



## NOTICE OF MEETING

20 NOVEMBER 2023

**Forum** Board of Studies for Social Data Science

**Meeting date** 27 October 2023, 14.00-16.00

**Place** 1.1.12

### Attendees:

Csilla Duray, Rosa Ellen Lavelle-Hill, Kaylie Clark (Vice-chair), Samantha Dawn Breslin, Gregory Eady, Andreas Bjerre-Nielsen (Chair), Friedolin Merhout (Head of Studies), Tereza Blazkova, Nikolaj Arpe Harmon, Camilla Veronica Branas.

### Guests:

Signe Staun Kelly (Coordinator of exams and teaching), Kristine Hemme (Student Advisor) and Sidse Gutfeld Overbeck Ærstrøm (Programme Coordinator)

## Agenda

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

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

Decision: Item five has been changed into an item of orientation. The rest of the agenda was approved without further revisions.

### 2. Processing of application for exemption and briefing on decisions regarding exemptions and credit transfer / Rikke (15 minutes, 14.05-14.20) CLOSED DOOR ITEM

### EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

#### SECTION FOR COORDINATION AND PLANNING

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**Decision:** *Rikke Bechmann Truelsen will present an application for exemption. The board should decide whether to grant the exemption.*

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**Orientation:** *Rikke will brief the board on the exemptions made in the previous semester.*

**3. News from the students / Kaylie (15 minutes, 14:20-14:35)**

**Orientation:** Students would like to discuss the formation of groups, and the topic will be discussed at item 7.

**4. Celebration of excellent teaching / Friedolin (10 minutes, 14.35-14.45)**

**Discussion and decision:** *The board must discuss and decide how the programme will celebrate excellent teaching in the future (see appendices 4.1 and 4.2).*

Friedolin informed the board on the background for this item.

**Present procedure:** Until now excellent teachers and teaching have been celebrated at the annual graduation ceremony. The Head of Studies asked students to nominate teachers, and the Study Leadership decided who to be awarded the prize.

**Decision:** The board agreed that students can nominate both teachers, TA's and courses, just as both A- and B- courses should be eligible for nomination. Furthermore, the members of the board agreed to the following procedure: Head of Studies ask the students to nominate best teacher/TA/course during early spring. Study Board will make the final decision at a Study Board meeting at the end of spring. Sidse will make sure to make the nomination an item for a meeting in the spring semester.

The board, furthermore, agreed to continuously celebrate good teachers/good teaching at the graduation ceremony. They also decided to inform new students at the Study Start. Teachers/courses nominated for best teacher/teaching will be awarded a diploma and a reward (Study Leadership will decide on the amount).

**5. Break (10 minutes, 14:45-14:55)**

**6. Procedure for students not meeting exam requirements / Friedolin and Signe (15 minutes, 14.55-15.10)**

**Discussion:** *Currently there is no clear procedure for how students can take (re-)exams if they fail to meet the exam requirements for the first exam. The SB should discuss different options and weigh in on their pros and cons.*

**Orientation:** The procedure of the exam registration requirements is stipulated in the Common Part of the Curriculum, and is, consequently, not up for discussion. The item was, thus, changed into an item of orientation.

Signe briefed the board on the rules regarding the exam registrations requirements as stipulated in [section 6.4 in the common part of the curriculum](#): *“The course descriptions in the programme curriculum’s course catalogue or at <https://kurser.ku.dk/> stipulate the requirements for registration for exam. The requirements may include submission and approval of compulsory written assignments, active course participation, compulsory attendance etc. Students who fail to meet the requirements stipulated in the course description will not be allowed to sit for the exam but will be registered as having used one of their exam attempts. Students cannot register for a re-exam, unless the course description determines that it is possible to meet the requirements before the date of the re-exam. Students who do not meet the requirements for sitting for an exam will have to register for the course and, thus, a 2nd exam attempt.”*

**Decision:** It appears that there is not full awareness on these rules regarding the exam registrations requirements, and Signe and Sidse will reach out to all course coordinators to:

- 1) inform them on these rules.
- 2) ask them to provide detailed information about the exam requirements. If needed, allow them to revise the requirements if they want students to fulfill them before the second attempt. If the Programme Curriculum doesn’t explicitly outline how students who didn’t meet the exam registration requirements before the initial attempt can fulfill them before the reexam, these students will need to re-register for the course. They can then take the exam during the next regular exam session for their second attempt.

Students report that TA’s don’t assess exam registration requirements in the same way, and Andreas proposed that in the future all TA’s should be informed by the course coordinator on how to assess the requirements. The board agreed to this.

**7. Procedures for group formation in first year / Friedolin (15 minutes, 15.10-15.25)**

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***Discussion and decision:** Currently students get assigned to study / exam groups in the first three blocks, shuffled once after the first semester, and can choose their own group for block 4. This procedure has pedagogical / educational motivations to strengthen interdisciplinarity and mimic work life, but also causes added administrative work and is a (for some severe) stress factor for students. The SB should discuss whether the current approach is best suited to achieve the intended goals or if there are ways to reduce the stress experienced by some students and administrative work resulting from the procedure and advise on what the procedure should be for block 2.*

**Orientation:** Friedolin stated that group work is an essential tool to ensuring interdisciplinarity. However, groupwork have received some critique the past year, and Head of Studies is, therefore, welcoming recommendations to a future procedure from the study board. **Framing:** The current procedure for forming the groups is that the Study Leadership assign groups for the three first blocks; block one and two are the same, and in block three new groups are assigned. For the fourth block students form their own groups.

**Discussion:** There are different opinions on the formation of study- and exam groups, and even though there are students in favour of the preassigned groups, some students experience difficulties in the group work. According to the students, what challenge the group work is primarily the different English and academic skills, but also personal issues. Teachers acknowledge these difficulties, but at the same time stressed the importance of interdisciplinarity and group dynamics. The following discussion evolved around the formation of the groups and the facilitation of group work.

**Formation of groups:** Students proposed to let students form their own groups. Those who did not manage to form a group should then be assigned by a teacher. Based on previous experience, Andreas was inclined to revise the current procedure, and in case of difficulties the course responsible should find a solution.

**Facilitation of group work:** Students proposed to have TAs or teachers provide guidance on groupwork and interdisciplinarity. It was also suggested to have the pedagogical consultants assist with facilitating the group work.

Nikolaj suggested that a work group should be formed to elaborate a future procedure for the group work, and the board agreed to this proposal.

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**Decision:** Friedolin will reshuffle groups for the coming block. Furthermore, he will setup a work group to come up with recommendations for a future procedure.

**8. Position and process for 1-year Master's / Friedolin (15 minutes, 15.25-15.40)**

***Discussion:** The faculty is preparing for the upcoming revision of Master's education decided by the government. KU has decided to pursue a route with three possible formats (2-year status quo programs, 2-year industry-based programs, and 1.25-years Master's). The SB needs to assess and discuss these options, and draft a process for how any potential changes will be turned into a program by the Fall 2024.*

**Orientation:** Friedolin explained, that the future revision of the Master's education is a long-term process. There is still a lot of uncertainty, but the message for now is, that all Master Programmes at SAMF must change. Friedolin invited the members of the board to share their thoughts in this regard. Friedolin (or the new Head of Studies) will make sure to keep the board informed, and we will know what to expect in spring 2024.

**9. News from Head of Studies/chairperson / Friedolin & Andreas (15 minutes, 15:40-15:55)**

**a. Employer Panel meeting / Friedolin**

***discussion:** The Employer Panel will meet 23 November, and the board is welcomed to supply Study Leadership with input for the meeting.*

**Orientation:** The Employer panel will be asked to reflect upon the future Master's revision by the government. Currently the panel advised study leadership on conducting a survey amongst graduates that could also seek input on potential revisions to the new Master Programme.

**b. Support for students on PhD track / Andreas and Sidse**

***Orientation:** Andreas will follow up on the possible support for students on PhD track.*

**Orientation:** Kaylie framed the needs from a student's perspective, and two aspects were addressed: 1) relation

between faculty staff and students 2) guidance: documents and grading

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**Documentation and grading:** Teachers and students agreed that the general document from the government isn't sufficient, and Samantha proposed a tailored document that explicitly states that all exams in the constituent courses are group exams that are being individually graded. Andreas recommended to discuss this at a future teacher's meeting and then get back to the Study Board with the results of the discussion.

**Relation to faculty staff:** The Conference setup in relation to this year's graduation is a good way to create relations between students (graduates) and staff. Samantha proposed to elaborate guidelines on how teachers can support students who wish to pursue an academic career. Ideally, this should be accessible at KUnet, so all teachers know how to assist and what to provide.

Sidse promised to get back with information on the research internships as she is still awaiting a reply from the Department of Political Science.

**Decision:** The board agreed to have the teachers reflect on a future procedure/guideline on how to support students at the PhD-track. Friedolin cannot promise that the Conference will be a permanent initiative; the Study Programme might be able to dedicate fundings for the initiative, but the event (the planning and the execution) must be driven by students. Kaylie will let the students know that they are to plan the conference of 2024, and Tereza proposed to invite the other universities to take shifts as planners and hosts of the event. Andreas agreed, and he, furthermore, proposed to examine whether a freshman can be hired to assist in the planning/execution of the event.

**c. *New Head of Studies at the MSc in Social Data Science / Andreas***

**Orientation:** *If possible, the board will be introduced to the candidate as new Head of Studies. The approval of the candidate will subsequently be made by hearing.*

**Orientation:** Study Leadership recommends Kristoffer Langkjær Albris as a candidate for the position as Head of Studies. The board will decide whether to nominate Kristoffer at the next Study Board meeting on 1 December 2023. The

default for appointment is that the Head of Studies is appointed for a period of three years or until the next staff elections. If the board nominates Kristoffer Langkjær Albris as new Head of Studies, he will be appointed until the next staff elections for the Study Board February 2025.

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

Csilla asked when the board is expected to discuss the revised MSc in Social Data Science, and Andreas responded that this will be an item in the board when we have an idea of what is expected of us.

Yours sincerely,

Sidse Gutfeld Overbeck Ærstrøm  
Programme Coordinator