

Function and composition of the Department Council

Background

The University Board has commissioned the President to do a review of involvement in decision-making within the departments. The purpose of this is to develop a proposal for securing greater involvement and influence, particularly for students.

The current department management function with governance by the Head of Department and an advisory council has existed for nearly seven years. A relatively large number of new department heads were appointed at the end of the year. In light of this there has been reason to evaluate the bases for influence and involvement within the departments and to review the current function and composition of the department councils.

Decision-making at KI

Decision-making at KI is organized as follows:

Decisions are made by the Head of Department or the one to whom this role has been delegated. Decisions that are to be made by the Head of Department are found in the President's order of delegation.

Prior to a decision the Head of Department shall:

- Address issues of fundamental importance in the Department Council.
- Inform and possibly negotiate with employee organizations on the development of the department from functional, economic and HR policy perspectives.

Only the function and composition of the Department Council are dealt with in this decision. Collaboration with the staff is addressed in a separate decision.

Function and composition of the Department Council

The President has decided that the following rules regarding the function and composition of the Department Council shall take effect 1 November 2000.

Every department shall have a Department Council, which deals with issues that are of fundamental importance or affect the department as a whole.

The Department Council is an advisory board, a forum for dialogue and support for decisions by the Head of Department. The issues which are to be addressed by the Department Councils are found in the appendix that describes tasks at KI. A Head of Department must take a stand on a number of issues affecting various groups within the department.

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The Head of Department shall consult and obtain the support of his or her proposals from these groups. The Department Council is a platform where various representatives can meet.

The composition of the Department Council can vary among the departments, since the activities, geographical location and personnel categories of departments differ.

Depending upon the activities and organization of the department some employees may be members of the Department Council by virtue of their positions while others are appointed. Representatives from the faculty organizations and their substitutes are selected by each organization. In addition, people from another operation, e.g. another department or a public health care clinic, may be members. The mandate is for three years.

Each student body that has members who are students in the department appoints a student representative. The postgraduate student union appoints one or more representatives and substitutes to departments that offer postgraduate education. The mandate period is determined by the relevant student bodies.

Representatives of faculty (teaching and administrative staff) and student organizations shall constitute at least half of the Department Council.

It is essential the Department Council has an all-round composition, and that particular consideration is taken to the balance between postgraduate and graduate education, issues of equality as well as representation by technical/administrative personnel and students. The purpose of this is to balance the composition of the Council in such a way that attention is given to the opinions and experiences of different members and that their voices are heard.

The composition of the Department Council must be reported to the President after consideration by the co-determination group.

The Council is to meet at least twice per semester. The Head of Department chairs the meetings. The notice to attend a Department Council meeting must contain an agenda with proposals and documentation for upcoming decisions by the Head of Department.

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Minutes of a Council meeting must be kept and made public no later than 14 days after the meeting.

Influence Committee

The President has decided to establish an Influence Committee as of 1 Nov. 2000, the purpose of which is to follow up the way issues of influence are handled by departments/ other units and to serve as a good example and take initiative intended to promote involvement and influence. The Committee, which will be chaired by the President, will include employer, employee and student representatives. Employee and student representatives will be appointed by employee organizations and student bodies.

Decisions in this matter have been made by the President, Professor Hans Wigzell, after a presentation by HR Director Ulla Östervall. Rune Fransson, University Director, was also present.

Hans Wigzell

/Ulla Östervall

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Department Council tasks

Appendix

The Department Council has an overriding function with a focus on departmental strategy and activities. The Head of the Department shall gain the support of the Department Council prior to making decisions on such issues.

The activities of departments are different. Below is a list of the tasks about which the Head of Department is most frequently expected to make decisions. The list is to be viewed as a checklist to assist the Head of Department in his/her identification of strategic areas and the decision-making structure.

1. Propose a new Head of Department to the President.

See the special memo.

2. Prepare matters prior to decision by Head of Department.

The Activity plan that the departments are to decide upon each year is a document that describes the overall development of operations for the department and which generates the need for various forms of support. In anticipation of the Activity plan there must be a discussion within the department regarding priority activities, budget and staffing needed for these, premises etcetera.

Decisions regarding the scope and priorities of activities

- within the **core areas**: research, graduate and undergraduate education.
- within the **management function** that can generate delegations within the department, organizational change etc.
- within the **support functions** performed by technical and administrative personnel.

Financial decisions such as budget, annual report etc.

HR decisions that include the principles for staff planning, employment, introduction, salary levels, competence development policy, issues of influences, HR policy etc.

Decisions on premises

Disposition of premises and associated costs for various activities.

Decisions on information issues

Information on websites, in employee newsletters and through other channels.

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Decision to establish work groups

Groups can be set up in the departments for budget planning, postgraduate education, undergraduate education, IT issues, library etcetera. The composition and task of these groups shall be discussed by the Department Council to which these groups regularly present their work.