



# EVERYDAY DILEMMAS

Working with basic values in practice  
at Umeå University



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

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## FOREWORD

In the last two years, employees at the University have been involved in discussions regarding the common basic values for central government employees as well as our own academic core values. All departments and offices have had the opportunity to bring up dilemmas that can arise when different interests, principles and values collide. The result is this book, in which you can read more about the common basic values for central government employees and how they are put into practice at Umeå University.

To keep the basic values alive and useful to everyone at the University, we have to work together to give them meaning. Later in this book, you will be given examples of different situations that challenge the basic values and where there is no ready template for how to act. By discussing these everyday dilemmas during workplace meetings and planning days, we can develop our ability to deal with difficult situations and to build a good public service ethos culture that also reflects our academic core values. This is a great help when difficult situations arise in reality. On the intranet Aurora, you can find more tips on how to conduct these discussions.

### **So why is it important for us to work with these issues?**

One aspect relates to compliance. We are a government agency subject to the Higher Education Act, the Higher Education Ordinance and other university-specific laws and regulations, but we must also adhere to the principles of the common basic values for government employees. Our activities are funded by the tax payers which means that we work for the citizens of Sweden. The actions of the university's employees and students affect tax payer's trust in our undertakings.

Another aspect relates to our role in society. The University can and must be involved in promoting democratic values across society and must be an active force against unscientific trends and knowledge resistance by communicating a critical and analytical approach.

A third aspect relates to academic culture, ethics and morals. The basic values are manifested in the culture that we ourselves create, to ensure that our research complies with good academic practice and to promote a good working environment and equal opportunities. The basic values are at the very foundation of the university's activities.

Discussions of the basic values will never be finished, but need to be constantly kept alive. It is my hope that this book will inspire discussion for many years to come.



Hans Adolfsson, Vice-Chancellor  
Umeå, 20 March 2019



# Umeå University's common basic values

## WHAT ARE BASIC VALUES?

Basic values are a collection of norms or values that together form a common ethical platform for the daily work within an organisation. The aim of such basic values is to create a common approach for the employees and to provide guidance in their treatment of each other and of people outside the organisation.

The Swedish higher education institutes are administrative government agencies that must exercise public authority in accordance with laws and regulations. What separates the universities from other government agencies is our scholarly activities, which are characterised by academic values.

## THE COMMON BASIC VALUES FOR CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

The common basic values for central government employees were formulated in 2013. The values are shared by all government employees and are based on six legal principles:

### **1. Democracy**

We work for the citizens and we implement the decisions of the Riksdag and the Government.

### **2. Legality**

Everything we do must be supported by law, and we are familiar with and comply with the legislation applicable to our activities.

### **3. Objectivity**

We are objective and impartial and treat every case equally. We do not accept bribes.

### **4. Free formation of opinion**

Transparency and freedom of expression are pillars of democracy and everyone is entitled to insight into the operations of government activities. Employees are entitled to talk about what goes on at their government agency, with the exception of confidential matters.

### **5. Respect for all people's equal value, freedom and dignity**

We treat everyone equally and with respect.

### **6. Efficiency and service**

We provide citizens with correct and comprehensible information as quickly as possible. We work efficiently and conserve our resources.

## ACADEMIC VALUES

The academic values can be summarised in three points:

**1. Academic freedom**

Supported by international recommendation but with legislative support only in the freedom of research. Academic freedom can be interpreted as individual, but in practice it is collective. This freedom entails the right to freely conduct research within your field of expertise.

**2. Academic integrity**

Is at the core of academic freedom and means that the researcher must remain unbiased and not be controlled by financial or political interests.

**3. Academic quality**

Involves quality assurance of both research and education. Research quality is largely guaranteed by the peer-review system.

## HOW DOES THIS AFFECT YOU?

As a government employee, you are obligated in your daily work to adhere to the principles governing our activities, to show what is important, what the University stands for, and thus embody the basic values. The basic values should give employees guidance in making decisions and in everyday actions.

## WHAT DO THE COMMON BASIC VALUES FOR CENTRAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ENTAIL FOR US AT UMEÅ UNIVERSITY?

This section provides a description of how we can relate to the common basic values for central government employees here at Umeå University.<sup>1</sup> The quotations under each heading are taken from the publication *Common basic values for central government employees – a summary* from the Council on Basic Values.

### Democracy

*Democracy is the highest principle, in accordance with Chapter 1, Section 1, first paragraph of the Instrument of Government, which states that all public power in Sweden proceeds from the people.*

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<sup>1</sup> The description was produced by the project group for the basic values project and is based on the documentation contributed by employees from all faculties, the School of Education, the University Library and the University Administration. The basic values project was commissioned by the Vice-Chancellor for the period 2018–2019.

At Umeå University, this means that

- the University is characterised by accessibility, openness, transparency and clear information regarding our activities
- we help increase the public's knowledge base by providing high-quality education and disseminating research results
- internal democracy is exercised by employees and students participating in common, collaborative, preparatory and decision-making bodies and being aware of decisions made
- external representatives are provided opportunities to exercise influence in relevant preparatory and decision-making bodies at the University.

## **Legality**

*Legality, in accordance with Chapter 1, Section 1, third paragraph of the Instrument of Government, which states that public power is exercised under the law.*

At Umeå University, this means that

- employees read, have good knowledge of and comply with the laws, ordinances and other governing documents concerning the public sector, including the university sector. This also applies to local governing documents and decisions that are made at all organisational units of the University.
- employees are familiar with rights and obligations that are applicable to employees and students, both in relation to the employer and in conjunction with education and research
- the University has clear internal work, support and decision processes, which outlines the responsibility for interpreting laws and regulations and for establishing and managing internal regulations and guidelines.

## **Objectivity**

*Objectivity, in accordance with Chapter 1, Section 9 of the Instrument of Government, which states that courts of law, administrative authorities and others performing public administration functions should pay regard in their work to the equality of all before the law and should observe objectivity and impartiality.*

At Umeå University, this means that

- employees are professional in exercising their duties, i.e. objective, impartial and treating everyone equally
- the University provides objective information, guidance and advice to society and individual citizens
- personal opinions must not influence decision-making and we act in a way that does not damage trust in the University

- decisions and decision paths are not dependent on the individuals involved, and the University has procedures to prevent, detect and manage irregularities
- employees do not accept bribes, and we consider conflicts of interest and investigate secondary employment to ensure that employees are impartial
- all employees strive towards an impartial and objective approach in teaching, research and administration, as well as to the opinions of colleagues and students on the contents, quality and implementation of these activities.

### **Free formation of opinion**

*Free formation of opinion, in accordance with Chapter 1, Section 1, second paragraph of the Instrument of Government, which establishes that Swedish democracy is founded on the free formation of opinion.*

At Umeå University, this means that

- we encourage employees and students to participate in the public debate
- we value transparency and freedom of expression in education, research and collaboration
- we have a permissive climate and show respect for the opinions of others
- all employees and students are entitled to objectively and respectfully express their opinions on the teaching, research and administration of Umeå University, with the exception of confidential matters.

### **Respect for all people's equal value, freedom and dignity**

*Respect, in accordance with Chapter 1, Section 2, first paragraph of the Instrument of Government, which establishes that public power should be exercised with respect for the equal worth of all and the liberty and dignity of the individual.*

At Umeå University, this means that

- we have a zero-tolerance policy against all forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- we have a high accessibility in education, research and administration, and we work actively to promote equal opportunities and diversity
- we are open and inclusive in the meeting with each other and with students, clients and other interested parties.

## Efficiency and service

*As a final point, the central legislation stipulates in regard to the public budget and administration that efficiency and service are fundamental values for central government employees.*

At Umeå University, this means that

- we use our resources effectively in order to carry out our core activities of education and research
- we have clear processes, procedures and guidelines to ensure short turnaround times and high quality in all parts of Umeå University's work
- we have an efficient and appropriate administration and systems that optimise the conditions for the core activities
- students receive good service in accordance with applicable regulations for higher education
- research is conducted through efficient use of resources, and results are appropriately disseminated, for example through open access publication and collaboration with society
- we provide service by informing, guiding and advising those who contact us.



## Everyday dilemmas

As a government employee at Umeå University, you must comply with the laws, regulations and the basic values that govern our activities in your daily work. But what do you do when different principles conflict with each other? Do you choose legality or efficiency? How is objectivity balanced with free formation of opinion? What can and should you express in public as a government employee? We must all consider and solve this type of conflict in our daily work.

Through regular dialogues regarding the basic values based on the conflicts of interests that can arise in the daily work at the University, we can develop an ability to handle difficult situations and to build a good culture. This is of great help when dilemmas arise in real life.

The dilemma bank contains 47 different dilemmas to discuss during workplace meetings and planning days. Each dilemma comes with a number of questions to start from the discussion. At the back of the book there is a summary of all the dilemmas and the basic value principles they challenge. You can find more tips on how to use this book in your workplace on the intranet Aurora.<sup>2</sup> There is also a guide for managers or discussion leaders.

The material is based on examples of situations perceived as dilemmas by employees at departments and offices throughout the University. Any possible similarity to real people is unintentional.

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<sup>2</sup> Aurora web address: <https://www.aurora.umu.se/en/about-umea-university/vision-and-strategies/umea-universitys-common-basic-values/>



## RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT



### 1. Researcher and politically active

Beata is a senior lecturer who is actively involved in a current local political issue, although she is not an active member of a political party. She has recently been seen taking part in demonstrations and she has posted some critical comments of the issue on social media.

Beata's head of department, Christopher, lives next door to Kristina, who is a municipal politician in charge of this matter. When they have a neighbourly chat, Kristina asks whether he thinks it is appropriate for a university employee to take up a position in the way that Beata has done. Should she not rather devote herself to her research?

Christopher feels uncomfortable and calls Beata to a private meeting where he asks her to tone down her engagement in the issue.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How do you feel about teachers and researchers being politically active?
- Is the head of department correct in having opinions on employees' commitments outside of work?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 2. Children do best at home with their parents

Johan and Malin have conducted a research project and have drawn conclusions from the findings about how public health can be improved. They are now actively disseminating their recommendations in the media and to the general public. Their research indicates that children who grow up in a nuclear family and spend less than 20 hours at preschool per week run a lower risk of developing obesity when compared with children who grow up with divorced parents and spend more than 20 hours per week at preschool.

Johan and Malin therefore recommend that society should enable parents to stay home with their children through, for example, childcare allowance and increased child benefits. In July, they present their findings at Almedalen. The journalists in attendance react to their message and start asking questions about their background and political agendas. One of these journalists subsequently does some digging and discovers that both Johan and Malin are active members of a political party that actively pursues this issue. The journalist contacts the head of department and asks her position on the research results. The head of department becomes hesitant and attempts to stop the publication of the article.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How do you think the head of department should act?
- Do the researchers have an obligation to be open about their preconceptions?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



### 3. Researcher and activist

Anna is an activist in Greenpeace and sometimes takes part in various actions. At work she is the project manager of a major research project that concerns food production and self-sufficiency. Anna's research group has produced results that point to significant deficiencies in prevailing methods within the food industry. The researchers draw the conclusion that Sweden should entirely reformulate its food policy and they use the faculty communications officers to achieve wide dissemination of their findings.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How is the requirement of objectivity challenged when research is used politically?
- How do we manage the risk that research perceived as critical of society is considered to violate the objectivity principle?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



#### 4. An exciting business idea

Marko and Julia's research has led to an exciting business idea and now they want to apply for an innovation grant from Uminova. They are also considering applying for a patent on their idea and therefore do not want to publish their research results. When they raise the issue with the head of department, he is very hesitant and wonders whether it is in line with the University's rules regarding secondary employment. He also points out that, according to the Higher Education Act, the researchers are obliged to make their research results available to the public.

Marko and Julia feel they are getting mixed messages from the University. On the one hand, they are to commit to third stream activities and contribute to innovation and enterprise. On the other hand, there are restrictions concerning secondary employment and significant requirements of transparency.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How are individual researchers to relate to the conflict between engaging in collaboration and disseminating research information, and contributing to innovation and enterprise?
- What do you think of the actions of the head of department? Should he have acted differently?
- Can the desire to make money impact objectivity?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 5. Suspicions of research fraud

Benito is a doctoral student in the final phase of his thesis work. In recent months, he has had several indications that his supervisor has been involved in data tampering and perhaps even fabricating certain results. He now lies awake at night in anguish. Should he tell someone of his suspicions? But how will this affect the thesis and his defence thereof?

In the end, he decides to consult with his fellow doctoral student Linda, whom he trusts. He goes into Linda's room and asks if she has a minute. Benito shuts the door and starts to tell her about his suspicions and the indications he has had, but says that Linda must under no circumstance relay the information to anyone else. Linda is shocked and thinks Benito should report his supervisor, but Benito is afraid this will affect him negatively and impede the remaining work on his thesis.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How would you act if you were Benito?
- How would you act if you were Linda?
- Where is the boundary between information that should and should not be handled confidentially? When are we as employees obliged to bring matters to the attention of management, for example, in relation to suspicions of research fraud?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?





# TEACHING ENVIRONMENT



## 6. Protests against the course literature

Tine is teaching a course. Recently a group of students has refused to read a book on the literature list saying that it portrays an antiquated view of a specific ethnic group based on current identity politics. The students have been vocal in their protest, not least on social media where they have gained the backing of students across the world. They have now written an appeal to the head of department where they threaten to boycott certain lectures. And that is not all. They have also contacted the University Library and demanded that the book immediately be removed from the library collection.

Tine is now considering changing the literature list out of fear of causing offence to the students and attracting negative publicity.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- To what extent should we meet the students' demands for politically correct literature?
- What responsibility do teachers have for the content of the course literature?
- How do we handle sensitivity or the questioning of material when it is associated with, for example, religion?
- How can teachers present and problematise the literature selection?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 7. The student teacher with controversial values

Robyn is studying on a teacher training programme. In an examination early on in the programme, Robyn expresses values that conflict with the requirements of the System of Qualifications. Among other things, she makes derogatory comments regarding certain groups in society. Ole is the course coordinator and examiner. He reacts strongly to Robyn's statements but is unsure how to act. The syllabus for the course in question does not contain any expected learning outcomes relating to judgement and approach. They are not assessed until the period that involves teacher placement.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How do you think Ole should address Robyn's opinions?
- Does the University, the department and/or examining teacher have any responsibility not to send out unsuitable individuals to teacher placement and ultimately to work with children and young people?
- Is it appropriate to have an advisory session with the student before beginning their placement?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?





## 8. Late application

Kalle teaches on a programme and the course has just started. After a few days a new student starts, Siri, who has submitted a late application. Siri contacts Kalle and says she has a visual impairment and asks what help she can get with keeping up with the classes.

Kalle is at a loss as he has not received any information about a student with a functional variation starting on his course. He wonders how he will have time to best adapt his material and teaching and the situation is causing him stress.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How do you think Kalle should act?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 9. A Master's student with advantages

On a Master's course with many international students, Ionna from Ukraine is struggling with understanding everything that is said in the course language, which is English. Krystiyan, who is one of the teachers on the course, is also from Ukraine. Ionna asks almost all her questions in Ukrainian and is answered by Krystiyan in the same language. After class, Ionna often stays behind to have assignments explained to her. Krystiyan is willing to help her as he feels the teaching will be more effective when Ionna gets the help she needs, thus reaching the same level as the Swedish and English-speaking students.

Many of the other students feel that this is deeply unfair. Especially Tulin, a student from Bangladesh who also has problems with the English. A group of students headed by Tulin approach the director of studies and also contact the students' union. They claim that it is unfair that Ionna is receiving special advantages and that there is a lack of transparency since they do not know what advantages she is receiving.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Is the teacher right to give the student help in another language?
- Is the teacher being fair in his treatment of the students?
- What does equal opportunities mean in this case?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?





## 10. The tone on social media

Maria teaches on a course and is invited by a student to join a Facebook group that discusses the course and the subject. When Maria starts following the threads in the group she discovers many condescending and disrespectful comments about students and teachers. One student in particular is writing disparaging and at times almost hateful comments. Maria is both sad and upset at the level of the discussion and is considering how to act.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Have you experienced something similar?
- How should Maria deal with the student publishing the most disparaging posts?
- How can she address the students and teachers who may have perceived the comments as abusive?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



## 11. Badmouthing at the student party

Yasmine has for many years taught on one of the longer programmes and she has now been invited to an end-of-programme party organised by the students. She talks to her head of department about whether she should go, and they agree that she should participate and represent the department.

Yasmine puts on a nice party dress and goes to the party. As the evening progresses, more and more students come up and start talking to Yasmine about their experiences from their time studying.

“Hey Yasmine, what’s up?” asks Isak, one of the students.

The students Irma and Jonatan join the conversation.

“That guy Johan... What qualifications does he actually have for teaching?” asks Irma. “He just drones on incoherently. It’s not easy to follow his non-sense.”

“And he shows pictures that feel super outdated. He’s probably used the same ones for the past twenty years,” continues Isak.

An increasing amount of beer and wine goes down as the evening goes on. The comments on Johan and other teachers become even more condescending and start sounding more like parodies rather than constructive criticism.

“Yeah, that Johan, what a bloody bore. He should be sitting in an archive sorting paper instead...” says Irma, and is rewarded with laughter.

Yasmine feels increasingly uncomfortable and does not know whether to stay or leave the party.

### **Discussion**

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How would you act if you were Yasmine?
- What responsibility and authority does a teacher have at a private party?
- Where is the boundary between constructive criticism and badmouthing?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



## 12. A student questions their grade

Emil is very disappointed about the grade he received on the latest course. When he hears that several of his classmates have received significantly higher grades, he is angry. He knows that all documentation is public and decides to request access to all email conversations between the teachers on the course along with all the grading teacher's notes on each student on the course.

"Now they're going to get it!" says Emil to himself, with a smug smile on his lips.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Which documents is a student entitled to request?
- What should the teachers do?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



### 13. The open university or the elitist university?

The Admissions Office has worked hard for a full academic year with producing and disseminating information to broad target groups as part of the work with widening participation, that is to say, that all groups in society are to have equal access to higher education.

When the autumn term starts, Patrik, who is a professor, welcomes a crowd of new students on the Knowledge Programme (which is a little easier to get into than the Science Programme). The students are expectant prior to their first lecture and listen attentively to Patrik.

“Welcome to the Knowledge Programme!” says Patrik. “It will be three interesting and exciting years! Let’s see how many of you are still here at the end and will actually graduate, because this is a fairly demanding subject and it requires a certain capacity. It’s certainly not as hard as the Science Programme where the demands are much higher, but the Knowledge Programme also requires you to step up!”

The students Ghebremariam, Halasse and Julia go for a coffee after the lecture.

“I’m worried I won’t be able to make it,” says Halasse. “Do I have enough prior knowledge? I haven’t been to compulsory school in Sweden, just upper-secondary school.” Ghebremariam nods in agreement. Patrik’s words worried him too.

Julia feels a small lump in her stomach and wonders whether she will receive enough support or whether her dyslexia will throw a spanner in the works? Or if it is even worth doing the Knowledge Programme? It does not seem that great after all...

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How should we welcome new students regardless of their background?
- How far should the University’s support extend?
- Should we more frequently help students with insufficient educational backgrounds move on to other programmes or professions?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 14. The student with a diagnosis

The student Linus has been diagnosed with dyslexia, which may be a reason why he is performing worse than his classmates in a course component that focuses on linguistic skills. Julia is the responsible examiner and has, before and after the exam, felt great uncertainty about how to deal with Linus and how much she should take his diagnosis into account. She decides to be lenient in her grading. He has a diagnosis after all.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How much do you think Julia should take Linus' diagnosis into account?
- How should Linus' work be assessed equally compared with other students in relation to set requirements?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



## RELATIONS

### 15. Do you want to be my reference?

Christopher teaches on a programme and is contacted via email by the student Sofia who is soon to be completing her studies. Sofia is looking for work and wonders if Christopher can act as her reference. Christopher is divided in his opinion of Sofia. He finds her sympathetic and talkative, but throughout her studies she has had problems meeting the set requirements, turning in assignments on time and passing her courses.

Christopher thinks the situation is problematic and is uncertain about accepting the request of being her reference. And if he does, should he be honest and refer to Sofia's shortcomings? Or should he instead provide an exaggerated positive picture so as to help her progress? Should he say no and risk offending Sofia?

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How would you handle this situation?
- Is it okay as a teacher to act as a reference for some students but not for others?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?





## 16. An after-work with a bad aftertaste

Nearly the entire department has gone out for an after-work together. In the beginning, the mood is pleasant with intense discussions, a lot of laughs and witty exchanges. As the beers go down, the tone and manner of speaking gets increasingly sarcastic. In particular, Fredrik and Marianne are egging each other on and badmouthing their colleague Annika, who is not there in the pub.

“Have you seen how she sucks up to anyone in management?” says Marianne mockingly.

“Yeah, apparently that’s how to get a wage increase,” says Fredrik, rolling his eyes.

Barbara, Faustine and Olof react to the way they are talking but say nothing there and then. Barbara thinks that maybe they badmouth her too, when she is not around.

It is only during a workplace meeting many weeks later that they say that they took offence and have felt bad long after the, in their opinion, very unpleasant atmosphere during the evening.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- The situation arose outside of working hours but has affected the work environment. How can the situation be dealt with?
- Should the head of department do something, and if so, what?
- Should the group that reacted have acted differently that evening?
- What view should we have of socialising outside of working hours when alcohol is consumed? When are we private?
- Would the head of department's responsibility and actions have been different if a similar situation would have occurred on a break at work?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 17. Do I dare report it?

Johanna and Petra are colleagues and also socialise privately. One evening during a friendly conversation over dinner at Johanna's place, Petra says that one of their colleagues had made unwelcome sexual advances on several occasions. Johanna was horrified and thought that Petra should report the incident, but Petra dismisses it. She absolutely does not want to, and asks Johanna not to tell anyone about it. The colleague she is referring to is respected and Petra is scared that it will be she who gets into trouble if she tells.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Where is the boundary between issues that can and cannot be handled confidentially? When are we as employees obliged to bring matters to the attention of the management, for example, with regard to discrimination, victimisation or harassment?
- How can we determine the boundary between information that can be kept private and information that should be brought to someone's attention?
- How would the situation have been different if Johanna had been a deputy head of department?
- Would you have acted differently if it had involved alcohol abuse or research fraud?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?





### 18. The generous supplier

Birgitta has for several years suspected that the department's systems technician Anton has now and again been taken out to dinner by a supplier. During a coffee break, Birgitta hears Anton talk about the fantastic food he had with the supplier at one of Umeå's finest restaurants. Birgitta then noticed that he had posted pictures on Facebook from a weekend trip to Åre together with the supplier's representatives.

Birgitta contacts Kerstin, the head of department, and wonders how she views Anton's actions. Kerstin says it is probably not a big deal and says it is nothing that bothers her.

A few weeks later, Birgitta overhears Kerstin and Anton talk about the lovely weekend trip to Åre that they went on together. Birgitta is alarmed and understands why Kerstin dismissed her when the matter was brought up earlier. She thinks long and hard about what she will do. In the end she decides to send an anonymous tip to the local paper regarding the irregular goings on at the department.

A few days later, Birgitta is called to see Kerstin, who makes it clear that she knows it is she who tipped off the paper and that she views the behaviour as disloyal. The article in the paper starts a lively discussion at the department, but Anton says that the whole story is exaggerated and that he indeed paid for himself.

Birgitta is frozen out by Kerstin and some of the other colleagues who have taken Kerstin's side. Birgitta feels now that she is given fewer and more boring tasks and feels ill at ease. In the end, she goes on sick leave.

### **Discussion**

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How do you think Birgitta should have acted?
- Where is the boundary between being loyal to the organisation and drawing attention to irregular goings on?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



### **19. Freedom of expression or a lack of respect?**

Lennart, who has just become a docent, meets his colleague Kim, who has a PhD, in the corridor at the department. Kim congratulates Lennart and asks how it is going with the research.

“It feels amazingly good to have my qualification down on paper, that I can back up my claims, unlike the lecturers who work mostly based on their anecdotal evidence,” says Lennart.

“What do you mean?” asks Kim.

“Well, look at best practice for example. Without a link to evidence it’s just an example of what that specific person usually does,” Kim laughs.

Lecturer Amina, who is sitting with her door open, hears the entire conversation. She feels wronged, and during a coffee break she relays the conversation between Lennart and Kim to three of her colleagues who are also lecturers. It is not the first time these four lecturers feel attacked and belittled.

“We handle the teaching and do all the grunt work and get nothing but crap in return,” says Amina.

“The researchers don’t know anything about the reality of the teaching situation and are still always so disrespectful!”

The lecturers feel increasingly angry and bitter over being seen as less valuable by their colleagues.

**Discussion**

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Have you experienced something similar?
- Within academia, there are different views on professional competence and scientific methods. How can we create a constructive discourse on this?
- How can we work to ensure respect and tolerance for different occupational groups' roles and competence in our meritocratic environment?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

**20. A fun evening with colleagues**

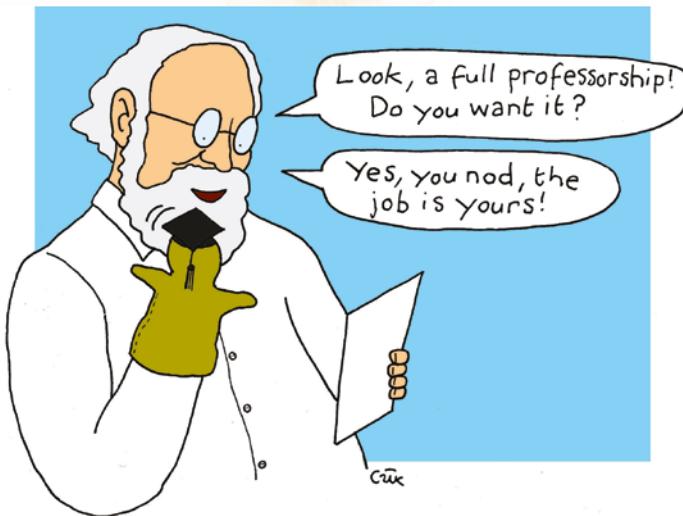
Anna is new on the job and naturally attends the nice staff party that her colleagues invite her to at Universitetsklubben. She thinks it fun to finally be at a workplace that likes to have a nice time together and takes care of the staff. Anna's previous experience of working in a public organisation was that the work duties were fun but the environment was quite reserved. When her new bosses are dancing and singing clever songs about this and that, she cannot resist the temptation to film the unusual phenomenon and post it with a happy comment on Instagram.

**Discussion**

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- What posts connected to work do you think are okay to put out on social media?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



## RECRUITMENT



### 21. Everyone knows everyone

A department is conducting research within a small research domain. There are a handful of professors in all of Sweden and a few more within the Nordic region. When a professorship is to be advertised, the department wants a recruitment process that is as fast, efficient and effective as possible. Subject specialists are appointed and it appears that they know the majority of the applicants well. They have collaborated on various projects and have met at scientific conferences, in addition to socialising privately in some cases. Three of the applicants are internal, of which two have family ties to other colleagues at the department.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- What can the University do to reduce the risk of conflict of interest in the review processes?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 22. Pragmatism versus laws and regulations

Senior lecturer Knut falls suddenly ill on the first day of term, which results in him not being able to give the course that has just started. So as not to negatively affect the students' situation, Head of Department Eva-Leena and human resources administrator Kristoffer try to find a quick solution.

Eva-Leena calls Isabelle who she knows can come in as teacher at short notice, and she is able to in this instance. They then quickly sign all necessary documents. According to applicable regulations and guidelines, the substitute position is to be advertised, but Eva-Leena and Kristoffer agree that it is most important that the needs of the students take priority.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Can one act pragmatically to resolve a situation even if it entails violating laws and regulations?
- How do you think the department should act?
- What basic value principles are being challenged in this dilemma?





### 23. Handpicked employees

A department is going to hire a new administrator. Head of department Anita wants to hire Elisabeth whom she used to work with at another department, and she asks her to apply for the position. Anita then contacts Simon, who is the faculty's human resources generalist, and asks him to arrange it so that they can hire the person they want.

Simon is new as human resources generalist and is hesitant about the head of department's request, but at the same time he is eager to create good relationships with the heads of department and make a good impression in his new job.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How should Simon act?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



#### **24. When you are ordered to violate laws and regulations...**

Irina is a human resources specialist at a faculty and is part of a recruitment group charged with hiring a researcher. The position is advertised and the experts determine a ranking of the candidates based on merit and skill. Sylvia is the chair of the hiring committee and has decided that a researcher from the US will be offered the position.

However, Irina has done a thorough check of references and has found out that the researcher, at his current workplace, has been prosecuted and convicted of a crime in the workplace. She calls Sylvia and describes the information she has discovered.

“I hear what you’re saying,” says Sylvia. “But I’ve already made my decision! This person is a renowned researcher. He has significant external funding and will be a great addition to the research at our university.”

##### **Discussion**

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Have you experienced something similar?
- Academic merits are sometimes weighed against personal characteristics, which can create a dilemma. Should we hire a researcher with high academic merits but low social merits?
- What is your experience with taking references? What weight should reference taking have in the process?
- How should Irina act?

## SERVICE & SUPPORT

### 25. What is the most important thing to do?

Olof works as an administrator at a department and often feels stressed about all the duties he has and the fact that many colleagues expect him to prioritise their specific tasks. He attempts to examine his process and see how he actually prioritises things. Does he work his way through each case or task in the order they come in? Or does he try to assess what is most important or pressing?

Does he maybe prioritise colleagues with a high status or informal power? Or does he prioritise those he likes most because they are always nice? Or those he is most scared of, who get angry and go on about it?

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Have you experienced something similar?
- How do you think Olof should prioritise?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 26. The project ends up in limbo

A project group has been instructed to streamline, develop and coordinate an administrative process at the University. There are currently many infrequent users in this specific process. Through current situation analysis and scrutiny of the organisation, it is possible to identify how the process can be simplified and streamlined in several ways. The proposal elicits strong reactions. Many members of management feel that their organisation is special and that they have the right to independently organise and control their administration.

The management gets cold feet and the project ends up in limbo. No decision is made, nor is the project shut down.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How can the project group act?
- Many necessary reforms and development initiatives are put on hold when they meet resistance. Does everyone have to be on board for a streamlining initiative to be implemented?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?





## 27. When the media wants “all” the information...

A journalist at VK approaches a department and asks to access all book-keeping of the employees’ travel and entertainment expenses for the past year. The journalist refers to the principle of public access and says she wants the information as soon as possible.

Head of department Håkan asks Peter, who is the department’s financial administrator, to produce the information. The journalist’s request entails a lot of work, and Peter, who is in the middle of working on the annual accounts, feels stressed. He asks the head of department if they really have to devote so much time to this? Can they not just say no?

The head of department says that they have to disclose the information and he mentions the principle of public access. However, he then asks Peter not to include the receipts from the department’s study trip to Budapest.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Have you experienced something similar?
- How should the financial administrator and the department act?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



## WORKING ENVIRONMENT

### 28. Do only senior academics have a right to influence?

Peter, Marina, Karim and Alexandra sit around the breakroom table and discuss the upcoming election of members to the Faculty Board.

“I don’t understand why I, as a lecturer, don’t get a vote,” says Peter. “I teach and I’m committed to developing our education. Why should my opinions and vote not count?”

“I think it’s natural that those of us with research qualifications get to vote,” answers Marina.

“Well we live in a democratic society where everyone has equal value,” says Alexandra. “Do you think that only certain people should get to vote in municipal and parliamentary elections too?”

“It’s not really comparable,” says Karim. “In scientific matters, those who are most qualified should get to decide!”

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- What do you see as advantages and disadvantages with only employees with a PhD getting to participate in nominating committees and voting in elections for the Faculty Board and teacher representatives on the University Board?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



## 29. Whose working environment is most important?

One department has invested in new creative environments for the students. On the floor there are soft rugs and the furniture is modern and inviting. The students are also really enjoying the pleasant environment. The cleaners and service assistants, whose work environment has suffered as a result, are less happy. The floor takes a lot longer to clean and the work also requires more physical exertion. Furthermore, the new furniture leaves ugly marks on the floor. The Service Office is disappointed that they have not been consulted in the discussions about the premises.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Is the working environment of the students and different staff groups equally important, or should one group be prioritised?
- How can we ensure that important target groups are given a voice in the planning of premises?
- Who should act and what should they do?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



### 30. Only half showed up...

The management of a department has invited all employees to an extended workplace meeting to discuss goals and activities relating to the entire department. The invitation has been sent out in good time, both orally and in writing, whereby the management has encouraged everyone to take part and has indicated that they have allocated department-wide time in the staffing plan. When the meeting starts, the management is very disappointed to see that only half of the employees have turned up. This is despite insistent calls for participation beginning some time back. A few have given valid reasons, but most have neither notified management of their absence nor given a reason for it.

"How is it that Johanna and Michel are never at our meetings?" wonders Maude, one of the employees who was at the meeting, while leaving the meeting room. "If I didn't turn up I'd probably get an earful, but I guess they don't..."

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Can the management of a department require that all employees prioritise taking part in work that concerns the common goals for the organisation?
- How can the individual employee balance their own goals and those of the organisation, for example, the requirement of research publication and the requirement of active participation in the organisation?
- How effective and valid are joint organisation-wide activities if the majority is not taking part?
- How do you think the management should act?
- What basic value principles do you think are being challenged in this dilemma?

### 31. The researcher who does not need to follow the rules

Anton is a popular and renowned researcher who, despite repeated requests and reminders from the University Library, has not returned borrowed books. There has been a queue for the books for a long time. Anton has now been suspended from borrowing further books and has also been billed for the books as these are now regarded as lost.

Anton storms up to the library reception, his face flushed with anger.

“What do you think you’re doing suspending me from the library?” he says angrily. “Don’t you know who I am and what I do?”

“Yes, of course we do, but the loan rules apply to you too,” says the librarian Elsa, trying to use a pleasant tone.

“You should know that my research domain is one of the most important here at the University. Of course I can’t follow your unreasonable loan rules! I need the books, and I don’t intend to return them or pay your stupid bill!” Anton says, almost shouting.

“We don’t give preferential treatment,” answers Elsa calmly. “Our rules apply to everyone!”

“I’m taking this further,” says Anton threateningly. “I’m going to contact the library director and my dean. They can help put a stop to this stupidity and have a serious talk with you.”

Elsa became unsure and at a loss for words.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Have you experienced something similar?
- How do you feel the librarian should act?
- Do we treat all occupational groups equally at the University?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/HARASSMENT



### **32. Time to get these bastards out of Sweden!**

Mats works at the University Library. One day while standing in reception, a man comes up to the desk. He is obstinate and loud and demands access to a private archive that is accessible for research purposes.

“Time to get these bastards out of Sweden!” says the man.

Mats knows that the archive contains information that may be sensitive if it ends up in the wrong hands.

#### **Discussion**

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How should Mats act?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

### 33. To be seen or not to be seen – on social media

Daniel teaches on several courses and often receives friend requests on Facebook and other social media from his students. The students are involved in placements at companies and in organisations during one of the terms, and Daniel sometimes also gets contact requests from their partners.

Daniel tries to be active and post interesting information on the course and on the department's research. However, recently he has felt some anxiety and a feeling of doubt has started to eat away at him. Increasingly he sees threads with condescending and disrespectful comments, and he wonders how he should react. Should he get involved in the discussion and introduce an alternative viewpoint? Does he have the time and energy for this? And if not, can this be perceived as him agreeing with this behaviour?

Many of his students also contact him via Facebook and Messenger and ask course-related questions. Is it unfair if he answers, considering that not everyone will get the same answer? Should he just interact with the students via the learning platform? Daniel feels stressed over the situation and is becoming increasingly uncertain.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- What counts as a public document? Is contact via social media the same as contact via email or phone? Has the media the right to request a conversation from a platform like Facebook?
- How would you act if you were Daniel?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



### 34. The study counsellor who does not want to be alone with male students

Miryam is a devout Muslim and has recently been hired as a study counsellor. Prior to her first counselling meeting with a male student, she says to her superior Nils that, due to her religion, she does not want to be alone when meeting a man she does not know. Nils is surprised as he has taken for granted that Miryam has understood that her work entails providing guidance to all types of people. He says that they are unable to make an exception for her and that the role of study counsellor means that she will be counselling both women and men. Miryam is upset and reports Nils for discrimination on religious grounds.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- What rights has Miryam to refuse to counsel men?
- What rights has her superior in requiring her to counsel all types of people?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

### 35. A teacher feels abused

Yusef teaches on a programme. Recently he has encountered many condescending comments from a small group of students during class. He has also received abusive emails that refer to both his ethnicity and his teaching methods.

“Typical of your kind to be corrupt and allow yourself to be bribed in return for giving good grades,” reads the latest email.

Yusef is upset and troubled, and he wonders how he should act and where he can turn for support.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Have you experienced something similar?
- How do you think Yusef should act?
- Where should Yusef turn?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 36. Abuse in the classroom

A few weeks into term, the teacher Kim receives an email from the student Miguel. Miguel feels that one of the other students in the group cannot accept his sexual orientation, and he therefore wants to switch groups for the ongoing group work. Kim has thus far not received any information indicating that there is a problem in the student group, but she thinks it is a reasonable request and lets the student switch groups. When the group work is to be presented, Miguel contacts Kim again. He is reluctant to present the group work for the entire class as the students who previously made derogatory comments usually roll their eyes and do other things to express their criticism during the presentations.

Kim consults with her director of studies and is told that these problems are well known and that there have been discussions with the students involved during previous courses.

“Why has no one told me this?” says Kim, irritated. “Then I could have handled the situation much better.”

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How should one act in the classroom if a student is abusive in their speech or behaviour?
- How should the situation be handled in a more long-term perspective? The students might be on the same programme for several years.
- Who is responsible when the students continuously change departments and thereby also change course coordinators and directors of studies?
- Our students should be prepared for the workplace after graduating. How should we, as a university and authority that awards qualifications, deal with those students who will be working with people in their future occupations but who have shown a lack of respect for people's equal value during their time at the University?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



## EXERCISE OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY



### 37. The big IT event

Anna, who works as a procurement officer with specific responsibility for the IT area, is invited by a major supplier of IT products to a very lavish event. The event includes performances by popular artists, good food, and all participants get a goodie bag full of IT products. Everything is free.

Anna is well aware of the university's policy that the University will only pay for and approve hours for external activities that benefit the organisation. She realises that the benefit of attending is negligible if not entirely non-existent, but decides that she can take a vacation day and attend the event privately. The press are covering the event and Anna ends up in a picture on the front page with a glass in one hand and the CEO of the IT company by her side.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- What would you do if you were Anna?
- When are we private and when are we public civil servants?
- What demands can we make regarding how a university employee acts in their free time?
- How do you think Anna's superior should react upon seeing the article?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

### 38. VIP treatment for big shots?

The University has procured a new mobile phone contract. The contract is viewed by many to be worse than the previous one, and it is heavily criticised. Among other things, the new operator cannot offer the same coverage as before. However, it is not possible to tear up the contract and find a new operator.

Some individuals with executive positions are among those voicing criticism, and they demand that they be exempt from the procured contract.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How should an individual civil servant act if they are ordered to break the rules by a superior?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

### 39. The international conference

Three colleagues at an office are invited to an international conference in Romania to present their organisation. The conference fee includes lunch and a conference dinner. Each person books their own trip via the university's travel agents.

Adam logs onto the travel agent's web service and books the cheapest trip, even if the times are not optimal. Britta and Sigurd also use the travel agent's web service but instead book a significantly more expensive flight with another airline, allowing them better flight times and a complementary lunch and wifi access.

All three are staying at the conference hotel in single rooms with breakfast included. Sigurd holds his presentation on the first day of the conference and disappears for the remainder of the conference, not even turning up for the conference dinner. Adam felt that the dinner was not filling enough so he went and had another meal at a restaurant later that evening.

On the flight home, Sigurd is clearly happy to tell his colleagues about how much work he got done. He has visited a colleague and planned a new course which will start next week. He thought the conference was mediocre.

When they return, each of them submits travel expenses. Adam adds the cost of a taxi ride and ticks that no meals were covered, even though he took part in the big conference dinner. Britta claims compensation for the airport bus cost. Sigurd states that he paid for all the meals himself.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- When is it acceptable to book a more expensive trip?
- How much do you feel you have to participate in a conference to justify the trip?
- Is it okay to work with something else when at a conference?
- How should the travel expenses from conferences be checked, and by whom?
- How do you think a superior would react if informed of this?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 40. Don't shoot the messenger

Jörgen is an administrator at a faculty office. He is often charged with implementing decisions made by someone higher up in the organisation. At times, these decisions cause dissatisfaction among employees and heads of department at the faculty, and Jörgen is left to take a lot of criticism and frustration. He then feels unfairly treated. He feels he is being blamed for rules decided by others and is told he is not service-minded when he is simply doing his job. Furthermore, he is unable to defend himself as it is his job to forward decisions and be loyal in doing so, even if he sometimes thinks they are wrong.

Jörgen feels caught between being loyal to the management in their decisions and measures and being receptive to the needs and expectations of the departments, an equation that never seems to add up.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Have you experienced something similar?
- How can Jörgen handle the challenges in his situation?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?





#### 41. It's cheaper to buy in town!

Peter is the head of an office and wants to buy a new sofa for the staff room. The old one is tattered and stained. He finds a nice and robust sofa at a good price in a local furniture shop. When he checks with Public Procurement and Purchase, however, this shop is not contracted, so instead Peter is referred to the contracted companies that sell office furniture. The sofas the company sells are significantly more expensive than the one Peter found. Peter is indignant and asks what his office and the University have to gain by buying a more expensive product.

##### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Sometimes the existing rules can be perceived as counterproductive. How do you think Peter should have acted?
- How should the public procurement officer act?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



## THE OUTSIDE WORLD/SOCIETY

### 42. The University – a real dump!

In recent years, the tone on social media has become increasingly aggressive. University employees are not exempt from this and they express themselves drastically and condescendingly regarding colleagues, competitors or other public institutions. In one example from Twitter, an employee referred to the University as a dump and said: “It doesn’t matter how many of us burn out or quit as long as the targets are reached.”

Another employee criticised his colleagues and superiors on Facebook and described them as dictators and worthless losers sitting on their fat asses and lying and abusing others while the taxpayers foot the bill.

#### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Do we as university employees have the right to express ourselves as we wish when we feel unfairly treated?
- How should the executives at the department respond to this type of post on social media?
- Are you acting as a university employee or a private person if you express yourself regarding your workplace and your colleagues on social media?
- Is there a difference in what is acceptable to engage in on social media depending on what role/title you have?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



### 43. Researcher Anneli is often seen in the media

Anneli is a successful researcher who is often seen in the media. She is personable and pedagogical and has the ability to reach out through the medium of radio and television. She is also active on social media and has an Instagram account where she posts the latest developments in her research. In this way she has managed to reach out to a wide audience with her research findings. It has also made her popular among journalists.

She has therefore recently been asked about everything from climate change to geriatric care, areas outside her field of research. With regard to geriatric care, she talks about her experience with her elderly and frail parents not receiving appropriate care. In this context she is also referred to as a researcher. She has now been criticised by colleagues who feel she is mixing up her roles as a researcher and private person.

#### Discussion

- The free formation of opinion is of interest when researchers participate in a public societal debate. All employees have the right to express their opinions as private persons. But where is the boundary between being a researcher or civil servant at a university and being a private person?
- What problems can arise when
  - a researcher expresses an opinion within areas other than where they conduct research?
  - a researcher is a politician and researcher at the same time?
  - a researcher runs or has interests in a company or other organisation?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

#### 44. Public interest creates a heavy workload

A department is conducting research that relates to minority groups in Sweden. As the department is one of few with this research focus among Swedish higher education institutions, they receive many questions from other researchers and the general public. The questions can range from the very specific to the extremely broad and general. The employees at the department always try to answer questions that are relevant from the perspective of the organisation, and other questions are referred to other public bodies. For some types of questions, this is a simple process, but others require serious investigative work.

In recent years, public and media interest in minority issues has increased, and although the department wants to encourage this interest, it takes far too much time away from the other activities. The employees feel inadequate and wonder how they can prioritise.

##### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- How should the employees prioritise?
- Could the department be paid for the additional work, and if so, when and how?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 45. Fruitful collaboration?

A research group has received an assignment from a successful Swedish corporate group. The assignment will mean a large contribution to the budget for the next few years. The researchers are also offered workplaces at one of the offices and are invited to various employee activities. A close and fruitful collaboration between researchers and company leaders develop, and it turns out the people involved also have several private interests in common.

The first year has now passed and the first stage is to be presented to the corporate management. After the presentation, the most senior manager expresses his dissatisfaction with their, in his mind, incorrect conclusions and their unnecessarily severe criticism. He threatens to retract the research funding unless they reassess their results.

### Discussion

- What is problematic in this situation?
- How do you think the researchers' objectivity is affected in this situation?
- How do you think the researchers should act in this situation?
- How can we prevent similar situations?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?



## 46. Employee tips off the media

Hasse is a registrar and best friend with Jonas who is a journalist at the local newspaper. In his role as registrar, Hasse comes across a lot of information that the media is not always aware exists, although they often look for news in the registry.

At one of the departments at the University, there is an infected work-related conflict that involves many employees, which results in calling in an external consultant to conduct an occupational health and safety investigation. When the expert delivers his results, Hasse contacts his friend at the newspaper and tells him that the investigation is now available as a public record. The friend immediately asks for a copy and the issue is covered in the newspaper the following day.

The faculty board is caught by surprise. They had invited all employees to a meeting the following day to present the results of the investigation and the planned measures. They now realise that the conflict at the department will be exacerbated after the employees find out about the content of the investigation from the newspaper rather than at the planned information meeting.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- Why does Hasse act the way he does?
- Could it sometimes be morally justifiable to release internal documents on unsatisfactory conditions to the media, or is it always unacceptable?
- Freedom of speech and protection of “whistle-blowers” relate to everyone. Should we still expect greater loyalty from certain occupational groups such as registrars, legal officers, human resources specialists and people in similar positions?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

## 47. Cut off at the ankles

Petra is an experienced coordinator at a faculty office. She has been entrusted with the task of running a faculty-wide project and is now presenting the results from the first part of the project to the faculty management. The faculty management is very pleased with the presentation, the results and the conclusions and expresses no objections. Ingrid is one of the members of the faculty management who does not participate in the meeting.

The next step is to hold the same presentation to the faculty board, which includes many influential professors. When Petra finishes her presentation, Ingrid asks to speak. She is very critical towards both the presentation and the conclusions and she conveys her opinions in a way that Petra finds both condescending and disrespectful.

None of the other members of the faculty management, who had previously been positive, supports Petra or mention that they had previously approved of Petra's work.

Petra leaves the meeting with a sense of failure and feels belittled. She has also lost interest in continuing to run the project.

### Discussion

- What do you think is problematic in this situation?
- What conscious and unconscious values do you find characterise the meeting?
- Do you find that administrative members of staff are treated with as much respect as academic staff?
- Is there anything Petra could have done – before, during or after the meeting?
- What basic value principles are being challenged?

# Dilemma overview

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Heading	Page	What principle is being challenged?					
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<b>EXERCISE OF PUBLIC AUTHORITY</b>	51						
37. The big IT event	51		x	x			
38. VIP treatment for big shots?	52		x			x	x
39. The international conference	53		x				x
40. Don't shoot the messenger	54		x		x		x
41. It's cheaper to buy in town!	55		x				x
<b>THE OUTSIDE WORLD/SOCIETY</b>	57						
42. The University – a real dump!	57			x	x	x	
43. Researcher Anneli is often seen in the media	58	x		x	x		
44. Public interest creates a heavy workload	59	x					x
45. Fruitful collaboration?	60			x			
46. Employee tips off the media	61		x	x			x
47. Cut off at the ankles	62				x	x	



As a government employee at Umeå University, you must comply with the laws, regulations and the basic values that govern our activities in your daily work. But the different principles can sometimes be conflicting; what to do then? Legally secure or efficient? How is objectivity balanced with free formation of opinion? What can and should you say in public as a government employee? We must all consider and solve this type of conflict in our daily work.

In this book, you can read about the common basic values for central government employees and how they are put into practice at Umeå University. You can also find 47 different dilemmas to discuss during workplace meetings and planning days. Each dilemma comes with a number of questions to start from. Through regular dialogue on basic values, we can hopefully develop the ability to deal with dilemmas when they arise in real life.



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