

December 5, 2017

Employers' Panel Meeting for BSc in Global Business Informatics (GBI) and MSc in Digital Innovation & Management (DIM)

January 25, 2017, 16:00 – 19:15, Room 3A 20/28, IT University of Copenhagen

Agenda

16.00 – 16.20:

1. Welcome and brief round of introduction (Louise Sparf)
2. Approval of minutes from last meeting (Louise Sparf) (*Appendix 1*)
3. Orientation that the revised Employment Ticket was approved September 6, 2016 (Louise Sparf) (*Appendix 2*)

16.20 – 16:40:

4. DIM review report and plans for revising the programme (Marisa Cohn) (*Appendix 3*)
 - Orientation and comments from the panel

16:40– 17:20:

5. Annual report 2017 from employers' panel – changes compared to the last report (Louise Sparf) (*Appendices 4-9*)
 - Discussion

17:20 -17:35:

6. Follow-up on the employers' panel meeting April 2016 regarding a specialisation on DIM in 'Public Digitalisation' (Marisa Cohn)
 - DIM invites the panel for further input

17:35 – 17:50:

7. Orientation from Head of Studies on the interval for replacements in ITU's employer panels and other formalities (Lene Pries-Heje) (*Appendix 10*)

17:50 – 18:05:

8. Employers' panel's comments on Global Competence Profiles for DIM and GBI (*Appendices 6,7*)

18:05 – 18:15:

9. Orientation about constituted heads of programme – DIM and GBI (Steffen Dalsgaard)

Dinner 18:15 – 19:15 (Canteen, 1st floor)

1. Welcome and brief round of introduction

Vice-chancellor Mads Tofte explained that he would chair the meeting in lieu of Louise Sparf-Bruun who was prevented from attending. Mads Tofte further explained that he tries to attend all panel meetings as this is an important way to understand the context, which all programmes of the IT University (ITU) must fit into. He emphasized that ITU uses what comes out the meetings and thanked everyone for coming.

2. Approval of minutes from last meeting

The minutes were approved.

3. Orientation that the revised Employment Ticket was approved September 6, 2016

Mads Tofte outlined the process for improving the employment ticket. Upon a dialogue with the panel, the revised ticket was sent in hearing by mail and was approved. The dialogue was very useful and helped a lot in rephrasing the ticket so that it has become much more concrete.

4. DIM review report and plans for revising the programme

Assistant Professor and acting head of DIM, Marisa Cohn, presented the external review report and plans for revising DIM. The key recommendations from the review board are to ensure better communication of degree expectations, improve integration of disciplines from faculty, reduce overlaps with the GBI degree and have a robust conversation of what technical skills means. Marisa Cohn commented that it is still an open question how to describe the technical competencies that are part of the programme. She invited the panel to give input.

The strengths of DIM compared to other similar programmes is its integration of constructive elements with critical investigation and students come out and are able to do this, even if DIM may have to do more faculty wise to integrate the different aspects of the programme.

Marisa Cohn presented a draft of the planned revision of DIM and explained that the revision will create more cohesion through a shared first semester, some courses will remain, some will be integrated and others will be added. The aim is to implement in the fall 2018.

In relation to the need for improving the integration of disciplines, Nicolai Meelby pointed out that integrating different levels of abstraction is also a valuable skill for students to learn. DIM may also work on making that skill explicit and fostering it.

Head of Studies Lene Pries-Heje elaborated on ITU's plans ensure that students with diverse backgrounds start on the same level in the revised DIM programme (new admission requirements combined with initiatives to bring students who do not meet the requirements up to the required level before admission). Prospective students may prepare for DIM either through electives or by participating in a boot camp. The panel supported this.

5. Specialisation in 'Public Digitalisation' and Discussion of Technical skills

Marisa Cohn asked the panel to give further input for a specialization in public digitization including how students can be brought in to the field for very concentrated periods of time to gain hands-on experience.

Malte Harrishøj Larsen suggested that DIM should look into having students involved in the process of how to raise funds for a digitization project. Knowledge of how to go about this, which layers to involve is important knowledge to have in the public sector. Other examples of case studies could be the handling of suppliers, contract management, management support for the technology.

Current challenges for the public sector are: better cooperation in the different domains (public, regional etc.); the complexity of working across sectors, as well as across different organisations and legal areas. Needed skills are: ability to uncover that on a more practical level, see things from different perspectives, read 'trending' policy areas, see thing from a citizen perspective. Other important skills are organisational understanding and knowing how to maneuver (how a political organization works, how to get a decision through all layers, how to calculate with the time this takes); basic knowledge of legal requirements.

Marisa Cohn proposed that the specialisation could fruitfully encompass big scale operations, looking at both digitization in the public sector and the new space of private activities where they also face the public (e.g. private companies depending on public registration systems or vice versa developing them).

In a discussion of relevant technical competencies (in relation to the specialization and in general), Malte Harrishøj Larsen pointed out that a good knowledge of data and machine learning will be important – this will be a major player in the public sector in the years to come, and skills to develop this will be in high demand.

Nicolai Meelby mentioned APIs, legacy systems and the need to make them work together with new systems. All agreed that it is valuable for students to know the history of programming and the steps in it. There are still jobs in Cobol and Nicolai Meelby explained that companies now go to Asia for these skills.

Head of the Business IT Department, Peter Eklund, proposed that GBI and DIM students might be expected to be able to develop requirements (even if they can't programme), draw diagrams and build documentation that programmers can follow. The panel agreed that this would be of interest to the private as well as the public sector.

Malte Harrishøj Larsen added that graduates would gain from knowing about databases, as this is a major part of the digitization strategy. With a view to the proposed specialization in digitization, Malte Harrishøj Larsen gave further examples of current issues in the public sector (better use of the data that is already there and on allowing data to pass between municipal and regional levels). There is a need for people who understand what data a new system will generate, but equally what kind of data is already there. Mads Tofte commented that this is also about distributed databases. Marisa Cohn added that being able to read a diagram of a distributed database system from a real case would be a huge step.

The consensus was that there is a demand for graduates who are able to understand problems of digitization and help the supplier deliver something useful as well as graduates who can investigate and understand what data is already there in increasingly complex systems. Marisa Cohn pointed out that looking at the diagrams and talking to people in order to map out the systems they use and the systems that touch upon these will give a very different map than the one the architect built. DIM can teach such complexities and teach students how to navigate around things not formally described.

The panel concluded that it is a good idea to develop a specialization in digitization.

6. Annual report 2017 from employers' panel – changes compared to the last report

In the absence of the chair of the panel, Nicolai Meelby took upon him to lead the compilation of the annual report. Mads Tofte went over the primary quality data in the report explaining that some data (unemployment rates) still relates to EBUSS. EBUSS students finishing their degree also affect average delay and completion time for DIM.

Marisa Cohn and Steffen Dalsgaard presented the courses of DIM and GBI respectively. The panel expressed that they generally found all courses valuable and that any concerns had been addressed in the background material for the meeting. While data on employability for DIM graduates is not available yet, the panel contended that they would not be concerned about unemployment rates for graduates. According to Malte Harrishøj Larsen, the municipality of Copenhagen is in a transition. To replace current staff the municipality is looking to hire more people like DIM graduates to match the complex skills required. The panel emphasized that DIM is a 'new brand' and restraint in intake makes good sense in order to keep the quality of graduates high.

Nicolai Meelby added that senior management with an understanding of IT (the principles and logic references in IT Systems) will also be in demand in the future. The panel went on to discuss how the course Navigating Complexity (DIM) tries to develop the next kind of skills that will be needed (navigating when data sits in different places). "We need someone with a 360 degree view who can translate IT to many different groups and understands what it will take to make IT work in an organization".

The panel concluded the discussion by pointing to DIM courses Navigating Complexity, Big Data Processes, and Digital innovation and Entrepreneurship as the most important courses in both the short and long term. For GBI the panel selected the courses Database Use and Design, Enterprise Systems and Information Management and IT Governance and Quality Management

7. Orientation from Head of Studies on the interval for replacements in ITU's employer panels and other formalities.

Head of Studies Lene Pries-Heje introduced the interval for replacement of panel members (2 years). She explained that current members will be asked to indicate if they wish to continue a little longer. In the future, the aim is to change half the panel each year. Replacements will begin after May. Nicolai Meelby

proposed that ITU considers electing panel members for 3 years to allow the members to build up sufficient knowledge of the programmes and the forum.

8. Employers' panel's comments on Global Competence Profiles for DIM and GBI

Lene Pries-Heje explained the role of the global competence profile in the university's quality policy. Due to lack of time this item was postponed until next meeting.

Mads Tofte closed the meeting thanking the panel members for their valuable input.