



Goal and action plan for 2018/2019 and four years ahead

Department of Information Studies



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0. Summary of most important goals

The Department of Information Studies (INF) has its roots in the library school that was established by the Danish Ministry of Culture in 1956. The school was bestowed university-status in 2000 and the first PhD defenses took place in 2004. In 2011 the school was transferred from the Ministry of Culture to the Ministry of Higher Education and Science and in April 2013 the school became a department under the Faculty of Humanities at University of Copenhagen.

Over the years, the school/department has gained a strong international reputation within some areas of information studies, primarily driven by a few world-leading faculty members' research contributions and their standing in the field. There has, however, in the recent decade been a concerted effort to strengthen the department's overall research strength, focus, and activities in an effort to raise the international research orientation and contribution by the department as a whole. At least since the 1990s, a still ongoing effort has taken place to broaden and reorient the scope of the educational programs from professional/vocational oriented programs with a focus on libraries to a broader scope which also includes other information-intensive organizations, businesses, everyday activities, and practices. The digitalization of society, explosion in digital media, and the general datafication of everyday activities have further shaped the department's research and educational programs, and today the department has a broad and inclusive profile that aligns with other *information schools* around the world¹.

The department's strategic ambition is to create a department of information studies that is internationally leading, and which in size and profile is comparable to the world's leading information schools. The department's unique focus is on systems, institutions, and platforms that organize, rank, sort, seek, recommend, and communicate information. Those activities are today integrated into any and all digital media, everyday activities, work environments, and systems of information. A central focus in much of the department's research is to explore the relations and interactions between information, humans, IT, organizations, culture, and habits. And, most importantly, the department takes information to be *something that tells someone something in a given situation or context* – information is never neutral but always grounded in culture, language,

¹ For more about Information Schools, please see: <https://ischools.org/>

communities, and sociality. As such, the Department of Information Studies is a humanistic, cultural, and social based information school.

This strategy outlines and discusses the strategic goals set by the department in years 2018-2022. It is the goal that the department at the end of this strategic period has been successfully and fully integrated into the University of Copenhagen – and that the department becomes an integrated contributor to the university’s vision: *“to be among the world’s best universities measured by the quality of research and education and to be recognised for excellence and intellectual creativity.”*

The department faces two overarching challenges which sums up the department’s strategic efforts in the coming four years:

Goal A - To be successful in winning prestigious research grants.

The department is leading among departments at the Faculty of Humanities in terms of international, peer-reviewed journal publications (BFI level 2). However, the department has yet to fulfill its potential in terms of attracting external research funding. While the department has in fact increased its number of research applications substantially since the merger with UCPH, the department still remains to be as successful as its peer departments in attracting external funding. It is a goal that the department in 2022 will be among the leading departments at the Faculty of Humanities in terms of attracting external research funding.

Goal B - To have a large number of applicants for the Department’s highly esteemed degree programs.

Unlike other departments at the Faculty of Humanities, the department only has one degree program at the BA and MA level. Until a few years ago, this was in fact one of the largest BA programs at the Faculty (admitting more than 260 students in 2014). However, the number of students in the BA program has decreased in recent years (projected admission in 2018 is 70 students). This decrease in the number of students can partly be explained in a lower number of applicants to the department’s educational programs partly by the University’s decision to require all applicants to have a grade point average of 6 from 2018. It is a goal that the department’s educational programs in 2022 will attract enough applicants to ensure that the required grade point average for admission into the BA program is above 6 and that all places will be filled at both the BA and MA level.

1. Attracting, developing and retaining academic talent

The Department of Information Studies has in the past decade had a strong focus on developing its overall research culture and external research funding as strategic priorities. Part of the present challenge in attracting external research funding stems from the department's history as an independent institution under the Ministry of Culture which had other expectations towards publication patterns than the University, and which gave access specific opportunities for research funding. Since the department's merger with the University of Copenhagen in 2013 the focus on external research funding has increased and faculty members have demonstrated a focus on expanding and developing their research networks and submitting applications for external research funding. The number of applications has indeed increased in recent years, and there is good reason to believe that the department will become successful in attracting substantial external research funding within a few years, given the necessary strategic focus and administrative support.

It is important for the department's continuing success that external funding is increased. There is a relatively small pool of PhD students and post doc scholars employed at the department, and it is a challenge to develop and expand academic talent at the PhD and post doc levels without substantial external funding to support these positions. A strategic goal for the department is therefore:

1.2.4. Expand the framework for talent development by winning more external funding.

It is intended that a focus on this strategic goal (goal 1.2.4) will also have an indirect effect on the development of the department's overall research environment (goal 1.2.1), support the department's researchers' intellectual creativity (goal 1.2.1), as well as contributing to the department's development of a strong sparring culture and focus on peer review (goal 1.2.2).

In the fall semester 2017, the department reorganized faculty members into research groups². The research groups are formed by faculty members according to their research interests, and the themes, organization, activities, and focus of the research groups are decided by the faculty

² Faculty members were organized into three research clusters from 2015 to 2017.

members belonging to the individual groups. All groups, however, are requested to communicate their publication plans, funding activities, and research focus to the department leadership group. The research groups constitute the core forums for research development, generating research ideas, and support and sparring with peers and colleagues. Further, the research groups will form the basis for outreach to individual researchers and research groups both nationally and internationally.

All PhD students and post doc scholars belong to a primary research group, and it is expected that their research activities are integrated into the research group's activities and plans.

The department will in the coming years develop and enhance research support service to ensure that researchers receive the necessary support to identify potential funding opportunities, are supported throughout the application process, and receive qualified peer-review and feedback. The department will further develop personalized research plans -- incl. plans for when and where to apply for external funding -- for all faculty members at the associate professor level. These plans will be developed in close dialogue between the department leadership and the individual faculty members, and the plans will have focus on personal and career development.

2. Education with closer ties to research and practice

The department has a long and strong tradition for close connection to practice within its educational programs. The goal is to develop, strengthen, and enhance those connections to practice - and to deepen the educational programs' ties to, and inclusion into research activities in the department. For this purpose, the department has as a strategic goal to:

2.1.2. Provide a strong framework for all academic communities to contribute to making programmes research-based and openly acknowledge excellent teaching.

There has over the years been an ongoing conversation in the department about what it means to deliver research-based educational programs. Part of this conversation stems from the department's origin as a vocational library school (which prepared students for specific jobs in the library sector), another part stems from particular understanding of what it means to deliver research-based

teaching (e.g. that research-based teaching only takes place when an instructor uses their own publications as foundation for a class or course), and yet another part may stem from specific subject matter in courses (e.g. in courses with a “hands-on” approach, a “practical” focus, or that are “tool”-based). The department will in the coming years have a focus on developing models and initiatives to strengthen instructors’ capacity to integrate research, research processes, research methods, and research strategies into the department’s educational programs. The department will also explore possibilities for students to get involved in research activities, e.g. in the department’s research groups.

The unemployment rate among recent graduates from the department’s educational programs is relatively high³. It is of outmost importance that the graduates have the required and necessary skills, knowledge, and competences to compete at today’s job market. This demands that the educational programs are strengthened and redesigned with a clear focus on requiring a high academic level, innovative thinking, and creativity among graduates. A strategic goal for the department is therefore:

2.2.2. Support students' career planning, and demonstrate how programmes can be applied in the job market, including strengthening initiatives to ensure that students have the requisite skills for innovation and entrepreneurship.

The department has recently redesigned its BA program with a focus on design thinking, experience with new information and communication technology, working with innovation and case-studies, developing a maker mindset, and entrepreneurship. The first cohort of students will be admitted into the new BA program in summer 2018. The department has recently initiated a process to revise the MA program, and plan to offer that program from summer 2019. Furthermore, there has been a number of faculty-led discussions about heightening the academic level in the educational

³ The unemployment among graduates in the 4th-7th quarter after graduation were for those who graduated in 2013: 26.8%; graduated in 2014: 17.0%; and graduated in 2015: 24.8% (See the department’s *Uddannelsesregørelse for 2016/2017*).

programs in the department which has led to an increased awareness to strengthen the academic content of the department's educational programs.

The department will in the coming years expand its connections and ties with organizations and businesses to develop cases used in courses, develop more practice-based master theses, and expand and strengthen students' opportunities for internships. It is a strategic ambition that the department will increase students' possibilities and abilities for career planning by bringing students in closer contact with practice through case-based learning, career workshops, career counseling, and writing their master theses in collaboration with practice.

3. Collaboration and societal commitment – nationally and globally

The department has an excellent tradition for collaboration and commitment to libraries in Denmark, and joint development projects based in the department have had a significant impact on the development of libraries in Denmark and beyond. In the coming years, the department will expand that tradition to also include other cultural institutions as well as private companies - and initiate development projects related to digitality, big data, FAIR Data, open data, data protection, data management, data ethics, etc. In other words, the department will combine the following two strategic goals into one unified goal:

3.1.3. Initiate development projects based on specific societal issues where different academic disciplines and collaboration partners contribute to resolving concrete challenges.

3.1.4. Improve students' and academic staff's opportunities to exploit the potential of digitisation and big data across the University and with our collaboration partners.

The department is in a unique position to take on societal conversations about the ethical, political and social consequences of the increased digitalization and datafication of the public sector (incl. the cultural institutions), the public sphere, and private organizations. The department will in the coming years initiate development projects with external partners along with collaborators across the university to explore societal issues and challenges related to digitality. It is the expectation that

this effort will lead to possibilities for the development of research projects, and as such support strategic goal 1.2.4 regarding attracting more external research funding.

The department has a long history of international collaboration and engagement. The department has partnerships and exchange agreements with a number of universities around the world; some of the agreements are very successful in terms of the number of student exchanges that take place. It is the expectation, however, that it will be more fruitful for the department to develop closer ties with a few, select information studies departments that match the department's research and educational profile -- by developing closer ties with a few, prestigious universities we hope to enhance collaboration both in terms of exchange of students and faculty members as well as in terms of developing and expanding international research projects and activities. It is therefore a strategic goal for the department to:

3.2.1. Enter into partnership agreements on research and education with the best universities in the world.

In the coming years, the department will review its existing partnership agreements and enter into collaborative agreements with a few information studies departments with a profile complementary to the department's research and educational profile. It is expected that such partnerships will entail deeper collaboration, generate more exchange of students and faculty members, and provide ground for stronger international research collaboration.

4. One unified and focused university

The success of the department depends in part on the ability to attract and retain academic talent at all levels (master students, PhD students, post docs, and faculty members) from outside Denmark. While the department as a whole, and many individual researchers have strong international networks and research collaborations (particularly in the Nordic countries and the Anglo-American world), it has been a challenge to attract strong applications to PhD, post doc, and faculty positions,

and when successful, it has been a challenge to retain international faculty members in the department.

The department has for a number of years offered a specialization in information science taught in English at the master's level, which attracts students from abroad and provides Danish-speaking students an international experience at home.

To take full advantage of the already strong international orientation at the department, a focus on developing an inclusive work and study environment that is welcoming to international and non-Danish speaking students and researchers is needed. It is therefore a strategic goal for the department to:

4.1.3. Promote a work and study environment of parallel language use in order to attract and retain talent.

The goal entails that the department in the coming years will have a focus on blending Danish and English as work languages, develop best practices for when and how to communicate in Danish or English, strengthen the language skills of staff as needed, and to be accepting towards staff's and students' less than perfect foreign language (whether Danish or English). Furthermore, there will be a focus on the fact that developing an inclusive work and study environment is about much more than merely translating central documents into English - it requires that staff and students appreciate a multi-cultural environment, where people are respected, and cultural differences are embraced.

A central component in the department's research activities, educational programs, and everyday practice is familiarity with today's technology. It is therefore a strategic goal that everyone in the department -- faculty, staff, and students -- have basic skills in the use and employment of digital technologies and that they have necessary knowledge to engage in critical dialogues about the impact of today's technology on society, work, and leisure. The department has as a strategic goal to:

4.3.2. Ensure that staff and students develop the necessary digital skills.

The department is currently developing a new maker space in collaboration with the CCC Labs (Centre for Communication and Computing Labs); the maker space will become a central component and educational experience for all students in the department. The purpose is to provide students with enhanced experiences with design, maker culture, information technology, and innovation throughout their studies. To make that effort successful, however, it is necessary that all staff and faculty members in the department have at least the same familiarity with maker space skills, knowledge, and experience as that which is required of first year BA students in the department. Generally speaking mastery of digital tools, digitality, and knowledge of consequences of digitization and datafication of society and work environments will be required skills in the next decade, and as such, because the Department of Information Studies aims to be a leading information school, students, staff, and faculty members will develop the necessary digital skills to contribute to society and the University.

5. Process and involvement of staff and students

This strategic plan is developed in close collaboration with staff and faculty members in the department, and several opportunities have been provided for feedback and input throughout the process.

The development of the plan was started with an all-day departmental strategy seminar for all staff on February 28, 2018. At this seminar, the overall strategy for the university was presented and staff and faculty members worked in groups to develop “we will” commitments for the department. The “we will” commitments suggested by staff were discussed and consolidated into the seven “we will” commitments contained in the present strategy.

Time and process plan

Date	Actor	Activity
28 Feb.	All staff	Department strategy seminar. Launch of strategy process. Generation of idea for strategy.
5 March	LTinf	Consolidation of “we will” commitment

6 March	LTinf + dean's office	Presentation of time and process plan
12 March	LTinf	Discussion of first draft
14 March	Study Board(Studienævn)	Presentation and discussion of draft
14 March	TAP-meeting	Presentation and discussion of draft
14 March	VIP-meeting	Presentation and discussion of draft
19 March - 2 April	Employer panel (Advisory Board?) (Aftagerpanel)	E-hearing of draft
22 March	LSU + AMG	Presentation and discussion of draft
13 April - 20 April	All staff	E-hearing of draft
16 April	LTinf	Discussion of draft
18 April	Department Meeting Faculty Meeting	Presentation and discussion of goal plan
Medio April	LTinf + dean's office	Submission of goal plan
June	LTinf + dean's office	Feedback from dean's office to INF
August	Department Meeting	Launch development of action plan for 2018/2019

6. Action plan for 2018/2019 (max 10 pages)

To be developed in summer 2018

[Med udgangspunkt i de strategiske mål i det forrige afsnit udarbejdes en handleplan for det kommende års aktiviteter for realisering af målene. Indledningsvis kan skrives et kort resumé af de væsentligste udviklingsaktiviteter i 2018/2019 jf. skemaerne nedenfor.]

6.1. Forskning. Tiltrække, udvikle og fastholde videnskabeligt talent

[De udvalgte mål beskrevet i afsnit 1 omsættes til aktiviteter i 2018/2019 ved udfyldelse af nedenstående skema. Kolonnerne udfyldes med:

Mål og delmål for 2019: Notér først det overordnede mål, som aktiviteten skal bidrage til realisering af, og som er opstillet i afsnit 1. Notér, hvad der forventes opnået det kommende år (2019).

Aktivitet: Notér overskrift på aktiviteten.

Kort beskrivelse af aktiviteten: Beskriv aktiviteten / handlingen i stikord.

Ansvarlig: Ansvarlig enhed / leder på instituttet / fakultetet.]

Mål og delmål for 2019	Aktivitet	Kort beskrivelse af aktiviteten	Ansvarlig

6.2. Uddannelse. Tættere kobling til forskning og praksis

[De udvalgte mål beskrevet i afsnit 2 omsættes til aktiviteter i 2018/2019 ved udfyldelse af nedenstående skema. Kolonnerne udfyldes med:

Mål og delmål for 2019: Notér først det overordnede mål, som aktiviteten skal bidrage til realisering af, og som er opstillet i afsnit 1. Notér, hvad der forventes opnået det kommende år (2019).

Aktivitet: Notér overskrift på aktiviteten.

Kort beskrivelse af aktiviteten: Beskriv aktiviteten / handlingen i stikord.

Ansvarlig: Ansvarlig enhed / leder på instituttet / fakultetet.]

Mål og delmål for 2019	Aktivitet	Kort beskrivelse af aktiviteten	Ansvarlig

6.3. Samarbejde og samfundsengagement – nationalt og globalt

[De udvalgte mål beskrevet i afsnit 3 omsættes til aktiviteter i 2018/2019 ved udfyldelse af nedenstående skema. Kolonnerne udfyldes med:

Mål og delmål for 2019: Notér først det overordnede mål, som aktiviteten skal bidrage til realisering af, og som er opstillet i afsnit 1. Notér, hvad der forventes opnået det kommende år (2019).

Aktivitet: Notér overskrift på aktiviteten.

Kort beskrivelse af aktiviteten: Beskriv aktiviteten / handlingen i stikord.

Ansvarlig: Ansvarlig enhed / leder på instituttet / fakultetet.]

Mål og delmål for 2019	Aktivitet	Kort beskrivelse af aktiviteten	Ansvarlig

6.4. Ét samlet og fokuseret universitet. Organisation, medarbejdere og fysiske rammer

[De udvalgte mål beskrevet i afsnit 4 omsættes til aktiviteter i 2018/2019 ved udfyldelse af nedenstående skema. Kolonnerne udfyldes med:

Mål og delmål for 2019: Notér først det overordnede mål, som aktiviteten skal bidrage til realisering af, og som er opstillet i afsnit 1. Notér, hvad der forventes opnået det kommende år (2019).

Aktivitet: Notér overskrift på aktiviteten.

Kort beskrivelse af aktiviteten: Beskriv aktiviteten / handlingen i stikord.

Ansvarlig: Ansvarlig enhed / leder på instituttet / fakultetet.]

Mål og delmål for 2019	Aktivitet	Kort beskrivelse af aktiviteten	Ansvarlig

Appendix

Følgende bilag skal vedlægges mål- og handleplanen, når den sendes til henholdsvis rektoratet / dekanatet:

1. Instituttets / fakultetets måltalsrapport (som også indeholder de nødvendige måltal til opgørelse af målene i den strategiske rammekontrakt).
2. Forslag til dagsordenspunkter til det kommende møde med dekanatet / rektoratet