



AALBORG UNIVERSITET

Aalborg Universitet
Postboks 159
9100 Aalborg

Sagsbehandler:
Maria Timis

Dato: [Brevdato]
Sagsnr.: [Sagsnr.]

Vælg et element.

Minutes Employer Panel Meeting, Service Systems Design

Monday 4. november 2019

AAU Copenhagen

Participants: Runa Sabroe (RS), Aurelija Rupsyte (AR), Amalia De Götzen (AG)

Other participants: Maria Timis, Minutes taker

Minutes

1. Description of the Curriculum

AG gave a short presentation of the curriculum:

1st semester 'Services as Interaction'

Within the first semester of the master program AG highlighted the possible future developments. One of the envisioned changes is to develop programming as a course more data oriented, to prepare the students to better deal with data analysis in the design process. AG asked if the participants thought that this is a relevant competence for a future service designer.

RN said that there is a demand for employees who know the transition from data to visibility; it is an issue to have the exact skills as a designer. We need people that understand the context, users, barriers. All companies talk about it and have interest in data.

AR: programming should be connected with measures and service evaluation, so the data aspect can be relevant. It is also important to say that a service designer needs to know how to translate her user research into specific IT requirements. She said that, as a service designer in Danske Bank, she is in between the business and the IT department and she has to understand the IT language. So the programming course is very relevant for service designers, because it gives the basic understanding of the logic behind the technical part of services and gives the tools to then be able to effectively communicate with the developers.

RN: In some way it is expected that candidates have digital skills (it's a baseline), but they should not be experts. She would expect SSD candidates to have digital skills at some levels, but not as experts. In this way the SSD candidates can sell themselves also as UX designers, which is a plus.

2nd semester – 'Services as systems'

AG: guided the discussion around the course *Services Representation and Prototyping*. The issue that while the video sketching part of the course is very important and gives some useful capabilities to be used in the job market, the prototyping part, that is focusing mostly on prototyping with electronic boards (f.ex Arduino) is not that valuable for our students now. We want to change the content of this course and we want to keep working on prototyping but more broadly in the context of services.

AR/RS agreed that we need to prototype. Arduino is fine, but very much on the micro level; service designers are expected to work more and more with prototyping, which seems to be the future key asset. AR pointed at



testing as a very crucial part; big companies like Danske Bank spend a lot of money to hire companies to test prototypes before entering into the implementation. The prototype testing part is very expected.

All agreed that Arduino should be dropped.

The discussion then moved into the course *Technological and Organizational trends in service design*, and RS pointed at circular economy as another important area and how you can use design as a basis to understand and develop it; understanding human behavior for private and public sector –for example for sustainability, circular economy. The timing would be perfect: Copenhagen might be world capital for architecture (in 2023) with big congresses on architecture, sustainability.

3rd semester – Internship

The main structure of the semester was discussed: the students can choose internship combining with a mandatory course: “Strategy and Business in Services”. They can go abroad for an exchange or they can also stay and have a semester project. There were no special points of discussion.

4th semester – Master’s thesis

The Master’s thesis is often written in collaboration with a company, both RS and AR had very good experiences with service design students both with internships and with thesis.

2. Employability and collaboration

RS found that 40 students a year is a lot, but it’s good to have more applicants than what you let in.

AG asked RS and AR if they have experiences with other students from other similar education and if they could see major differences between them.

RS: She has experience with students from KADK, CBS and AAU. She said that KADK students have very good graphical skills, so she would go with them if she wanted really nice drawings. From CBS you expect more understanding of the business part of it, while AAU students are better in understanding the systemic characteristics of services, to involve the right stakeholders of the ecosystem. RS pointed out that a crucial expertise for every designer in the future will be to understand Design + Business Development and what does it mean to use design as basis for Business Development. It would be a great asset for service design students to become experts in “a designerly way of developing a business”. Furthermore sustainability, business and data are important skills for the SSD students to have. AR added that organizational design and facilitation skills also are good skills.

AG asked if we should keep the generalist profile for the education?

RS: If you find new, strong tendencies, you should be able to be quick at applying changes. You should be willing to change it year by year, but it requires a lot of you as an institution to be very agile.

But you should give your candidates a basis/generalist profile. A graduate will never have a leader position at her/his first job, but strive to be expert in something.

Students from ITU have more technical skills and students from DTU also have knowledge about physics, but they are not so visual and creative as students from AAU.

It was asked if there are problems about the name of the education. AG said there was no plan of changing the name, but it is a challenge for students to ‘pitch’ themselves.

The University wants us to have more Danish students enrolled in the education. At the moment 70% are international students. How can we attract Danish students?



AR: It is important to think tactically and choose who you corporate with. You also have to brand the education better. It is important that the potential students know that this education would bring them to areas/companies they are interested in. Danish students are very focused on where they end up after finishing the education.

RS mentioned that collaboration with other educational institutions could be a good way of branding and positioning yourself as an institution and also a way to attract more Danish students.