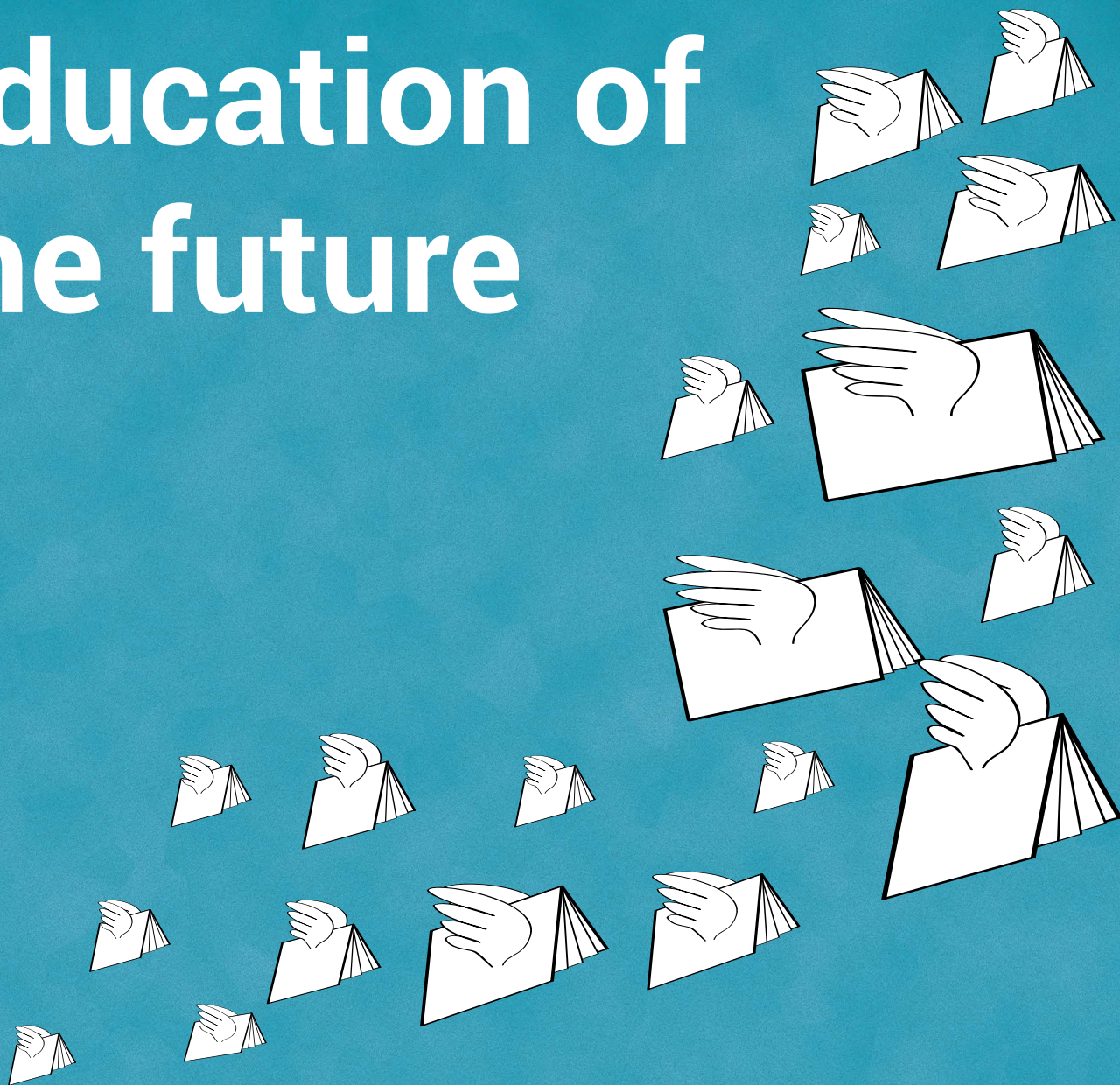


Education of the future



- a declaration about educational quality

Education of the future is made by students at the University of Oslo Februar 27th - March 1st.

The declaration can also be found at studentparlamentet.uio.no

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Dear reader,

Globalization, climate change, new technologies. The world is changing, and the university cannot stand still. Quality in higher education demands that we utilize the opportunities and solve the challenges that the future brings. At the Student Conference 2015, we raised the question: What should education look like in the future? How can the education at the University of Oslo (UiO) become as engaging and relevant as possible in a changing world?

We invited students from all of UiO to give their opinions and take part in the discussion about these questions at the Student Conference 2015. A diverse group of 40 students from different fields of study and different countries took part in the workshop. Together, we made the declaration you now hold in your hands, with help from our invited speakers and workshop leaders. The declaration gives some answers to the big, important and difficult questions we asked ourselves, and contains concrete suggestions for how we think the education offered at UiO can become even better.

The four topics of the conference – teaching, study programs, relevance to society and academic formation – were thoroughly discussed in groups and plenary sessions. At the end, the participants decided on the final text of the declaration and the main suggestions from the conference as a whole. The Student Parliament has also unanimously backed the main suggestions presented here.

Two of UiO's main strategic goals state that we aim to "offer research-based education equivalent to that offered by the foremost international places of learning" and "help to ensure that research-based knowledge is employed to solve the major challenges facing society in the 21st century." These are necessary but demanding ambitions. If the recommendations in this declaration are put into practice, we are positive that the University will come closer to achieve its goals.

Sincerely,

Marianne Andenæs, President of the Student Parliament 2014/2015

Runar Bjørkvik Mæland, Officer of Academic Affairs at the Student Parliament 2014/2015

Endringsforslag - Studen

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/17DcaFy491jpZt5CfA22zra0Bj081W-5C3Hn6Y1Q/edit>

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Akademisk dannelse:

Forslag 1:
Opprinnelig tekst: Alle studieprogram og emner ved UiO skal legges definisjonen av dannelse, gjengitt i brødteksten, til grunn når de skal revideres.
Type forslag: Strykning av "og emner"
Ny tekst: Alle studieprogram ved UiO skal legges definisjonen av dannelse, gjengitt i brødteksten, til grunn når de skal revideres.

Forslag 2:
Opprinnelig tekst: Alle studieprogram og emner ved UiO skal legges definisjonen av dannelse, gjengitt i brødteksten, til grunn når de skal revideres.
Type forslag: Strykning av "gjengitt i brødteksten"
Ny tekst: Alle studieprogram og emner ved UiO skal legges definisjonen av dannelse, til grunn når de skal revideres.

Forslag 3:
Opprinnelig tekst: "Alle studieprogram og emner ved UiO skal legges definisjonen av dannelse, gjengitt i brødteksten, til grunn når de skal revideres."

12:25 01.03.2015



Main recommendations:

The following motions were voted upon by the participants at the student conference 2015 "Education of the Future" as the best measures to enhance the education of today and tomorrow at the University of Oslo:

- UiO should establish a central teaching and learning center that provides and coordinates resources for improving the quality of education. This center should be able to help lecturers to use modern and effective didactic methods and technological tools in their teaching.
- Study programs should have clear focus areas that enable cross-disciplinarity. Some of the focus areas should address the great challenges society faces.
- To establish more cross-disciplinary research centers, meeting places and degrees, especially to solve challenges that require broad competency, such as climate and environmental challenges.
- The teaching in Examen Philosophicum (Exphil) should make students reflect over the problems of the course and relate them to today's context.

Teaching

Main measures:

- In order to incentivize good education it is important that the quality of the teaching becomes a more important factor in the hiring process of academic employees as well as in the process of moving up in the university hierarchy. The evaluation of the academic employees in these processes should be openly accessible to the students and staff.
- UiO should establish a central teaching and learning center that provides and coordinates resources for improving the quality of education. This center should be able to help lecturers to use modern and effective didactic methods and technological tools in their teaching.
- All education and teaching needs to be student-centered. It is important to prioritize teaching time on interaction and discussion on individual level (student-to-student and student-to-teaching personnel) and in smaller groups.

We believe that good teaching must be based on a student-centered perspective, it must make complex concepts digestible and inspire curiosity and make learning engaging. It should not only provide the basic knowledge but also the algorithm of using this knowledge to solve realistic problems. Digitalization should be promoted in all learning environments.

Good teaching is constituted by the following factors: Enabling students to identify their strengths and their weaknesses. Good learning environment should be promoted. It should ensure understanding of the underlying concept studied instead of just reproducing scholastic sentences. It should also ensure good theoretical and practical knowledge of the subject.

The local culture at the University of Oslo today does not promote teaching well enough. The culture is characterized by how the 'responsibility of teaching' is being overshadowed by 'the right to do research'. There is a precarious lack of incentives to provide teaching of high quality at an individual level. The lack of a center for competence and facilities of communication/teaching resources makes it difficult for innovative and forward-thinking lecturers and teachers to provide digital/alternative learning resources for students. This makes it difficult to develop the teaching methods used at the University, which has been static for too long. Cases of bad teaching are not addressed, and lack of individual follow-up and evaluation of teachers makes it difficult for individuals to improve. An education system that is ineffective and uncoordinated prevents student-teacher interaction and makes follow-up of students more challenging.

Other suggestions:

- The use of digital examinations should be increased and every exam should include an automatic written evaluation so that exams can be tool for learning rather than just a measurement tool.
- The system for grading must be standardized and unified to a greater extent to ensure that people are accurately evaluated, independent of who is doing the grading.
- The results of teaching and course evaluation must be openly available to the students and must be given greater impact than today. This transparency must also apply to evaluations carried out by student organizations.
- There must be better quality assurance of syllabi and compendia.
- Better feedback and more attention to individuals and small groups from academic staff/teaching personnel.
- Student cooperation must be facilitated both by adapting the physical learning environment to make this easier as well as using teaching methods in which the students work together to solve tasks. Facilitating student cooperation must be incentivized. Greater accessibility to buildings to students with all kinds of levels. Libraries should be open on Sundays.
- A lot of courses could benefit from communicating more clearly what is expected of the students and what the university can expect from the university.
- A clear system of follow up for academic employees to ensure good teaching, run by the Teaching and Learning Center.
- UiO must develop facilitate for the establishment of arenas where teaching staff can meet and discuss how to improve their own teaching methods.

Study programs

Main recommendations:

- Study programs should have clear focus areas that open for cross-disciplinarity. Some of the focus areas should address the great challenges society faces. An example can be: A bachelor degree in political science with a focus area in climate change. There must be clear information about this before and at the start of the studies.
- Courses in study programs must be composed in a good way. Teachers must talk amongst themselves about the content of courses to ensure that students have the prerequisite knowledge before they take other courses. There must also be a clear progression in study programs. That means that courses build on each other and that students develop their competence further.
- All study programs should lead to a competence that makes the students able to get a job after the studies. Therefore it should be possible for all bachelor students to write a bachelors thesis and to acquire credits through work placements.

In many of today's study programs there exists a lack of a clear vision and a holistic approach to planning and execution of the programs. This is true for both the structure of the programs and the relevance of topics to the whole. There is therefore a need for revising the study programs. To meet tomorrow's challenges, it is important that study programs encourage interdisciplinarity and be organized so that students can specialize in important societal challenges.

Other suggestions:

- All study programs must have clear vision for what the student is supposed to learn at his/her program
- All bachelor's degrees must allow students to write a bachelor's thesis assignment as well as allowing for gaining credits through work practice.
- The academic supervisors must be easily available to the students. They are responsible for contacting the students about what they can provide so that each student has the possibility of arranging their education in a suitable way.
- A more structured bachelor's degree that creates a framework for an academic program that results in a degree with a specified level of competence.
- Utilize new methods of teaching and evaluation that promote general competence and understanding of the academic field of study throughout the study program.

Relevance to society

Main recommendations:

- To establish more cross-disciplinary research centers, meeting places and degrees, especially to solve climate and environmental challenges.
- UiO must ensure diversity at the university through directed recruiting.
- Work-oriented and research-oriented courses of study through more work-placement, internships, research programs and more student-active research.



Universities impact the surrounding society by educating tomorrow's citizens, contributing to the national debate and by developing new knowledge and technology. At the same time the university is in turn impacted by the surrounding society as a whole. It is therefore important that the University of Oslo follows the developments in the society around it and helps to influence it in the right direction.

The Norwegian society and the world face significant and disruptive challenges. Some of the challenges which will require greater efforts globally are the climate and environmental issues, poverty, and health issues. These are serious problems that require global solutions through multidisciplinary international academic cooperation and knowledge sharing. The Norwegian society is changing, and the University of Oslo will have to take an active role in maintaining a sustainable welfare state and a good diversity in society.

The University of Oslo must ensure that future challenges are addressed in the education they offer. Research done must reflect these issues, and the University must educate citizens who are prepared to meet these challenges. Education should be accessible to all and the student body at the University should reflect the diversity of society. The university must throughout the studies encourage students and staff to participate in and influence the public debate.

Other measures:

- The digital resources at UiO should be merged in a single resource center so they are the most accessible to students and staff, and should have the task of facilitating development and training in digital education, MOOCs and the like.
- UiOs research must be made available through Open Access. Teaching at the University should be freely available online through open portals.
- More resources need to be channeled towards environmental and climate research and the university should strive in the long term to phase out all petroleum research. Education should be based on the latest research
- All study programs at the University of Oslo should offer training in popular dissemination as part of the learning outcome description.
- University will actively help to educate others than just their own students and provide strong incentives for dissemination.

Academic formation

Main recommendations:

- The teaching in Examen Philosophicum (Exphil) should make students reflect over the problems of the course and relate them to today's context.
- UiO should encourage well-functioning student activities and student democracy, as these are important arenas for participation in society and development of self.
- The various study programs should have courses that address ethical and moral problems related to the subject field, and open up for student's reflections about these problems. This should not replace Exphil, but be an addition to it.



We live in a complex world in constant change, where knowledge and information is more important than ever. The flow of people, resources and ideas across national borders is perhaps the most important characteristic of modern society. The academic formation at the University must prepare students to face this reality.

Academic formation must involve the development of intellectual capacity for change and a scientific way of thinking. Formation involves a connection between theory and practice. Academic formation does therefore not only mean the acquisition of knowledge but also the development of the capacity for independent and critical reflection, which provides the basis for action and community participation. It is important that academic formation involves developing awareness of scientific integrity and source criticism. Academic education must promote openness and dialogue between the various scientific directions, and contribute to the development of scientific open-mindedness in the face of diversity in academia. Formation is all about participation as a reflective individual who recognizes themselves as part of a wider context, both locally and globally.

Today the aspect of academic formation at the University of Oslo is essentially covered in the topics Exphil and Exfac. This is a good starting point, but has major deficiencies. The topics Exphil and Exfac fall short as formation agent at the University, and are not sufficiently engaging to the students. The focus on interdisciplinarity and social environment is not sufficient, especially early in the course of study.

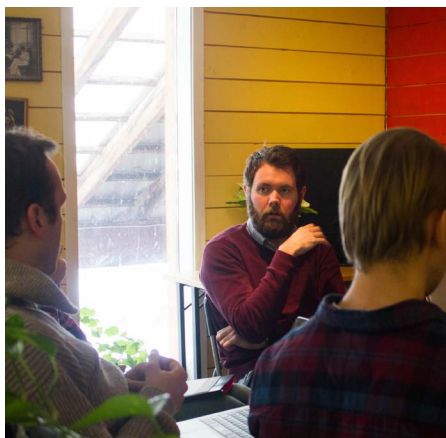
Other measures:

- All students must take Exphil during the first year
- The University must decide the role Exfac should have considered in conjunction with Exphil. and other topics in a context of academic formation
- All study programs at the University will base revisions on the definition of academic formation, rendered in the preceding paragraph
- Increase informal discussions and contact between academic staff and students
- Academic formation should be a primary element in designing the course descriptions of study programs.

These participated and contributed during the conference: Amanda Schei, Anne-Marthe Hovda, Barbro Årnes, Dagmara Grzybowska, Dong Chen, Håkon Beckstrøm, Håkon Søliland, Hanna Asefaw, Hashem Jafari, Heidi Bang, Helge Sander Lie Schwitters, Henrik Halvorsen Hortemo, Ingelin Rendal, Javier Godoy, Jonas Nilsen, Jonas Vårum Olafsen, Kari Anne Andersen, Karoline Killi Hovland, Knut Frydenlund, Kristian Tuv, Kristina Klakegg, Labiba Abu Nima, Madeleine Sjøbrend, Maren Høyland, Marianne Andenæs, Runa Næss Thomassen, Runar Bjørkvik Mæland, Sabina Feingold, Sondre Jahr Nygaard, Timm Seitz, Vebjørn Andersson, Shan Jiang, Yuki Ma.

Speakers: Dan Banik, Kim Kantardijev, Kirsti Lyngvær Engelién, Knut Mørken, Ragnhild Hennum, Sofie A.E. Høgestøl.

The Student Parliament at the UiO has also endorsed the declaration.





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