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## Meeting in the Educational Committee of Bachelor in Graphic Storytelling

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Location:  
Online and at The Animation  
Workshop, Kasernevej 5, Viborg  
(Big Meetingroom)

Meeting date:  
Monday, October 7, 2024  
12.30-15.30

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### Participants

Joana Mosi, Sandra (Sam) Mattsson-Robertsdotter, Sascha Altschuler,  
Kasper Kruse, Peter Dyring-Olsen, Erik Barkman, Martin Flink, Line Høj  
Høstrup, Marie Munch Burski, Leonor Barbosa de Almeida Cruz da  
Silva, Maria Skov Pedersen

### Declined

Dorte-Pia Ravnsbæk, Angelica Inigo, Erik Petri

### Guests

Freja Devantié, VIA Career Center  
Søren Klit Lambæk, assistant professor, VIA Software Engineering  
Program  
Trine Raaby, Quality consultant, VIA Educational development

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## Agenda

### 1. Welcome

12.30-12.35 (Peter Dyring-Olsen)

#### a. Welcome

#### b. Approval of agenda

*Approved.*

#### c. Election of meeting chair

*Peter will chair the meeting.*

### 2. News from the bachelor department

12.35-12.45 (Erik Barkman)

### Minutes

- *3<sup>rd</sup> semester: At the end at the semester the students will collaborate with students at Manuskriptskolen for Børnefiktion to develop illustrated narratives.*
- *4<sup>th</sup> semester: Serial fiction and collaborative writing.*
- *5<sup>th</sup> semester: Less technology, more design. Introduction to technology will be spread out on the different semesters.*
- *6<sup>th</sup> semester: Less final production, more portfolio production.*

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## SUMMARY/ AGENDA

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Meeting chair:

Referent:  
Anna-Maj Geyti

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Date: 7 October 2024  
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- 7<sup>th</sup> semester: Final projects with internal mentors. The students are producing 10 comics, 5 “art of” books, and 5 illustrated prose. For the first time we have two students working together on a project.

As a part of Erik’s adjunct program, he is studying what GS graduates do. The purpose of the survey is to collect information for guiding students and shaping the courses.

### 3. News from TAW

12.45-13.05 (Kasper Kruse)

#### a. NIMBI GameLab

Nimbi GameLab – Denmark's Institute for Game Development. This is the name of Denmark's new game institute, which Kasper Kruse is involved in establishing as head of the institute’s board. The name refers to one of the first Danish digital games from 1963. The institute is the first of its kind in Europe and is established to support the Danish game industry. Read more about the institute here (in Danish only): [Europas første spilinstitut er i luften \(kum.dk\)](http://kum.dk)

#### Minutes

*The institute has been established. We have found a CEO, but due to a reshuffle in the government and the establishment of a new Ministry of Digitalization, there has been uncertainty about how the institute should be anchored. This has now been resolved, and the center remains anchored in the Ministry of Culture. Additionally, three new employees have been hired. The center’s activities are funded by “Spilordningen” and the Finance Act. We aim to support talent development, assist in the startup of new companies, and contribute knowledge and awareness about the Danish game industry.*

*Sascha is asking if Nimbi can support the development of more commercial games – as opposed to now, where Spilordningen primarily supports the development of non-commercial and more artistic games.*

*Kasper does not know but imagines that it might be possible to support promotion (not the development itself), but it still needs to be clarified what role Nimbi should have in this.*

*Peter: Nimbi is strategically relevant to our education programs, as they can help TAW’s programs in terms of how they should position themselves in relation to games*

#### b. Reform of the professional bachelor programs in Denmark

#### Minutes

*We are waiting for the government’s proposal regarding changes to the education system. The proposal has been delayed many times, and we don’t know anything yet, but we expect to learn more tomorrow. After that, the politicians will discuss it, so we will continue to wait to understand the consequences for our programs.*

*Peter suggests that we invite the committee for an additional meeting, once we know more, to inform the committee about the content.*

### 4. News from head of studies

13.05-13.15 (Peter Dyring-Olsen)

#### Minutes

- New adjunct professor: We are in the process of recruiting a new adjunct professor these weeks. We hope that our new adjunct professor can start 1<sup>st</sup> of November or 1<sup>st</sup> of December. But we are flexible and able to wait for the right candidate.*
- Ongoing development process: we will keep developing the education as Erik mentioned examples of. The reform will most likely also cause changes to the program.*

## 5. Denmark's 2023 Study Survey

13.15-13.45 (Peter Dyring-Olsen)

The survey "Denmark Study Survey" and Graduate Survey are conducted every other year among students and recent graduates from higher education institutions under the Ministry of Higher Education and Science. The results provide information on students' and graduates' assessments of the quality and relevance of their education programs. Peter will present the results from Denmark's Study Survey relating to Graphic Storytelling.

Please find the results attached to this agenda.

### Minutes

#### STUDY SURVEY

84 % of GS students replayed = 37 students.

*Overall, we are rated very well on GS (and Anim): The educational environment and the social study environment are good. So are the answers related to internship.*

*Special focus areas:*

- *Loneliness*
- *Stress (this is less caused by practical matters regarding the program. 65 % say that stress is caused by their private life ("social life, my family life and other personal matters").*

*Many of our students come from abroad and this can affect both the feeling of loneliness and stress related to social and family life.*

*We have quite high numbers of students self-reporting that they have a mental impairment, a diagnosis or a disability compared to other programs. (65 %). This does not align with how many receive SPS (special educational support), which are fewer. So, we have a grey area here and our staff do a lot of talking to our students to help them.*

*Leonor pointed out that it is important that the students are aware of the possibility of getting SPS and that some might not be. Peter noted that other programs stress the importance of repeating the information about SPS and that we will be aware of this, too.*

*Our students do not report very high on having a clear picture of what profession they are being taught.*

*Joana suggests that the program should continue to explore opportunities to provide students with practical opportunities to collaborate with other schools and related industries. This can affect the students' perception of having a clear picture of the profession they are being trained for. It should not only be about drawing things for others, but also related skills for GS, such as teaching, organizing events, and writing speeches.*

*Leonor also requests collaborations across the programs at TAW and Arsenalet.*

#### GRADUATE SURVEY

*We only had 6 responses, so the response rate is too low to work with the results. Men spørgsmålene har givet os anledning til at diskutere, hvordan vi forstår begrebet "kritisk tænkning" i vores kontekst.*

*Sascha: The ability to think critically and not only take orders is really important. E.g., how can we find new ways to do things. You need new people to suggest new ideas or new ways to do things.*

*Joana: Our job is to think, make decisions and make things – and asking questions about why we are doing things the way we are.*

## 6. VIA Career Center

13.45-14.00 (Freja Devantié, VIA Career Center)

Freja will introduce the committee to the activities VIA Career Center is hosting for the students at TAW/Graphic Storytelling.

### Minutes

1. *Long term goals – Career Center perspective: to support and strengthen the students' ability to find jobs when finishing their studies. How:*
  - a. *strategic career plans*
  - b. *career management skills.*
2. *Specific career activities: We will spread them out during the program instead of offering them at the last semesters, so the students learn the skills and have time to practice them.*
  - a. *Career management skills: networking, making a cv, tools for structured internship search. Putting your social and personal skills into words. E.g.: workshop with skills in focus: CV and cover letter. How did we practice this skill:*
    - i. *Workshop with HK (unemployment insurance fund)*
    - ii. *Working on CV and cover letter in our Online Career Universe*
    - iii. *Receiving feedback on the CV and cover letter.*
  - b. *Meeting the industry & other examples:*
    - i. *Event: "Meet your future" - A collaboration with Viborg Animation Festival. Inspirational talk + informal network session.*  
*=> a safe space to practice network skills. (they had a workshop on this in the spring) and a place to expand their network by meeting companies.*
3. *If you would like to collaborate with Freja and the Career Center, please reach out: [deva@via.dk](mailto:deva@via.dk)*

*Peter highlighted that it is a strategic choice to work with the Career Center as they are professionals in helping the students in this field and to start earlier with introducing career teaching and have it as an ongoing theme so it is not only on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year.*

*Sam stressed that this is very helpful for the students and that the workshops and events have been relevant.*

## BREAK

14.00-14.10

## 7. Introduction to VIA's new Software Engineer Program with XR in focus, in Viborg

14.10-14.25 (Søren Klit Lambæk, assistant professor, VIA Software Engineering Program)

Søren will introduce the committee to the new Software Engineering Program in VIA, which started up this semester with 21 students. The program is located at TAW and we plan for future collaboration between the programs.

### Minutes

*Søren introduced to the structure and content of the program. The program employs two teachers and will expand. The software program in Horsens is also providing teaching on the forthcoming semesters. We are looking into ways of collaborating with each other.*

*The students across the programs at TAW have already started collaborating on their own initiative with games.*

## 8. The balance between passion and employability

14.25-15.05 (Joana Mosi)

Joana will facilitate an open discussion in the committee about the balance between passion and employability working in the field of graphic storytelling:

"Since the last meeting, I've noticed that there's been a growing concern not only with employment but also with the impact of AI and modern technologies. I think that's really important and determinant, but would it also be interesting to talk a bit about the craft/art itself? What I mean is; how can we face the current reality affected by technological advances and multiple employment challenges, and how does that affect our relationship with the craft and art itself? Is there still room for "passion"? Or, in other words, is being led by passion and dreams incompatible with prioritizing employability and sustainability? I'm mentioning these thoughts because they're common concerns and discussions among students."

### Minutes

*Line: This has always been a challenge for creative people: the dilemma between making art and making money. During the external evaluation, we had an interesting discussion about whether this can be combined and if it can be done, for example, in teams? Can this be practiced, or will it always be two different worlds?*

*Martin: It has always been a dilemma for me. I have always done something on the side to make a living. And it has always been difficult for creatives. I have found crafts related to it. I would like to publish my own books, and when I teach, the teaching is related to it, but it is to earn money. When you talk to the students one-on-one, you can talk about what other interests they have and how it can be combined so they can earn enough.*

*Sascha: I can also recognize this. But when you work deeply on something and put some of yourself into the work, you also become interested in it. But I also have my own "passion projects" that I work on occasionally.*

*Martin: Your passions change with age. You get new ones, and they connect to the old ones. For example, I make cookbooks now. So, it becomes easier to accept that you go back and forth a bit.*

*Sascha: My passion is drawing, but I went to TAW because it is a way to learn to use your interest to make money. Otherwise, I would have gone to an art school.*

*Line: As soon as it becomes commercial, it is harder for me to put myself into it. So I work more on the artistic side. I would like to know if it is something that can be practiced.*

*Martin: I just had to find a way to draw and get into the comic book industry. Back then, there was no GS program. I don't think it's a big problem. It has always been like that for me.*

*Maria: I am passionate about illustration, but I also don't think I would like to work with it because I don't have a commercial take on it. So maybe it's not around your passion that you should find your work. But I am very happy with my job at TAW and am passionate about it. When you are young, it is very important what you do during the day. When you get older, it is also about being happy with where you live, etc.*

*Sam: Maybe you can learn to become interested in something you are not passionate about. For example, some students just skip the workshops they don't find interesting. So it needs to be trained to find what is fun and useful for you in the workshops/work that is there, instead of just dropping it.*

*Peter: We are not an art school and the ministry gives us funding to educate students to get a job. This has also been a journey for us. Part of our job here is to figure out how do we learn students to expand their career plans. We must talk about meaningfulness in a job and then that might grow into a passion. We need to give the students a realistic picture of their future and it can be heartbreaking to tell them that they don't have a sustainable plan if they only want to follow their passion. It is very complex and it is not being easier with introducing the pace of the technology development.*

*Kasper: Meaningfulness and purpose must go hand in hand. Purpose can be being able to take care of someone, e.g. kids.*

*Joana: Going back to the critical thinking: How can your skills be useful? Somehow it is also a challenge I like: How can I find my place in society with my passion and skills. The idea of success has also changed throughout the years. Critical thinking is also necessary when working with AI and new technologies. And then we also put our passion in it.*

*Maria: Another way of framing it is also that actually a lot of our graduates are working in relevant jobs. Not like when I was in an art school where graduates were expected to earn their money in other jobs than art.*

*Marie: Learning art is also about solving problems.*

*Kasper: Passion strengthens curiosity and relations, and this is what you want in persons you will work together with.*

## **9. News from the members**

15.05-15.25 (Peter Dyring-Olsen)

We would like to get a bit closer to what is happening in the industries related to our educational programs. Therefore, we would like the members to give a brief presentation at the meetings on how things are going in the industry – in general and particularly in relation to new technology, such as AI.

Sascha and Angelica will give presentations at this meeting. After the presentations all members are welcome to discuss or give input to the topic.

### **Minutes**

*Sascha's presentation: There has been a lot of talk in the gaming industry about how AI is influencing the industry. In Denmark, however, there is not yet talk about people being fired because of AI. Generally, there are many layoffs in the industry worldwide. But this is probably a consequence of a significant increase in the game industry during the pandemic, when people played a lot of games. And now they are being laid off again because there is not as much demand as when people were home all the time. I don't think it's because of AI. But it happens. Generally, AI is frowned upon in the indie game community. For example, you are not allowed to use AI on Steam and Kickstarter.*

*The positive is that AI can improve the image quality of old games. It is also used in programming and scripting. So, AI is both very useful and very annoying.*

*Angelica was unfortunately not able to attend the meeting, so no presentation from her.*

## **10. AOB**

15.25-15.30

### **Minutes**

*We might reach out to you when we know more about the reform. No matter what we will give you an update, when we know more. It might take a while before we know all the details.*