



## eLIFE – news on life at LIFE

Thursday 18 February 2010

Email to the editors: [elife@life.ku.dk](mailto:elife@life.ku.dk)

The final deadline for editorial changes is Wednesday before the publication of eLIFE on Thursday.

The online newsletter may be subject to editorial changes.

As regards links in the newsletter, please refer to the Danish online version at the faculty's website [http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life\\_internt/nyhedsbrev.aspx](http://www.life.ku.dk/Maalgruppe/medarbejdere/life_internt/nyhedsbrev.aspx)

Gudrun Lau Bjerno, Editor, LIFE Communications, [glb@life.ku.dk](mailto:glb@life.ku.dk)

## Life at LIFE

### **Student-organised happening to protest cut-backs**

On Monday-Wednesday in calendar week 7, the Marble Hall was filled with old uniforms symbolising the approx. 100 employees who no longer work at LIFE as a result of budget cuts.

According to the organisers, the happening is not a criticism of the LIFE Management. It is a declaration of solidarity to the employees who have lost their jobs and a proclamation to the students who will ultimately feel the after-effects of the budget cuts.

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [glb@life.ku.dk](mailto:glb@life.ku.dk) – latest update 17 February 2010*

## Announcements

### **Information Meeting on Annual Tax Returns**

The time for preparation of the annual tax returns (*selvangivelsen*) is approaching. The deadline is 1 May 2010.

Join us for advice from the Copenhagen Tax Centre, and learn how to fill out the annual tax return correctly! After the meeting, refreshments will be served.

Date and time: 17 March, 3-4 pm

Location: University of Copenhagen, Nørregade 10, Meeting room 1 (committee room 1), entrance O (near Lindegården), 1017 Copenhagen

Price: Free

International Staff Mobility

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [glb@life.ku.dk](mailto:glb@life.ku.dk) – latest update 12 February 2010*

## Education

### **Dialogue meeting on future perspectives of LIFE study programmes – main points**

Main points from the group discussions at the dialogue meeting on 10 February 2010

Below, you will find the specific proposals by the staff and students at the dialogue meeting on the perspectives of LIFE's study programmes grouped thematically. The Faculty Management will now consider the proposals in the further process of developing LIFE's strategic action plan.

Further proposals and comments may be sent by email to Associate Dean of Education Grete Bertelsen, [proud@life.ku.dk](mailto:proud@life.ku.dk).

### **E-learning in the classroom**

- Request for a long-term strategy with the necessary resources in the establishment phase.
- Good technical and educational support – already available via ITLC.
- Blended learning results in savings in connection with large lectures.
- E-learning courses mean high admittance requirements, and they should be compulsory if they are to be a success.
- Minimum requirements for all study programmes with e-learning will underpin the area.
- E-learning is a good tool and can be used to watch lectures again online.
- Lecturers need to be aware of e-learning.
- E-learning should be part of the assistant professor and PhD training programme.
- E-learning is suitable for handling training and lab-intensive courses. Works well with review of lab exercises, which can be made available online.
- E-learning promotes teaching teams.
- Internet problems make students wary of electronic exams.
- Students aren't necessarily interested in full-scale e-learning. It is one tool among many that should be used where relevant in combination with other tools.
- E-learning is a good tool for continuing education.
- Identification of 'enthusiasts'/lecturers who strongly support e-learning and can act as pioneers (both some that are appropriate for blended learning and some that are appropriate for 100% e-learning courses)
- Huge potential in FTE earnings from e-learning.

Motivation for students and lecturers:

*Lecturers:*

1. Earn FTE points.
2. Lecturers need to accept and recognise that preparation for e-learning courses takes longer than for standard courses.
3. Good supervision (e.g. ITLC)
4. A lecturer cannot handle more than 50-60 students in 100% e-learning courses

*Students:*

1. Courses with blended learning are no problem. Students are happy to use podcasts and vodcasts of teaching material as this allows them to attend courses when it suits them
2. 100% e-learning courses should be of high quality (along the lines of elite courses), with specific admission requirements to ensure a uniform and high academic level.
3. Requirements for student activity.

### **Studying abroad**

- Something should be done to make it easier for students to study abroad as many students find the application procedures and regulations at foreign universities difficult.
- It should be clearer which courses students may take while studying abroad and when it is best to study abroad.
- Strict study plans make it difficult to study abroad. The good study environment is another factor that keeps students at home (a positive dilemma).
- A mentor scheme might encourage more students to study broad, including ensuring better integration of foreign students at LIFE.
- Mobility could be increased if projects and/or internships abroad were incorporated into the study programme.
- Possibility of transferring grades according to the 7-point grading scale.
- Studying abroad should give 'extra points', and thus be an advantage in your studies.
- The block structure does not work with the semester structure of other universities, which means that studying abroad can increase the time it takes to complete your studies.
- There is an unexploited potential in the existing collaboration agreements with foreign universities.

### **Joint teaching and educational activities across the faculties at the University of Copenhagen**

- Joint course database is necessary to achieve the greatest impact on the University's inner market. It should be just as good as LIFE's current course database in which it is possible to conduct single word searches.
- The joint course database should be organised in the same style as Amazon, including information on additional searches performed by other people who have searched for the same course. Often students do not know what other relevant courses are offered at the various faculties.
- In order to get students to choose more courses outside their faculty, the entire University needs to follow the same FTE point allocation procedures.

- Students need to be motivated to choose courses at other faculties. Directors of study etc. need to be aware of the fact that courses from other faculties can make up core courses in a study programme if this is academically advantageous.
- There isn't necessarily a need to organise more courses, but it can be a good idea to consider the possibility of existing academic environments collaborating across the faculties.
- Inter-faculty collaboration is not relevant in connection with large courses, but more logical for small courses with less volume and for electives.
- Overlapping courses at the University should be identified. Dialogue meetings between the faculties would promote joint teaching and educational activities. It requires coordination between the lecturers across the faculties.
- Inter-faculty student forums would call attention to the University's courses.
- Management needs to make a joint course database a high priority in order to truly benefit from the inner market.
- Inter-faculty collaboration is not a good idea in the first year of study when students often need to develop a social study environment and, therefore, are interested in taking courses at their own faculty.
- Requires a uniform structure for the academic year.
- Project/methodology-oriented courses of general interest might be particularly interesting in an inter-faculty context. For instance, summer courses. As an example, a course on project management was discussed specifically – there is a genuine need – especially for students who are about to graduate, but also as an introductory element in a project-oriented course. ECTS can be discussed – differing competencies among lecturers from different faculties can be advantageously exploited.
- Week structure should allow students to take courses at two different faculties. This should have been addressed with the new week structure, but some students still experience logistical problems due to the extra transit time.
- Abolishment of academic areas: Inter-faculty courses should be viewed as a way to maintain academic breadth in study programmes.
- Courses taught jointly by lecturers from different faculties – there are initiatives in play, but in light of the recent budget cuts, it is important that this is underpinned by positive motivation, academic grounds and an open process in order to avoid excess turmoil over further rationalisation benefits. Such courses already exist, but they are relatively few.
- On the one hand, joint courses produce synergies, but on the other hand, they dilute the individual identities of the faculties and study programmes and should, therefore, be weighed against the logistical problems and resources connected with inter-faculty coordination. For example, this is the case with the proposed basic module 'integrated science' which would be offered jointly by FARMA, LIFE and NAT and the proposal of a joint introduction to biology at the University, where there is a need to define the common arena.
- In the wake of the budget cuts, the prioritisation of new inter-faculty initiatives vs. 'own' study activities is under pressure – the management boards need to define a framework and set priorities.

## Study environment

- Postcast-based courses would improve the study environment.

- Clarifying what is possible when composing a course of study would improve the study environment.
- Expansion of the Campus Plan and social meeting places.

### Contact with employers

- LIFE should make an effort to get more thesis students to enter into partnerships with businesses in connection with their thesis projects.
- Businesses need to be made more aware of the advantages of increased contact with students at LIFE.
- Employers should be involved as lecturers on e-learning courses and invited to be guest lecturers.

Thank you for the fruitful discussion!

*Faculty Management*

Participants: 85.

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 17 February 2010*

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5. Send your application to the Secretariat for Internationalisation, Bülowsvej 17, 1870 Frederiksberg C

We look forward to hearing from you!

Best regards, Secretariat for Internationalisation

Email: Louise Sørensen, [mlos@life.ku.dk](mailto:mlos@life.ku.dk) or phone: +45 3533 2052

*Gudrun Lau Bjerno, [gib@life.ku.dk](mailto:gib@life.ku.dk) – latest update 17 February 2010*

## Grants

## Grants awarded

The Henrik Tofte Jacobsen grant was awarded on 15 February 2010 in connection with Henrik Tofte Jacobsen's birthday – the recipients were notified directly. Letters of rejection will not be sent.

**Marie Louise Sørensen, Study and Students' Affairs, [mlos@life.ku.dk](mailto:mlos@life.ku.dk)**

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## Fulbright-Schuman Programme – grants for EU citizens

The Fulbright-Schuman Programme, administered by the Commission for Educational Exchange between the US, Belgium and Luxembourg, is jointly financed by the US State Department and the Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission. Find out more at [www.fulbright.be](http://www.fulbright.be).

Types of grants:

- Grants for Research or University Study
- Grants for Professionals in International Education
- EU Scholar in Residence Program

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## Research funds etc.

See the updated information on the Research & Information website.