

Meetings in the working group for evaluation of teaching:

22 February 2013 - Half-day seminar at Koldkærgård (items 1-2)

4 March 2013 - Follow-up at Koldkærgård and brainstorming session regarding international seminar programmes (items 3 and 4)

MINUTES

Present at Koldkærgård on 22 February: Berit Lassen, Eva Karring, Klaus Mors Kristensen, Lars Brian Krogh, Ole Sonne, Jonas Ostensen, Erik Østergaard, Hanne Birkmose, Jonas Geil Pedersen and Hanne Kargaard Thomsen (keeper of the minutes)

Absent: Ken Henriksen and Nina Bjerre

Guests:

Anne Ravn, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Southern Denmark (SDU) (speaker)

Geeske de Witte Vestergaard, Roskilde University (RUC) (speaker)

Gitte Stavad, the Quality Team, AU Studies Administration

Ref. HKT

Date: 23. April 2013

Present at meeting on 4 March: Berit Lassen, Klaus Mors Kristensen, Lars Brian Krogh, Ole Sonne, Jonas Ostensen, Erik Østergaard, Hanne Birkmose, Ken Henriksen, Nina Bjerre and Hanne Kargaard Thomsen (keeper of the minutes)

Absent: Jonas Geil Pedersen and Eva Karring

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1. Presentation by Anne Ravn, Faculty of Social Sciences, SDU:

SDU has introduced a new, cross-faculty system for evaluation of teaching at the Faculty of Social Sciences. This is a development of SDU's sub-policy for methods of evaluation and for evaluation of teaching. The intention is to achieve further quality development and to enhance the students' self-reflection.

The Faculty of Social Sciences consists of 8 departments, 6 research centres, 4 cross-faculty departments and centres and 14 boards of studies. The evaluation of teaching system must be capable of handling a large number of subjects and courses (891 subjects and 1,083 courses). Among other things, the faculty is facing the challenge of being scattered across 7 campuses. Furthermore, the evaluation of teaching has been organised in very different ways so far, and the approaches have varied.

The system is being tested as a pilot study and has yet to be fully implemented and first experience outcomes can now be reaped. The evaluation is based on questionnaires and has a digital solution organised at faculty level. The model is an offer, and other methods of dialogue are very welcome. However, all boards of studies have accepted the offer and use the system. The system does not include: Bachelor's projects, dissertations, Graduate Diplomas in Business Administration (HD) and summer school.

Organisation: It is up to each board of study to relate to the cadence of the evaluation of teaching, the follow-up etc, but it is recommended that an evaluation strategy is prepared.

The lecturer typically responds to each evaluation, and comments and results are forwarded to the boards of studies for consideration.

The evaluations contain questions at three levels: faculty questions, board of study questions and questions prepared by each lecturer relating to the specific subject. The last part will be tested through the evaluations this spring. There is no requirement that questions are to be repeated a certain number of times in order to compare over a period of time. This is to be decided by the relevant parties. An inspirational question bank has been created and to begin with, this contains questions from existing evaluations at the faculty. The use of a question bank will be evaluated.

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The technical aspects of the evaluations of teaching have gotten off to a good start, and the new evaluation system has been widely accepted at all levels. However, it takes time to change attitudes in order to secure that the results will be used actively in the future. There is still much work to be done in that area, and much attention is being paid to the large communication task in continuation hereof.

All in all, it is estimated that the process has been a success so far and much has been achieved in a short time, but it is also quite resource-demanding.

Challenges/recommendations:

- 1 Change of culture and behaviour: Only a great degree of knowledge and agreement on action technologies and unambiguity regarding goals and results can make top-down-management possible and culture less critical.
- 2 *Responsibility and decision-making authority:* It is important to organise the project through project management with a high degree of decision-making authority.
- 3 Yet an (IT) system: What can be delivered, how and when? Communication and dissemination are included from the beginning. It is important to consider the final product throughout the process.
- 4 Ressource-demanding! CONSERVATIVE estimate of 1.5 years, approx. 1-1.5 credits spent.
- 5 Floodlight problem: It is a dilemma that a lecturer might be held accountable for a centrally settled focus through faculty/SN questions which students do not necessarily find desirable, which must not necessarily be dealt with or which the subject does not herald.

2. Presentation by Geeske de Witte, RUC:

RUC is organised with 6 multidisciplinary departments, and RUC's quality system is based on an evaluation view which is fundamentally dialogically rooted. It is important that the method of evaluation is tailored to fit each study programme.

The website contains a catalogue of evaluation methods for inspiration and there are centrally established standards for evaluations of teaching regarding bachelor, graduate and master's degree programmes. These are as follows:

1. The director of studies, the degree programme director and the department head stay mutually updated and cooperate on development, including the overall pedagogical development of the teaching.
2. The board of studies establishes the methods of evaluation used. These are communicated on the website of the subjects/study programmes.
3. All courses and projects are dialogically evaluated on an ongoing basis and interim evaluations or something similar are being used. The evaluations must reflect thoughts on the following matters: Fulfilment of learning goals, form and organisation of the teaching and also an assessment of the teaching activities and suggestions for improvements, if any.
4. All new courses are evaluated in writing in addition to the ongoing, dialogical evaluation, and a written report is completed.
5. All new courses and projects are evaluated in writing every third year in addition to the ongoing, dialogical evaluation and a report is completed.
6. A report for the board of studies must include a compulsory account explaining how follow-up on the feedback/criticism from the evaluations will occur. In their treatment of the feedback, the director of studies and the board of studies can then decide if there is a need for further follow-up or for other initiatives.
7. All cases involving individuals, e.g. complaints regarding teaching and the like, must be presented to the department head. Being the head of staff, the department head must follow up on such complaints and discuss the specific challenges and options of each lecturer in order to address them.
8. General pedagogical development of teaching and continuing education of the lecturers are included as a regular part of the staff development interviews.

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Follow-up on the evaluation of teaching:

The purpose of the ongoing, dialogical evaluation of teaching is to ensure that a minimum of follow-up takes place after the teaching has been conducted.

In addition to the ongoing reports to the director of studies and the board of studies, the director of studies prepares a director of studies report for each study programme once a year. The report is discussed in the board of studies/steering committee and forms the basis for a discussion between the department head and the director of studies or the degree programme director/board of studies.

The report includes a description of the evaluation which took place in the study programme, a brief outline of relevant key figures and a presentation of relevant outside input (employer panel/focus group, reports from external examiners, information from graduand surveys etc.). Furthermore, it must contain suggestions to the follow-up of any problems in the study programme and other suggestions, if any, to further development of the study programme. The report also must contain a description of the follow-up taking place based on the problems mentioned in previous reports.

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The directors of studies are currently positive towards the director of studies report. Among other things, it is a good starting point for discussions with the department head.

Furthermore, the Pro-Rector, a representative from the university pedagogics unit, a director of studies and Geeske visited all boards of studies to discuss e.g. evaluation of teaching. The visitation round was a significant link in disseminating knowledge of the evaluation and quality system for the various subjects.

RUC also works on communicating the method of evaluation and follow-up of the evaluations of teaching to the students, e.g. in the form of a website for each subject/each study programme.

You can see examples on how the written reporting looks under “evaluation”.

3. *The working group’s reflections on the presentations:*

SDU’s evaluation system:

- People need ownership, but questions etc. must be quality assured. A question bank is fruitful.
- The tripartition of the questions in relation to the main academic area, board of studies and lecturer is good but also complicates reporting. There are different purposes, depending on the level. The lecturer needs something more closely related to the subject. The boards of studies need it for quality assurance and partial subject development and the faculty level needs to see how the boards of studies work.
- It is important to be ambitious regarding the response rate in order to offer legitimacy. Time must therefore be taken from the teaching and it is important to include it on the agenda. It is important to take time from the teaching and to explicitly encourage it in a written procedure. For low response rates, a follow-up procedure could be considered.
- A lot of thought must be put into the process in order to ensure that the questionnaire for each evaluation of teaching is interconnected. Quality assurance of

the questions is important. Putting a quota on the number of questions could be considered. The university pedagogical centres can contribute in this area.

- Introducing a system like SDU's takes time. It needs to start in pilot.

Time of the evaluation

- SDU and RUC: evaluate at different times in the teaching process. RUC evaluates midway, SDU evaluates at the end of the process. An interim evaluation might not be reported/documentated in the same way as the end evaluation.
- It was discussed if it might be an idea to encourage the lecturers to present the evaluation results from the previous semester in the very beginning of the teaching process. This would offer the lecturer the opportunity of explaining e.g. why the form of instruction hasn't changed or that certain adjustments have been made. This could prevent myth-making.
- RUC's suggestion regarding communication with the students in the form of a website was inspiring.

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Recap/input for the report.

- It is important to be fully aware of what the system is to be used for and what you want to get out of it.
- It is important to be very specific regarding follow-up expectations, who is to deliver what and when.
- The report could present possible scenarios/models regarding frequency, form etc.
- It could be considered to make a toolkit available to support the evaluations.
- A high degree of freedom in which each teaching process can be viewed is necessary.
- Legitimacy regarding the process/implementation is important and rooting throughout the organisation is necessary.
- It is important to be fully aware of what the lecturer, the board of studies and the main academic area need to know.

4. Brainstorming session - international seminar processes:

In closing a brainstorming session of what the group would like to discuss with the international guests:

- **Legitimacy/co-ownership:** How are legitimacy/co-ownership ensured throughout the organisation?/How is support ensured?
- Various methods of teaching: How is diversity handled in methods of teaching, didactics etc., including:
 - bachelor's projects/master's theses
 - shared teaching courses with several lecturers involved
- Completion: When is the most appropriate time to carry out evaluation of teaching in the teaching course?
- Reporting forms: When, form, and to whom?
- The follow-up process: When is a reaction on not satisfactory evaluations of teaching required? (standards)/How is follow-up ensured? What kind of follow-up?
- Communication with the students: What is the most appropriate way of communicating with the students regarding the evaluation of teaching when it comes to commitment, ownership, transparency in follow-up etc.?
- Effect: How can it be measured/secured that the evaluation of teaching has an effect?
- A satisfactory response rate: How is that challenge solved?

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The continuing course: Berit and Hanne prepare a draft/outline for the half-day day seminar as well as the 12-12 seminar together with Peder Østergaard and the draft is circulated for commentation in the group. The draft must be finally approved by the Education Committee.

Status of the groups

The group that is to account for AU and other experience from Denmark is in the start-up phase when it comes to writing that part of the account. It was decided that when the sections for each main academic area are finished, the relevant vice-deans are being asked to quality assure the section for their own main academic area.

The international group awaits contact persons from Lund and Sydney before they start the writing process. Berit will send out invitations.

Future meetings

As regards future meetings, the group awaits a final date for a seminar with international guests and then a planning meeting will be called before the seminar.

If there is a need for further meetings, the group's participants are always welcome to contact Hanne who will organise the notice.