Board of Studies (BoS) – 5 November 2020

Present: Stine Gotved (faculty, chair), Jörn Christiansson (faculty, SAT DD), Paolo Burelli (faculty, SAT Games), Baki Cakici (faculty, SAT Bus), Marco Carbone (SAT CS)

Jonathan Jung Johansen (student, SAT Games), Jens Hovgaard Jørgensen (student, SAT DD),

Lene Rehder (SAP), Dorthe Stadsgaard (secretary, SAP)

Assigned guests: Lene Rehder (SAP), Annelise Agertoft (LS)

Guests: John-Arne Jensen from SAP and Karina G. Christensen from Dean of Education Support

Absent: Head of Studies (as ITU currently has no Head of Studies), Sophia Aumüller Wagner (student), Norkka Mirella Medina Nino de Guzmán (student, SAT Business), Eva Hauch Fenger (student, SAT DD), Theodor Christian Kier (student, SAT CS), Mikala Sofie Skoglund Thomsen (student, SAT Business), Annelise Agertoft (LS)

Minutes

1. **Approval of agenda**
   The agenda was approved.

2. **Approval of minutes from meeting 8 October 2020**
   The minutes were approved.

3. **FYI: Moving from owncloud to Teams/sharepoint**
   Guest: John-Arne Jensen from SAP.
   Appendix 1a and 1b

   John-Arne: If you have not already done so, you need to install Teams on your computer. We have made a BoS Team with an address (a link) for accessing BoS documents. You will use the same link every time you access BoS documents.
   Marco: Would it make sense to move BoS meetings to Teams instead of using Zoom?
   Stine: We can discuss that. Let us put it on the agenda for next meeting.
   Dorthe: We will move the documents during the next week. For the next BoS meeting, agenda and appendices are to be found in sharepoint via the link in Teams.

4. **Education Portfolio Report 2020, BoS writes their statement**
   See also the item on CrossDIT.
   Appendix 2

   Stine: Does anyone have comments to the report?
   Baki: I think the way CrossDIT is discussed in the report is problematic. The term 'resistance' is problematic, and the text sends the message that the only issue with the course is resistance among students and faculty. I disagree with that.
   Marco: Can BoS decide to turn CrossDIT into an elective?
   Stine: No, but we can recommend it to management. Resistance is a loaded term, I agree.

Jonathan: The text in the report mention similar courses at other universities and it seems that courses like CrossDIT have structural problems. At the same time the text imply that the issue is resistance and that the course will continue even if we (students and faculty) do not buy in.

Karina: I had a meeting with the course manager from SDU. SDU management decided to keep the course. NTNU etc. have also decided to keep such a course. ITU's employers' Panel have asked for such a course, and so have our students – at least some years ago. The challenge is: How do we best provide students with cross-disciplinary skills?

Baki: The way CrossDIT has been designed I do not think it teaches cross-disciplinary skills. And on e.g. DIM we already teach these skills. It is redundant on DIM. In a way, CrossDIT erases what has already been taught on DIM. This causes frustration among students and faculty. I agree, that DIM's Employers Panel says we need the skills but they do not say it must be via a course like CrossDIT.

Marco: I think CrossDIT is a waste of ECTS points. We can teach cross-disciplinary skills better in other ways.

Stine: Has it been decided for how long CrossDIT will continue?

Lene: No long-term decision has been made. If you wish to recommend it being discontinued, it is very important to show management how cross-disciplinary skills are taught and learned on the individual programme. Heads of Study Programme need to show that very explicitly.

Baki: If the Education Portfolio Report did not put the issues down to resistance, I would be much more open. Describing how cross-disciplinary skills are taught on each programme could be a task for the coming year. I just did not expect it to be necessary to have to make this description; it is an integral part of DIM.

Paolo: It is frustrating that a course on my programme can be decided by someone else. CrossDIT does not fit into my programme but I have no say in it.

Marco: There are many possible solutions. E.g. study programmes could propose electives in collaboration (like the former course Big Data Management which was a collaboration between DIM and SDT). That way, we could have several multidisciplinary electives and perhaps we could even make it mandatory for students to choose at least one of them.

Stine: We should recommend that Heads of Study Programme are much more involved in the future design of CrossDIT and that it is made an elective.

Lene: CrossDIT is owned by the Head of Studies. The New Head of Studies starts 1. January 2021. The title is changed to Dean of Education.

Baki: Another point for the BoS statement on the Education Portfolio Report is assignment of teachers to courses. Courses that cut across programmes are difficult to staff with the current system for staffing courses. If we want students to meet across programmes, we need to rethink how teaching is distributed.

Stine: I agree. The current set-up (departments) on ITU does not really support cross-disciplinary and cross-departmental courses and teaching.

Stine: Another issue for the BoS statement: I think we should remind management that diversity should be part of the action plan and that diversity should be about more than gender.

Jonathan: It seems management consider diversity to be about sexual harassment. That will not get us very far.

Baki: Another issue for the statement is the term Robustness. It seems a shallow definition. Having at least two faculty who can teach a topic/course does not mean they have time to teach it. Everybody has a full schedule, so we do not have resources to ensure real robustness.

Lene R: The original intention of the predicate was to check if we have a minimum of competences within an area or if we are short and possibly need to hire faculty in an understaffed area.

Jörn: Maybe robustness is just the wrong word. Could we use research base instead?

Dorthe: The term Robustness is part of Quality Standard 2.8 in the quality Policy. I am working on the draft Quality Policy 2021 and will see if the term research base will work. BoS is consulted on the Quality Policy 2021 at our next meeting (if all goes according to plan) where you will see the suggested change.

Decision:
Not enough students were present for BoS to make the statement to management on the Education Portfolio Report. Dorthe makes a draft statement based on the discussions at the meeting and sends it to all BoS members on 6 November. BoS must comment/approve in writing by Monday 9 November. Comments are sent by email to Dorthe cc. the rest of BoS. Based on the response from BoS members, Dorthe puts together the final statement and forwards it to BoS, Education Group and Executive Management.

Statement sent to Executive Management 9 November 2020:
The Board of Studies (BoS) discussed the draft Education Portfolio Report at their meeting 5 November 2020. BoS' statement is hereby forwarded to Education Group and Executive Management.

1. **CrossDit:**
   BoS welcomes that CrossDit is treated in the report and is part of the Action Plan. BoS objects to the use of the term 'resistance' as it comes across in the Action Plan as if resistance among students and faculty is the only issue with CrossDit. BoS finds it not to be so. BoS recommends adding to the Action Plan, that the course faces structural problems, also related to item 2 on this list. An alternative to the complex construction of CrossDit could be to task each study programme and that each MSc programme with making an explicit description of how cross-disciplinary skills are taught in the programme. Another alternative is to make CrossDit an elective across programmes.

2. **Assignment of teachers to courses**:
   BoS finds it relevant to point to a side-effect of the current organisation at ITU. Staffing courses and teaching activities with a departmental starting point makes it more difficult to staff activities that cut across study programmes and departments.

3. **Diversity**:
   BoS takes the opportunity to remind management of the importance of not limiting diversity to issues concerning gender. Diversity has many other relevant aspects at ITU and on the study programmes and the Heads of Study Programme miss the input from the former Diversity Officer.

4. **Robustness**:
   The term robustness is used in Quality Standard 2.8 to determine if a minimum of at least two faculty can teach a given course which is mandatory for some students. BoS finds the term problematic as it sends a signal of available teaching resources that does not reflect reality. BoS suggests using the term Research based instead.
   The change would be made in the Quality Policy 2021.

5. **CrossDIT, BoS continues discussion**
   Appendix 2 (same as item 4)

   Baki: I have a comment on the course's process. The intention with the course is to involve all students and teachers. I am not against the idea. But could we make a different process for registration to the course, to make it possible for students to make groups prior to registration, or put together the groups as students register? Is that at all possible?
   Marco: On CS we have a way of building groups for the course Research Project, that might be useful for CrossDIT.
   Lene: We can find ways of doing such things, but it that the first thing we should do? I think we should start with the purpose of the course and work from there.
   Baki: If we can imagine other ways to ensure cross-disciplinary skills than having a mandatory course like CrossDIT, we could start exploring options. There might be multiple ways to organize it.
   Stine: With that, I think we have finished our discussion of the course. We look forward to further discussions with management.

6. **FYI: Study Environment Assessment 2020**
   Guest: Karina G. Christensen from Dean of Education Support
   Appendix 3

   Karina: To be compliant with regulations, we must make a on Study Environment Assessment at least every 3 years. ITU has decided to use the combined survey from UFM (LÆRBAR, Uddannelses-zoom, TRIV and DCUM) as data, and since 71 of the 118 questions must be included to comply, we decided to include all 118 questions as data for the assessment and action plan. ILM will have their own survey as they are not included in the ministerial survey.
   Jörn: How do the students react to the size of the survey?
   Jens: Speaking for myself I find it to be a lot of questions! I think many students will not participate or drop it halfway through because of the volume of questions.
   Jonathan: I know people who have not participated, probably because it is so long.
   Marco: Are we penalized if the response rate is not high enough?
   Dorthe: No, not directly. Dorthe proceeded to explain the survey set-up, its components etc. ITU has decided to use it as data for our Study environment Assessment instead of making our own survey. All eight universities have written UFM asking for a process to clean up and slim the survey.
   Jonathan. I did not know the survey was open until 15 December, perhaps that should be made known more widely.
   Lene: We are not punished on the response rate, but results are put on our webpage and could impact future students' choice of ITU.

7. **Diversity officer, BoS decides how to proceed**
   Stine: As it is not an option to approach the Board of Directors, we need to decide how to proceed. We can recommend it being added to Education Portfolio Report Action Plan.
   Baki: What does the Education Group think? Where do they stand?
   Lene: I cannot answer of behalf of Education Group. BoS should make it an official question to Education Group including Heads of Department.
   Stine: Lene; could you bring it up that BoS is pushing for a diversity officer for students and faculty?
   Lene: Yes, I will do that.

Decision:
BoS asks Education Group including Heads of Department to inform BoS on their position on the need for a Diversity Officer for students and faculty.

8. **AOB**