



STRATEGY 2017-21



PROBLEM SOLVING, CRITICAL REFLECTION AND ADDRESSING THE FUTURE



INTRODUCTION

OUR VISION

We make a difference in the lives of our students by empowering them to become problem-solvers, empowered with the knowledge, competences and skills necessary to address present and future challenges. We contribute to the global production of knowledge and understanding of these challenges by developing theory and method in political science. We offer nuanced understandings of, critical reflection on and robust solutions to Danish, European and global political problems.

We maintain a vibrant, engaging and supportive working environment that facilitates the achievement of excellence. We cultivate talent, celebrate diversity, respect work–life balance and carefully include considerations of gender in our activities.

OUR OPPORTUNITIES

The Department of Political Science has graduated from the national to the international stage in terms of achievements and aspirations. In 2016, an international peer-review research evaluation concluded that ‘the Department of Political Science at the University of Copenhagen provides ... one of the best research environments in Europe for the conduct of leading edge research of international quality in all aspects of political science and international relations.’ The Department makes a difference in three overlapping domains: research, education and societal impact.

Research excellence manifests itself in high rankings

but also in terms of the recognition of our peers, our graduates, their employers and our stakeholders, to whom we provide new understandings of the many challenges defining the 21st century. We live in an age defined by the disruption caused by technological development, climate change, demographic reconfigurations and the fragmentation of international institutions and the realignment of the international balance of power. These challenges are global in nature, even as they have a specific regional and national impact. The rise of populism and alternative social models has raised questions regarding the organisation of public governance and the effectiveness of democracy. We need to be able to explain and understand these developments at the same time as we contribute to the innovation of policies to address them. The compound nature of these challenges means that they must often be explained, understood and innovated using mixed methods that combine several fields and methods in ways that are at least as innovative and disruptive for old ways of thinking as the developments they seek to study.

The influence of our research must reach beyond academia and our findings should assist government, civil society and the private sector to identify and ultimately solve major societal challenges. The most lasting impact we make is probably in terms of the graduates we educate, and we work to ensure that they have a deep, reflective knowledge of the world and that they are equipped with tools with which they can solve its problems.

The Department integrates several fields into a single pluralistic research community in order to best serve research, education and societal impact. This pluralism is a major asset for the Department, as it helps us innovate and continuously develop our education programmes.

OUR CHALLENGES

Advanced knowledge societies such as Denmark are changing rapidly, meaning that the Department must also change. We have identified four strategic, interrelated challenges we want to address as we continue to develop the Department into a truly world-class research institution.

- The first challenge relates to the impact that the Department should make on society. Universities need to adapt their culture of learning to fit the knowledge society in which traditional research publication paradigms are insufficient. In these circumstances, the Department must redefine its impact on society and retool to address the great societal issues of a time of change.
- One of our core strengths is the Department's strategic position in the global discipline of political science. As pointed out in a recent research evaluation, however, we have yet to realise the full potential of the internationalisation of teaching and research. The Department must develop a global curricula and learning pedagogy in order to address global challenges optimally.
- In our academic environment, students experience a disconnect between the issues addressed in classroom and the major issues dominating the society in which they will work upon graduation. The students also experience a disconnect between the research done at the Department and the curriculum. While the Department has recently experienced some successes in integrating

major societal issues in teaching, it must further connect its research excellence to its educational programme to ensure its students are prepared for the transformations taking place in Danish, European and global politics.

- The rapidly changing funding structure for public education and research presents the Department with an imperative to reconsider its financial position and diversify its income in terms of alternative and internationalised education, research funding and public-private cooperation. At present, our teaching programmes are not sufficiently effective to absorb the projected changes in the funding structure for university teaching in Denmark.

The Department needs to rethink its role in teaching, research and public engagement so that its educational culture and research environment encourage students and researchers to address 21st century political challenges. This strategy will address these challenges on impact, internationalisation, academic environment and revenue.

The purpose of strategy is to provide a guide for coherent action. This strategy is neither an exhaustive list of every activity in the Department nor a detailed plan. It is a design that establishes a narrative that shapes how we act individually and collectively in the next 5 years. Specific implementation plans will be formulated for the various actions mentioned in the strategy. These plans make due consideration to the work-life balance of staff.

The Department strategy is to be read as a guide to how we want to focus our efforts within the greater strategies of the University of Copenhagen and the Faculty of Social Sciences.





I · IMPACT

ASPIRATION

1. We believe that by in-depth analysis and critical reflection, we can make key contributions to the continued development of democracy.
2. We will make an impact nationally and internationally in terms of the development of concepts and instruments as well as further developing capacity.
3. We will make academic social responsibility, understood as the mission to actively engage staff and students to the benefit of society through research, service and partnerships, a hallmark of the Department and its graduates.
4. We will continuously develop flexible knowledge-exchange strategies that make us better able to engage with stakeholders outside academia and other communities of knowledge.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

1. Stakeholders experience that individuals and centres at the Department engage actively with broader society and with existing and emerging public policy imperatives.
2. Employers find that our graduates bring a distinctive problem-solving ability to the organisations and workplaces in the public and private sectors.
3. Students experience that they acquire a strong skillset of analytical competences, advanced methodological skills, critical thinking and understanding of how to affect society.
4. Staff is highly active in the public debate, takes societal responsibility and are represented in government councils and other venues in which we contribute knowledge and expertise to the development of good policy.
5. The global academic community recognises the Department as a global knowledge institution, which is 'world leading' in some areas and 'internationally excellent' with regard to most of our centres and research groups.

ACTIONS

1. Maximise the potential impact of the Department's international reputation of existing excellence by promoting research and publications that are consistent with high performance in relation to relevant bibliometric and reputational indicators.
2. Establish task forces involving relevant stakeholders to address political and social issues.
3. Allocate resources to enable better impact, including media training, social media presence, impact reporting assistance, annual publication of impact activities at departmental level as well as individual impact assessment meetings.
4. Partner with natural science research communities at the University of Copenhagen and other research institutions in research projects on major societal challenges. In 2021, we want to be a partner in at least two major projects of this nature.
5. Establish 'policy labs' in cooperation with stakeholders on a number of specific issue areas.
6. Engage in the debate nationally and internationally on how to define and measure impact and communicate the Department's impact. This will include publishing several 'impact stories' on the Department website.



II · INTERNATIONALISATION

ASPIRATION

1. We are international by temperament and proud of our heritage. A non-hierarchical work environment based on teamwork and equal opportunity should be cultivated into a Department culture that attracts and nurtures talent.
2. We will strengthen the Department's international connectedness and expand international networks.
3. We will attract outstanding international students for programmes that are innovative and research-based.
4. We will continue to incorporate international, intercultural and global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as the learning outcomes, assessment tasks and teaching methods.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

1. Employers recognise that graduates have a comprehensive understanding of and flair for operating in an international context.
2. A diverse student body provides an international student experience in Copenhagen that allows students to benefit from exchange with others from different backgrounds.
3. Department staff are actively engaged in international cooperation and exchange related to both teaching and research.
4. The Department can attract the best talent from around the world at the BA, MA and PhD levels as well as for postdoc and faculty positions. Newcomers to Denmark – staff and students alike – experience a welcoming, inclusive environment, flexibility, and clear communication of job expectations that enables them to make a determined and continued effort to become an integrated part of the Department and Danish society in general.
5. The Department continues to encourage high quality publications in Danish on the challenges facing Danish society and politics. The Department seeks innovative

ways in which research generated in the Danish context leads to publications in the best international publication channels and will also make sure that its publications in Danish are informed by the newest international research literature.

ACTIONS

1. Encourage research projects, educational activities and impact work that communicates Danish models for addressing societal disruption to a global audience as well as translating global experiences to a Danish audience.
2. Launch initiatives to facilitate the job placement of graduate and PhD students and post docs in Denmark and abroad.
3. Increase the international connectedness of staff by stimulating and supporting activities that help them build and expand existing international networks. This should include the establishment and codification of partnerships with international universities.
4. Ensure that the curriculum contains teaching opportunities for international staff.
5. Establish a number of formal networks with similar international academic environments.
6. Attract and retain high-profile international research staff by ensuring that search committees for new positions in the Department seek out and encourage applications from researchers from Denmark and abroad that will further the Department's strategic goals.



III · ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

ASPIRATION

1. We empower our students to achieve a better future by teaching them to identify, analyse and address the challenges of the future and the problems of the present.
2. We will bridge the study–work divide by rethinking the relations between student work placement in the class learning experience and real world methods.
3. We advance and support pluralism in forms of knowledge both within and between fields in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders. We facilitate the synergy between ongoing research and education, which we consider inseparable and mutually enlightening activities.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

1. Employers experience graduates with a flair for solving problems, in-depth knowledge of the causes of these problems together with relevant analytical, communicative and administrative skills.
2. Students experience a community of practice that gives them real-life competences as well as the ability to critically reflect on the world and its problems; that students experience a campus that offers them opportunities to learn and network beyond the classroom.
3. Staff experience the Department as an environment in which individuals can realise their ambitions in collaboration with others and in respect for different approaches and roles. All researchers (including PhD students) are an active part of a research group.
4. The global academic community experiences an excellent research environment that is well connected to global research and learning centres. This manifests itself in continued top rankings. Teaching teams form the backbone of the Department organisation and they enable students to interact with research and researchers.
5. The structure of the education activities ensures that we deliberately and consciously decide on the elements of teaching in the light of both pedagogical and financial concerns.

ACTIONS

1. Reform the BA and MA programmes in Political Science and Social Science aiming at integrating teaching and research. This means, inter alia, the inclusion of research-based activities from the first semester and ensuring the ongoing progression for students with the aim that they complete their studies on time.
2. Bring ‘real-world problems’ into the classroom by creating courses and workshops that evolve around solving, discussing and potentially reframing existing societal problems, including a PhD-level course on policy making.
3. Brand graduates’ competences more precisely and with a special effort to explain the competences to future employers, including the private sector.
4. Offer courses in collaboration with other departments that foster inter-disciplinary thinking and research.
5. Ensure that students engage with all faculty members in all programmes throughout their time at the University of Copenhagen. This includes the active use of academic student societies as well as the development of a feedback culture that facilitates easier access to, and better communication about, face-to-face interaction with faculty members for students.
6. Establish teaching teams that will integrate one or more research groups in teaching with the aim of a common responsibility for continuous development and implementation of courses. The teaching team is responsible for facilitating, establishing and maintaining problem-driven interaction with relevant professional practices and the surrounding society.
7. Appoint an Innovation Officer to assist the Head of Studies collecting, sharing and developing best practices on teaching.
8. Establish an early career programme for PhDs and postdocs in order to facilitate placement in high-ranking institutions and with attractive employers.



IV · REVENUE

ASPIRATIONS

1. We will enhance and diversify revenues. We will reduce proportionate dependency on income from students completing exams (STÅ) and reduce proportionate dependency on national research council funding.
2. We will allocate resources for centres, research groups and individuals following clear rules and guidelines that support our strategic objectives. We will formulate and follow strict priorities that enable the Department to develop and expand in a challenging funding climate.
3. We will promote initiatives that enhance innovation in teaching and research, collaboration, and contribute both academically and financially.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

1. By generating new income and reducing costs, the Department will overcome projected financial challenges in 2020.
2. The relative costs and benefits of income-generating activities are clearly communicated and transparent to students, staff and administration.
3. The Department is increasingly being awarded larger grants with overhead from national and international funds. This includes a considerable increase in ERC grants, Marie Curie grants and at least two centres of excellence funded by the Danish National Research foundation or similar by 2021.
4. Increased income from research-based public sector services and continued NIAS and CMS funding.
5. The Department maintains a culture where all contributions to the financial well-being of the Department are welcome providing they are cost-efficient and consistent with our academic and professional values and goals in teaching and research.

ACTIONS

1. Nudge students and staff to make choices beneficial to the Department's finances by creating greater awareness of the various incentives and funding systems that govern the Department's finances.
2. Reduce the costs associated with the current organisation of the BA and MA programmes in political science, including the costs associated with exams and ensuring higher completion rates.
3. Increase revenue from professional education courses by better utilising internationalisation and existing programmes (Master in Public Governance operated with the Copenhagen Business School, the University of Copenhagen Summer University).
4. Attract more fee-paying international students.
5. Increase research-based public sector services and build a support structure for researchers engaging in such activities.
6. Involve former graduates in fundraising or develop special paid-for events for alumni, including the establishment of an Executive Alumni Network.
7. Reform the norm system for faculty, salary agreements and travel/conference allocations so that they support the Department's strategic initiatives on research, education and societal impact.
8. Develop a policy of smart applications, including a systematic approach to applying for externally funded projects that establishes a schedule for ensuring the high quality of applications to well-known funding sources as well as a pro-active plan for engaging with less-familiar funding sources.
9. Encouraging a number of senior staff in gaining the experiences and competences to generate major research projects.

The Department of Political Science has 1,800 students in its BA and MA programmes in Political Science as well as the MA in Social Sciences and MA in Security Risk Management programmes. In partnership with the Copenhagen Business School, the Department teaches 600 students as part of the Master in Public Governance programme. The faculty consists of 76 researchers and 41 PhD students, and there are 20 administrative staff.

In 2016, the Department has total revenue amounting to app. DKK 114 million, of which DKK

37 mill. is related to externally funded projects and approximately DKK 78 mill. comes from government-funded activities. Of the DKK 78 mill. from government-funded activities, DKK 55 mill. (71%) is related to educational activities, DKK 10 mill. (13%) is related to research and DKK 7 mill. (9%) is revenue such as overhead, Ph.D.-taxameter and workplace contributions related to externally funded projects. Other revenue amounts to DKK 6 mill. (8% of total revenues).

The baseline for our work with this strategy consisted of research and teaching evaluations carried out in 2016. KaareLBK and Let's Involve facilitated the strategy process with the main objective to include staff, students and stakeholders in a comprehensive review of the challenges and opportunities facing the Department of Political Science. Preparing for this strategy, we have conducted interviews with key stakeholders, discussed the Department's challenges and opportunities with our

Employer Panel, our Alumni Association and conducted a 2-day workshop with students. A number of research groups, centres and the PhD students met and discussed strategic challenges and opportunities. They submitted various memos to the Strategy Panel via the Head of Department. These inputs have been discussed by a strategy panel which prepared the input for a strategy day for the entire Department staff and facilitated the continuous discussion of the strategy.

FEEDBACK
REPETITION
SPG
- PAUSE -
QUIZ

H/O
L



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