

Autumn has arrived and a new semester has begun – what will be an eventful semester for the Faculty. We are about to see many important internal organisational changes that will strengthen our research and education. In addition, there are other significant events happening around us, such as the budget and research propositions, which will, somewhat unexpectedly, bring new funds in addition to the previously announced investments in the SciLifeLab and other major facilities. The Minister of Education wants to invest in elite research, but a prerequisite for elite research is breadth. Fortunately, the investments appear to be relatively broad, including an increase of allocations to the universities and the Research Council. I gave my views on the research bill in a [debate article](#), where I argued for a sharp increase in funds to the Research Council. At the Faculty we are planning to, at the end of the year, create a centre for Baltic Sea research from the existing Stockholm University Marine Research Centre and the Baltic Nest Institute, and merge the Departments of Botany and Systems Ecology into one department. Hopefully the three “white” biology departments will also form a single department at the same time. An important requirement for this department’s operations is a modern animal house, for which we are currently making plans. Negotiations to take over the Institute for Solar Physics from the Academy, with support from the Research Council, are now in the final stages. Furthermore, the Linnaeus centre for climate research, the Bolin Centre, will receive a modified management structure that is better suited for the phase the centre is now entering after a successful start-up period. Many of these changes will require financial support from the Faculty. As a basis for discussion about this, there is a [memo](#) in Swedish describing how we allocate the funds for research and research education at the Faculty.

A new semester means the campus once again comes to life, and new students arrive. I hope that in the future we will be able to discuss important issues regarding education more than we have done in recent years, when we have been busy dealing with demanding changes, such as the Bologna reform and taking over teacher training. What education should we provide? Can we reduce the drop-out rate? How should we recruit students to our Master’s programmes – and what programmes should we provide? These are just some of the education-related issues we ought to discuss.

Welcome to a new academic year!

Anders