



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

UNIVERSSEN

Hard at work



Calling senior mentors
PAGE 4

What does Internal Audit do?
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Internationalisation at home
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UPPSALA UNIVERSITY. In spring 2020, while the campus has emptied, staff have been hard at work dealing with the situation. The last issue of Universsen is also dominated by the pandemic, see for example PAGES 9–11

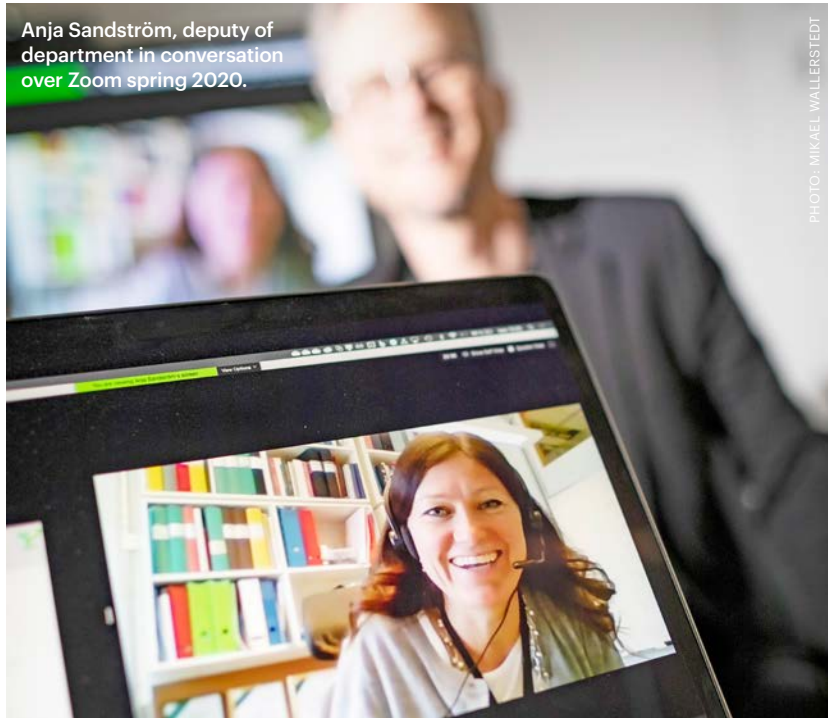


For my own part, work environment management is all about achieving the University's goals, one prerequisite for which is that staff feel good in themselves and can collaborate, be creative and focus on the work at hand."

Karin Karlström, HR strategist on systematic work environment management, PAGE 5

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Anja Sandström, deputy of department in conversation over Zoom spring 2020.



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Course on risks of handling infectious agents.



Karin Karlström, HR strategist works with systematic work environment management.

“It is important to vary your working position; try standing if you can, sit on the sofa, put your feet up.”

ANNA MARIA NÄSLUND, PAGE 11

LEADER, UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

THE CORONAVIRUS AND DIGITISATION



THIS SPRING HAS seen us faced with the challenge of digitising all of our teaching at short notice, not to mention large parts of the University's other operations. We would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere thanks to all of you who, with such energy and creativity, have made extraordinary efforts to deal with this transition.

Nobody knows how long the current restrictions will be in place. As we are not in a position to decide for ourselves when the University can reopen for teaching on campus, we are planning for the summer and autumn based on various scenarios. Management is determined to create the most stable conditions possible given the uncertain situation. Budget work and operational planning continue based on the assumption that the given planning conditions for 2021 still apply. At the same time, we are preparing ourselves to jointly mitigate any negative consequences arising locally in the wake of Covid-19.



EVEN IF THIS pandemic is affecting many people inhumanely and severely and putting us all to the test, there are positive aspects to a crisis such as this. We are forced to think along new lines, to try new ways of working and we gain valuable experience that we can carry with us once Covid-19 has passed. Our university will emerge better equipped for a future that we know will be increasingly digitally integrated. Our ability to utilise the digital toolbox is developing, opening up new opportunities.

That said, we are probably all looking forward to meeting again on a regular basis; after all, small talk in the corridors, creative conferences and annual festivities mean so much to our relationships, wellbeing and job satisfaction. Meeting in person is a need that cannot always be replaced.

ANOTHER SIGN OF increasing digitisation is that this is the final edition of the staff magazine, Universen. For over 50 years, it has contributed to the exchange of experiences and the identity and cohesion of our institution with news, reports and portraits. As we transition to fully digital communication solutions, with all of the obvious advantages in terms of speed, we should not forget the importance of these values.

With that, we leave you with the wish that, despite all, you will enjoy a lovely summer.

Eva Åkesson, Vice-Chancellor
Anders Malmberg, Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Caroline Sjöberg, University Director



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IN BRIEF



Student teacher Molly Sjödin Lundholm, then director of studies Karin Hassan Jansson of the Department of History and student teacher Anna Nylund discuss their experience of the use of a racial epithet in the classroom.

PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT

Racial epithet demands time, respect and empathy

During spring 2020, one specific case has led to a debate on the use of a pejorative racial epithet in teaching. In this context, it is of interest to discuss another similar case.

At a seminar on historical thinking at the Department of History, a teacher used a pejorative racial epithet to illustrate how the connotations of a word can change and that, as historians, we must take account of this in order to understand historical context.

"But then an open discussion took place that got out of hand," explains student history teacher Molly Sjödin Lundholm. "Some students said things that were disrespectful and objectionable, creating a bad atmosphere."

"The word was used outside the teaching point concerned and the students were not challenged on it," says Anna Nylund, another student history teacher.

THE THEN DIRECTOR OF studies at the Department of History, Karin Hassan Jansson, arranged a meeting between the teacher and students to discuss the balance between the need to examine and discuss social phenomena and to respect how various terms can be perceived.

"It would be easy to ignore the issue of this and other loaded words simply because they are sensitive; however, it is crucial that we have this discussion," says Karin Hassan Jansson. "The meeting with students reminded us of how important it is to prepare thoroughly; the discussion must be introduced with care and sufficient time needs to be set aside."

"A pejorative racial epithet always links to the wider issue of oppression and perhaps not all students understand the difference between using such a word in teaching and in other contexts. It is a very complex issue that demands time, respect and empathy," says Anna Nylund.

"AND REGARDLESS OF WHETHER it is used derogatorily or illustratively as part of a discussion, it can be very troubling to hear. Irrespective of the teacher's good intentions, simply using the word may also legitimise its derogatory use by those who do not understand the difference," adds Molly Sjödin Lundholm.

One part of the solution is to avoid using the word in its entirety and instead apply an abbreviation.

"For us, it goes without saying that we would say the abbreviation to distance ourselves even further from the intension

[abstract definition] of the original word," explains Anna Nylund.

"While we may feel that we are using the word with due respect, for this generation of students it is a powerful symbol that should never be spoken," says Karin Hassan Jansson.

THE MEETING ALSO LED to a follow-up meeting between Karin Hassan Jansson, the teacher in question and all faculty members at the department.

"This created a greater understanding of the students' reactions among the faculty," says Karin Hassan Jansson.

"Our outrage is often misinterpreted; when this racial epithet is used in its entirety, I am sad and angry on behalf of people I know who are adversely affected. That doesn't mean that I am unable to discuss the word or am easily offended," says Molly Sjödin Lundholm.

"There is an attitude prevalent in the debate that students are easily offended – that their outrage is groundless," says Anna Nylund. "This leads to a fear of speaking up, but it is important to raise the issue so that everyone feels welcomed to the University."

Anders Berndt

The final Universen

The magazine you are holding in your hand is the final issue of Universen. Its role will now be taken over completely by the Staff Portal and internal newsletters.

Universen is being discontinued and replaced with various forms of digital internal communication.

"There are a number of reasons why we are cancelling the hardcopy magazine," said Pernilla Björk, Uppsala University's director of communications, in the last issue of Universen. "Among other things, it is part of University Administration's work on digitalisation, internationalisation and sustainable development."

By no longer printing and distributing a hardcopy magazine we will be saving paper, transportation and working hours.

"We are also creating the financial scope to spend more on translation. We need to improve the bilingualism of internal communications."

Just as previously, internal news, reports and videos will be available in the Staff Portal. The content of the Staff Portal will be developed and published regularly to keep it bang up to date.

Staff will also receive an internal newsletter with brief notifications linking to the Staff Portal, which will provide a quick overview of the most important news.

For news and reports, please visit the Staff Portal at mp.uu.se.



Spring Conferment Ceremony rescheduled

The Spring Conferment Ceremony has been postponed until 13 November due to the pandemic. This year's inauguration of professors, previously scheduled for 13 November, has been cancelled and new professors will now be inaugurated next year.

HELLO THERE

ANNE RAMBERG,

lawyer and former Secretary General of the Swedish Bar Association, who will be taking up the post of chair of the Uppsala University Board on 1 May.

“Impressed by the transition”



1 What is your relationship to Uppsala University?

“I was awarded an honorary doctorate by Uppsala University in 2015, since when I have taken part in a great many activities at the University covering everything from teaching constitutional law to participating in alumni days and legal policy debates. I have also had close contacts with the Faculty of Law for quite some time.”

“I have also had close contacts with the Faculty of Law for quite some time.”

2 This year will also see the election of a new vice-chancellor and new vice-rectors at the University. Will this present a particular challenge for the University Board?

“Obviously, major changes within an organisation over a short period of time can always bring challenges; however, when they take place in a highly organised form and in a harmonious atmosphere, as is the case here, I see no cause whatsoever for drama. Many members of the University Board remain and we will have the pleasure of the vice-chancellor’s continued presence until the end of the year.”

3 Have you had the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the University’s new goals and strategies?

“That’s something I’m in the process of studying. I have read all of the governance documents, observed the work from a distance and read the vice-chancellor’s very informative blog but I have much left to learn. I am also in contact with my predecessor and we will be consulting prior to the handover.”

4 A great many changes have occurred at the University during the coronavirus pandemic. What are your views on this?

“I have been impressed by the University’s efficiency in appointing a crisis management group and successfully transitioning the organisation. It remains to be seen what lessons can be learned from these experiences; for example, in terms of decision-making, technology and the University’s role as a social institution in such a situation.”

Annica Hulth

➤ **Read the longer interview (in Swedish) “Nya ordföranden Anne Ramberg vill värna forskningens frihet” (New Chair Anne Ramberg Determined to Protect Research Freedom) at www.uu.se.**

PHOTO: MICKE LUNDSTRÖM

Seniors sought as mentors

As someone with a wealth of experience, why not take the opportunity to help a student in need of a mentor?

“It is stimulating and keeps me physically and mentally active, as well as providing personal contact and an incredible response from the student,” says Karin Allgulin, who mentors four students.

Mentoring is a form of support for students with various disabilities, helping them to plan and structure their studies.

“For the students, it’s worth its weight in gold to have someone to bounce ideas off and discuss their study situation with,” says Catrin Schulze, coordinator at the University Administration’s Study Counsellors and Career Office.

Karin Allgulin was asked to become a mentor a couple of years ago, after retiring as a senior lecturer in education.

“It felt right to accept, given my interest in education and students and having spent almost my entire working life in the field. It is an enjoyable and stimulating way to prolong one’s professional life. Some of the students I have helped are now a couple of years along the road

to graduation and it’s rather exciting,” says Karin Allgulin.

“As a mentor you contribute your experience, both from your own studies and your professional life. Many mentors have previously worked at the University and have a great deal of experience of students. It’s a fantastic way to help students through their studies,” says Catrin Schulze.

MENTORS AND STUDENTS MEET for an hour a week to discuss study requirements, follow up and plan ahead. At present, due to the pandemic they are video conferencing.

“Planning a meeting with a student isn’t particularly demanding. There is no lesson to plan or articles to be read. You just bring your experience. Students also become more independent as they go along and learn how to plan their studies,” says Karin Allgulin.

As mentors receive an hourly fee they are not permitted to have an active post at the University.

“We can see the need for mentors increasing semester by semester,” says Catrin Schulze. “Students with various types of disability are gradually increas-

ing in number nationally and internationally. This is a positive development, given that the composition of the student body should reflect society as a whole.”

There are currently around 170 students at Uppsala University receiving assistance from some 100 mentors. The student’s continued need of mentorship is reviewed each semester and as a mentor you only commit to assisting a student for one semester at a time.

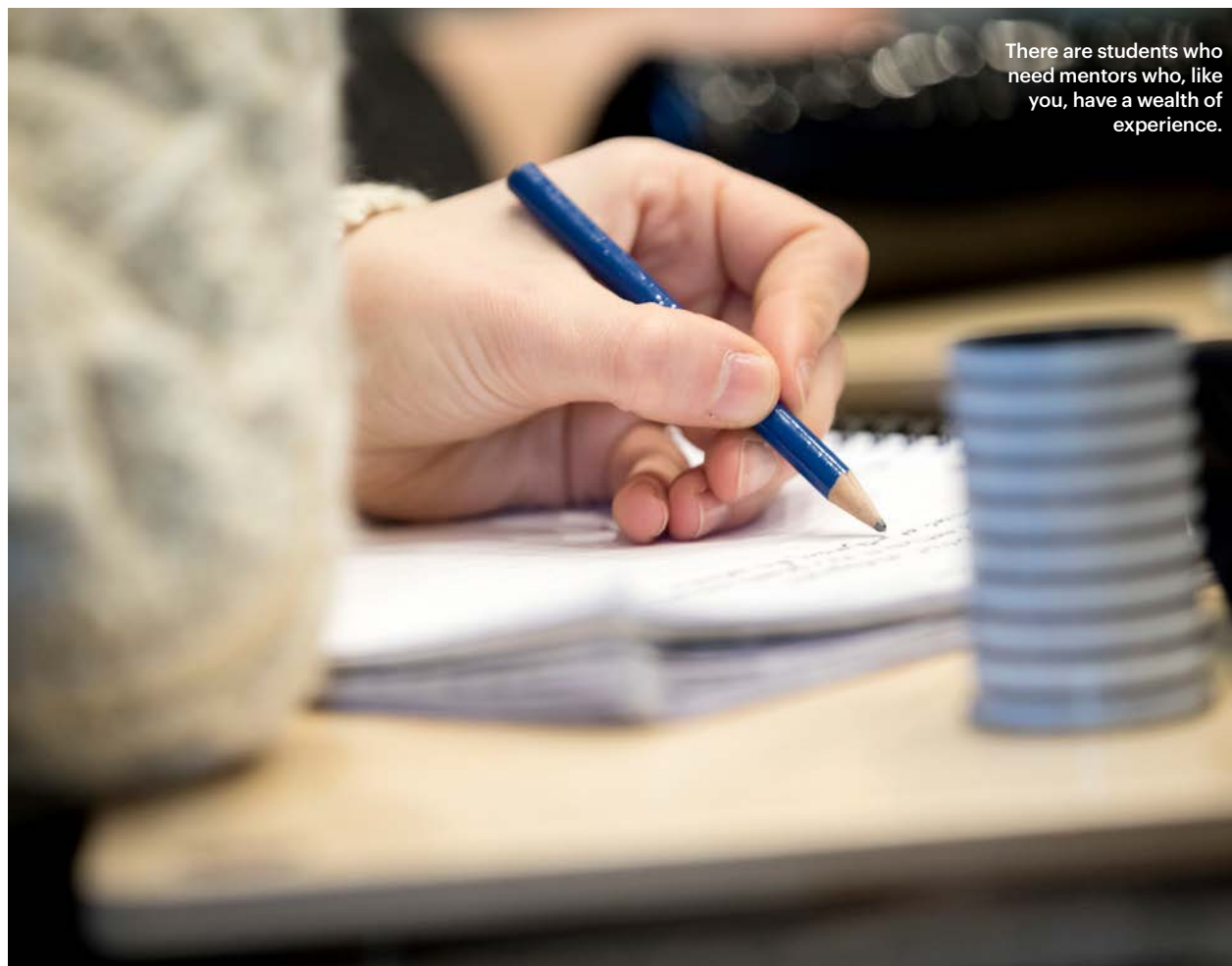
“That said, we prefer mentors to be able to continue to support the same student if the need exists and the collaboration is working well. And, of course, you develop as a mentor over time.”

There is a training course for all new mentors, while mentor coordinators also arrange meetings for mentors.

“During the training course we discuss what it means to be a mentor and what it doesn’t involve, while at meetings they can offer one another tips and advice,” explains Catrin Schulze.

Anders Berndt

➤ **Please contact mentorskoordinator@uadm.uu.se if you are interested in becoming a mentor.**



There are students who need mentors who, like you, have a wealth of experience.

PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT



PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT

Routine health and safety inspections of the physical work environment will be supplemented with inspections of the organisational and social work environment, explains HR strategist Karin Karlström.

Developing the work environment

Support for systematic work environment management is currently under development in a project at the Human Resources Division.

The project (see adjacent article) has seen the HR Division prepare a list of prioritised activities in collaboration with health and safety representatives, trade unions and operational HR. These are divided into four areas: survey; risk assessment and action plans; co-operation/collaboration; and training. The following is a selection of the project's activities:

SURVEY

- Health and safety inspections and procedures for processing results, feedback regarding the organisational and social work environment.
- Process and approach/procedures for conducting staff surveys and developing proposals for handling feedback and ongoing measures based on the results.
- Questions for staff meetings that can be used to prompt discussion of the work environment.
- Developed template for performance reviews.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLANS

- Procedures and support materials for conducting risk assessments and preparing action plans.

COOPERATION/COLLABORATION

- Joint work environment training for managers, health and safety representatives and operational HR.
- Support material for local work environment groups.

TRAINING

- Digital training.
- Support material for operational HR.
- Training on systematic work environment management in practice; the organisational and social work environment in practice; and early signals of mental ill health.

➤ If you would like to learn more about the work environment, material is available in the Staff Portal: mp.uu.se. Under Your Employment you will find headings including Work environment and occupational health and Wellness.

Anders Berndt

Wellbeing factors crucial in the workplace

A model is currently being developed for health and safety inspections of the organisational and social work environment.

“The wellbeing of staff is a prerequisite for achieving the University’s goals,” says human resources strategist Karin Karlström.

A project is currently underway at the University Administration’s Human Resources Division to develop the University’s systematic work environment management.

“We want to refocus from a reactive working method that addresses issues that have already arisen to more preventive, health-promoting activities,” explains Karin Karlström, strategist at the Human Resources Division.

SYSTEMATIC WORK ENVIRONMENT management requires every department, division or unit to adopt a systematic approach to identifying needs and implementing measures for both the physical and organisational and social work environment.

“We need to develop support for the organisation and develop a feasible recommended basic level. In terms of measures, it is important to be realistic and select an appropriate number of areas that can

be addressed annually, rather than biting off more than we can chew.”

Work environment management is also a matter of developing what we know works well.

“At the same time as combating ill health, it is important to maintain and develop various wellbeing factors.”

Karin Karlström asserts the importance of systematic work environment management to achieving the University’s goals and strategies.

“For my own part, work environment management is all about achieving the University’s goals, one prerequisite for which is that staff feel good in themselves and can collaborate, be creative and focus on the work at hand.”

The cornerstones of systematic work environment management are: study; assess risk; formulate and implement measures; and follow up results. This is an annual cycle, meaning that study also involves following up the previous year’s measures.

One important piece of the systematic work environment puzzle is a local work environment group consisting of management, operational HR and staff representatives (including health and safety representatives).

“Collaboration is important in work environment management. Management

and staff need to work together to achieve good solutions and create a healthy work environment.”

There are a number of different ways to study the state of the work environment, perhaps the classic example being health and safety inspections of the physical work environment.

“We are also in the process of developing a health and safety inspection for the organisational and social work environment.”

Can you offer any examples of what the basic level might look like?

“A good basis for studying the situation, both at group and individual level, would be annual health and safety inspections of the physical, social and organisational work environment, staff meetings focused on the work environment and work-environment issues raised at performance reviews. Work can then be conducted through risk assessment and action plans based on studies conducted in local work environment groups. Any measures will need to be implemented and regularly followed up by the line manager. We will also need to conduct an annual review of the need to augment the knowledge of managers, health and safety representatives or staff.”

Anders Berndt

The auditing year begins in February

In February each year, the University Board decides on the coming year's audits. At the same time, work is being concluded on the previous year's audits.

One audit that has attracted considerable attention is the audit of secondary occupations conducted in 2019, which showed that very few employees of the University reported any secondary employment. The term secondary occupation refers to any professional activities in addition to employment at the University, all of which must be reported by all teaching staff, managers and some administrative positions.

"WHEN WE AUDITED secondary occupations, it became apparent that the regulatory framework was outdated and information regarding the regulations was difficult for employees to grasp," says chief internal auditor Sven Jungerhem. "A number of measures have now been taken to improve the situation and we will be monitoring these to assess whether they have had the desired effect. It is important that we deal with secondary occupations correctly, not least from a reputational perspective, given that any deviation from regulations risks harming public confidence in the University."

WHEN THE AUDITORS HAVE completed an audit report, it is submitted to the University Board and the vice-chancellor is given the opportunity to comment and propose solutions.

"The University Board then decides on any measures in relation to the audit."

The auditors will then return with a follow-up report on the audited area, to see whether the measures have been implemented and what effects they have had.

AUDIT PLAN 2020

- selected departments, divisions and units;
- museums and collections;
- contract education;
- cheating in examinations;
- the use of legal entities in teaching and
- the whistle-blower function (follow up).

Anders Berndt



PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT

The review and evaluation of governance and operational processes is the focus of chief internal auditor Sven Jungerhem.

Governance under review by Internal Audit

Internal Audit assesses how well internal governance and control is functioning on behalf of the University Board.

Uppsala University is one of some 70 public authorities tasked by the Government with conducting an internal audit of governance and operational processes to ensure that these are functioning satisfactorily. Organisationally, Internal Audit is an independent division of the University reporting to the University Board.

"The purpose of Internal Audit is to review and evaluate operational processes and internal governance and control in order to assess whether these are being conducted in the manner decided on by the University Board and management. And whether operations are being conducted efficiently," explains chief internal auditor Sven Jungerhem.

As a public authority Uppsala University is subject to the Swedish Government Agencies Ordinance (SFS

2007:515), Section 3 of which states that the authority's operations must be carried out effectively and in accordance with applicable law, and reported in a reliable, true and fair manner, and that the authority must manage state funds responsibly.

"WHEN WE CONDUCT AN audit, we ask ourselves whether internal governance and control is working to ensure compliance with the Government Agencies Ordinance and the fulfilment of the University's goals. Do we have an effective organisation for achieving the objectives of the Ordinance and the University? In this way, one can say that Internal Audit contributes to the ability to achieve the University's goals."

Among the things Internal Audit looks at when performing an audit is whether there is a regulatory framework in place, if it is being complied with, and whether it is kept up to date and meets statutory requirements.

"In terms of internal governance and

control we prefer to focus on controls that help the organisation to develop internal governance in order to make the best use of resources to achieve the goals. Of course, sometimes we may need to point out that something is not acceptable or functioning adequately." **But surely you can't be experts in every field?**

"Although our team consists of four people with broad experience, we are of course not expert in every field; rather, I would say that our strength lies in assessing internal governance and controls in relation to international standards and advising accordingly."

How do you select what to audit?

"That is decided by the University Board based on our annual risk analysis."

In the risk analysis, auditors compile potential risks that they have identified as worthy of further investigation based on business intelligence, the University's own risk assessments, previous audits, etc.

"We assess identified risks based on probability and likely consequences. We try to find significant risks, given the need to prioritise among the risks we see. Might this happen and, if so, what happens then? How will it impact on the University's ability to operate successfully? Is there a risk that the University's reputation will be harmed? Might the University suffer financial losses due to liability or corruption? Is there a risk of some form of irregularity?"

Anders Berndt

Change project based on goals and strategies

As reported in the previous issue of Universen, in December 2019 the University Board adopted new goals and strategies for the University. The plan is for the University's various departments and divisions to review these goals and strategies and work on those of particular importance to their own operations. One example of a far-reaching change project initiated under the University's previous goals and strategies is the Faculty of Theology's Project 2020.

Fewer third-cycle subjects, organisational changes to enhance subject competence, new study programmes, strengthened multidisciplinary research centres and revised rules of delegation – these are the most important elements of Project 2020. This change project was based on the goals and strategies adopted by the Faculty of Theology in December 2016. To ensure that work on goals and strategies was fully supported, the entire faculty was invited to attend a two-day conference to hammer out the basic elements.

“We then prepared the overall goals, including making changes to first and second-cycle courses and study pro-

grammes and reducing the number of third-cycle subjects to between four and six,” says Mattias Martinson, Dean of the Faculty of Theology.

“**THE MOST THORNY ISSUE** has been changing third-cycle subjects. We have therefore worked with a model in which we decide which third-cycle subjects should have combined higher seminars during the year and then evaluate the results. Evaluation has shown that some ideas have not worked in practice and we have then made changes for future years.”

In total, this process has been repeated three times for higher seminars before finalising the changes. General syllabuses can now be prepared for new, combined third-cycle subjects.

“At the moment our plan is to establish seven third-cycle subjects during 2020, organised in six subject committees.”

A WORKING GROUP HAS prepared new study programmes and new structures for main fields of study.

“While we previously had four main fields of study in religious studies, we now have one: religious studies. We are now also making changes to the Bachelor's programmes; in the autumn we will

be starting two Bachelor's programmes that together reflect the entire field of religious studies.

“In working on this reorganisation, we also realised that we needed to review the collegial governance model for the entire department. We have now built from the bottom up based on subject expertise.”

MATTIAS MARTINSON GOES INTO greater depth regarding why it is important to review the entire organisation.

“This was something that the Faculty Board and I felt strongly about. We needed to understand why we do things the way we do, to take a long, hard look at ourselves and where we stand as an academic institution. All staff have now been involved in shaping the Faculty of Theology over a number of years in a systematic process.”

Martinson emphasises that the change project was never intended to save money.

“The reorganisation has resulted in a certain amount of streamlining, including a reduction in the time allowed for certain administrative tasks; however, the motive has always been to renew the organisation and to assure quality, not to reduce the budget.”

Anders Berndt

HELLO THERE, BJÖRN NYSTRÖM

of the University Administration's Division for Internationalisation. You are the project manager for SkillMill, a project within Erasmus+ to develop an app for students studying overseas.

App for exchange students

PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT



1 What is the purpose of the project?

“When a student spends a year on their own abroad, they often return more resilient, independent and respon-

sive. Conducting a field study in Chile can hone many qualities that are highly valued in working life, even if it's difficult to put your finger on what has actually happened. Studies do indeed demonstrate that, in terms of qualifications, personal development can be equally as important as good grades for those who study abroad – as long as you can put that development into words. In other words, studying abroad provides intensive training in soft skills – something that, according to LinkedIn, all employers want but none of them know how to find. This is where we want to make a contribution.”

2 Who is working on the app?

“We bring together career guidance and exchange studies experts, psychologists and game designers from Uppsala University and the universities of Helsinki, Stavanger and Tartu. The results will be a new guidance model and an innovative app.”

3 Who should be using it?

“The intention is that all of the thousands of incoming and outgoing exchange students in the EU, and ideally worldwide, will have free access to the app.”

4 So, what is it good for?

“Above all, the SkillMill app wants to teach users three things: firstly, to recognise and identify skills-training aspects in overseas experiences; secondly, to understand and reflect on which skills they are training during various experiences; and thirdly, how to communicate their development in narratives that appeal to future employers.”

5 When will it be ready for testing and release and where will people be able to find it?

“We are aiming to have a finished product by autumn 2022. The SkillMill app will be available from the App Store and Google Play.”

Birgitta Sinder Wilén



Mattias Martinson, Dean of the Faculty of Theology, discusses a multi-year change project that is nearing completion.

PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT

Global speech therapists eschew air travel

Internationalisation in combination with ensuring a good environment and sustainable development? The equation isn't always simple for our courses and study programmes; at the Speech and Language Pathology Programme, the watchword is internationalisation at home.

“WHILE THE SPEECH AND Language Pathology Programme isn't the first to internationalise at home, we are unique in actively rejecting goals for student mobility across national borders. Naturally, we are well aware of the risks involved in sacrificing what many might deem to be ‘the fun part’; however, this is vastly outweighed by the risk in waiting for someone else to take environmental responsibility somewhere down the line. Change is required here and now and, given the current corona crisis, our timing feels spot on,” says Nadina Laurent, programme coordinator for Speech and Language Pathology.

UPPSALA UNIVERSITY PURSUES THE stated goal of global student recruitment and exchange studies. The Swedish Higher Education Act (SFS 1992:1434) also states that higher education institutions should promote understanding of other countries and of international circumstances. All well and good – until one considers that Chapter 1, Section 5 of the Act also requires institutions to promote sustainable development to assure for present and future generations a sound and healthy environment, economic and social welfare, and justice.

“We have been involved in a long-running discussion regarding the contradictory expectations of promoting international exchange programmes and environmental sustainability. This equation simply does not allow for mobility and the consequences of this are addressed in the action plan we have now prepared. Along the way, it has become apparent that this has been a fairly undramatic step. In fact, the most tangible effect has been that we now offer all students entirely the same opportunities regardless of socioeconomic status, meaning that the initiative is also playing its part in our equal opportunities work,” says Nadina Laurent.

THE ACTION PLAN, WHICH runs for three years, declares that internationalisation requires neither enormous resources nor long-distance travel; rather, it is a creative attitude that determines altitude. The points of the plan already implemented include the new module Speech Therapy Without Borders under the direction of



The Speech and Language Pathology Programme is working towards internationalisation without travel, explains study programme coordinator Nadina Laurent.

British speech therapist Sheila Robson, who also recruits study buddies and international experts for various courses. Next on the agenda is the translation of the course Neurolinguistics into English in order to attract international students already studying medicine, psychology or languages in Uppsala.

“We have had a few teething problems during the first year but overall everything is going well and we were nominated for the Prize for Internationalisation of Teaching and Learning at the Swedish Medical Faculties. We are now

entering phase two armed with important lessons that can help us to achieve even better results; for example, we intend to recruit international experts to supervise degree projects via Zoom, which may well lead to exciting spin-offs such as research exchanges. We will also be writing a travel policy for staff and students, as well as fine-tuning our second annual international scientific conference, which is organised by our graduating class.”

Magnus Alsne



PHOTO: MATTON

Does flying benefit a researcher's career?

Pressure is mounting on higher education institutions to reduce air travel in order to minimise greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, research is an endeavour without borders facing increasing demands for internationalisation. But just how necessary is air travel to research?

In order to study the effects of air travel on academic careers and productivity, researchers at the University of British Columbia in Canada have examined the links between air travel, productivity and career advancement for 700 researchers. Their findings have been published in the article “Academic air travel has a limited influence on professional success”.

Among other things, the researchers studied the relationship between air travel emissions and publicly available bibliometric measurements. They found no link between air travel emissions and academic productivity; however, they did find a link between air travel emissions and salary, even when allowing for seniority.

Might there be other explanations?

“Academics are probably no different from anyone else,” says Erik Rautalinko, senior lecturer at the Department of Psychology. “One incentive for travelling to scientific conferences may be to see a bit of the world. If you pay for a few nights yourself, you can have a cheap holiday.”

Erik Rautalinko also mentions the tragedy of the commons, a situation in which we act individually in our own interests, thus depleting common shared resources.

“The personality type social dominance orientation is overrepresented among those who are prepared to use common resources that are in danger of exhaustion. They either consider that they have the right to use a resource due to their high position in the hierarchy, or that they have the right to use it in order to climb higher in the hierarchy.”

Anders Berndt

➤ The research study “Academic air travel has a limited influence on professional success” is available via www.sciencedirect.com.



Zoom meetings are the new reality. In the room, Pelle Lindé, strategist at the University Administration's University IT Services, and on screen, Anja Sandström, deputy head of the Department of Medicinal Chemistry.

PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT

A new way of meeting

Over the next eight hours, we will participate in over 3,000 digital meetings. Students in the Master of Science Programme in Pharmacy will conduct experiments online. Perched in front of laptops around the city, researchers will discuss what perspectives Camus' The Plague can offer on current challenges. Welcome to a perfectly abnormal day at Uppsala University.

On 18 March, Sweden's higher education institutions switched to distance teaching in the interests of slowing the spread of Covid-19. Four weeks later, we find Anja Sandström, deputy head of the Department of Medicinal Chemistry, in an almost abandoned Uppsala Biomedical Centre where she is drafting new methods for transferring practical course elements to digital environments.

"We are working closely within the faculty and relatively speaking we have taken the step online in our stride. Students participate in those laboratory sessions that can't wait via Zoom. We are postponing critical elements that require physical attendance in the lab until a later date. Should the restrictions prove to be prolonged, it would be desirable to conduct laboratory sessions in smaller, socially distanced groups; however, we are not there yet."

One significantly greater challenge is the creation of digital examinations.

Without invigilators, course literature may be approved as an aid – something that requires more reflective questions. While in the latter stages of study programmes the change may be less noticeable, the focus on detailed knowledge in the early semesters demands creative solutions.

"Examinations must follow the course syllabus and have legal certainty. Those elements that need to be held in an examination hall can wait. Where e-exams are an alternative, among other things we have made our students answer randomly selected questions to prevent unauthorised collaboration and, so far, it seems to have worked well."

ANJA SANDSTRÖM IS NOT alone in benefiting from the Zoom digital meeting tool. Over a four-week period this spring, the number of registered users at Uppsala University increased from 2,600 to 17,992. Between us, we participate in over 3,000 Zoom meetings per working day – and we like it.

"We have never experienced such an

■ **Literature discussions continue and are open to all staff at Uppsala University. For further information and to register, please contact julie.hansen@moderna.uu.se. For further reading, see the article on page 15.**

influx to an e-tool as we have with Zoom and virtually everyone has been positive. We have invested a great deal of time in providing information and online training courses and Support is receiving few questions. Hopefully, our next step will be to develop the digital meeting culture by offering support on creating inclusive online discussions," says Pelle Lindé, strategist at University IT Services, a division of the University Administration.

AT THE DEPARTMENT OF Modern Languages, inclusive meetings are already very much a reality. In early April, invitations were issued to a literature discussion on the theme of Isolation and Inner Strength, a development on last year's successful Reading Parties, taking the step from the English Park Campus to the internet. Interest was high and hosts Torsten Pettersson and Julie Hansen were able to welcome participants from eight different faculties.

"Literature offers new perspectives on our experiences; in the same way, our experiences provide new perspectives on literary classics. In our case, the current situation provides the opportunity to gather colleagues from various disciplines to discuss something that affects us all. Meeting online resulted in a fascinating discussion that raised many new ideas on both texts and pandemics. We have just booked two more discus-



Julie Hansen, associate professor of Slavic languages

PHOTO: DAVID NAYLOR

sions and registrations are flooding in," says Julie Hansen, associate professor of Slavic languages.

BEYOND THE WALLS OF the University, news feeds continue to focus on the virus and the future that may await us. Reports from Germany raise the spectre of domestic football played in front of empty stands for up to 18 months. Translated to Zoom statistics, this timeframe implies that Uppsala University staff and students can look forward to 1.2 million online meetings before, hopefully, we are able to return to normality.

"This period will undoubtedly shape how we look at meetings," says Pelle Lindé. "Many people are already observing how much time they are saving by meeting online instead of travelling between campuses. Not to mention the environmental benefits of cancelled international travel. The possibilities of technology overcome most objections and, right now, we are learning very valuable lessons to take with us into the future."

Magnus Alsne

Attending a course on infection risks

On a morning in the midst of the pandemic, a course on infection risks for laboratory staff is underway at Uppsala Biomedical Centre (BMC). The course participants come from a company that is about to begin testing for Covid-19.

The company A23 Lab, which has facilities at BMC, normally performs tests for possible prostate cancer; however, the company is now repurposing part of its organisation in order to test for coronavirus. Prior to this transition, A23 Lab's staff have undergone the University's internal infection risk training.

"When working with large numbers of tests, it is almost inevitable that something will go wrong at some point," says Uppsala University's biosafety coordinator and course coordinator Henrik Gradstedt. "It is therefore important to practice managing the situations that may arise."

TOVE HOFFMAN, LABORATORY MANAGER at the Zoonosis Science Center (ZSC) at the Department of Medical Biochemistry and Microbiology, is also the course director. ZSC is one of the laboratories at BMC and has the second highest safety classification. The research conducted at ZSC deals with diseases transmitted from animals to humans, which are known as zoonoses. The current coronavirus pandemic is suspected to be just such a zoonosis.

"When it comes to this type of course, my goal is to ensure that those taking part get the hang of thinking ahead. All situations are different but by practising and going through various possible issues in advance, you will be far better prepared," says Tove Hoffman.

Tove Hoffman points out that most people working with infectious agents



Course participants will practice using a pipette in various ways in order to learn how to minimise any spillage. The simulated infectious agent shines brightly in ultraviolet light and the exercise is therefore conducted under UV lights.



Course participants simulate a spill in the laminar flow cabinet with the aid of red dye. They practise disinfecting the spill and safely removing gloves and arm guards before removing their arms from the laminar flow cabinet and standing up.

PHOTO: ANDERS BERNDT



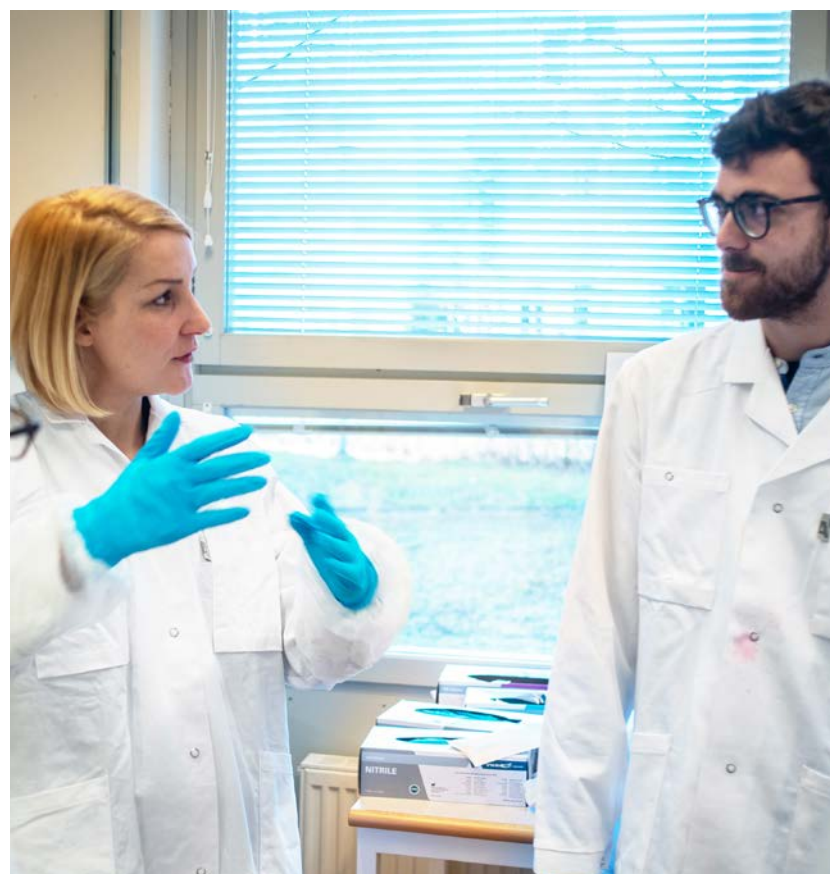
The laminar flow cabinet in which the course participants work is equipped with an extractor fan. This means that any airborne particles formed during handling or in the event of an accident are sucked into the cabinet and caught in the filter.

in a laboratory would find a major spill a stressful experience.

"This is why it is good to have at least two people [working in the lab] so that the person working in the laminar flow cabinet has help to work calmly and methodically to clean themselves and then get away from the workbench in the event of an accident," explains Tove Hoffman.

THE MAJORITY OF THOSE who are going to work with infectious agents at Uppsala University undergo this particular one-day course, which is held once a month with support from ZSC and the Centre for In Vivo at Uppsala University.

Anders Berndt



Tove Hoffman, laboratory manager at the Department of Medical Biochemistry and Microbiology's Zoonosis Science Center at Uppsala University, discusses laboratory risk management with course participants from the company A23 Lab.

As chief security officer Christina Boman explains, during the most hectic period of the pandemic a situation summary was prepared and the crisis response directors met on a daily basis.

PHOTO: DAVID NAYLOR



Behind the scenes of crisis management

The University's crisis management organisation has been working full out throughout the pandemic. Universen met with chief security officer Christina Boman over Zoom to find out more about crisis management.

"I had my first contact with colleagues from other higher education institutions on 23 January. We began following developments and informed crisis management."

DURING JANUARY, THIS WAS still a matter of a virus outbreak in Wuhan, China, rather than a pandemic.

"We began by identifying which students and staff we had in the area and who from the area was in Uppsala and might have friends or relatives who were affected. This is typical of how we react to events in another country."

Through the University's travel agency, the crisis management organisation identified a number of people with links to the University who were in that area of China and began assessing how they could be helped to get home.

"It is important to book business travel through the official travel agent as we are unable to help if we don't know where employees are."

The crisis response organisation was activated at the end of January.

"The crisis response directors quickly realised that this was the kind of event that required the University to quickly communicate what was happening and issue clear recommendations to students and staff. As the university management is not part of the crisis response directors group we also instituted daily meetings with the university management."

THE CRISIS RESPONSE DIRECTORS are heads of divisions within the University Administration. Within the divisions there are then crisis response teams with dedicated staff prepared to deal with crisis management. Christina Boman emphasises that the crisis response organisation does not make decisions.

"The role of the crisis response organisation is to act as an information hub: what has happened, facts, analyses. To create direction. The decisions that a given manager – whether that be a head of department or the vice-chancellor – takes under normal conditions remain within their remit even in a crisis. All information is reported to management on an ongoing basis so that they are in a position to make strategic decisions or alter the direction of crisis response."

The crisis response organisation

started to circulate daily situation reports to a broad group of recipients on 3 February. Daily summaries and crisis management meetings have now transitioned to weekly reports and meetings.

One communication measure instituted by the crisis response directors was an FAQ function in the Staff and Student Portals. A generic mailbox was also opened to which all questions were referred.

"We received over 600 emails but closed the mailbox as the nature of the crisis changed and questions became more focused on work environment issues that line managers needed to deal with. We now refer questions to FAQs and line managers."

CHRISTINA BOMAN EXPLAINS THAT crisis management took on an extra dimension when she had to take time off just as things were most hectic.

"I'm sure there are critical voices regarding my absence in the midst of the crisis; however, crisis management must be able to function even if I'm not around – there must be redundancy. How we deal with crises and design crisis response organisations is critically important. Crisis management should be a function and in this case my deputy took over the role."

Anders Berndt

Your home work environment

Although your employer's responsibility for your work environment extends to working from home, in the situation we currently find ourselves in this does require cooperation between staff and management.

Universen spoke to **ANNA MARIA NÄSLUND**, work environment engineer at the Buildings Division, and Karin Karlström, strategist at the Human Resources Division, to obtain advice on how the situation can be managed. Both Anna Maria and Karin stress that maintaining communication between staff and management is even more important when working from home. That said, we must have reasonable expectations regarding how much is possible and how communication can be maintained.



"As an employee, you also have a responsibility to raise any concerns you may have. In this situation we need to be both pragmatic and creative in how we deal with the work environment and this new social situation," says Karin Karlström.

ANNA MARIA NÄSLUND SUGGESTS placing a towel or cushion in the small of the back to provide lumbar support while sitting.

"Naturally, if you have an adjustable chair you should use that but, otherwise, perhaps you can place a cushion on the seat if it is too low in relation to the table. You can also sit further out on a standard chair so that you are in a position more like a saddle stool. It is important to vary your working position; try standing if you can, sit on the sofa, put your feet up. All variations are important in avoiding remaining static – you need to keep your blood circulation going. Take breaks, stand up every half hour and walk around, stretch and move your arms."

IF YOU WORK AT a laptop without an extra screen, it is important to try and avoid hunching over because the screen is too close to the keyboard. It is also important to support the lower arms, both in order to relax the neck and shoulders and to ensure that the screen is at eye level so that you avoid constantly looking downwards.

"If you don't have an extra screen perhaps you can rest the laptop on a pile of books and use an external keyboard," suggests Anna Maria Näslund.

Anders Berndt

➤ **Read a longer version and more about the work environment in the Staff Portal at mp.uu.se.**

The importance of a sense of humour

“A sense of humour is a tool that helps us to weather adversity,” says linguist Maria Ohlsson, “and it really is something we can’t get too much of during the current corona crisis.” So, how does one go about keeping that collegial humour alive when working from home?

Would you like to hear something amusing? A good laugh not only reduces the risk of stress, stroke and heart attack, it can also boost creativity and a sense of community; something we all benefit from, especially in the semi-quarantine enforced by Covid-19. On the other hand, we do like to joke about the things we all have in common and, given the fact that a virus is constantly foremost in all of our minds, perhaps it is not entirely appropriate. In certain quarters, jokes on the subject have already been decreed off limits, which raises the eternal question: can we really joke about absolutely anything?

“Personally, I don’t even see how it’s feasible to ban jokes on a given topic; firstly, when it comes to humour everything is grist for the mill and, secondly, like weeds, jokes will unfailingly spring up anyway. Not only that but humour is a tool that helps us to get through difficulties such as the coronavirus. That said, we do find ourselves in a situation that demands caution. You never know who may have just lost a loved one, so it is probably wise to confine jokes to the behaviour of the healthy rather than the disease itself,” says Maria Ohlsson, senior lecturer at the Department of Scandinavian Languages.

THIS ADVICE IS UNLIKELY to shock anyone, unless you happen to be Lenny Bruce or Roseanne Barr; the vast majority of us generally try to get a feel for new groups and situations before we unleash our inner comic. At best, jokes that land beyond the pale may be perceived as inappropriate drivel but, with a touch of bad luck, we also risk offending any number of people. The next – and hopefully not quite so timeless – question is therefore: how do we keep office humour alive when so many of us are working from home and are likely to continue doing so for some time to come?

“Being funny remotely is hardly an extraordinary feat given the amount of

technology surrounding us; for example, we might simply take a moment each day to send each other amusing items found online. Many workplaces have also introduced video coffee breaks, which are a nice alternative when we can’t meet around the water cooler. That said, even on Zoom the boss needs to demonstrate that laughter has its place, just like in the office. That doesn’t mean being a compulsive joker but rather creating

an inclusive climate in which employees can express their sense of humour,” says Maria Ohlsson.

SO, HOW MUCH FUN are we having in the current corona crisis? Well, we can at least amuse ourselves by looking at some statistics. Studies show that before the outbreak of the virus we laughed around five times per day per employee, a little more often for management. One might

call that a Pass with room for improvement; so, why not utilise our time in quarantine to develop a humour strategy? An open, secure and tolerant atmosphere is a good foundation; otherwise, there is no patented solution. If we play our cards right, the pot contains a better work environment, stronger sense of community and, in all likelihood, reduced sick leave. Good luck!

Magnus Alsne



According to Maria Ohlsson, senior lecturer at the Department of Scandinavian Languages, a good laugh increases creativity, enhances your mood and can even help you to weather adversity.

Studying children's experiences of the pandemic

PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT



■ A new study led by researchers from Uppsala University focuses on children and young people's experiences of the coronavirus

crisis. The intention is to obtain an image of how children between 4 and 18 years of age experience and think about events around them as a result of the pandemic.

"Although there is a great deal of talk about the coronavirus at both preschools and schools, no one has previously studied how children and young people themselves experience the events," says Anna Sarkadi, professor of social medicine at Uppsala University's Department of Public Health and Caring Sciences, who is leading the study.

Concerned about the economy

■ A survey prepared by researchers in economics, some of them from Uppsala University, found that the greatest concerns of Swedes regarding the pandemic are the impact on the country's economy and how the healthcare system will cope with the flood of patients. While concern for the country's economy tends to increase with age, concern regarding the health service being overwhelmed decreases with age, significantly so among the over 70s. Concern over the virus's impact on personal finances also appears to diminish with age.

Virus propagation model

PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT



■ Researchers at Uppsala University are working on a model of how the new coronavirus is likely to spread in Sweden in order to provide

policy-makers with a better basis for decisions and to help the public understand the need to maintain social distancing. The model is intended to show the effects of various levels of measures on the spread of infection.

"The results can provide guidance in understanding how various measures are likely to affect infection and demands on healthcare. They may also illustrate for the public the importance of following social distancing recommendations," says Tove Fall, professor of molecular epidemiology and the researcher behind the model.

Electric flight set to reach new heights

The electric car is well-established on the nation's roads. The electric aircraft is now poised to take over the skies.

"The development of electric aircraft is making rapid progress; all of the major industry stakeholders are involved and it is entirely possible that within a decade the majority of domestic air travel will be by electric plane. It is primarily a matter of having the courage to invest," says Mauritz Andersson, researcher at the Department of Electrical Engineering's Division of Electricity.

A great deal of water has passed under the bridge since the day in 1973 when a pilot flew for 14 minutes without fossil fuel. Drones are now a well-integrated part of the skies and the self-piloted all-electric, tilt-wing vehicle demonstrator Airbus Vahana recently completed its final test flight. Nonetheless, the technology still arouses a certain amount of distrust.

"THERE WILL ALWAYS BE sceptics but the arguments we are confronted with are generally rooted in ignorance. My assessment is that we are currently passing through the same phase of development as electric cars ten years ago."

Sweden is at the cutting edge of this field. We have the expertise, political will and an infrastructural need, given that electric aircraft can save traffic

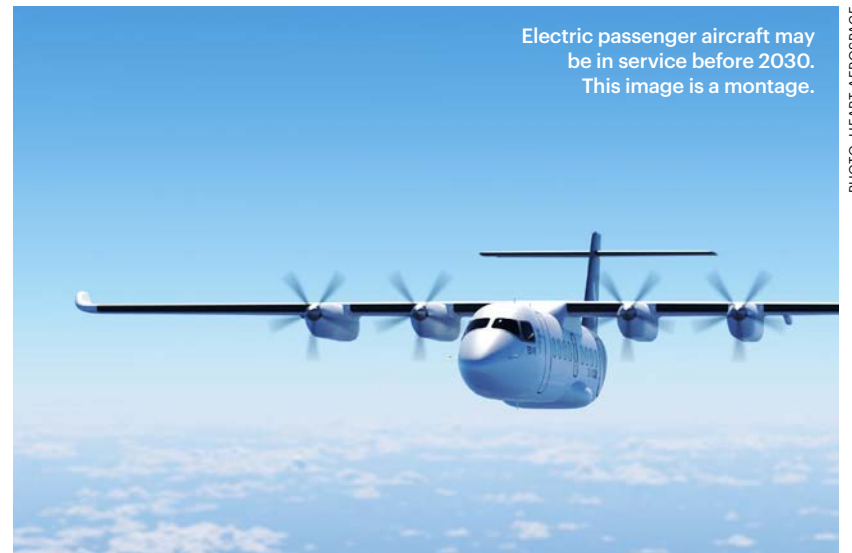


PHOTO: HEART AEROSPACE

routes to many places around the country. Launched in 2018, the project Electric Air Transport In Sweden (ELISE) gathers researchers and private and public-sector stakeholders in an effort to accelerate the introduction of electric passenger aircraft.

"The development of electric air traffic involves more than simply building electric aircraft. Uppsala is home to much of the necessary cutting-edge expertise and our University is currently the academic hub of ELISE, with all of the prerequisites for driving development."

In Norway, politicians have set a target of 2040 for electrifying all domestic flights. The hope is that the Swedish Government will formulate an equivalent strategic objective.

"Heart Aerospace, the industrial partner in ELISE, is currently developing new models for as many as 19 passengers. If we can maintain this forward momentum, it is possible that the University's researchers will be taking electric flights to Campus Gotland this decade," says Mauritz Andersson.

Magnus Alsne

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR ULF LANDEGREN,

professor of molecular medicine

Evaluating coronavirus immunity

1 Your research group is developing a method for large-scale analysis of coronavirus immunity. What's going on in the laboratory?

"We are developing a variation on one of our established tools for identifying target proteins. The project is one of several life-science initiatives being coordinated by SciLifeLab to intensify the fight against the coronavirus."

2 What benefits will your work have for healthcare?

"We are hoping to do our bit by creating a method for large-scale analysis of who is carrying antibodies and is therefore immune to the virus. Should we succeed with our specific approach, it may also have implications for evaluating potential vaccines."

3 When will you be able to present a result?

"Hopefully we will begin

testing patients by the turn of the year. That said, we are working under anything but ideal conditions. I myself am working from home, participating in planning via digital meetings. When the project reaches the laboratory, we will need a concrete timetable for who is on site and when, so that we can accelerate the process while maintaining social distancing."

4 Do you see a risk that the ongoing crisis will drive researchers to rush their work?

"Right now there is an enormous demand for available data and clearly some publications are taking place without undergoing the usual scientific scrutiny. That said, we are in an extreme situation in which the shortest possible route from call to result is likely to benefit society. Naturally, this carries the risk that many people will be simultaneously inventing the same wheel, which



PHOTO: DAVID NAYLOR

Ulf Landegren, professor of molecular medicine

makes SciLifeLab's coordinating role crucial to the work we are conducting in Sweden."

5 Does this imply that the scientific community is transitioning from a competitive approach to teamwork?

"I hope that in the long term this situation contributes to increased understanding among researchers regarding our mission to both share and explain the results of our work."

Magnus Alsne

FINALLY

■ Four elite athletes studying with us have received scholarships from Uppsala University: **Carolina Wikström**, enrolled in the Medicine Programme, **Ingrid Wixner**, enrolled in the Physiotherapy Programme, **Oskar Lundqvist**, enrolled in the Medicine Programme, and **Jerker Ortman**, enrolled in the Master's Programme in Electrical Engineering.

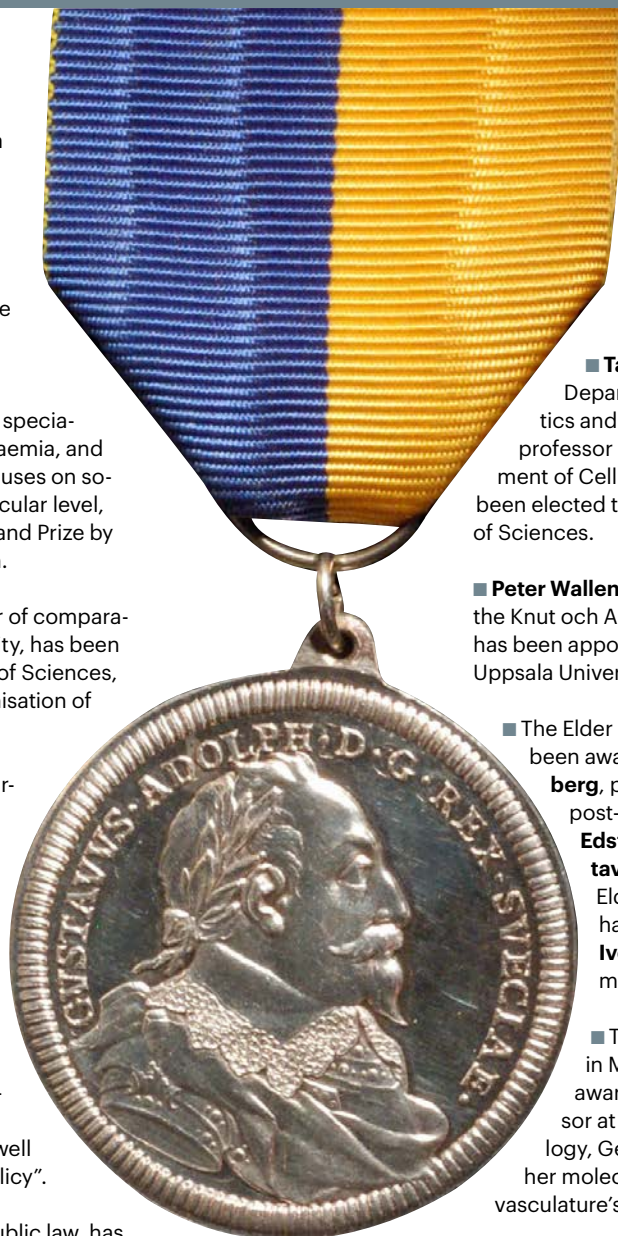
■ **Jessica Nordlund**, a researcher specialising in acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, and **Haining Tian**, whose research focuses on solar energy conversion at the molecular level, have been awarded this year's Grand Prize by the Göran Gustafsson Foundation.

■ **Kerstin Lindblad-Toh**, professor of comparative genomics at Uppsala University, has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences, the United States' foremost organisation of leading researchers.

■ Four new members of the University Board: Chair **Anne Ramberg**, lawyer, **Svante Pääbo**, professor, **Johan Söderström**, managing director and **Linus Tunström**, theatre director.

■ **Peter J. Katzenstein** of Cornell University in the United States has been awarded the Johan Skytte Prize in Political Science for "furthering the understanding of how history, culture, and norms shape economies, as well as national and global security policy".

■ **Anna-Sara Lind**, professor of public law, has been appointed to the European Commission on Racism and Intolerance.



■ The Swedish Cancer Society has awarded grants for six new posts for researchers in various stages of their careers: **Marika Nestor**, **Fredrik Swartling**, **Femke Heindryckx**, **Joakim Crona**, **Anzhelika Vorobyeva** and **Milena Doroszko**.

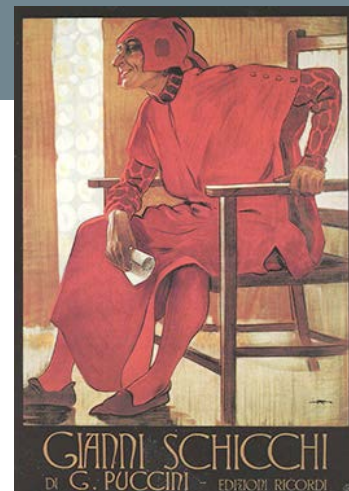
■ **Taija Mäkinen**, professor at the Department of Immunology, Genetics and Pathology, and **Staffan Svärd**, professor of microbiology at the Department of Cell and Molecular Biology, have been elected to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

■ **Peter Wallenberg**, chair of the board of the Knut och Alice Wallenberg Foundation, has been appointed as an honorary fellow of Uppsala University.

■ The Elder Gustaf Adolf Gold Medal has been awarded to: **Agneta Skoog Svanberg**, professor, **Elisabet Nihlfors**, post-retirement professor, **Kristina Edström**, professor, **Sverker Gustavsson**, professor emeritus. The Elder Gustaf Adolf Silver Medal has been awarded to **Therése Ivey Gardell**, deputy chief administrative officer.

■ The Göran Gustafsson Prize in Molecular Biology has been awarded to **Taija Mäkinen**, professor at the Department of Immunology, Genetics and Pathology "for her molecular studies of the lymphatic vasculature's growth and function".

The Elder Gustaf Adolf Medal is also known as the Hedlinger Medal, after its engraver Johann Carl Hedlinger.



Gianni Schicchi is a one-act comic opera that takes place in Buoso Donati's bed chamber in Florence in 1299.

Sing opera with a symphony orchestra

The Royal Academic Orchestra is planning a production of the opera Gianni Schicchi in December 2020. Gianni Schicchi was composed by Giacomo Puccini for fifteen soloists and the intention is to cast the roles with a mix of professional and amateur singers.

The orchestra is therefore looking for staff, students and alumni who might be interested in appearing in the production.

If you are interested you will need to act quickly, as the deadline for submitting applications via the orchestra's website is 1 June.

➤ For further information and to submit an application: www.akademiskakapellet.uu.se/concerts-events/

An attractive employer

Uppsala University is ranked seventh among Sweden's 150 largest companies and organisations as an attractive employer and second among public authorities, according to annual rankings from Randstad based on the survey Employer Brand Research, which interviewed almost 4,800 Swedes. The ranking is topped by furniture giant IKEA.

Randstad Employer Brand Research is an annual study of what the Swedish people consider most important when choosing an employer. Almost 4,800 Swedes have

been interviewed about their views on Sweden's largest companies. The list of Sweden's most attractive employers is topped by IKEA, followed by Volvo Cars and Volvo Group.

The inclusion of public authorities is new for this year, with the Swedish Police taking first place followed by Uppsala University and the Swedish Armed Forces. Uppsala University came top in the education sector, where the most important criteria were using the latest technology, has a good reputation and provides interesting duties.

Survivor's pensions

Every year, Uppsala University disburses financial support to surviving partners and dependents of deceased staff of the University through a number of foundations. The member of staff must have been employed at Uppsala University at the time of retirement or death. The term survivor refers to the widow, widower, surviving cohabiting or registered partner, or children below the age of 18. It is also possible for the University's own pensioners to apply for pension enhancement.

The University also disburses funeral aid to survivors of

members of staff to the sum of SEK 30,000.

Pension enhancement guarantees the applicant a gross income of four base price amounts, which for 2020 amounts to SEK 189,200.

For further information and application forms, please email personaladm@uadm.uu.se or contact Susanna Schjöllin on 018-471 77 64 or Camilla Sävmarker on 018-471 63 85.

Applications must be received by the HR Division no later than Friday 25 September 2020.



Quarter-hour discussion on innovation

What is innovation? Who is an innovator? What does an innovation office do? Join in with UU Innovation's quarter-hour discussion, which will take place via Zoom twice weekly during June. Every Tuesday and Thursday between 8.30 and 8.45, Hillevi Englund and Johan Edman of UU Innovation will be discussing issues related to collaboration, the utilisation of research and the image of innovation and innovators.

➤ www.mp.uu.se

“We have realised that virtual meetings are a model that has probably come to stay and will remain more common than previously. More people can participate and the meetings can be kept short and efficient.”

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BLOG, 18 APRIL 2020.



Ingrid Berg, project coordinator at the Centre for Integrated Research on Culture and Society.

Do you have any useful holiday tips if we are unable to travel as normal during the summer?

Right now we have no idea whether we will be able to travel domestically or abroad during our summer holidays. So, what should we do if the recommendation remains to stay within the local area? Universen asked a number of staff members for their views on the summer holidays and possible limitations; surely, we can still find meaningful ways to spend our time?



Can we understand a pandemic?

The media is full of articles and reports on the pandemic but is news reporting really capable of creating a deeper understanding of events during a major social upheaval?

This was the question posed by staff at the Centre for Integrated Research on Culture and Society (CIRCUS).

“This is why we organised a reading list to which researchers could add suggestions for books and articles that might act as tools of thought for understanding pandemics, public health crises and major social problems and how they impact on communities and on people socially, culturally and psychologically,” explains Ingrid Berg, project coordinator at CIRCUS.

INGRID BERG DISCUSSES THREE examples from the reading list. The anthology *Humanimal: Oss djur emellan i medicin och samhälle förr och nu* (*Humanimal: just between us animals in medicine and society, then and now*) includes a contribution from Alexandra Waluszewski, professor of economic history.

“In order to understand pandemics we also need to understand the relationship between humans and animals in different societies and at different times. In this anthology, researchers provide perspectives on both human and animal medicine that deepen our knowledge of epidemics, vaccination, diet and ill health.”

MARTIN HOLMBERG, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR of infectious diseases at the Department of Medical Sciences, is the author of the book *Pandemier och epidemier: ett tvärvetenskapligt perspektiv* (*Pandemics and epidemics: an interdisciplinary perspective*).

“In his book, Martin Holmberg argues that we require an interdisciplinary perspective if we are to understand the complexity of dealing with public health crises.”

FRANK M. SNOWDEN, YALE University, is the author of *Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present*.

By studying how different societies have dealt with epidemics, we can illuminate various social and cultural phenomena.”

Anders Berndt

www.humsam.uu.se/circus



Marie Engegard, the University's travel coordinator, Campus Gotland

“Though someone who usually travels, I will be staying here and enjoying the island. I intend to give my casting rod a rest and learn fly fishing – I'm hoping to catch the occasional trout that I can cook over an open fire. I will either camp out in a tent or in the car, or just sleep beneath the stars, unless I'm staying with friends.”

PHOTO: PRIVATE



Pernilla Erikshaag, administrative coordinator at the Division for Central Services and Administration

“If we are allowed to travel within Sweden, we intend to visit castles and manor houses ranging south from Uppsala, following a guide purchased in the book sales. We may also spend some time in our summer cabin in Jämtland; however, if we have to stay home in Uppsala, we can enjoy the summer in our garden. For me, being able to go out in the garden to eat breakfast or barbecue is a holiday in itself.”

PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT



Annemarie Ljungberg, facilities manager at the Rudbeck Laboratory

“This summer I will be working for the most part; we have planned an extended winter holiday in our apartment in Portugal when, hopefully, the corona situation will have calmed down. But I will be spending a week in a cabin on Utö with my husband and dog during the summer or, if that's not possible, we will drive to some less populated location.”

PHOTO: MIKAEL WALLERSTEDT



Jonathan Schalk, project manager at Unit for International Mobility

“I have the good fortune to have a balcony that enjoys evening sunshine, so I intend to spend a good deal of time on that. I will also be playing the guitar, playing games, writing songs, baking bread, exercising, listening to music, watching films and eating good food with my partner. I'm sure that I'll read a book or two as well.”

PHOTO: PRIVATE



Charlotte Sundström, administrative coordinator at the Division for Quality Enhancement

“I very much enjoy going on excursions. A bicycle ride or walk around Uppsala and the surrounding area is pleasant, but don't forget the packed lunch! As I have a greenhouse and enjoy growing things I will be occupying myself with that. Naturally, I'm looking forward to meeting friends and family – perhaps they can join us on an excursion or we might arrange an outdoor summer party and hope for fine weather. That said, I also want to sit on my patio reading a book, eating home-baked cake and drinking a cup of coffee.”

PHOTO: PRIVATE

Birgitta Sinder Wilén

PROFILE

/ERIK EJDEPALM



Erik Ejdepalm has worked as a technician for Uppsala University in Antarctica.

PHOTO: ERIK EJDEPALM

Antarctic technician

- Last book read: *Catch 22* by Joseph Heller
- Favourite music: Mostly electronic these days
- Preferred way to spend a day off: Exercising, tinkering in the workshop at home, renovating the house
- Holiday tips now you can't travel: Take a walk in the forest and listen to nature or an audiobook.

Dream summer job

Last year, Uppsala University placed a job advertisement for a technician on a three-month contract at IceCube, the South Pole neutrino observatory. Among the qualifications sought were experience of working at altitude in low temperatures and general mechanical handiness. Erik Ejdepalm saw the ad, applied and got the job – something he certainly doesn't regret.

"I was sitting around waiting for a delayed train when I stumbled across the advertisement by chance. I couldn't get it out of my head and a couple of days later I submitted my application. The most appealing thing was probably the idea of solving problems with limited resources in an extreme environment. I didn't really hold out any hope of getting the job but apparently my technical knowledge and mechanical interest weighed heavily in my favour," says Erik Ejdepalm, who has a degree in machine design from KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm.

IceCube is the world's largest neutrino detector, consisting of 5,160 digital optical modules installed

in a cubic-kilometre of ice at an altitude of approximately 3,000 metres in one of the world's driest areas. Although the facility is staffed all year round, operations are conducted during the Antarctic summer between early November and late January, which is when Erik was there. His task was to inspect the ice borehole system, something that will continue for three years until new boreholes are drilled in 2023. "I travelled to the United States in mid-August and met the others I was going to be working with, all of whom were Americans apart from one Swede. Most of them already knew one another from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Physical Sciences Lab and

it didn't take me long to feel part of the group. Among other things we went through a battery of medical tests – you need to pass the medical before you can go and it reduces the risk of people falling ill while they are down there. Then, in November, we flew via Christchurch in New Zealand to McMurdo on the Antarctic coast, from where we travelled to the South Pole itself."

THE SUMMER TEMPERATURE ON the coast is around -10°C but once up at the South Pole it is not unusual to find temperatures of -50°C once wind chill is factored in. The sun is very strong so both sunscreen and sunglasses with high UV protection are a must. "Yes, it was terribly cold but, actually, you get used to it surprisingly quickly and the United States Antarctic Program had equipped us with excellent outerwear. After a few days everyone looked like a panda, with brown faces and white rings around the eyes. I really enjoy working and problem-solving in the field and being aware of the risks; for example, not breaking something that it will take months to get a spare part for."

THE CREW WORKED NINE hours a day, six days a week. Erik and his colleagues spent the evenings in the gym or sauna, playing pool, watching films, doing yoga or other activities. Initially there were around 60 people at the facility, rising to approximately 150 as researchers and others arrived from around the world. "It's an incredible experience to be placed in entirely new surroundings in which you have no choice but to stay. At first I had some problems sleeping due to the thin air, but that passed. Of course, I was a little homesick over Christmas but everything was so well organised, we really didn't want for anything during those three months. I'd love to go back."

Birgitta Sinder Wilén