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2021-08-27

Tasks for course coordinators and examiners

As teachers, although we think most about teaching and how it should be as good as possible, we have in our assignments as course coordinator and examiner a number of rules we need to follow.

There are national rules, rules decided centrally at Stockholm University (SU), rules decided at the faculty, and rules decided locally at the department. The purpose of this document is to summarise some of these rules. At the end of the document, there are references to several of the central and faculty level decisions that regulate teaching and examination at SU.

General information about teaching, examination, and teaching staff and their roles

Every course has a syllabus which describes the course content, the teaching format, the forms of examination, and the expected learning outcomes. The syllabus is the governing document and must be followed. For each course, we normally have a teacher who is responsible (course coordinator) for the course, and who may be assisted by other teachers and/or teaching assistants (normally PhD students). In addition, each course also has an examiner who approves the grades on the course. In some courses, there may be several examiners, but each grade decision is made by only one examiner. The examiners are decided by the head of department, and they are listed in the staffing plan.

Those who are appointed as a coordinator for a course (or any similar assignment) in the staffing plan are required to take overall responsibility for the course, from any preparatory work, to the teaching, the examination, and subsequent follow-up work. Normally, the course coordinator is also the examiner for the course. It is important to note that an examiner must be employed in a **teaching position**[1] at SU, and when the course coordinator does not have such a position, an examiner is appointed, as stated in the staffing plan. The examiner's role in such cases is, in consultation with the course coordinator, to determine an appropriate form for the examination and how it is to be carried out, even though the course coordinator normally handles the examination itself. The examiner/course coordinator can enlist the help of others who assist in the course (e.g. other teachers, PhDs, postdocs) to assess the students, but the formal decision on grades lies with the examiner.

For courses with several modules, the different modules may have different examiners. The course as a whole then has examiner who has the overall responsibility for assigning a weight for each of the modules towards the final grade. How this weighting is done must be stated in detail in the grading criteria, and is also described in the course syllabus.

For the diploma projects, the staffing plan includes a committee of teachers, and the course coordinator draws from this group to form a two-person assessment group for each project, one of whom is the contact person. In each assessment group, the examiner (usually the contact person) sets the final grade after hearing the assessment group's views. For more details, see separate document regarding the diploma projects at the Department of Physics.

[1] Teacher appointments at Stockholm University are, according to the employment regulations: assistant lecturer, senior lecturer, professor, assistant professor, adjunct professor, guest professor, adjunct teacher, guest teacher and part-time teacher. Please note that PhD students, postdocs, and researchers, are not teachers in this sense, and thus cannot be examiners.

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Overall responsibility / preparatory work

The course coordinator has the following responsibilities

1. Organise a planning meeting with all teachers, teaching assistants, tutor leaders, laboratory assistants, heads of practice laboratories, computer managers, etc., in good time before the course starts, i.e., 2-4 weeks before. The planning meeting should be held sufficiently early that those involved are given enough time to plan their work.
2. To know the course's place in the education programme, and plan the course based on this.
3. Ensure that students can access any necessary computer software using their private computers. Students are encouraged to use their private computers but, if necessary, a laptop can be borrowed from the student office during the course. In consultation with the computer coordinator for the laptop computers (deputy director of studies), the course coordinator should then ensure that they are available and equipped with the correct software.
4. In consultation with the person responsible for demonstration and exercise labs and assistants, ensure that laboratory instructions, laboratory equipment and demonstrations are in good condition before any laboratory work starts.
5. Carry out a risk assessment for all laboratory work before each time the course is given, following the procedures given in the documents that can be downloaded here fysik.su.se/kursansvariga. The course coordinator has to ensure that the course assistants receive sufficient information to feel safe to teach the laboratory with regards to safety, and that the risk assessment is attached to the lab instruction.
6. At least two months before the start of the course, ensure that the information on the course's website in the digital education catalogue is correct. Proposals for changes are sent to the communication coordinator, study counsellor or director of studies. The pages for first and second year bachelor's program courses are written in Swedish. For courses given during the third year bachelor's program, or in the program in medical radiation physics, the information must be available in both Swedish and English. Advanced level courses are in English.
7. Notify any proposal for new course literature to the Undergraduate Education Committee (GUK) in good time (3–4 months) before the start of the course. Before new course literature is discussed in GUK, it must have been reviewed by the Equal rights and opportunities committee, which issues an opinion on the course literature from an equality perspective. The department board then decides on the course literature. Course literature must have been approved by the board no later than two months before the start of the course.
8. Inform the student office well in advance of the start of the course (three weeks) which components of the course are to graded (exams, laboratory work, assignments, bonus points, compulsory seminars, etc.) and which teachers are able to enter results in LADOK.
9. Ensure that students have easy access to information about the course through the learning platform Athena. Athena pages are created for all courses at the department to which course coordinators are authorised to control (for questions or problems, contact the Athena administrator of the Department of Physics). In cases where an off-platform course website is used, the page needs to follow the department's and SU's guidelines on web publishing. The course website must be linked to from both the course website in the education catalogue and from the course's Athena page.
10. Provide a course description via the course's Athena page/course website at the latest by the start of the course. The course description is a complement to the course syllabus (which is available in SISU) and is a more detailed description of the course content, the examination format, what teaching aids the students may have, etc. It is very important to be explicit in the course description as to what teaching aids they may have, and if there are any time limits for certain

steps, and if some steps are mandatory. Note that lectures are almost never compulsory (it is stated in the syllabus whether they are or not). For laboratory work, the department has general rules that the course coordinator can refer to, and which can be found on our internal page fysik.su.se/kursansvariga. If the examiner wants additional rules on a certain course (which should only be done if there are very good reasons), these must be clearly stated in the course description.

11. Provide grading criteria at the latest at the start of the course via the course's Athena page/course website. These must be written on the basis of the expected learning outcomes that are stated in the syllabus established by the faculty. For courses at advanced level, the grading criteria must also be translated into English. The grading criteria must state what is required of the students to receive different grades.
12. If they are required, and in consultation with the director of studies, revisions to the course syllabus must be sent to the Undergraduate education committee (GUK), the board (FS) and finally to the faculty. The course syllabus is the legally valid document about the format of the course. We do not have the right to provide other forms of teaching, examination, etc., than what is stated in the syllabus. It is therefore important that it is correct. Current course syllabi are available in SISU, http://sisu.it.su.se/ or from the course web site.
13. Ensure that the students on the course are registered in LADOK. Students apply for the course through antagning.se and register via student.ladok.se. Only when a student is registered can they access to course's Athena page. For questions, contact the student counsellor or the student office.
14. Establish the schedule for the course. Schedules are determined approximately one semester before the course is given. For smaller student groups, it is of course possible to change schedules at short notice if premises of the "group room" type can be used. For other changes, which you should be restrictive with, contact the person responsible for schedules at the department. Any schedule requests should be reported to the scheduler in good time before the course is given. The program coordinator is responsible for scheduling the latter part of the program in medical radiation physics, and the clinical courses are scheduled by Karolinska Hospital.
15. Keep your pedagogical competence updated in order to be able to choose the form of teaching that best suits the course and the students.

During the course

The course coordinator has the following responsibilities

16. Offer students the opportunity at the beginning of the course to participate in course forums (oral evaluations during the course) and to organise such forums during the course to get feedback from students about the course. For more information see fysik.su.se/kursansvariga.
17. Inform the students about the possibilities for active influence of their education also through FÄR (Fysikum's student council).
18. Encourage the students to make a written evaluation of the course. The course evaluation will take place through the course's Athena page and is administered by Fysikum's administrator for course evaluations. The course evaluation consists of fixed general questions determined by the university, and additional course-appropriate questions added by the department. If necessary, the course coordinator can add additional questions. The course evaluation takes place electronically via Athena after the final examined part of the course.
19. Motivate the students to participate in the course evaluation by showing at the start of the course how previous years' course evaluations have affected the structure of the course.

20. Inform the students about the time frames for laboratory reports that apply at the department, see fysik.su.se/kursansvariga for more information.

21. Ensure that the teaching of the course is of the highest quality possible.

22. Ensure that the examination is carried out in a good way (the person who prepares a written examination, or other examination assignment, should solve the assignment themself in advance, and ask another teacher on the course to do the same). It is important to state at the examination and in the course description which teaching aids are permitted at the examination. If no aids are allowed, state 'No aids allowed'. General rules for written exams can be found at fysik.su.se/kursansvariga. In the case of a written examination, the questions must be sent to examination@fysik.su.se no later than two working days before the examination. As far as possible, written exams are conducted anonymously.

23. Inform the students about the place and time for the regular examination as well as re-sits. Booking of extra exams in addition to those scheduled is done through department scheduler and the student office at the department.

24. Be available to answers questions during the exam. Visit the exam preferably once after 1.5-2 hours and preferably again when there is at least an hour remaining. The course coordinator (the examiner, or another teacher appointed by the course coordinator) is obliged to be available (e.g., by telephone) during the entire examination.

25. Ensure that all teachers/assistants participating in the course are aware that they must act as evacuation coordinators for the students in the event that an alarm (e.g., fire alarm) occurs in connection with a lecture/seminar or other teaching activity.

26. Ensure that the results are entered in LADOK when the students have passed each component, and to send the students who have received grades to the examiner after completing the course.

After the course

The course coordinator has the following responsibilities

27. Publish solutions for regular exams and for re-sits via the course's Athena page/course website. It is important that the solutions are available as soon as possible after the examination (e.g. as support before a possible re-sit).

28. Ensure that examinations and other examination assignments are corrected as soon as possible. An examination assignment must be corrected and reported in LADOK within 15 working days from the examination and no less than 10 working days before the next examination.

29. In consultation with the examiner, hold any supplementary assignments for the students who have received the grade Fx. Note that the grade Fx is a failed grade, and it is stated in the syllabus if the students then have the right to supplement. The examiner decides the supplementary assignments, and assesses whether the student has passed. A supplementary assignment can only give the grade E, unless otherwise stated in the syllabus. The supplementary assignments must take place before the next scheduled course exam.

30. Report the results of the examination to the student office as soon as possible (however, no later than 15 working days from the day of the examination). At the end of the year, it is extra important that examination results are reported in LADOK no later than the first week of January (the exact date is determined by SU centrally annually), otherwise we will lose all payment for the course.

31. Hand in the corrected exams to the student office. Students normally pick up their exams themselves at the student office. As an alternative, a so-called scheduled exam review can be held where the exams are returned and the students have the opportunity to ask about any corrections. It is up to the course coordinator/examiner to decide whether an examination review should be held.
32. Ensure that course material is archived by, e.g., ensuring that the person responsible for the student office has access to the course's Athena page/course website where the material is stored.
33. Write a course reflection. After the students' course evaluation has been compiled, it is sent to the course coordinator, who will then communicate it to the other teachers and assistants involved in the course, and write a reflection with any comments and suggestions for changes and improvements. The reflection is written through a form that is sent to the course teacher via the course's Athena page. If necessary, a course forum can also be convened to discuss the course evaluation before the reflection is written. The reflection must be written within 10 weeks.
34. Organise a follow-up meeting with all teachers and assistants if necessary.
35. After completion of the examination, eliminate all stored personal data that are not necessary to save.

The examiner has the following responsibilities

1. Ensure that all students who complete the course receive their grades (by checking/certifying the grades), and that this takes place no later than three weeks after the final exam/completed course.

2. Submit written documentation for grading (such as correction protocols) to the student office for archiving.

Conclusion

The purpose of this document is to collect information that is the responsibility of the course coordinator/examiner. However, it is not completely comprehensive, and, so, in cases of uncertainty, contact the director of undergraduate studies at the department.

References and other rules and guidelines

- General rules for the entire university can be found in the rulebook (in Swedish) https://www.su.se/medarbetare/organisation-styrning/styrdokument-regelboken/utbildning/regler-f%C3%B6r-utbildning-och-examination-p%C3%A5-grundniv%C3%A5-och-avancerad-niv%C3%A5-1.244425
- The faculty's additions to these rules (in Swedish) https://www.science.su.se/regelverk-och-beslut/riktlinjer-f%C3%B6r-utbildning/riktlinjer-r%C3%B6rande-utbildning-p%C3%A5-grundniv%C3%A5-och-avancerad-niv%C3%A5-1.34761
- A collection of rules and guidelines for teaching at undergraduate and advanced level at the Department of Physics can be found at fysik.su.se/kursansvariga.

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