

Board of Studies (BoS) – 7 meeting 2022

2 September 2022

Present: **Stine Gotved** (directly elected faculty), **Hanna Wirman** (faculty, SAT Games), **Irina Papazu** (faculty, SAT Business), **Dan Witzner Hansen** (faculty, SAT CS), **Signe Louise Yndigegn** (faculty, SAT DD)

Nynne G. Kristiansen (student, SAT CS), **Peter Bech Astrup** (student, SAT Games), **Thomas Flodgaard Kaufmanas** (student, SAT DD), **Khurram Murtaza Kahn** (student, SAT Business), **Theodor Christian Kier** (directly elected student)

Ea Feldfos (assigned guest, SAP), **Pernille Rydén** (assigned guest, Dean of Education), **Dorthe Stadsgaard** (secretary, SAP)

Minutes

1. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Information: BoS members Autumn 2021

Stine welcomed new and old members of BoS and gave a brief introduction to BoS and BoS' place in the organisation.

3. Decision: Delegation of decision on credit transfer applications

Decision: BoS unanimously approved renewal of the delegation.

4. Update: Changing the registration requirement to 22.5 ECTS

Stine: Executive Management approved BoS' decision over the Summer.

Ea: A project group has been established in SAP with members from student counselling, programme coordinators, systems, exam team etc. The Head of SAP is project owner and I have been appointed project manager. BoS, Student Council, Heads of Study Programme and Education Group incl. Heads of Department are reference groups. The project is scheduled to continue until Spring 2024.

Lowering the registration requirements ties in with ITU's strategic focus on securing a thriving learning environment. The first steps are being worked on in SAP and I could say a lot about the administrative changes needed to implement the lowered registration requirement. However, it is also about culture and expectations on how it will take effect on study programmes. I would like to invite you to share your thoughts on risks etc. so we can take them into consideration. What are your thoughts and feelings etc.

Ea: Changing the curricula, there are a lot of un-knowns and risks. We probably need some new definitions or categories. Currently, we use the categories mandatory courses, electives, and projects/thesis. Perhaps we need a new category which could be called flexible courses. Mandatory courses can become flexible courses, meaning they are courses that students must take, but when you take them is flexible. We could use the category to describe that this is a course you can take 'when you want', it is not a prerequisite for another course.

Thomas: I need a clarification. Are you suggesting that we should change our definition of mandatory courses?

Ea: Yes. And that means all Heads of Study Programme have a substantial tasks ahead of them assessing their mandatory courses to find out which are/can be made flexible courses.

Thomas: I am not sure I understand why we need to change the definition.

Ea: Heads of Study Programme want to help students who need to study less than 30 ECTS per semester find the best way possible through their study programme. Some courses are prerequisites for other courses and thus must be taken in a specific order. Heads of Study Programme need time to consider the different possible paths through the study programme. Then they will bring it to SAT for discussion.

Thomas: I am concerned with a change of definition. Mandatory courses will still be mandatory – but called something else. This will cause confusion. Perhaps we could frame it differently, call them green flagged courses or something like that.

Dan: It resembles something I wrote in a Study Programme Report. Students who fail a course were forced to do 45 ECTS the following semester – I suggested to have mandatory activities made up of new courses and courses they have failed. Is this similar?

Ea: No, that sounds like something else.

Dan: What will it mean for a course to be mandatory but flexible?

Ea: It will mean that it is a mandatory course that can be postponed if needed. It is flexible when you take it.

Thomas: I would like to suggest calling them fixed and flexible mandatory courses.

Dan: Why would this be helpful to students? Are you sure this will help students, so they are not confused?

Nynne: Ideally all students should study 30 ECTS per semester and follow the official schedule for courses. But if you need to deregister and study less than 30 ECTS, there should be some guidelines for what to postpone.

Thomas: Currently there are understandings among students on which courses can be postponed. Put simply, we want to make this knowledge and experience official.

Signe: We could make different scenarios for paths through the study programme.

Pernille: It is important to consider that we need to empower students to find their (own) way through their study programme. With that also comes responsibility. It must be a balance between giving the students the responsibility and offering help.

Hanna: When are students supposed to decide if they want/need to deregister and study less than 30 ECTS in a semester?

Ea: There are regulations for BSc study programmes that we must abide by. In the first year on a BSc study programme students must participate in activities covering 60 ECTS and pass 45 ECTS (if you do not pass 45 ECTS during the first year, you will lose your SU (the Danish state education Grant)). This means we cannot make it possible for BSc students to deregister courses during the first year.

Hanna: Do we want all students to consider deregistering or only students who meet with a situation that makes it impossible for them to study 30 ECTS per semester?

Thomas: It should be an option, a possibility, but not the normal. The normal should still be 30 ECTS per semester.

Khurram: Are there similar regulations for MSc programmes?

Ea: No, but I suggest that we make it a rule that MSc students cannot deregister the first semester. The reason behind my suggestion is that ITU wants students to be integrated well into ITU and their study programme and secure a good study environment etc. Thus, I think it makes sense to have at least one semester where all new MSc students are on the same track before we allow them to deregister and create singular paths through their study programme.

Ea: Getting back to Hanna's question on when students must decide if they need to deregister courses/activities, the systems we have right now cause some limitations. We are planning for a new system, but if we want to implement the lowered registration requirements in some form from Spring semester 2023, we must accept some limitations. At the moment you can only deregister during the existing registration periods.

Thomas: Does this mean, students will have to decide beforehand how many ECTS they will take the coming semester? Will it not be possible to deregister from a course during the semester? Exam results from the previous semester can influence students' planning of the next semester, but the exam results may not yet be in before the registration period ends.

Ea: With the current (it)system, you can only deregister during the existing registration periods.

Thomas: If that is the case, I am afraid we need to revisit the decision BoS made in spring. We wanted and decided on being able to deregister a current course. Can we extend the registration period to remedy this limitation?

Ea: I am afraid not, due to planning of exams etc.

Thomas: I find that this changes the decision BoS made. Now it seems that unless you can predict having to deregister, the only solution is to fail the course and then deregister from it. That is a change of focus.

Ea: We want to make it the student's choice if they want to sit the re-exam. But right now, the registration systems cannot handle this. Ideally you should be able to deregister reexams. I hope it will be possible in the longer run, hopefully from Autumn 2023.

Nynne: Would you be able to sit the re-exam and then skip another course?

Ea: No. Students can deregister within the registration period but not later.

Stine: In reality, students will stop attending a course, thereby deregistering in practice.

Hanna: I remember from the workshops in spring, that 14 days (the registration period) is not enough. As Thomas mentioned, you may not have received all your grades from the past semester's exams and reexams before the deregistration deadline, so you do not know if you have passed all your courses.

Ea: This is an issue.

Pernille: What is the optimal deadline?

Ea: Different stakeholders (students, CM, Exam, systems etc.) will have different answers to that question.

Nynne: Let us say I failed a re-exam, and I did not make the deregistration deadline. Can I apply for an exemption?

Ea: Yes, students can always apply for an exemption.

Nynne: Would that take care of the issue?

Thomas: I disagree that the issues should be solved by making it necessary for students to apply for an exemption. I find that it goes against the purpose of lowering the registration requirements. Let's say I pass all my third semester courses, but in March I find out I want to deregister a course on my fourth semester. Can I do that?

Ea: No, you can only do it during the registration period.

Thomas: But data from our registration requirement project in spring showed that the need to deregister often appears in the middle of the semester.

Peter: Deregistering four or more weeks into a course can be a problem. E.g., when you are part of a project group.

Thomas: That would not be the case, since we learned that the students who want to deregister courses during a semester are already doing it. As stated, we do not expect more students to skip courses, we just want to make it easier and more comfortable for those who really need to.

Ea: This is what we can do now, otherwise we would have to wait until 2024 (because of our IT systems). I want us to be able to do something in spring 2023.

Thomas: The project must be very specific on this. It must state very clearly that there will be a temporary solution during a specified period before the permanent solution for lowering the registration requirements to 22.5 ECTS is implemented.

Nynne: I agree with Thomas.

Thomas: Students are looking forward to being able to deregister courses without needing a doctor's note or having to apply for an exemption, but this first step is not really a change, I think. That must be visible in the project document.

Stine: It must say that this is step one.

Khurram: When the flexibility is fully implemented, have you considered that some courses will have very few students and other courses too many?

Ea: Yes, we are aware of that. We must find a way to deal with this.

Stine: We need to wrap up the discussion for today. We will discuss the project again. Thank you very much for your input.

Ea: Would it be possible to put the item on the BoS agenda for each meeting for the next year or so?

Stine: In principle yes, but some meetings may have too many items to allow time for it.

Dorthe: I will put it on each agenda as a tentative item that will be pushed if the agenda is too full.

5. AOB (Any Other Business)

- a. Dan: I find there is an issues with the introduction of the **academic quarter**. Lectures are 50 minutes, and the academic quarter is 15 minutes. That leaves only 5 minutes for a break in the middle of a two-lecture session. This is an issue when you have a big class.

Stine: We will need to discuss this. We will put it on the agenda for our next meeting.

- b. From October 2022 BoS will get a **new secretary** (perhaps already from meeting the 29 September) as Dorthe is leaving ITU for a position at CBS.