



**AALBORG UNIVERSITET**

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## Minutes of Joint Consultation Comitte Meeting

**Time:** Wednesday November 25, 2020 at 9.00-11.00

**Place:** Fib 14 – room 56 + Teams

**Participants:** Kjeld Pedersen, Jette Marie Christensen, Lars Rosgaard Jensen, Brian Vejrum Wæhrens, Christine Steenberg Pedersen, Klaus Kjær, Kjeld Nielsen, Lars Diekhöner

**Absent:** David Hansen

**Other participants:** -

### MINUTES

<b>1. Approval of minutes and agenda</b>
<i>Approval of minutes from the last meeting and approval of the agenda for today's meeting.</i>
<i>Enclosure 1: Link to SU meeting minutes 7 October 2020 on the intranet: <a href="https://www.intranet.mp.aau.dk/digitalAssets/888/888001_su-moede-7-oktober-2020_.pdf">https://www.intranet.mp.aau.dk/digitalAssets/888/888001_su-moede-7-oktober-2020_.pdf</a></i>
<i>Enclosure 2: Link to updated Rules of Procedure for SU on the intranet (cf. item 4 in the minutes of 7 October - the number of members from the management session changed from four to three):<a href="https://www.intranet.mp.aau.dk/digitalAssets/913/913630_rules-of-procedure-for-the-joint-consultative-committee-mp---version-2020--godkendt-og-underskrevet_.pdf">https://www.intranet.mp.aau.dk/digitalAssets/913/913630_rules-of-procedure-for-the-joint-consultative-committee-mp---version-2020--godkendt-og-underskrevet_.pdf</a></i>
Minutes and agenda have been approved.
<i>Who does what: We will optimize invites and booking of meetings – note: meetings are either digital or physical.</i>
<b>2. Information from the chairman and vice-chairman</b>
<i>Kjeld and Lars inform, among other things, about corona situation and salary negotiations.</i>
<i>Enclosure: none</i>
<b>Corona situation:</b> We're in control of the situation. We have generally had few people infected in our department. It shows that our employees are generally good at following the guidelines and taking care of themselves and each other. We must continue to do so. We shall continue to work from home whenever it is possible. It is



important that we continue to be aware of our new and young employees, and also employees who do not have the large network.

Question / comment from staff: It is unclear what teaching we should provide in the situations where some students do not show up? Not in cases when the entire class is included, but in cases where some students choose to stay away from teaching, or if they have been sent home for a shorter or longer period of time. What are they entitled to? And what are our goals?

Answer: We are obliged to offer digital teaching, for example by setting up a camera and streaming in cases where an entire class has been sent home, or when some students from the class have been sent home (for example students living in one of the seven municipalities that have just been closed down). We are not obligated to provide digital teaching in cases where students choose to stay at home because they are worried or afraid of being infected. We have adapted our physical framework to the guidelines and therefore continue to offer physical education. If you as a student follow the guidelines by keeping a safe distance, using face mask, hand sanitizer, etc., it is then safe for you to attend the teaching.

Several employees are looking for a forum for exchanging experiences about digital teaching (knowledge, guidelines and best practice). It apparently does not exist at the university. Shall we do something locally about it?

**Salary negotiations:** We have finished the salary negotiations for both VIP and TAP. The result should be approved by both sides next week and will be announced thereafter. Almost DKK ½ million has been distributed – of which DKK 100.000 has been used for TAP (1.0% of the salary sum).

**Assistant Professor and Professor Promotion Programs:** Lars stated that two programs have now been in hearing and that the hearing statements, that have been made, have been positively accepted. Among other things, it has become clearer what the process is and what happens if someone does not fulfill the requirements.

*Who does what: -*

### 3. Economy: result for 2020 and budget for 2021

*Briefing and discussion.*

*Enclosure 3: Budget material November 2020*

*Enclosure 4: MP Revenue Framework 2021-23*

Review and discussion of budget. We have a profit in 2020. We have been allowed to budget with a deficit in 2021 due to a fall in the revenue framework.

- Our revenue framework falls mainly as a result of a fall in (FTE) full-time equivalent, primarily in Copenhagen. External funding fortunately helps us, but there is still a decline of approx. 2 mio. kr.
- We must bring in 1 million during the year.
- As a result of declining revenues, the costs have been cut. Consumption expenses (travel and purchase) are reduced, because the entire University is charged with 25% savings on travel expenses (this only includes travels paid by the department). Travel funded by external funding is not subject to this saving. An unrealized saving of DKK 1 million has been included in the salary budget and must be found during the year on vacancies and so on.

Main points from the discussion::

- Buyouts and co-financing were discussed. The increasing project income leads to more co-financing, which puts pressure on us in terms of resources.



- The rent cost was discussed. It will be good if we can gather the activities at FIB. The construction process drags on.
- The continued savings are unsustainable. We need to look at the fundamentals. We cannot continue to cut costs. It requires a radical structural change if we want to be able to solve it.
- Costs for joint contributions will increase from 2020 to 2021. This will put even more pressure on our budget.
- Relocation of the 1st year of study and the financial consequences of it? Termination of the buildings on Strandvejen provides savings on rent at faculty level. It must be clarified what it costs to house the students on Campus.
- Unfortunately, the economy does not look better in the years to come. We fall in FTE. Of course, the closure of Copenhagen also plays a role here, but the number of students is also declining in general. There are fewer students that we have to teach, but we have to hold the same number of courses. The only thing we "save" is project supervision.
- The budget process has not been satisfactory. In principle, it is not right for us to receive the revenue framework so late that it is not possible to discuss it in the Joint Consultation Committee (SU). There is a recognition at the university that the budget process needs to be looked at more closely. The employees will ensure that this subject will be taken up in the Faculty's Consultation Committee (FSU) and the Main Consultation Committee (HSU).

*Who does what: Lars Rosgaard goes further with the issues concerning the budget process in various committees.*

#### **4. Offensive behavior – sexism**

*The faculty encourages all consultation committees to discuss offensive behavior and sexism in the workplace - is there a need for special measures at the department?*

*Enclosure 5: Link to Procedure for Dealing with Offensive Behavior towards Employees at AAU: <https://www.haandbog.aau.dk/dokument/?contentId=366672>*

We have seen many cases of offensive behavior in Denmark. We know that it also occurs at universities. What may have been okay ten years ago is not okay today. There are some things we need to work on.

We agree that a cultural change is needed. We must help each other, get the dialogue started and have an ongoing attention to the problem. It is important that we work together to find a way to solve this issue.

The big task is to reconcile the perception of what offensive behavior is. We each have our own personal perception and limit of what is okay and what is not okay. We want a culture where we help each other to be aware of it, and where it is okay to state clearly in the situation: "What you did / said is not okay". So that we can take the dialogue continuously.

We must prevent and take things in stride and work to ensure that it does not turn into cases.

There is a broad consensus that we lack the tools to deal with specific situations. It would be good if we had some tools at the university in general that we could use across. As a teacher, for example, you may be in a situation where the students anonymously state in evaluations that 'there is a problem' and that you must follow up on it. But there is no help to be found in terms of how to actually do so. And that's a big problem.

We must also have a good system that can handle complaints and we must also have good procedures for it. It is also important that it goes fast, the cases must not drag on. It is an untenable situation for all parties.

It is generally a very difficult balancing act that should not be cultivated and misused. There are always two sides of the situation. But how 'polished' should we be? We must also have teachers with character.

It must be clear who you can go to and what help you can get if you feel offended. We must encourage people to stand up so that we can deal with the cases that exist. Incidentally, it has been announced to the



students how to act in the given situation. The university's procedure has also been announced in general to all employees.

A possible dialogue method: dilemma games have been discussed in the media, which via concrete cases focus on our different perceptions and approaches to the problem. We are going to test the dilemma games in the Secretariat and will look at whether it is a good method to start the dialogue and whether it can possibly be used at the department in general.

Idea: could we invite a behavioral researcher inside who could help us facilitate the dialogue, point out possible tools we can put into play when the situation arises and at the same time give us some reasons why you react the way you do (both parties). It could be both at a major event and as a conflict resolver in a specific situation.

We must keep an eye on new employees – especially very young and foreign employees. They must be equipped og prepared to be able to act in situations. We need to think about it in our onboarding process. In relation to foreign employees, a close collaboration with ISU (International Staff Unit) can be a really good idea – they focus on Danish culture and the differences that may exist.

We must also support our PhD students, and remind them to make use of the PhD coach.

We have also had this topic up for discussion in AMIU. We initially decided to encourage raising the issue at staff meetings in sections and units. This is an issue that we must have on the agenda in both committees from time to time, and which we must continuously focus on. At the same time, the management has a task in ensuring that we actively work with this.

*Who does what: Jette tests dilemma games in the Secretariat in January / February 2021. We regularly raise the topic in the joint consultation committee.*

## 5. Home offices and working environment

*Discussion of how the department can support home offices so that they meet the requirements of the working environment legislation.*

*Enclosure: none*

Due to the corona situation, we are currently asking all employees to work from home as much as possible. If you do not have proper working conditions at home, it is okay to show up at the office. You are also welcome to borrow equipment from the office to take home (as long as it comes back).

We can not create real home offices. There are new rules and regulations under way in this area and the university is waiting for them.

*Who does what: -*

## 6. Evaluation + meeting schedule and annual wheel 2021

**Assessment:** *What has worked well in 2020? Is there anything we want to change in the future?*

**Proposed meeting schedule 2021:**

- *February, week 7*
- *May, week 19*
- *September, week 36*
- *December, week 49*



We can also hold an extraordinary meeting regarding the budget in early November, knowing that we can move it in relation to when the budget is ready.

**Annual cycle:** We have previously operated with an annual cycle. Should we resume the idea, and if so, which topics / themes can we bring up and when? Suggestions for topics could be: Wellbeing barometer 2020 (result is expected in February), sickness absence statistics, Budget (October / November)...

Enclosure: none

No immediate desire for change – an annual cycle would be nice to have. We put 'Proposal for annual cycle' on the agenda for the next meeting.

Proposed meeting plan 2021 has been approved. We convene an extraordinary meeting on the budget when the process has been determined centrally.

Who does what: Lars Rosgaard and Kjeld Pedersen prepare proposals for the annual cycle. Anne convenes meetings in 2021.

## 7. AOB

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Enclosure: none

Kjeld Nielsen: how do we get rid of smoking on campus?

A smoking ban on campus has been discussed in the Main Consultation Committee (HSU). The proposal was not adopted. Therefore, it does not make sense to do anything locally.

Who does what: -

## 8. Communication to the department

Is there anything from today's meeting we need to communicate out and who does it?

Enclosure: none

Minutes will be posted on the intranet as usual.

We are not announcing anything separate about the budget, as it is already planned to convene a staff meeting at Zoom in early December, where Budget 2021 is also on the agenda.

We do not report anything separate about sexism until we can be more specific about what we do and when.

Who does what: Anne posts minutes on the intranet.