

Meeting date: 29 May 2024
Meeting place: Staff room, Nobel Park 1483-117
Meeting topic: CAS Committee meeting

Participants: Birgitte Beck Pristed; Claudia Welz; Emilie Lund Mortensen; Gitte Pappé Ludvigsen; Henrik Reintoft Christensen; Janne Blegg Lini; Jesper Sølund Hansen; Kirstine Helboe Johansen; Marie Vejrup Nielsen; Nicolai Krejberg Knudsen; Signe Sangill Termansen; Mathilde Vadsager Andresen; Emil Klitgaard Poulsen; Søren Schrøder; Jakob Bek-Thomsen; Kasper Steenbjerg; Louise Fabian

Cancellations: Anne Ingeborg Frank Sørensen; David Harvey;

Minute: Camilla Dimke

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Welcome

Chairperson Birgitte Beck Pristed welcomed the "new CAS Committee" and summed up the role of the council, after which she informed about upcoming meetings and meeting formats.

The autumn meetings will consist of a short meeting of one hour at the beginning of the semester, a longer meeting in the middle of the semester, possibly with a guest, an excursion and possibly followed by something social, as well as another short meeting at the end of the semester.

Nicolai Krejberg Knudsen and Signe Sangill Termansen will, together with the chairperson, prepare the agenda for the autumn meetings. The main themes of the agenda will be communicated to members as soon as possible so that they have a better opportunity to discuss these with their departments. At the same time, it is also important that the members get input from their departments to the agenda. The previous "round the table" will be made more problem-focused in the future. This means that members must write to Birgitte prior to the meetings with any topics that they wish to be dealt with under this item. In this way, the committee members can better prepare to discuss a problem.

Regarding language, the agenda will be published in English and the minutes in both Danish and English, so that the committee can better include the department's international employees. However, the faculty's language policy imposes a limitation in relation to the English material. The spoken language in the committee will be a both/and solution. You each use the language you are comfortable communicating in.

3. Opening discussion - CAS staff room

The meeting took place in the CAS staff room in the Nobel Park. The Staff Room is a faculty room, which provides an opportunity for employees at all levels and from all academic environments to meet across departments and faculty. Unfortunately, the room does not function optimally. CAS committee was therefore, asked to discuss the reasons for the lack of use of the room and to put forward suggestions for improvements.

The members of the committee expressed the following views:

- It is unclear whether all employees know about the room and whether everyone automatically has access.
- The purpose of the room is unclear – the employees do not know what they can and must use it for.
- You cannot reserve the room at the moment. Introducing a booking system should be considered, especially if you want a multifunctional room that can be used for e.g. project collaboration. It should be visibly announced what is taking place in the room
- The room is very sterile and could benefit from some decoration and color
- We could consider a massage chair.

It was decided that Claudia Welz and Signe Sangill Termansen are the coordinators. They follow up on the discussion about the room and its use.

4. Tema: Junior researchers - perspectives and involvement of staff members in temporary positions in our local daily work life culture, research environments, committees, and fora.

Nicolai Krejberg Knudsen introduced the theme, after which he gave the floor to Deputy Head of School for staff and organisation, Jakob Bek-Thomsen.

In the junior research area, there is increasing dissatisfaction. Jakob informed the committee about what he/the School is currently working on with a view to achieving better well-being and a better working environment.

He mentioned, among other things:

- First and foremost, there is a focus on the way in which temporary positions are created. With the right positions, it will be possible to create better opportunities to focus on development, well-being, networking, onboarding and offboarding.

- The biggest innovation at the moment is the recently announced postdoc pilot training programme under IMC.
- An attempt is being made to establish a network for assistant professors. Postdoc networks have already been established in several departments, which Jakob follows on the sidelines.

There is no doubt that the initiatives will be challenged by external elements such as the political reforms. Jakob, therefore, emphasized that it will be even more important in the future with transparency and clear communication.

The committee then discussed the situation and experiences with integration at the departments.

Theology:

- The research programme manager announces which meetings will take place in English and which will be in Danish.
- The first items on the agenda of the department meetings are in English.
- Teams are established where senior researchers and junior researchers work together
- Thesis seminars include all employees
- "Text and Theology" is held every six months. Here junior researchers can test their thoughts

Archaeology:

- Here, a joint PhD and postdoc forum has been established, which meets twice a month. This is of great benefit to both groups. All of the department's postdocs are international, so the network means a lot for integration – also in relation to life off campus.

In connection with the archaeology network, it was discussed whether it could make sense to try to establish a school network for postdocs and PhDs.

Nicolai Krejberg Knudsen and Jakob Bek-Thomsen noted the proposal for possible later use.

Philosophy and History of Ideas:

- Teaching and publications are often the best way to ensure integration and good cooperation
- On the other hand, there is room for improvement in relation to supervision. At AU, it can become very hierarchical. You could look out into the world for inspiration and think about supervision more broadly and possibly more collectively.
- Brown bag lunch seminars also provide a natural focal point in daily life

Global Studies:

- Here you have several international colleagues where job change also means a change of country. A call from this department is that we all become more explicit about all codes - including the academic ones.

Theology:

- At the department, there is a big difference in the perception of what is done to ensure integration. Senior researchers feel that a lot is being done, junior researchers feel that very little is happening.
- In general, the whole idea that someone is a junior researcher is perceived as excluding in itself. The School (and in fact AU) should therefore think about the use of language.

Jakob noted experiences and suggestions for further work to improve the well-being of junior researchers at the School.

5. Diskussion: VIVE Reports

In March, the Danish Centre for Social Research and Analysis (VIVE) published the report 'A quantitative and qualitative study of PhD students' experiences of sexism and retention in research careers'.

Unfortunately, the report painted a picture of an academic world where PhD students are exposed to sexist incidents to a significant extent that affect their work, health and career choices.

CAS committee was asked to reflect on and discuss the survey and how it is followed up.

Signe Sangill Termansen began the discussion by sharing experiences from her department's handling of the report. At archaeology, they have worked a lot with the report's results in their joint postdoc/PhD forum, but also at department level, as their head of department is very concerned to ensure a good and healthy working environment for all.

The department has done the following:

- The department's employees have discussed how to approach the problems mentioned in the report
- A working group has been established consisting of the research programme director, the head of department, a PhD student and a postdoc who works together on how to handle any problems
- A seminar has been held where the focus was on getting a common language for the problems that the report discusses.

- A recurring seminar/meeting on the topic is planned. It is important that it is not those who are exposed who are responsible for finding solutions. Therefore, participation becomes mandatory for everyone.

After Signe's sharing of experience, the head of school explained which initiatives have been implemented by the management:

- The report has been discussed in all levels of management. The dilemma game, which has been developed at Health, has been rolled out at Arts / CAS. It is a tool that can be used to get a common language and to work with the culture in the organization. The committee may play it on occasion.
- All departments are asked to address the question of what culture they have.
- Management is working on clearer information about where to turn if you experience problems.

The Head of School and the Deputy Head of School for staff and organisation will continuously follow-up.

The committee then discussed how to create a school practice for how and where to turn anonymously with doubts or problems, as well as how to practice talking about things openly– as it was also believed that there is an empowerment in being able to talk openly about what is going on.

It was proposed:

- A physical mailbox at the departments where you can anonymously leave inquiries.
- That the school gets a central ombudsperson (who is not management) who can handle inquiries and help with problems. This is the case in Germany, for example, and it has also been seen at other AU departments. Example: <https://mgmt.staff.au.dk/the-department/ombudsman>

6. Closed item: Assistant professor appointments

The committee was able to support 5 out of 6 nominations. A single recommendation required a closer examination of an employment contract.

7. Management briefing

CAS Economy

The Head of School briefed the committee on the economic situation at CAS.



Reorganisation of Arts Communication

The Head of the Secretariat explained the background for the faculty management team's decision to reorganize Arts Communication. The reorganization has meant, among other things, that CAS now has a permanent communications officer, who is based in the management secretariat in building 1467.

Work related asymmetrical relationships

The local liaison committee has developed a policy for work related asymmetrical relations. The Head of School gave a brief account of the work process and the background for the guidelines.

The department heads have presented the guidelines at department meetings – in some places in collaboration with the union representatives.

If you have comments or questions about the paper, you can write to the joint union representative Peter Bugge or to the Head of School.

The committee then discussed the reception of the paper at the departments.

Status of the BA admission decrease and MA reform

There was nothing new to discuss.

Study environment survey

The Director of Studies briefed about the latest study environment survey and the process for how to work with the content. The study has been raised in all study bodies. A theme that has taken up a lot of space is the students' opportunity for feedback.

8. New process for appointing an advisory group for the appointment of a new head of school

In agreement with the chairperson, the head of school left the meeting under this item.

In connection with the appointment of a new head of school, the chairperson of CAS committee has become aware of a change in the guidelines for the appointment of the advisory committee, which CAS committee has influence on the composition of. The committee has not been informed of the change, and it was unclear to the committee whether it is in fact a question of a deterioration of the committee's role. At the same time, it has also caused surprise that the committee has not been informed about who was ultimately selected to sit on the advisory committee.

The committee discussed the change and agreed to ask for an explanation of this and the lack of information about it when the recruitment procedure is to be evaluated.

At the same time, it was agreed to reach out to the other department committees with a view to a more principled discussion of employee democracy in the future.

(After the meeting, The Dean's Office announced that they would publish the names of both the advisory and appointment committee when announcing the appointment of the head of school. This was the same procedure as for the most recent dean appointments. The representatives announced on June 14, 2024, were:

Advisory committee:

- Rikke Bjørn Jensen, Department Secretary at Theology
- Vinnie Nørskov, Associate Professor and director of the Museum of Ancient Art
- Casper Andersen, Associate Professor at the History of Ideas
- Elisabeth Roland Christensen, student of Theology

Appointment committee:

- Maja Horst, Dean of the Faculty of Arts
- Niels Overgaard Lehmann, Deputy Dean at the Faculty of Arts
- Unni From, Head of Department at the School of Communication and Culture
- Ulla Gjørning, Head of the Dean's Office
- Jesper Sølund Hansen, Head of Secretariat at the School of Culture and Society
- Annette Skovsted Hansen, Associate Professor and Head of Department at Global Studies
- Helle Strandgaard Jensen, Associate Professor at History
- Martin Demant Frederiksen, Associate Professor at Anthropology)

9. Other

The next meeting will be held at the beginning of the autumn semester with a duration of one hour. It is being investigated whether it can be held at Theology. The theme of the meeting: integration of international employees.