

**Minutes from the Danish SDC Board meeting, 17 February 2015, 14.00–16.00** Minutes

**Present at AU:** Brian Bech Nielsen (AU, Chairman), Henrik Pedersen (SDU), Inger Askehave (AAU), Morten Laugesen (SDC)

**Present at ITU:** Thomas Bjørnholm (KU), Peter Kjær (RUC), Jørgen Staunstrup (ITU), Martin Bendsøe (DTU), Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen (SDC)

**Absent with Notice:** Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard (CBS)

- 1. Approval of Agenda**
- 2. Approval of Minutes from SDC board meeting, 16 December 2014**
- 3. Appointment of new Danish JMC member**
- 4. Briefing from the SDC Director**
  - a. SDC Thesis procedure for Danish and International students*
  - b. Correspondence with Rector of Copenhagen Business School*
  - c. House of the Danish Industry Foundation*
  - d. Flexibility for the MSc programmes*
  - e. Upcoming JMC meeting*
  - f. Food & Health SDC MSc programme*
  - g. Evaluation of the SDC*
- 5. Guidelines for appointment of Danish PCs and HEPs**
- 6. Guidelines for Danish SDC PhD scholarships**
- 7. SDC Accounts 2014**
- 8. Any Other Business**

The Danish SDC-secretariat

Date: 27 February 2015

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**1. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved.

**2. Approval of Minutes from SDC board meeting, 16 December 2014**

The minutes were approved.

**3. Appointment of new Danish JMC member**

The Chairman informed the board that the issue had been discussed at a recent meeting in the Danish Rectors' Conference, where it was decided to name Brian Bech Nielsen a candidate. The board supported this and elected Brian Bech Nielsen new member of SDC's Joint Managerial Committee.

#### 4. Briefing from the SDC Director

The board initially discussed how items listed in this part of the agenda should be formally presented. The board asked the SDC-secretariat to include relevant background information, including extract from the minutes of previous board meetings and potentially a brief update of the situation since the last meeting.

a. *SDC Thesis procedure for Danish and International students*

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen informed the board that an agreement with UCAS has been made with regard to the thesis procedure for Danish and International students.

The board expressed its satisfaction with the results and discussed various models for Danish students related to their thesis writing.

b. *Correspondence with Rector of Copenhagen Business School*

Brian Bech Nielsen briefly informed the board about the correspondence with CBS Rector Per Holten-Andersen, which led to a more general discussion about the upcoming evaluation of the SDC. See item g.

c. *House of the Danish Industry Foundation*

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen informed the board that a meeting between representatives from UCAS and the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science was held in Beijing in mid-January to discuss unsettled issues mainly related to the choice of materials.

According to the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science, the construction of the SDC Building is on schedule.

d. *Flexibility for the MSc programmes*

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen gave a brief account of the issue of flexibility for the SDC MSc programmes since the previous board meeting. The SDC-secretariat has still not received a formal response from the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science to the letter sent in early October 2014.

The board expressed disappointment with the lack of progression of the case and decided that Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen together with Brian Bech Nielsen should contact Permanent Secretary Uffe Toudal Pedersen so the suggested model of flexibility can be implemented at once.

After a brief discussion, the board concluded that it is important that potential SDC students receive correct and balanced information about the SDC, which is in line with the original visions.

e. *Upcoming JMC meeting*

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen informed the board of the plans to arrange a JMC meeting in Denmark this spring. The partners have not settled on a date yet.

A tentative agenda for the upcoming JMC meeting was presented to the board. Of most importance are the issues of including new MSc programmes in the near future as well as the forthcoming move to the SDC Building at UCAS' Yanqihu campus north of Beijing.

The board took note of the information and asked that the JMC meeting material is sent to the board members when completed.

f. *Food & Health Master's programme*

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen informed the board of the recent activities to develop a Master's programme in Food & Health. There has been a long-lasting political pressure from the Ministry of Higher Education and Science to develop educational activities within this field.

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen has met with professor Klaus Grunert from Aarhus University and asked him to identify members for a small task force to investigate the prospects of various possible Master's programmes.

Inger Askehave asked if a procedure for establishing new Master's programmes exists and how to make sure all relevant Danish research environments are included.

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen described the process of how the existing Master's programmes had been developed and stressed that the process of developing a Master's programme in Food & Health will be transparent and open for all interested academic environments.

Thomas Bjørnholm stated that University of Copenhagen does not support developing an additional Master's programme at the moment. Focus should still be on the existing seven Master's programmes, which still faces many difficulties and requires many resources to run. Although the idea of a Master's programme in Food & Health is interesting and will have a big potential, the time is not ripe for additional educational activities.

Peter Kjær stressed the importance of keeping a recruitment perspective in mind when looking into the possibilities of a future Master's programme in Food & Health.

Brian Bech Nielsen summarized the discussion and suggested that Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen asked professor Klaus Grunert to continue his work in order to provide more information for upcoming board meetings. By the end of the day, the universities are the ones responsible for the quality of the Master's programmes so it is important that as much information as possible is available before the board can make a decision.

*g. Evaluation of the SDC*

The board briefly discussed the suggested time schedule for an upcoming evaluation of the SDC and stressed the importance of an upcoming evaluation not only focusing on the past. The process must also generate information valuable for the future development of the SDC.

The board agreed to the suggested time schedule and asked the SDC-secretariat to prepare the relevant material for the upcoming meeting in late June.

## **5. Guidelines for appointment of Danish PCs and HEPs**

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen informed the board that the recent replacement of former PC for Social Science Lars Bo Kaspersen by Stine Haakonsson had provided the SDC-secretariat with a good opportunity to draft a set of guidelines for how to appoint Danish Principal Coordinators (PC) and Head of Educational programme (HEP) in the future.

The board then discussed the job specifications for Danish Principal Coordinators (PC) and Head of Educational Programme (HEP) presented by the SDC-secretariat.

Jørgen Staunstrup asked that collaboration with the Chinese part is stressed even further in both job specifications while Thomas Bjørnholm suggested that the PCs are also involved in the process of appointing HEPs. Martin Bendsøe suggested that candidates for HEPs are nominated by the relevant universities in a process similar to the appointment of PCs.

Morten Laugesen informed the board that the SDC-secretariat will discuss with the PCs whether a set of guidelines for appointing Principal Investigators (PI) should be drafted.

The board asked the SDC-secretariat to draft a new set of guidelines based on the comments and suggestions from the board members and subsequently discuss these with the PCs at the upcoming meeting upon which a final set of guidelines can be drafted.

Finally, the board agreed that the the university of a PC receives an annual compensation of DKK 100.000.

## **6. Guidelines for Danish SDC PhD scholarships**

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen presented the figures for PhD students financed by the Danish SDC-secretariat since 2011. While the overall number is impressive, the number of Danish PhD students could be higher.

The board discussed the suggested measures to better balance the number of students with different nationalities. The board agreed that the majority of PhD students funded by the Danish side of SDC should preferably be Danish but there must also be room for International students. The important thing is that all PhD students from both Danish and Chinese side contribute to the achievement of the overall objective of the SDC. Hence, much responsibility lies with the members of hiring committees, who pick the final candidates.

The board did not support the suggestion that future PhD positions on the Danish side are only advertised in Danish language.

UCAS has previously informed the Danish side that national regulations in China state that Chinese citizens in foreign PhD positions cannot be awarded a Chinese PhD double degree, which is a prerequisite in the Partnership Agreement. The board therefore decided that Chinese citizens should not be considered candidates for PhD positions financed by the Danish side of SDC.

## **7. SDC Accounts 2014**

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen presented the key financial figures for 2014 and explained the reason for some of the adjustments made in the forecast for 2015 since the last board meeting, including the ones related to the energy theme.

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen clarified that the SDC accounts 2014 will be audited as part of Aarhus University's accounts and therefore should not be considered final although the figures are not expected to change. The final accounts 2014 will be presented to the board at the next meeting in June.

Martin Bendsøe pointed out that the budget column (B2015) should contain the figures approved by the board at the meeting in December 2014. Whatever adjustments made to the budget thereafter must be reflected in what should rightfully be named the forecast column (FC2015). The SDC-secretariat will make the suggested adjustments.

## **8. Any Other Business**

Martin Bendsøe suggested the SDC-secretariat draft a document outlining how new SDC Master's programmes can be established in the future.

Peter Kjær informed the board that RUC researchers in the field of Learning are reluctant to push forward activities within the SDC framework as their primary research partners are located at Zhejiang University and at various universities in Shanghai.

Minutes by Morten Laugesen

SDC board meeting dates and other important dates in 2015:

- 26. June 2015: SDC board meeting (Beijing with videolink to CPH) time tbd.
- 27. June 2015: SDC Graduation Ceremony in Beijing
- 22. September 2015: SDC board meeting (AU with videolink to CPH) 14.00-15.30
- 10. December 2015 (possibly): Inauguration of SDC building in Beijing (tbc )
- 15. December 2015 SDC board meeting (CPH) 16.30-18.00