UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Board of Studies for MSc in Social Data Science

NOTICE OF MEETING

Forum	Board of Studies for Social Data Science
Meeting date	22 September 2023, 14.00-16.00
Place	1.1.12

Attendees

Rosa Ellen Lavelle-Hill, Samantha Dawn Breslin, Gregory Eady, Andreas Bjerre-Nielsen (Chair), Friedolin Merhout (Head of Studies), Kaylie Clark (Vice chair), Tereza Blazkova, Csilla Duray, Camilla Veronica Branas, Kristine Hemme (Student Advisor), Signe Staun Kelly (Exam and teaching coordinator) and Sidse Gutfeld Overbeck Ærstrøm (Programme Coordinator).

Absentees

Nikolaj Arpe Harmon and David Anthony Charles Broomham.

Agenda

1. **Approval of Agenda / Andreas (5 minutes, 14:00-14:05)**

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

   Decision: the board approved the agenda.

2. **Welcome to Student Advisor, Kristine Hemme / Friedolin (5 minutes, 14:05-14:10)**

   Orientation: Kristine is joining the study board as our new representative from the Student Advisory. We will start with a quick round of presentation.

Orientation: The board welcomed Kristine and all attendees presented themselves. Kristine introduced herself and informed the board on her role as contact person for SDS. As contact person for SDS she will attend board meetings as an observer, and she will be the first student advisor to contact when changes have been made in the programme curriculum. She will also get back to the board with general tendencies amongst the students at SDS.

Kristine made the board aware of the two upcoming events for SDS-students; the first event is a Master's Thesis information meeting, the second is Holdets time (wellbeing checkin amongst first-year students). Students will receive an invitation through KUnet to the information meeting and student advisors will visit first-year students during exercise sessions in week 44.

3. **News from the Student Counsellors / Kristine Hemme (5 minutes, 14:10-14:15)**

4. *News from the students / Kaylie (15 minutes, 14:15-14:30)*

    a) Orientation: Results from first-year review (Csilla and Kaylie)

    Orientation: Csilla had elaborated and shared a first-year review with the 2022-cohort. 20 students had responded to the questionnaire.

    Structure of the programme

    Very high expectations to the students in the course ESDS, and the course seems to be placed too early. Students proposed to place ESDS after SDA, or to swap with Data Governance or Digital Methods.

    Friedolin thanked Csilla for elaborating the first-year review and he pointed out, that some changes have been made already, but he acknowledged that the programme could maybe be rearranged in a better way.

    Kaylie suggested that the structure of the programme should be an item on the next SB-meeting, and Andreas agreed to this.

    Learning outcome for Digital Methods

    Digital Methods got some critique regarding the assignments and the assessments of the exam. Students don't find the learning outcome sufficiently clear.

    On a general note students asked for more transparency in expectations, about grading and feedback, more

interdisciplinarity in the programme and better facilitation of the group work.

Decision: the board decided to discuss the structure of the programme at the next SB-meeting.

b) Discussion: Update on student conference (Chris)

Orientation and Discussion: Chris summarised the plan for the conference; the conference will be hosted in Copenhagen, with participation from both Oxford, LSE and Lund. The planning of the event is moving forward with help from peers and from 14 presenters. 40-50 people will attend the Conference, which will be held at the CSS auditorium, at UCPH. Furthermore, the event will be streamed. The event has been aligned with the graduation ceremony in October.

The purpose of today's item is to decide on how to pay for the event and Chris presented the budget of the event. Today present estimated budget.

Andreas welcomed the initiative but made it clear that the board does not have the power to decide on the financing of the event. The board did however agree to recommend the idea.

Decision: the board agreed to recommend the initiative and Chris was advised to send an application to Friedolin.

c) Discussion: Support for students on PhD track (Kaylie) (discussion)

Discussion: Kaylie has been examining the possible support for students on the PhD track. She is aware that there are already some initiatives which support the students, but there is a need for more relation work between students and professors just as there is a need for more transparency regarding the Danish grading system. Nikolaj suggested a small document to describe the grading in higher education in Denmark, and Sidse is proposing this document from the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science.

Andreas welcomed the feedback from Kaylie and added that initially the relation between professors and students was closer. However, the closeness may have disappeared during COVID.

Decision: Andreas will investigate how to reestablish the closeness between professors and students. He will also examine if the research internships at Political Science are also applicable for SDS-students. Lastly, he will examine if more guidance on the PhD track can be provided.

5. **Presentation of the SUE (Annual summary course evaluation report) / Friedolin (10 minutes, 14:30-14:40)**

Orientation and discussion: Friedolin will present a draft of the SUE (Appendix 5.1), and the board is welcome to comment on it.

Orientation: Friedolin presented his drafted, annual summarized evaluation report (SUE)*.* He reported that all activities have been evaluated and, according to the common ranking recommended, there are no C-rated courses at the programme. 8 autumn courses have been B-rated and 6 spring courses were B-rated. The response rates for both autumn and spring courses have dropped slightly, and teachers are encouraged to allocate time for the evaluations during classes. Study leadership will remind teachers to do so.

6. **Break (10 minutes, 14:40-14:50)**

7. *Course evaluation of block 3-4 and the summer, Andreas (25 minutes, 14:50-15:15) CLOSED DOOR ITEM*

   a. *Orientation: The board must review the results and implement action plans to correct any unsatisfactory conditions (Appendices 7.1-7.6).*

   b. *Discussion and decision: The Study Board must discuss and decide on the suggestion for course categorisations as presented in the appendices 7.7-7.9.*

   The courses to rate are: Data Governance: Law, Ethics and Politics, ASDSI, ASDSII, Digital Methods, Academic Internship (15 and 30 ECTS), Co-curricular Written Assignment and the Master's Thesis.

   Courses based on supervision

   Academic Internship: The course was categorised as a B-course.

   Co-curricular: No responses (0/1). The course will, hence, not be rated.

Master's Thesis: Students ask for more streamlined supervision, since the supervision is not provided equally amongst supervisors.

Decision: the board agreed to make course coordinator (HoS) aware of the time allocated for the supervision. Course coordinator (HoS) should then inform supervisors about the structure of the time allocated for the supervision. The course was rated as a B-course.

Courses based on teaching

Data Governance, Law, Ethics and Policy: Students outside SDS are now welcome at Data Governance, Law, Ethics and Policy, and teachers point out that they come with somewhat different academic backgrounds. To facilitate their participation in the course it was suggested to improve the framing of the course.

Digital Methods (DM): students asked for better interplay between ASDS (I and II) and Digital Methods.

Advanced Social Data Science I (ASDSI): Students noted that the topics change too quickly, and students ask for better interaction between networks and modeling.

Advanced Social Data Science II (ASDSII): Students noted that there was no link between the different methods, and teachers explain that this is how the different methods are being presented. Some students found the level too high, but student representatives state that this might be due to receiving the literature late. Students remarked that they appreciate the notebook hand-ins and would like it for them to be mandatory. Friedolin stated that this should be decided upon by the board at a later meeting.

Decision: All courses based on teaching were rated as B-courses.

c. *Decision: The Study Board must decide whether to add supplementary questions for the evaluation for the coming academic semester (see last year's additional questions in appendix 7.10).*

   Decision: the board approved to continue with the former additional questions, with a minor revision of question two. The board furthermore decided to add one quantitative

question concerning the coordination of the course with other courses, and one qualitative question on how to possibly improve the coordination of the courses.

Sidse promised to send out inspiration for the two latter questions, and to clarify the wording with the board by e-mail.

8. **Digital literacy and digitalization of the educational programme of the MSc in Social Data Science, Friedolin (10 minutes, 15:15-15:25)**

    a. *Decision: The board should decide whether to approve the process for digitalization of the programme as presented in Appendices 8.1-8.3.*

    Friedolin explained the process until now. A central part of the educational focus of the UCPH strategy ([Talent and collaboration – strategy 2023](#)) has been a focus on students' digital literacy and competencies in all BA programmes. From September 2024 all BA students must meet the [five dimensions of the KU model for digital literacy](#).

    Furthermore, it has been decided at the Faculty of Social Sciences that MA-level study programmes relate to the model as well and reflect on whether it would be constructive to further develop aspects of the model at the MA-level (at a higher taxonomical level than BA).

    Friedolin and Sidse met with the TEACH-team (pedagogical consultants of UCPH), and the attendees came up with the idea proposed and the focus of the Head of Studies is ensuring an digital alignment in the Study Programme.

    Decision: the board approved the proposed process, and Friedolin and TEACH will proceed according to the plan.

9. **Curriculum / Friedolin (10 minutes, 15:25-15:35)**

    a. Approval of minor changes, including course descriptions

        - **Revision of the course description of ASDSII:**

            Orientation and decision: The HoS will brief the board on the possible change of course description for Advanced Social Data Science

II (Appendix 9.1). The board should discuss whether to approve the change of course description according to the draft revision. The change will become effective as of February 2024.

Decision: the board approved the revision of the course Advanced Social Data Science II.

- **Revision of the course description of ESDS:**

Orientation and decision: The HoS will brief the board on the possible change of course description for Elementary Social Data Science (Appendix 9.2). The board should discuss whether to approve the change of course description according to the draft revision. The change will become effective as of February 2024.

Decision: the board approved the revision of the course Elementary Social Data Science.

Revision of paragraph 4.1 and 6.9.

Orientation: Both paragraphs will be revised due to a consequential amendment.

Revision of paragraph 4.1: "Students must write and submit the Master's thesis on their final ~~semester~~ year of the degree programme."

Revision of paragraph 6.9: "It is a requirement that 60 ECTS credits have been passed before the thesis writing period begins. ~~Students are strongly encouraged to place the Master's Thesis in their final semester, and as a minimum complete all compulsory courses before writing their thesis.~~"

10. News from Head of Studies / Friedolin (15 minutes, 15:35-15:50)

a. **Employer Panel meeting**

Orientation: The Employer Panel met the last time in May. Head of Studies will brief the board on the outcome of the meeting.

Orientation: the HoS asked the Employer Panel for feedback on how to retain international students in the Danish labour market. Panel members questioned if this was even an issue. Exit interviews and an exit survey is being elaborated for feedback for the employer panel**.**

b. **New student cohort and Study Start**

Orientation: Head of Studies will brief the board on the new cohort, and he will brief the board about Study Start.
Orientation:
Study Start: The Study Start went smoothly: The location worked well, and it was good to have breakfast with both students and teachers.
Kristine asked if Thursday works for the International Day, and Rosa replied that Thursday isn't the best day. Rosa and Kristine will coordinate prior to the study start of 2024.

No-show of students: Teachers asked when the students who have not showed up, will be removed from Absalon / be registered as having dropped out if the program. Signe clarified that they do not get disenrolled, until their maximum duration of study expires (for full degree master programmes the maximum duration of study is 3 years, see paragraph 3.2 of the Common Curriculum). Friedolin encourage teachers to keep tap on the attendants and to make sure that group work isn't affected by this. Signe added that a common study start test is being developed at faculty level for the student intake of 2024. The study start test is a non-academic test, which allows the administration to disenroll students who do not pass the test by the second attempt.

c. **Orientation and discussion of how to handle sensitive research subjects (specifically this year in SDA)**

Orientation and discussion: Friedolin will brief the Study Board on the new teaching team for SDA and some concerns around sensitive research topics that they would like to introduce. The teachers hope to get some feedback on how to best integrate these topics in the course.

Decision: The board recommended for the HoS to advise the teacher to frame the matter and provide context for students prior to teaching the respective classes.

d. **New Head of Studies, Andreas (5 minutes, 15:50-15:55)**

Orientation: Anders will brief the board on the expiration of the nomination of Friedolin Merhout as Head of Studies. He will inform the board on the further process.

Orientation: Friedolin is stepping down as Head of Studies and a new candidate will be recommended. The candidate will join the board of studies at the next Study Board meeting to present himself/herself, and the board must approve of the recommendation of the candidate. On behalf of the board, the Programme Coordinator will send the recommendation for the dean to approve, and he will then ask for the rector to nominate the new Head of studies as of 1. December 2023.

11. AOB / Andreas (5 minutes, 15:55-16:00)

a. *Decision: Representatives for the Board of Appeals for one SDS exam complaint appeal (Friedolin)*

Orientation: Friedolin informed explained to the board that he needs two representatives (one student and one staff) for an ad-hoc Board of Appeals for one appeal, and Greg and Tereza volunteered for the position.

b. **Orientation:** Misalignment regarding third party agreement-form.

Orientation: Camilla noted that there has been a misalignment regarding the third-party agreement-form. She proposed the form to be found both at the forms-section at KUnet but also at the Internship, Co-curricular and Master's Thesis section at KUnet. student services forms in regards third party agreements. She furthermore proposed that the course catalogue adds info on where to find the third party agreement-form.

Decision: The Student Advisors will make sure to update KUnet accordingly, and Sidse will make sure to have the course catalogue updated as well.

Yours sincerely,

Sidse Gutfeld Overbeck Ærstrøm
Programme Coordinator