

PLAN OF WORK 2019

Introduction

This working plan outlines the priorities of DSF's work. It is used by the National Forum (LF) and the Executive Committee (FU) as goals and tools for the work in 2019. The working plan is not comprehensive, and is not prioritised. The working plan is to be seen in context with DSF's long-term organisational strategy (see strategy).

The discourse on education

The focus on students, and higher education in general, it is used to create negative and damaging discourses, that legitimise economic cutbacks in the education area. When education is exclusively seen as a mean to reach employment, we neglect important formative and democratic perspectives. By talking about students as 'users', instead as active co-creators of their respective educations, an educated and democratic society, as well as active contributors of national research. User discourse makes acceptable to remove governance and influence from the us who experience education the closest in our everyday lives. Many students experience that the damaging reforms from the latest years have been normalised and have resulted in business, stress, and worse educational quality as part of their daily lives. Those of our fellow students, who start at a long higher education in these years, have never experienced an education sector with time, resources and capacity. Bad conditions in and around our educations must never become a normal.

When discourses are created portraying students as "lazy", the SU as "coffee money", and sabbatic years in between educations as "lazy gaps", there is an attempt to legitimise a reduction of students' living conditions. Therefore, the negative discourse on academics and about specific research areas should stop. Furthermore, it is being constructed a false contradiction between university education and, for example, VET, which is also damaging for us, students. DSF should actively work against damaging discourses within the educational environment, as well as at the general public debate. We must work towards removing false contradictions among students and other social groups.

DSF should continue to promote why we consider that education is a social good, which has a value on itself. As well as work to spread a positive discourse around education and students. We need to actively remark that students are active, engaged, and hardworking citizens in our

society. We should do so through our press work and cooperation with the rest of the pupil and student movement.

Parliamentary election 2019

Most likely there will be a parliamentary election in the spring of 2019. DSF must actively use the election to ensure students' influence and oblige parties to go against the damaging policies in different educational areas. Examples of these are the study progress reform or "dimensioning". In this process it is essential to not forget to have a proactive approach towards improvement of our educations.

We must make politicians follow the promises made before and under the election campaign. Here are a set of topic, which are relevant to raise up in relation with upcoming election campaign:

Cutbacks

Different big political parties have started to play with the thought of removing the annual 2% cutbacks in educations. However, many parties still wish to remove these only after some years. Furthermore, different parties propose to implement further cutbacks, which should be implemented within the education sector. We must push to ensure that cutbacks are removed right after the elections, and that the amount of money cut is returned to the specific educations it was taken from.

Limit on double education

In the spring of 2018 the pupil and student movement collected 50.000 signatures to take down the limit on double education. Different parties have been outspoken on the fact that they will weaken or remove the law on limit of double education. We should up to and during the elections work towards that goal and try to mobilise the great opposition that there is against this law. This mobilising should reach an extent where maintaining such becomes a political risk after the elections.

SU reform

It should be a priority for DSF to aim to press political parties to, as a minimum, publicly promise to preserve the SU grant as it is today. This should be done so a reform of it would not be a possibility, and it reducing it or making it loan based in the upcoming years would be considered as a broken promise.

Education policy

The study progress reform

When the study progress reform became effective in 2014, the goal was to reduce the average study time by 4,3 months up to 2020. Since then, students are completing their educations quicker, but the the reform has lead to a list of negative consequences, both at academic and student well-being level. Students are more stressed since the reform became effective, drop-outs have increased, and there is less time for focusing on their academic fields. At the same time, the reform has lead to an increase in the amount of existing bureaucracy, that produces extra pressure on the already underfunded administrations of our institutions. DSF should therefore work towards the removal of the study progress reform, in order to give students more flexibility and better possibilities to focus on their fields of study.

Admission system

As a consequence of the past years' increase of the number of higher education applicants, the minimum admission grade have become higher. This has contributed to a growing race for higher grades and an unreasonable pressure on incoming students. Furthermore, this situation raises concerns on an increased social bias in the admission system. In the 2018's governmental university proposal it is mentioned that there is a need of researching on the strengths and weaknesses of the current admission system, as well as bringing forward proposals for improvements. We need to follow this work closely and we should proactively work to formulate a series of recommendations for a new admission system, which should promote an increase in social mobility, and makes sense within the different educations. DSF should research on the possibilities of implementing exam-based admissions.

Inclusion and influence

Since the university law of 2001 the internal governance of the long higher education institutions has continuously been reduced, last time through the work of the committee for better university educations. This development cannot be accepted since it removes focus from the chore tasks of the universities and makes institutions biased towards the wishes of the people that hold power at that time. Therefore, the internal voices at the universities should at a higher extent have influence on the strategic leadership of the institutions. DSF should in the coming year work towards giving students at institutions and staff members the possibility of choosing on whether the mandate of the university board should be internal or external.

Institutional governance

The decision-making competences of the internal structures of institutional governance are of essential importance for the students' democratic participation at the universities. Therefore, it is crucial that DSF continues the work for students to be able to be active co-creators who take

on responsibility and have influence at universities, as well as towards the quality and development of our educations. This should be done at all decision-making governance structures, independently on whether students have decision-making power or not. This includes especially the decision-making power of study boards, which is currently under attack. This work must be continued in the new working group, set up by the Minister. This must be done by proactively working to improve the study boards, as well as strengthening student influence in all internal governance structures in our institutions.

Technology in study environments

The technological development affects our every day lives as students, both within and outside our institutions. This includes also the development of technological platforms, which students use in relations to their studies, technology used in relation to learning, and use of students data. It is important that DSF is aware of this development, and work towards the use of technology never happens at the cost of students learning and the chore content of their educations.

Technologicum and philosophicum

Understanding the meaning of technology for both individuals and society has become at a higher level and element of basic education and it is included in the proposals of technologicum and philosophicum. It is important that DSF influences the development of these areas, as well as works towards the inclusion of technological understanding and philosophicum never happens at the cost of the chore content of education.

Bachelor employment market

In 2018 the Ministry of Higher Education and Science presented an education proposal, where there are certain points where DSF needs to be critical about. Within these there are the proposals of creating 1-year long master educations and the continuous focus on the job market.

We must also be critical towards the proposal of creating wider bachelor educations, which can come at the cost of chore content of educations. It is important that universities offer both wide and specialised educations. We must also be critical on the idea that all bachelor educations must give competences to the job market; this is a decision to be taken by study boards locally.

Furthermore it needs to me named that the education proposal includes many good elements too, where there are no clear plans on how to finance them, given current cutbacks in education. DSF should therefore in 2019 use the recommendations as a tool to fight for stopping cutbacks and, instead, include extra money in the education sector.

Welfare and social policy

Well-being

Unfortunately, there are enormous problems with the well-being of students. We see far more cases of depression and anxiety than ever before, just as stress and loneliness are on the rise. Therefore, it is central for DSF to next year work for better living conditions for the students. This is done through a flexible and transparent education system where the students are informed about the educational institution's guidance services. In addition, there must be established structures and processes that calls for well-being instead of counteracting it. DSF will, during next year, work to put students' well-being on the national and local political agenda. God well-being supports students learning.

SU

For us to have the time and tranquility for immersing in our education, we need to have proper living conditions. Here the SU are essential. An SU reform containing significant reduction of the SU, has been threatening for a long time. DSF does not expect such a SU reform to be proposed before a parliamentary election, but we fear what may happen afterwards. Therefore, will DSF, the coming year, continuously oppose such an SU reform, that will degrade the students' economic livelihoods and we will actively work for an SU on a level, at which a stable private economy can be maintained, and likewise work actively for we students to be able to receive SU for as long as we study independently on nationality.

Transport and Housing

The recent years, we have experienced that there have not been enough housing affordable for students. Therefore, DSF will work for an increase in housing and for cheaper homes during next year, as well as enter dialogue with parties, who are trying to take action regarding housing shortages and high rents. DSF will also work during next year to relieve the bottleneck 103 problems that may arise in response to the high demand for housing at the time of study-start. It is essential that we as students can get back and forth between our homes and our education institutions. An important part of this is that the transport must be affordable to students living on a SU. Therefore, in DSF, we will continue the work to improve the discount schemes that are existing within the area. In addition, it is also important that DSF, in collaboration with member organisations, work to improve traffic safety on and around the universities.

The international area

DSF must continue and further develop international cooperation with student organizations in other countries. The international area is an important political and learning area where we can get a lot value from prioritizing such cooperation. It is important that international cooperation

does not become a separate arena for DSF's work, but is expanded so that the whole movement can benefit from this.

International events in Denmark

In the spring of 2019 it is DSF's turn to host the 75th Nordisk Ordförande Möte (NOM). NOM is the network for us and our sister organisations in the Nordic and Baltic countries. NOM meetings take place twice a year and the hosts rotate across member countries. Part of the work effort in DSF's international sector will be aimed at hosting the spring NOM meeting.

We will continue working for hosting a European Students' Union (ESU) Board Meeting in Autumn of 2020, which is part of our strategic work to build up DSF's position and influence in ESU. In 2019 we will start fundraising for the event.

The global work

It is DSF's conviction that the right to academic freedom must be protected and that students have the right to complete their education regardless of their political positions. These principles apply not only within the borders of the country, but should apply globally. Therefore, we will work towards implementing a Danish version of "Students at Risk", a Norwegian-inspired program that offers Danish study sites to a certain student from all over the world who are being persecuted for their human rights work.

DSF has for many years been a player in the international field. This has been done through our umbrella organisations, such as ESU, through our lobbying in various councils, such as the Nordic Council of Ministers, or through our partnership projects with the Zimbabwe National Student Union (ZINASU) and the Palestinian Student Union Forum (PSCF).

By 2019, it will be a goal to expand our scope of proactive action in various areas, such as UNESCO, the Nordic Council of Ministers or the Global Campaign for Education. In addition, we will try to engage in new areas that we have not previously been active in and which can benefit our policy goals.

The international sector as capacity building tool

We will continue to use the international sector in a way that can benefit and build capacities among DSF member organisations (MOs) at a political and organisational level. In order to achieve this, we will aim to use the international sector as a support to this and, in addition, continue with previous successful initiatives

Organization

Ownership and union

DSF member organisations are organised in very different ways, therefore we need to continue to be aware of and ensure that all MOs can identify themselves in the way that DSF organises itself. DSF should work for therefore work to ensure that all MOs feel close to the organization and continue to shape its development. It is therefore important that all MOs feel heard on an equal footing internally in DSF. DSF must try to involve LF more in daily work, as well as involve MOs even broader and at a higher degree where this makes sense. We need to strive towards bigger geographical mobility through, for example, committee meetings or other activities. To support this, we need to look at how DSF's committees can be used optimally, and they must be supported in such a way that representation in it becomes widely representative across DSF's MOs.

Contact to MOs need to be a focus point: MOs and DSF, but also internally in the MOs. While the contact from DSF to the MOs is more obvious, so is the contact across the MOs important in order to build capacities among each other. DSF's task will be to facilitate contact so that the MOs can exchange ideas and cooperate where it makes sense for them.

Workflows

The work in DSF requires involvement and participation of MOs to be optimal, and for ensuring that MOs can identify themselves with the organisations. DSF should therefore work for creating inclusive workflows, so, especially work in the committees, function optimally. DSF should furthermore in 2019 look into how we work with our papers, among others taking in consideration making the next plan of work more action-based and focused.

A new course sector

The course sector has in 2018 experienced different challenges which need to be solved. Therefore the course sector needs to be reworked and re structured in 2019, to create a strong sector, which covers better the needs of the member organisations. FU and LF will therefore in 2019 work to develop e a new model for the course sector, which is even better at meeting the needs of the MO's and their current capacities. The restructuring will keep the yearly summer camp which will not disappear form the 2019 course catalogue.

Climate change

DSF must research how we as students can play a role in the gift against climate change. We must influence our education institutions to bring them towards a more sustainable direction. Furthermore, we should support the development of ways in which education can set its focus towards sustainability and the problems connected to climate change in a way that makes sense for each education. DSF should look into how in its working methods can reduce its CO₂

emissions as much as possible. We may also work for our education institutions actively reduce their negative climatic impact and choose more green alternatives.

Equal access to education

LGBTQ +

In the coming year, DSF will focus on investigating the conditions for LGBTQ+ students in Denmark for our work to be more inclusive and representative. It is important that DSF as an organisation is an inclusive environment, but as well that our institutions are so too.

Harassment

As a result of the global #MeToo movement, problems with sexual harassment became remarked at Danish universities. It is important that all students feel safe wherever they study. Therefore, DSF will continue to work for safe study environments and focus on problems with harassment at education institutions. We will continue our cooperation with Universities Denmark to follow up on the national sexual harassment survey, with the goal to get universities to work actively on the matter.

Students with disabilities

In the coming year, DSF will work to improve the conditions for students with disabilities and long-term illnesses. It is essential that DSF continues to work to ensure good conditions for this group and that this work is conducted in close dialogue and cooperation with organisations and relevant groups in this area.

In the coming year, DSF will focus on working on follow-up to the Disability Survey 2019, including starting up networks, focus groups work and media stories.

Refugees and asylum seekers

We will continue to work to improve the opportunities for refugees and asylum seekers to attend higher education institutions. This means that we will continue to support existing projects in this area, such as Student Refugees, but also work to start new, if possible. In addition, we will continue our lobbying work in this area to ensure that strategies and legislation are created to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers have a fair opportunity for accessing and completing an education in Denmark.

International Students

International students have in recent years been exposed to increased stigmatisation, which is reflected, among other things, in policies that counteract their opportunities for access to and complete an education; and which counteract their opportunities to stay in the country after

graduation. DSF needs to work to create the frameworks which make it possible for the different education institutions to remove the barriers that international students meet such as, for example, lack of communication in English. We will continue our efforts to change the negative and false image created by politicians on international students. Furthermore, we will also lobby with concrete proposals of improvement of international students' possibilities to access and complete education, as well as remain in the country afterwards. DSF should work towards no international student being negatively discriminated. DSF will work towards the remote of the cap on educations in English, proposed in 2018.

External cooperation

DSF has a wide range of external partners and alliance partners. Some work in the short term and others are regular partners, which are an integral part of DSF's political activities. Among these are the pupil and student movement (ESB), the Education Alliance (UA), cooperation with student organisations in other countries, and further partners, with whom we can work with specific agendas.

Since DSF plays an important role in the Education Alliance, it is especially important that DSF, with mandate of its members, contributes actively to the development process of it, and makes clear how we think the alliance should develop itself.