

Meeting on: 24 September 2012, 14.00 – 16.00
Aarhus University with videolink to IT University
Danish SDC Board Meeting

Present: Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen (AU, Chair), Nils O. Andersen (KU), Henrik Pedersen (SDU), Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard (CBS), Lene Lange (AAU), Martin Bendsøe (DTU), Ib Poulsen (RUC), Jørgen Staunstrup (ITU).

SDC Director Hans Gregersen and Søren Walbum Høst represented the SDC-secretariat.

Agenda

1. **Approval of agenda**
2. **Approval of minutes from the board meeting, 13 March 2012**
3. **Start-up of SDC Master's programmes 2012**
4. **Challenges regarding the Master's programmes**
5. **Compensation 2013**
6. **The House of the Danish Industry Foundation**
7. **Budget and accounts**
8. **Other issues**

The Danish SDC Secretariat

Date: 16 January 2013

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1. **Approval of agenda**

The agenda was approved by the board

2. **Approval of minutes from the board meeting, 13 March 2012**

The minutes were approved by the board

3. **Start-up of SDC Master's programmes 2012**

Hans Gregersen briefed the board on the final stage planning and start-up of the SDC Master's programmes including the introduction weeks, the visit by the Prime Minister at the opening ceremony for the Master's programmes and the first two weeks of formal teaching activities. The process can be summed up as follows:

- The two introduction weeks proceeded satisfactorily. During the first week students enrolled through the Danish universities participated in joint activities. During the second week the Danish and Chinese students were divided in groups according to their respective programmes. The students have expressed satisfaction with the activities of both weeks.
- The Prime Minister took part in the opening ceremony for the Master's programmes. This was a great experience for the students. Furthermore it creat-

ed a lot of media attention that SDC can benefit from and will actively take advantage of in future marketing.

- Shortly before the commencement of the introduction weeks, SDC educational activities were moved from one Beijing UCAS campus to another. This was a positive development. All students are now in one campus. Classrooms have been allocated exclusively to SDC programmes. Office space for SDC staff and lecturers has also been allocated at the campus in walking distance from the classrooms.
- According to first reactions from lecturers and students the Chinese students are generally highly qualified and some already have a Master's degree.
- After the Danish universities guaranteed the start-up of the programmes, UCAS has promised that all programmes in the future will be included in the UCAS study handbook.

Before start-up in 2013 some issues must be settled:

- The arrival and settlement of Danish students was planned in detail but in practice turned out to be somewhat chaotic due to the infrastructure and problems with the real estate agent. The situation was manageable due to the limited number of students but next year changes must be made. The arrival of Danish students in 2013 will be more manageable if UCAS is able to allocate student dorms for the Danish students as promised.
- Offices allocated to SDC staff and lecturers need to be equipped.
- Chinese SDC colleagues have been largely absent at the administrative offices leaving the Danish staff to handle almost all issues in a foreign institutional setting. A Chinese Vice-dean for the SDC College has recently been appointed which proves well for the future collaboration.
- Courses in Chinese language. Learning Chinese can be a great benefit for the Danish students, but Hans Gregersen wants to ensure that participation in the Chinese language course offered by UCAS is optional.

To follow up on the start-up activities the SDC secretariat will carry out a survey among the students to get their feedback on the quality of the introduction weeks and service provided by SDC. A survey will also be carried out among lecturers and programme coordinators.

The board was impressed with the efforts made by the SDC secretariat and the programme coordinators, but also cautioned that changes need to be made next year when the intake of students will grow considerably due to the start up of three additional programmes. The board invited the SDC secretariat to write a memo summing up experiences of the start-up in 2012 and staking out the strategy for start-up in 2013. The board furthermore stressed the importance of a housing plan for 2013 in accordance with the Partnership Agreement.

4. Challenges regarding the Master's programmes

Hans Gregersen briefed the board on the most significant challenges regarding the Master's programmes.

The issue of balance

Hans Gregersen informed the board on the ongoing challenge regarding the balance between the Chinese and Danish contributions.

- Contributions from Danish and Chinese researchers and lecturers in planning and implementing the SDC programmes do not achieve the target of 50/50 contribution stated in the partnership agreement. The imbalance is more pronounced in some programmes than in others. In Neuroscience at least 90% of the teaching will be carried out by Danish lecturers.
- PhDs. PhD-projects have not been initiated on the Chinese side. Initiation of PhDs on the Chinese side could make involvement in SDC more attractive to CAS researchers.

Long term stays

Very few Danish researchers and lecturers stay more than a couple of weeks at a time in China to carry out SDC activities. SDC is working on clarifying tax-issues related to long-term stationing of university staff.

Study administration

Hans Gregersen briefed the board on the efforts being made to ensure a qualified and stable study administration at SDC. The Danish SDC-secretariat will employ a permanent study administrator and is currently negotiating with a candidate.

Furthermore, SDC is implementing a job rotation system for study administrators employed at the four universities responsible for the current SDC programmes. The first study administrator from CBS is already in place at SDC in Beijing and will stay for 3 months. She will be followed by study administrators from AAU, KU and AU to complete the first year

Recruitment for the SDC Master's programmes

The meeting material for the board members included a memorandum on the past recruitment efforts and a suggestion for strategy and division of labor for future recruitment efforts. Experience from last year's recruitment efforts show that students are mainly recruited from the university responsible for the individual programme.

The board is concerned about the reported imbalance between the Danish and Chinese side in the cooperation and stress the importance of working continuously towards improving the balance. In order to strengthen the cooperation with UCAS the board recommends that SDC hires a Chinese liaisons officer.

Hans Gregersen will contact member of the board Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard regarding the latter issue. Moreover, the board recommends that the JMC discuss how to further embed SDC into UCAS activities.

The board agrees that long-term stays are an important way to strengthen Sino-Danish cooperation and encourage Danish university staff to consider this option.

Regarding the study administration, the board expressed its satisfaction with the efforts being made to ensure a solid administration but also suggested that the job rotation scheme should be evaluated after approximately 6 months to confirm if there is a need to continue the scheme.

The board stressed that a balanced effort is essential to ensure the success of the recruitment for the SDC programmes. There is a need for balance between the SDC secretariat and the universities in planning and carrying out the recruitment activities. The universities have agreed that students must be recruited from all the universities with qualifying BA programmes and not only from the Danish university responsible for the individual programme. This implies that all universities make a substantial effort to reach all students from relevant programmes covering the seven SDC Master's programmes. The board agreed to support the principle of balance but also stressed that the SDC secretariat still has the strategic overview and coordinates the activities. To address the challenges associated with recruiting students to the SDC Master's programmes, the board recommended that SDC hires a recruitment officer on a 2-year contract to oversee and coordinate the recruitment efforts in Denmark.

5. Compensation 2013

Hans Gregersen informed the board on the suggested minor changes to the compensation structure. The changes suggested regard travel expenses for PhD students to facilitate that they have opportunity to participate in SDC activities in Beijing no matter where they might be stationed.

The board approved the changes to the compensation structure for 2013.

6. The House of the Danish Industry Foundation

Hans Gregersen briefed the board on the matters regarding the House of the Danish Industry Foundation.

The building process has been considerably delayed. The cause of the delay is requirements to building safety. The Danish Ministry for Science, Innovation and Higher Education has presented UCAS with a revised plan for action.

The board agreed that the building to house SDC is essential to the SDC project and that the Danish side must persevere in working with our Chinese partners to realize the building project.

7. Budget and accounts

Hans Gregersen presented the board with a status of SDC budget and accounts.

The board declared itself satisfied with the status and suggested a new entry added to the budget for inviting guest lecturers. This would contribute to create a dynamic environment around SDC in Beijing.

Seminars in Denmark by researchers or administrators connected to the SDC could be useful for recruitment purposes.

8. Other issues

No other issues.

Jacob Fuchs and Christina Bording from FIVU participated in the last part of the meeting.

Minutes by Søren Walbum Høst