1:35PM – 1:40PM)

Orientation: *Head of studies will inform the board on the process of the Master's reform. We will hopefully know more during spring 2024, and study leadership will get back to the board, when we know more.*

Kristoffer informed the board on the reform in general and at the present time being. All official information regarding the Master's Reform can be found [here](#). A final decision on which programmes should be reformed has yet to be made, and Kristoffer made it clear, that, if possible, he would advocate for keeping the two-year Master programme for Social Data Science, and both staff and students agreed on this. Kristoffer will inform the board on the Master's reform at the next Study Board meeting, and he further informed the board, that he will include both staff and students for the development of a potential reform of SDS, and he plans to invite these participants for a retreat possibly during fall 2024.

6. Course evaluation of Social Data Science Base Camp, Elementary Social Data Science, Social Data Analysis, Academic Internship (15 ECTS and 30 ECTS), Data Collection, Processing and Analysis (15 ECTS and 30 ECTS) and Master's Theses, Kristoffer (30 minutes, 1:40PM – 2:10PM) CLOSED DOOR ITEM

a. **Discussion and decision:** *The board must review the results (Appendix 6.1 – 6.4) and implement action plans to correct any unsatisfactory conditions.*

b. **Discussion and decision:** *The Study Board must discuss and decide on the suggested course rating as presented in the appendices 6.3 and 6.4.*

Discussion and decision: due to a miscommunication/misunderstanding regarding the processing of the course evaluations, the item was postponed until the next Study Board meeting. The processing of the course evaluations in the Study Board will be communicated prior to the meeting. For the time being Kristoffer clarified, that some aspects can and should be addressed in the processing of the course

evaluations – other suggestions for improvement might be out of the jurisdiction of the board or might simply be too expensive to implement. Nikolaj supplemented Kristoffer by noting that all teachers follow up on the results of the evaluation, and the feedback from the students is appreciated.

7. Group work at SDS / Kaylie (15 minutes, 2:10PM – 2.25PM)

- a. Orientation and discussion: The working group will present the result of their work, and the board should discuss the result and formulate a summary of what recommendations should be passed on.*

Orientation: Generally, students value the group work, but some issues remain to be solved. This is particularly the case for the groups where conflicts in the groups cannot be solved.

The task force recommended both some extracurricular solutions like reshuffling groups with issues, student formed groups, new groups for each block and dissolution of groups, but also some curricular solutions like change of exam registration requirements/and or exam forms.

Sidse noted, that the procedure for assignment of groups is within the jurisdiction of the Head of Studies. Likewise, groups can be dissolved, as long as the exam requirements in the course description are being met. Study Board can make changes to the curriculum (and the exams/exam registration requirements), as long as the competence profile is being honoured.

Decision: Kristoffer recognized the need to look into the groupwork aspect of the programme, and this will be dealt with at a later meeting during the spring semester. One thing that should be looked into, is how to help groups early in the process. Furthermore, study leadership propose to have assigned groups for the first semester (block one and two), to then have students assign their own groups in block three.

Furthermore, the board unanimously decided to change the exam of the Advanced Social Data Science I, and to make it an individual exam from spring 2025.

The study leadership thanked the task force for their work and the result of it.

8. Curriculum (minor/major changes), Andreas (5 minutes, 2:25PM – 2:30PM)

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a. Minor changes to the curriculum

- i. Orientation regarding potential new elective courses for fall 2024.

Andreas informed that the study leadership expects to offer programme specific electives in the future: The first one will be within the realm of climate change, and Clara Vanderbilt will be course responsible for the course. The course has been offered before at the Political Science department. The new elective course will be presented to the board in a written hearing, and the board should decide whether to approve the new course.

The other elective course, that might be offered in the future will be in applied machinery. This course will be presented and decided upon later.

b. Orientation about exam registration requirements.

9. News from the Students, Student Representatives (10 minutes, 2:30PM - 2:40PM)

- a. *Discussion: Student concerns about English proficiency level (a finding from the working group) (Kaylie). Discussion.*

Students expressed their concern with the differing English levels of students, and they asked whether the language requirements could be changed. Sidse will investigate this, and she added that a such revision of the language requirements will constitute a big change to the course curriculum.

- b. *Decision: Approval of document explaining grading and group-based examination system to accompany student transcripts in applications to PhD programs (Appendix 9.1) (Kaylie).*

Decision: Kaylie presented the document to the board, and the board approved the document without the last paragraph. The admin staff clarified that the document cannot be provided by the Faculty, and study leadership responded that they will be responsible for sharing the edited document. The appendix will be provided for the graduation 2024.

- c. **Orientation:** Concerns from 2022 cohort about clarity of exam questions (Janis and Sofia). Orientation.

Students noted that the expectations for the exams could be clarified in some courses – but also for the Master’s Thesis. Csilla will follow up regarding the Master’s Thesis.

10. News from the Head of Studies, Kristoffer (10 minutes, 2:40PM – 2:50PM)

- a. **Orientation and Discussion:** *Head of Studies will present the Key Study Data (Appendix 10.1). The board is welcome to comment on and discuss the results of the abovementioned data.*

Orientation: Kristoffer pointed out that the document should be published in English to ensure accessibility and transparency for the programmes taught in English.

Furthermore, he highlighted the following two aspects:

- 1) VIP coverage: SDS has the highest VIP coverage at the Faculty of SAMF.
- 2) Number of confrontation hours: the two first semesters are in the very high end at the Faculty.

- b. **Orientation:** *The Head of studies will present his initiative regarding the appointment of external examiners for the Master’s theses.*

Signe has presented an initiative to reform the procedure for appointment of external examiners for the Master’s Theses. The degree programme draws on the board of external examiners for the Department of Sociology, and to better cover the topics specific for SDS, Kristoffer and Signe are exploring a add on to the current setup. The hope is for the initiative to be implemented and be running in June, but it’s still uncertain, if this is possible.

Orientation: *Kristoffer will give an update on the planning of the SDS Match Day.*

The event will be held April 16. There will be presentations from students, who have done internships and employers who offer internships to the students at SDS. There will, furthermore, be a student initiated and led Job Fair for students

of the international Master's programmes in Global Development, Social Data Science and Security Risk Management.

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- c. Orientation: Head of studies will inform the board on the SDS Educational Supports Fund.*

Kristoffer informed that info on the Educational Support Funds for SDS have been sent out to students and staff 8 March. The applications will be processed as they come in.

11. News from the Student Counsellors, Kristine Hemme (5 minutes, 2:50PM – 2:55PM)

N/A

12. Any other business (5 minutes, 2:55PM – 3:00PM)

No other business was presented.

Yours sincerely,

Sidse Gutfeld Overbeck Ærstrøm
Programme Coordinator