

Universitetspladsen

RUglobal



Information and debate from Roskilde University

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World Wide Web or **Well Working Web?**

Before we say goodbye to 2010, ruc.dk has been completely transformed into a Well Working Web

IC? – Oh, I see...

ENSPAC, CBIT, IMFUFA, CUID, TAP, BSCW, VIP, SR, IC – Everyone seems to know what they mean



Danish researcher discovers 'missing link' in the fruit fly

Why do children enter puberty earlier and earlier? Assistant professor in medical biology at Roskilde University, Kim Rewitz, might have discovered the key to the explanation in the fruit fly

To mark the commencement of study, rector of RU, Ib Poulsen, visited the 'houses' on August 23/24/25. RUGlobal brings his welcome speech to all the new students below

Welcoming the new students to RU 2010

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the Basic Studies in the Humanities/the Natural Sciences/the Social Sciences and the Humanities and Technology and to RU.

We have been looking forward to having you here and to your contribution to forming and reforming RU over the next five to six years.

You have come to a university that has managed to transform itself to reflect current requirements, but also to a university that boasts traditions and special characteristics that we are proud of. Some of these special characteristics are our basic studies, problem orientation and project organisation. Together with interdisciplinarity, these ways of organising studies have been RU's central trademarks during our nearly 40-year long history.

It is a well-known fact that RU has undergone many changes during its lifetime, and you will naturally also experience major changes during your three, five or eight years at RU.

RU will change, and the Danish educational policy will change as well as the terms for universities in society. Some of the steps to launch initiatives we will take ourselves; others will be launched from outside of RU.

Although some changes may cause problems, it is important to maintain that a university is changeable, and should remain changeable, and to insist that its scientific and educational traditions are respected.

A university should not be allowed to rest in a state of self-satisfaction. At RU, this is symbolised through our logo: The coral. A coral can only survive in roaring waves and flowing water.

Corals on the lee-side of reefs die where the water is stagnant, but do create a foundation. Therefore, RU's motto is: "In stillness death, in movement life." You need to help us secure the ongoing movement.

RU is a university known for its critical approach. – What is criticism?

Criticism is a fundamental element in obtaining new knowledge and understanding, because criticism means to encounter established truths with healthy scepticism and curiosity in order to assess their validity. To assess whether established theories and scientific understandings are valid, it is a prerequisite to study them.

A university is a place where learning and intelligence, and even wisdom, flourish. You have come to RU to acquire knowledge and learning. Some of the tools you will use are computers, teamwork and project work, courses and lectures; it is, however, important to remember that a university and a study programme include more than just that. Organising your own work and taking your own initiatives are important for your everyday life at the university and for the outcome of your study programme.

A university without inquisitive, active and demanding students is no university – it is a

drowsy school; this not only applies to the actual study work, but also to the student social activities. To us, it is important that you contribute to setting the university agenda.

Originally, RU was built for 2100 students, but even though the school has been heavily extended since 1972, we do realise that space is scarce for today's about 9,000 students. We have tried to distribute our available square meters to the best of our abilities.

I have heard that, when actually going to university, quite a few students at other universities say that they are going to school. On the face of it, I guess there is nothing wrong with calling a place of learning a school; however, it is important to understand that a university is a place where independent learning and understanding is an opportunity and where you take an active part in the learning process. At schools, teachers carry the responsibility, or at least part of the responsibility, for your learning. Here, to a much higher degree you are the ones responsible, even though researchers and lecturers share this responsibility with you. Studying is very different from going to school.

You will embark on your university programmes tomorrow. Today, RU says welcome and hello. Tomorrow, you will be part of RU. Our university also belongs to you – use it, and nurture it.

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Publishing information

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Editorial staff:

Hanne Preisler (Responsible)
Thomas Humle (Editor)
Anne Frida Christiansen (Editor)
Camilla Buchardt (Editor)
Louise Houmøller Schjerning (Editor)

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DK-4000 Roskilde, Telephone 4674 2013,
e-mail: RUCnyt@ruc.dk,
www.ruc.dk/ruc/RUCnyt

Notifications: rucnyt-meddelelser@ruc.dk

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Upcoming deadlines:

Nr.	Articles	Notices	Publication date
2	9/9	14/9	27/9
3	30/9	5/10	18/10

– at 12 noon on the assigned date

On behalf of Roskilde University, I as the head of the International Office would like to welcome you to an educational experience here. All in all 350 new international students have been enrolled from 50 different countries.

**By: Mette Reebirk,
The Head of International Office**

You all bring fantastic know-how with which you will enrich this university. At Roskilde University you will be challenged both intellectually and characteristically. You will work in groups with people who have a different way of thinking than you. Embrace this as a gift and mirror this in order to equip yourselves with the ability to catch sight of new aspects for yourselves and others.

You will work on your abilities to ask questions – yes wonder how organisations, companies and relations between people intertwine. Asking the correct can be more

difficult than finding the answers. The way you ask questions and create synergies in groups requires you to operate with different theoretical perspectives.

Different theoretical training and knowledge from both Natural Science, Social Science and from The Humanities become a method by which to work and when you utilise this interdisciplinary field like a microscope and know exactly how to use this a whole new universe will be revealed to you, which will in addition will make it possible to create new techniques and ideas.

Finally, I would like to tell you that the International Department will gladly be available to help you with settling in and you are always welcome to drop in on us.

Employees in my department in alphabetical order:

- Anne Keinke
- Chanda Hansen
- Jean Lohmann Rasmussen
- Magnus Falby
- Maja Ammitsbøl
- Maria Hylstoft
- Marie Brobeck
- Michael Bech
- Sandra M. V. Langtofte
- Susan Thomsen Varmer
- Wei Zhang

Never reveal your password to others!

Someone is trying to trick you into revealing your RU username and password and misuse your account. Read more here:

www.ruc.dk/en/phishingattempt



The annual party is just around the corner

To celebrate a new semester, the annual party will be held Friday, 17 September at RU. The Kamarilla's preparations for a great party are already well under way.

By: Anne Frida Christiansen, RUGlobal
Photo: Anne Frida Christiansen, RUGlobal

Hoping that she will reveal some of the party events, RUGlobal manages to reach Tine over the phone while she is on her way to RU. Tine Bolvig and Line Nue share the chairmanship of the Kamarilla, which is organising the annual party. When Tine talks about the annual party, her enthusiasm is unquestionable; she always expects it to be a great party at Marbjerg Mark with a series of events that senior students will also remember from previous years. On the north-facing lawn (Nordplænen), next to Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies (CBIT), tents will be erected, and bands from RU will perform on the RU stage. In the canteen there will also be dancing and partying. We will also have a DJ tent with famous DJs, adds Tine. A slightly untraditional element

is Irish folk music which will also be represented at this year's annual party. What is, however, in keeping with tradition is that the new freshmen will be responsible for a number of tents with "the top of pop" playing happy music. Not until the freshmen have commenced their studies at RU, will the final themes for these tents be in place; however, in recent years the annual party has been strongly supported by the new students, so in this respect, Tine is optimistic. In this context, she highlights that sharing the responsibility for a tent is a good way for new students to get to know each other, and it can also be a good way to earn money for "the households", she says. As a new feature, this year's party will have an outdoor lounge area with bean bags and a couple of pavilions. Here, the bass will not be thumping as hard, which means that you can "chill out" with old and new friends and discuss world issues. That the weather will play a crucial role is, however, no secret, Tine emphasises.



Signs put up on campus guide the happy partygoers. At this year's annual party, the programme will also include Irish folk music.

Preparations for the big party in the basic tents.

A list of some of the music playing at the annual party

In the Royal tent, the line-up looks as follows:

- From 11.00 p.m. – 1.00 a.m.: KENNETH BAGER
(Existing record tracks + Ibiza sets)
- From 1.00 a.m. – 3.00 a.m.: NYE RÔR
- DJ Simon Jul (from Banjos Likørstue, MØRK&JUL, etc.) + DJ Martin Skovbjerg
- From 3.00 a.m. – 5.00 a.m.: FAGGET FAIRYS
- (DJ Set + LIVE)
- In the Irish tent, Irsk Lir will be playing.

When RUGlobal went to press, the agreements on the music in the canteen were yet to be confirmed, which will therefore be a surprise...

Another new thing that Tine can proudly reveal is that it is now possible to buy guest tickets via the Internet. About this setup, she says: "We found it a bit unfair that the students had to go to RU to buy guest tickets at the Bogladen Bookstore, and for this reason we have chosen to sell guest tickets via the Internet". From Portalino there will be a link to the box office. As always, you can bring a maximum of five guests to the party and like last year, students can attend the annual party free of charge.

In the week leading up to the annual party the work is intensified, and extra voluntary hands are needed to help with all the practical work that needs to be done. Tine explains that fences need to be put up, tables brought out, and there is a lot of cut and paste work to be done; the canteen will be the work base, and everyone is welcome to drop by to lend a hand. "We usually have a good time doing the preparations," Tine promises and says in conclusion that "We can create the framework for a good party, but the most important thing is a large turnout – at the end of the day that's what makes a party a success."

This message has now been passed on.

ruc.dk/international

*By: Michael Bech,
International Office
mib@ruc.dk*

World Wide Web or Well Working Web?

As part of the constant renewal of the university, the "old" World Wide Web – www.ruc.dk has gone through a major change – some might say that it has been revitalised and before we say goodbye to 2010, ruc.dk has been completely transformed into a Well Working Web!

The most visible change is of course the new design with the colourful squares and right now we are currently working hard to implement the new design to our more than 20000 pages from our "old" webpage.

Of course this means a lot of work but more importantly it gives us a chance to re-think the way we communicate to our

surroundings, our partners, our employees and our students through the website. The major change in our new webpage (besides the new fantastic design) is that the Danish site will be targeted to the Danish speaking audience and the international site (ruc.dk/international) will be 100% focused on international students, staff and partner universities.

The international site will (when completely implemented) be an easy-to-navigate and accessible information portal that is structured and contented by the coming students, staff and partners needs. We've had surveys, focus groups and personal interviews with our users, which has been a very learning experience for us – and we're still working hard to reach our goal, which is to transform our World Wide Web into a Well Working Web!

 <p>RU Roskilde University</p>	<p>For students  For employees  Find Person</p>	<p>På dansk</p> <p>AAA Print RUCA-Z</p> <input type="text"/> Search	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Research Cooperation Departments Library About the University Jobs Press
 <p>Thinking About Studying at RU?</p>	<p>Information to new Undergraduate Students Your First Term Starts August 23</p>	 <p>RU Researcher Discovers "Missing Link" in the Fruit Fly</p>	 <p>A Guide - Getting Started at RU</p>
<p>News</p> <p>18.08 2010 > Danish researcher discovers 'm..</p> <p>> More news</p>	<p>Events</p> <p>10.09 2010 kl. 09:30 > Development Studies - past, ..</p> <p>> More events</p>		
<p>Shortcuts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > RU A-Z > Study and Careers Service > University Library > Find Person > På dansk 	<p>Directions</p> <p>> See Train Schedule</p> <p>Roskilde University Universitetsvej 1, P.O. Box 260 4000 Roskilde Phone: +45 46742000 e-mail: ruc@ruc.dk EAN-no: 5798000418110 CVR-no: 29 05 75 59 VAT-no: 29 05 75 59</p>	<p>Quote</p> <p>"Innovation is the key to developing good solutions for the future"</p> <p>Kristian Ebbensgaard, former chairman of the Zealand Regional Council</p>	

Alongside the development of the Internet we are working on a new Intranet that (in time) will be your daily portal for information as student or staff at RU. But much more about that when the time comes.

In order to constantly have a user-friendly and informational website we appreciate any comments, ideas or suggestions that you might have to ruc.dk/international. After all you're the user – not us.



Why do children enter puberty earlier and earlier? Assistant professor in medical biology at Roskilde University, Kim Rewitz, might have discovered the key to the explanation in the fruit fly

Danish researcher discovers 'missing link' in the

**By: Camilla Buchardt,
The Information Office**

How the human body knows when to begin the transition from child to adult has long been one of science's great mysteries.

Now, a researcher from Roskilde University in Denmark has discovered an important link in relation to what initiates sexual maturity in fruit flies. The ground-breaking discovery might help us to understand the mechanism behind human puberty, and at the same time enlighten us as to why young people in the Western world enter puberty earlier and earlier.

Searching for answers for a century

The fruit fly is one of the most commonly used organisms when it comes to research within genetics and biomedicine, partly because of its short reproduction time and the fact that it is cheap to breed and partly because it is genetically simple and its DNA has been mapped. This gives researchers a big 'tool box' to help them answer biological questions.

A century ago, researchers discovered that there was a factor in the fruit fly's brain that could initiate sexual maturity. It was not possible to identify this factor, but it was certain that there was something in the brain that could trigger the process.

Kim Rewitz, assistant professor in medical biology, Department of Science, Systems and Models (NSM), said:

"Twenty years ago it was discovered what this factor was and that the molecule was a peptide hormone similar to a number of growth factors being produced and released from some nerve cells. It was also discovered that the peptide hormone affects the gland that produces steroid hormone, and they realised that, due to the structure of the molecule, this signal molecule from the brain had to be something that bound to the gland's surface."



Kim Rewitz, assistant professor in medical biology, Department of Science, Systems and Models (NSM).

fruit fly

“However, it was not possible to find the receptor of the signal on the cell’s surface. We’ve been looking for it for 20 years, and now we’ve found it. It was a huge missing link in understanding the system involving sexual maturity”, said Kim Rewitz.

The cells’ receptors can be divided into different groups. The problem was that researchers had been looking at the wrong group of receptors. Kim Rewitz got the idea of looking at a different group of receptors after a stay onboard the Danish Galathea Expedition where he talked to some researchers from the University of Southern Denmark (SDU), who are experts in analysing proteins by using so-called proteome analyses that analyse the human body’s proteins. The idea came from the subsequent proteome analyses showing that the way the hormone communicates with cells is the same used by growth factors in humans. Consequently, the hormone had to use a different group of receptors than previously anticipated.

“After I discovered the receptor, I spent eighteen months in the United States with two other researchers, Michael O’Connor and Naoki Yamanaka, characterising it, and fortunately we had our results published before anyone else. It’s always a bit nerve-racking when you feel you’ve discovered something pretty big because you know that around the world, there’s a lot of researchers trying to discover exactly the same”, said Kim Rewitz.

Early puberty

The results mean that, for the first time, we have an actual set of tools providing us with the opportunity to understand what initiates sexual maturity. Fruit flies’ system is in many ways very similar to the system initiating puberty in humans and can therefore be used as a model. Hopefully, over time, it can help us better understand human puberty, which is still a mystery to researchers around the world.

A survey from the Department of Growth and Reproduction (Vækst og Reproduktion) at Rigshospitalet, Denmark shows that in Denmark puberty occurs a whole year earlier than it did just fifteen years ago. In fact, most girls develop breasts already before their tenth birthday. In recent years, the Copenhagen Royal Chapel Choir also has had problems with early puberty and voices breaking.

When puberty sets in too soon, it affects the body in many different ways. However, researchers are not completely sure on how, but they fear that the hormonal stimulation increases the risk of breast cancer later in life. Also, children with early puberty will often stop growing early and thus not be as tall as they would otherwise be.

One of the theories is that chemicals can alter the biological clock telling the body that now it is time to initiate puberty. Another theory is that obesity might be the cause

of early puberty. However, researchers have not come so far that they can prove this. Nevertheless, it is an important step that we are now a bit closer to understanding what happens when fruit flies enter “puberty”. The theory is that it is a similar process that takes place in humans.

“I hope that the results can help us understand the whole complicated system involving puberty and make us able to transfer some of these things to humans in the long term. Everything indicates that a high calorie diet can contribute to accelerating puberty. This applies to both fruit flies and humans, but we need much more knowledge about the processes taking place in the human body”, said the Danish researcher.

IC?

- Oh, I see...

*By: Gosia Kulińska, Kristel Pent and
Natacha W. Petersen*

For a newcomer, a common conversation at RU is full of unintelligible abbreviations – ENSPAC, CBIT, IMFUFA, CUID, TAP, BSCW, VIP, SR, IC... And everyone seems to know what they mean, except for you freshman, who have enough trouble already figuring out about what ‘cardinal question’ is supposed to be. We all know, of course, that one of the main duties of journalism is to inform and educate the public, so let’s enter into this secret discourse of RU - one abbreviation at a time. We don’t want to have you stumbling around RU looking for the building of BSCW after all.

This time we are going to start with a reference to you. At RU you are... a student? Yes, and...? An... exchange student? And as an exchange student you are also an...? International student? Precisely! Perhaps you didn’t even know that there is a student organization at RU for international students. On everyday basis it is called the IC, which means International Club. It was founded back in 2003 and it is free for all students at RU to become member of the IC.

What is IC all about?

Let’s hear it from some current Committee members: “We are a group of RU students who arrange social events, trips and other activities mainly for international students.

For instance, in the spring semester 2010 we arranged a career workshop with guest speakers who shared their experiences about finding a job and working in Denmark. It was an inspirational event showing that persistence and hard work will pay off for both internationals and Danes in order to start a successful career. We hope that during this semester we will organize even more events that are in line with your interests.”

Wait a minute... a Committee? Is it a Communist organization? No. The only thing in common for the IC and the Communist ideology is that they are both international. The International Club is a meeting place for people from all around the world. But back to the Committee – the Committee is simply a steady group of students who gather for minimum one semester and are responsible for office hours, arranging some events and helping the IC members arrange the events they want. This means that you can join the IC Committee for a semester (or longer if you are up for it – we are all-in for continuity) or for arranging a single event.

What has the IC actually been up to?

According to the current members, they’ve been out and about: “We’ll help you to organize trips to many beautiful and interesting places in Denmark such as Bornholm, Møns Klint, Legoland, Jutland etc. By having monthly International Cafes at Gimle (not just another abbreviation but a meeting



place in Roskilde for RU students), we are giving you the opportunity to present your nationality, your national cuisine and music. Take a chance and show the others how you are partying back at home!"

However, there's much more. For instance, one shouldn't forget the yearly Crazy Christmas Cabaret in Tivoli, where if you are (un) lucky, you might end up on the stage in the middle of the play. We are still hoping that one legendary Christmas the person on the stage will be an IC member.

As mentioned one of IC's new initiatives last semester (spring 2010) was arranging a career workshop, where internationals working in Denmark shared their tips and tricks about getting a job in Denmark and experiences from their respective branches. This turned out to be a really popular event with almost 50 participants. As a nice extra feature, the participants could get feedback on their CV's from a Human Resources specialist.

Besides being a forum for social events, IC this semester established a new branch. It will concentrate on student politics and primarily represent students that are studying in English. As the number of international students is growing, the need for being politically active is becoming more and more important in order to maintain a good international environment at the university and empower the students.

So, what are you still waiting for?

In order to join the IC, the only thing to do is to come by our office close to the bookshop in Building 01, where we hang out on Mondays between 12.00 and 13.00. You can read much more about that on our website ruc.dk/ic. After that – sky is the limit on what you can organize (well, occasionally finances might set some boundaries as well). Join our Facebook group 'International/Erasmus Roskilde 2009/2011' (link can be found on ruc.dk/ic), where we post news and events and if you want to become an admin write to international-club@ruc.dk or to any of the current admins of the facebook group.

If you have any questions about the practicalities of life in Denmark, the inner workings of RU or suchlike, you're also most welcome to contact us by e-mail, on Facebook, or personally in our Office.

International Club
ruc.dk/ic
international-club@ruc.dk