



2022

ANNUAL SUMMARY

DEPARTMENT OF
ACCOUNTING

STOCKHOLM SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS

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FOREWORD

LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

2021 has come to an end and I want to take the opportunity to thank all faculty and staff as well as our stakeholders for your fantastic work and engagement during the year. In spite of an ongoing pandemic, we have had many positive developments at the Department of Accounting, Stockholm School of Economics. We have, for instance, welcomed a record number of five new PhD students, Aleksandra Pop-Vasileva has started a brand-new position as Lecturer with special outreach responsibilities, Lisa Larson has started as Department Coordinator and Beatriz Garcia Osma has joined our team as Visiting Professor. You can read more about them in the Annual Summary.

In terms of research, our fantastic faculty has published widely in journals such as *Abacus*, *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, *Accounting and Business Research*, *The British Accounting Review*, *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, *European Accounting Review*, *European Financial Management*, *Financial Accountability & Management*, *Journal of Accounting, Auditing & Finance*, *Journal of Business Finance and Accounting*, *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management* and *Triple Helix*. In addition, Liwei Zhu, Noor Alshamma, Milda Tylaite, Niclas Hellman and Henrik Nilsson have been acknowledged for top research in terms of Best Paper awards from the European Accounting Review Annual Conference and the Nordic Accounting Conference.

In terms of teaching, all faculty have done an amazing job in delivering courses, on-campus as well as online. Our faculty are frequently recognised for outstanding teaching performance and the recent success when it comes to the record high number of students in our new Bachelor specialisation in Accounting and Financial Management sends a strong signal that what we do is highly appreciated by the students.

In terms of outreach, our Accounting Center of Excellence is growing with two new companies; Elekta and Skanska. Aleks Pop-Vasileva and Martin Carlsson-Wall together with all faculty and PhD students are doing a fantastic job in linking research and practice through, for instance, events, guest lectures, workshops and online communication. A few years ago we launched the ambitious strategy to excel not only in research and teaching, but also in outreach and the cogwheels below symbolize this strategy where we strive for a high level of integration between research, teaching and outreach.



Figure 1: Department of Accounting Strategy with three cogwheels.

I want to thank faculty, staff, and PhD students at the Department of Accounting and all our stakeholders for a fantastic 2021. I am looking forward to continuing this successful journey also for 2022 and onwards.



Kalle Kraus
Professor and Head of
Department of Accounting
Stockholm School of Economics



NEW MEMBERS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING

We are happy and proud to welcome a record number of five new PhD students (Fanny Almersson, Anders Biörklund, Yao Cai, Sofia Martinez Dominguez, Isabella Nordlund), Aleksandra Pop-Vasileva who has started a brand-new position as Lecturer with special outreach responsibilities, Lisa Larson who has started as Department Coordinator and Beatriz Garcia Osma who has joined our team as Visiting Professor. You can read more about them here below.

LISA LARSON, DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR



Born in Luleå, Sweden

Started working at SSE
in October 2020

Works at the Depart-
ment of Accounting and
at the HR Department

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

I finished my Bachelor in Human Resources from Umeå University in June 2020.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Throughout my HR studies I worked part – time at Länsförsäkringar’s HR department in Umeå. After I finished my studies, I moved to Stockholm. In October 2020 i started working at the HR Department here at Stockholm School of Economics. In September 2021, an opportunity came up to start working 50% as a Department Coordinator. From November 2021 I am now working 50% with HR and 50% at Department of Accounting. I think it is super interesting to be able to work with both professional services and the faculty.

HOBBIES

I love to explore new places with friends and family. The best way to do that, according to me is to have a competition or a specific goal to achieve when you are there. For example: Go to Reims in France and run the Marathon, visit a friend in Kiruna and climb to the top of Kebnekaise. I really enjoy spending time in the nature. Sleep in a tent, making your food over the gas stove and then go for a run in the morning. That is amazing! Skiing and horse riding is also some of my biggest hobbies.

BEATRIZ GARCÍA OSMA, VISITING PROFESSOR



Born in Madrid, Spain

Lived in the UK from
2003 to 2008

Visiting Professor

Professor at Universidad
Carlos III de Madrid
and Research Fellow at
ECGI. Editor, European
Accounting Review

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

I have a degree in Business from Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (Spain), where I also completed a Masters in Research (DEA) in Accounting and Financial Economics. Through Marie-Curie Scholarship, I obtained funding to do a PhD and a post-doc at Lancaster University in the UK. A funny tidbit is that when I came back from UK, I had to submit my PhD diploma for homologation (to be able to work in Spain). A committee decided that my PhD stood for “Doctor in Philosophy” full stop. Thus, if you look up my Spanish official CV, you will see I appear to hold a second PhD degree: in Philosophy. I wish I had such an extensive education. Alas, it was just a clerk’s mistake.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Since 2017, I am Professor of Accounting and Financial Economics at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid. Since 2020, I am a Research Fellow at ECGI. Currently, I am editor-in-chief of the European Accounting Review, the flagship academic Journal of the European Accounting Association, where I also was Co-Chair of the Doctoral Colloquium, a tremendously rewarding experience. I enjoy doctoral education above all other academic endeavors.

HOBBIES

Outside of the University, I enjoy travelling and (guess it) eating out. Observing life, culture, and tradition in foreign countries is something I am keenly interested in. I am grateful for the opportunities academic life has given me to meet people and visit places around the world, and it is common for me to try to extend my conference trips by a day or two, to take the time to visit those cities I do not know well.

ALEKSANDRA POP-VASILEVA, LECTURER



Born in Skopje,
Macedonia

Lived in Australia from
2005 to 2020

Lecturer with special out-
reach responsibilities

Co-Director, The Ac-
counting and Financial
Management Center of
Excellence (ACE)

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

I finished a Bachelor in Economics degree in Macedonia in 2004, a four year program with a double major in economics and business management. Upon my move to Australia I completed the Honours (1st class) in Accounting program at The Faculty of Business and Economics at Macquarie University, Sydney in 2008 (1 year Masters with thesis equivalent). In 2009 I began the PhD program (part-time) at Macquarie University and finished in 2017.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Throughout my PhD studies I worked as a full time Lecturer (Assistant Professor) and tenured faculty at the Department of Accounting at Macquarie University. In 2017 I accepted a Lecturer (Assistant Professor) position at Monash University in Melbourne where I worked until my arrival at SSE.

HOBBIES

My main passions have always been languages and music. I speak three languages confidently and two more cautiously, and I look forward to add Swedish to my list. My music passion led me to a research project in the underground techno scene in Melbourne whereby together with Professor Kalle Kraus and Associate Professor Martin Carlsson-Wall and we studied the control and identity issues of an independent electronic music radio station and the underground dance music subculture more broadly. Throughout the project, I met and interviewed numerous DJ's, attended dance music events and eventually was taught how to DJ myself. I spend my free time discovering and collecting new music, advancing my music mixing skills, compiling DJ sets either on my own or jointly with professional DJ friends for labels and promoters, as well as playing live at the occasional party.

FANNY ALMERSSON, PHD STUDENT



Born in Köping, Sweden

Background from study-
ing at the Stockholm
School of Economics and
Esade Business School

1st year PhD Student in
Management Accounting

Passionate about sports

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

I completed a three-year bachelor in Business and Economics at the Stockholm School of Economics (SSE) in 2019. Throughout my studies, I spent one semester studying finance and management at Esade Business School in Barcelona. After returning to SSE, I completed the two-year Master Program in Accounting, Valuation and Financial Management in 2021. In August 2021, I joined the Department of Accounting as a PhD student.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Prior to my PhD studies, I worked as a research assistant at the Center for Sports and Business. Moreover, I was a part of a project to implement Impact Weighted Accounts to the 100 largest firms in Sweden together with Norrsken Foundation and Harvard Business School.

HOBBIES

My biggest passion is sports, and I have a background in football, athletics, gymnastics, and dancing. I have spent 12 years playing and coaching football, and during my time at SSE I have played in and coached the female football team (with a gold medal in Euromasters 2017 as the biggest achievement). In addition, I spent one year in the board of the Sports Committee. Although I nowadays spend most of my spare time skiing, snowboarding, and playing padel, I am excited to kick off my first research project where I will study the management accounting in a Swedish football club.

ANDERS BIÖRKLUND, PHD STUDENT



Born in Karlstad, Sweden

Lives in Stockholm since 2015

1st year PhD student in Accounting

Affiliated researcher at the Mistra Center for Sustainable Markets

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

I have a Bachelor in Business and Economics (2015-2018) as well as a Master in Accounting, Valuation, and Financial Management (2018-2020), both from SSE. Started my PhD studies at the SSE Department of Accounting in August 2021.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Worked as a research assistant at the Mistra Center for Sustainable Markets after graduating the master in 2020 until I began my PhD studies at the SSE Department of Accounting in August 2021. Before that I did an internship in the fall of 2019 for BMW Northern Europe where I worked on a project about internal control.

HOBBIES

My main interests include food, reading, and hiking, preferably involving socializing around a camp fire along with something to eat. The passion for cooking is without question the one with most history (video proof suggest from the age of 2), being a vital component of my daily life and I always enjoy a good dinner party. I am also part of a book club with friends from the Bachelor studies, and in addition to reading we also use the book club as a forum for playing board games and discussing stock-picking as we have a common interest in financial markets.

YAO CAI, PHD STUDENT



Born and raised in Chongqing, a beautiful mountain city on the move in southwestern China. Fond of the spicy delicacies there, e.g., hotpot!

1st year PhD student in Accounting

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

I majored in Accounting at Huazhong Agricultural University from 2014 to 2018 in Wuhan, China. Meanwhile, I also minored in Taxation at Zhongnan University of Economics and Law in 2016. In 2020, I got my MSc in Accounting, Valuation and Financial Management from Stockholm School of Economics. And I am very excited to “re-join” the Department of Accounting as a PhD student and be back in Stockholm in September 2021.

HOBBIES

On the one hand, I am a passionate person. I have been a football enthusiast for around 11 years. My favorite team is Manchester United and my favorite star is Cristiano Ronaldo. I love doing sports as well. During my whole undergraduate stage, I played as a striker and sometimes center forward on the college football team, and now I continue to play with some friends on weekends here in Stockholm. When I don't play football, I work out at home (yeah weirdly I don't like going to the gym). On the other hand, I could also be a very quiet person who enjoys the tranquility of “loneliness” very much. In my other spare time, I like reading, drawing and writing bullet journals (while watching sitcoms). Dream about opening an independent bookstore one day in my elder time.

SOFÍA MARTÍNEZ, PHD STUDENT



Born in Roses, Spain

1st year PhD student in Accounting

Research in financial accounting and corporate governance

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

I hold a Bachelor in Finance and Accounting from Universidad Carlos III de Madrid in Spain, a four year program where I specialized in financial accounting. Right after that, I completed a Master in Research in Business and Finance from Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, where I started doing research in financial accounting and corporate governance topics. My current research focuses on corporate governance institutions such as boards of directors and how they shape firm outcomes and the financial reporting process. In 2021 I started my PhD studies at the Department of Accounting at Stockholm School of Economics.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Throughout my master studies I worked as a Teaching Assistant for financial accounting courses in the bachelor program.

HOBBIES

My hobbies include reading, learning languages and baking. I speak Spanish, Catalan and English. I'm also looking forward to learning Swedish and baking some traditional Swedish pastries these coming years.

ISABELLA NORDLUND, PHD STUDENT



Born in Vallentuna, Sweden

Background as Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant at Stockholm University.

1st year PhD student in Accounting

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

I finished a Bachelor in Business Administration with a specialization in Accounting at Stockholm University in 2018. After a year of additional courses in Economics and Economic History, I completed a two-year Master program in Accounting and Management Control in 2021, at Stockholm University as well. In August 2021, I joined the department of Accounting at Stockholm School of Economics as a PhD student. My research interests lies with the roles and identities of the accountants as well as accounting communication.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

Starting my second year of the Bachelor program, and up until my completion of the Master, I worked as a Teaching Assistant at the Department of Accounting at Stockholm University. Furthermore, during a period of my Master studies, I was part of a research project on Accounting Talk as a Research Assistant. Additionally, I am one of the co-authors to a Swedish course book in accounting, Den Nya Affärsredovisningen, as of its latest edition (2021).

HOBBIES

Some of my interests are reading, languages and going to musicals. In terms of genres for reading, it ranges from everything between non-fictional to fantasy. Moreover, I studied Italian for a while before starting my university studies. I would not claim, though, to be able to speak it confidently, but would like to pick it up sometime in the future.

INTERVIEWS



We took the opportunity to do a short interview with our new **Visiting Professor Beatriz Garcia Osma**.

How have your first months been at SSE?

Beatriz: "SEE has given me the warmest of welcomes. I feel quite integrated within the department, despite being a visiting scholar and having only been there for one week in person. I have joined in several seminars and doctoral activities, as well as already started collaborating with members of the department. Overall, I am very positively impressed and look forward to the rest of the year."

How are you finding the department? What has been your experience as new faculty?

Beatriz: "As noted, I have felt very welcome. The department strong focus on excellence is very motivating. I met many of the researchers in the financial accounting group at an event organized by Henrik Nilsson, which was a great launch for the year. We discussed our own projects and had the opportunity to give and receive feedback, as well as to learn about current projects and bounce ideas off each other. I am very much looking forward to visiting in the spring/summer, to see what advances the different projects have made and to perhaps start some new projects with the group."

Is there anything unique/specific/interesting/amusing that you may have noticed during the year that you would like to share?

Beatriz: "I only attended one fika, but I am already a huge fan. I look forward to joining some more in the future!"



We also took the opportunity to do a short interview with **Assistant Professor Irina Gazizova** who joined the department in 2020. Given the peculiar pandemic time she joined the department, we reached out to Irina for her reflections from her first year at SSE.

How has your first year been at SSE/ Stockholm in general?

Irina: "Even though I joined SSE in September 2020, the first year of the Covid-19 crisis, my transition was very smooth. I had a lot of support and guidance from my new colleagues and the government. Stockholm and SSE are very friendly for expats."

How are you finding the department? What has been your experience as new faculty?

Irina: "I think we have a very healthy and supportive environment at the department. It was very easy to get to know the faculty. Everyone was welcome and open."

Is there anything unique/specific/interesting/amusing that you may have noticed during the year that you would like to share?

Irina: "I think that having Wednesdays' Fika event is a very nice tradition. As a new person, I had the opportunity to interact with the faculty in a less formal environment and with people with whom I did not have any work overlaps."



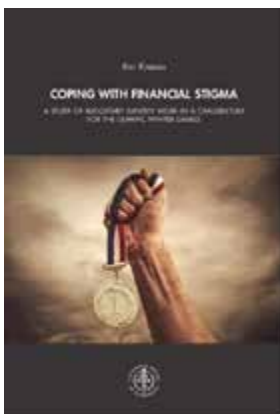
RESEARCH

RESEARCH

The research at the Department of Accounting covers a broad range of questions related to management accounting and control, financial and sustainability accounting, auditing and tax, and financial analysis, valuation and corporate governance. Our faculty regularly publish in leading accounting journals and employ both qualitative and quantitative methods.



DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS



Kai DeMott (previously Krauss) successfully defended his PhD thesis “Coping with financial stigma: a study of budgetary identity work in a candidature for the Olympic Winter Games” on May 28th, 2021. The dissertation is based on a case study of a candidature for the Olympic Winter Games, where project managers were occupied with pitching their budget for such a megaproject in the light of prevailing cost controversies. In order to make sense of the challenges faced by these managers, the concept of organizational stigma was mobilized to offer a ‘reinterpretation’ of budgeting as a site for stigmatization, in which budgets may become key attributes of a financial stigma, which also makes them pivotal objects in the identity work of organizational members. Based on this reinterpretation, the study answers the question of why and how organizational members cope with the financial stigma of megaprojects like the Olympic Games through budgeting.



We took the opportunity to talk to Kai DeMott.

What have you been up to since finishing your PhD at SSE?

Kai: “Writing papers, attending workshops, and looking for a job. I know

this may sound rather unromantic but, indeed, it has been a bit of a challenge for me personally with the pandemic, a small baby, and moving to North America. However, everything turned out great, in fact, better than I could have wished for in the end. I just signed an offer and will start my tenure-track this fall in Canada [Concordia University, Montreal], which my family and I are super excited about.”

If you had to reflect on your time at SSE, what are some of the most stand out experiences/memories that come to mind?

Kai: “There are plenty of course, but what I will always hold in good memory is just being around the department among wonderful people. I loved just being there, whether sitting at my desk focused or annoying colleagues with my questions. It is a place that also allowed me to embrace the well-needed silliness at times, chatting on the hallway, the Fikas, the spontaneous after-work beers, or Wäng-lunches together. I think those more intimate encounters have been just as inspiring and important for me in the PhD process as any formal seminars or courses. In the same way, I also just loved attending conferences and doctoral colloquia, especially when we came as a bunch from SSE, because those

were just great opportunities to learn from others in the field, to get connected and establish a network – something I utterly benefited from in my recent job search, but also for finding out where I fit in, so to say, and for collaborations going forward.”

What would you say SSE has taught you during your studies that you will take with you in the future or that you have already applied since completing your degree?

Kai: “It is kind of funny now looking at SSE ‘from the outside’ and the things I took with me. I can certainly say that I have learned a great deal when it comes to the craft of an academic, but also about myself personally, which I

think goes hand in hand. However, in the light of my answers before, I think one of the most important things SSE has given me is some sort of momentum that continues beyond my PhD studies. Since completing my degree, I see how the world of academia keeps opening up to me, how it seems to make more sense one step at a time, and I feel that I still keep progressing when it comes to my writing, my interest in (and sensemaking of) the literature, and basically in forming my own identity as a researcher and teacher. In that sense, SSE has not only taught but ‘triggered’ me, which I consider an invaluable gift for which I will always be thankful!”

RESEARCH AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

During 2021, our faculty and PhD students have been recognized for outstanding research.

Professor Henrik Nilsson, Assistant Professor Tomas Hjelström, Professor J-P Kallunki and Assistant Professor Milda Tylaite received an Honourable mention, runner up for the best paper award in European Accounting Review 2020 (announced in January 2021), for the paper entitled “Executives’ Personal Tax Behavior and Corporate Tax Avoidance Consistency”.

Professor Henrik Nilsson, Acting Professor Niclas Hellman and Assistant Professor Milda Tylaite received the Best paper award at the 2021 European Accounting Review Annual Conference (19-20 November 2021), for their paper entitled “Mandatory Adoption of IFRS for SMEs based Reporting Standards in Private Firms: A Swedish Regulatory Experiment” (Co-author: D. Vural -Meijer)

PhD student Liwei Zhu and PhD student Noor Alshamma received the prestigious PhD award for Best Paper at the Nordic Accounting Conference 2021 held in Copenhagen (11-12 November 2021). Liwei’s paper is entitled “Do audit partners learn from the bankruptcy of their clients?” and Noor’s paper is entitled “The co-movement of stock prices and fundamental values: The role of firm characteristics and investor sentiment.”

Assistant Professor Ting Dong was awarded a Wallander scholarship for outstanding thesis, a three year full research financing. Her thesis is entitled “Essays on the supply and demand for auditing service.”

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

This year has been particularly successful for our faculty based on the volume of accepted and published peer-reviewed articles.

Carlsson-Wall, M., Goretzki, L., Hofstedt, J., Kraus, K. & Nilsson, C-J. (2021). "Exploring the implications of cloud-based enterprise resource planning systems for public sector management accountants". *Financial Accountability & Management*, <http://doi.org/10.1111/faam.12300>

Based on a case study of a large Swedish local government municipality, this paper captures the complexity of a CERP system implementation, by unpacking the effects of how cloud-based systems are used in practice and how they are implicated in the performance of management accountants' role. CERP systems can pose a double-edged sword for public sector management accountants—enabling and constraining their role.

Carlsson-Wall, M., Goretzki, L., Kraus, K. & Lind, J. (2021). "Exploring the Role of Management Control Anchor Practices in New Product Development". *European Accounting Review*, 30(2), 251-276, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638180.2020.1763187>

This paper shows how certain management controls become more guiding than others in the management of new product development (NPD). The findings detail how the opportunity space within which managers maneuver NPD can be underpinned by a hierarchically arranged management control infrastructure governed by management control anchor practices that enable 'anchored prioritizations' through which some concerns become 'more important' than others.

Carlsson-Wall, M., Iredahl, A., Kraus, K., & Wiklund, M. (2021). "The role of management controls in managing heterogeneous interests during extreme situations: the Swedish migrant crisis in 2015". *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*, 18(1). <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRAM-05-2018-0030>

This paper explores the role of management controls in managing heterogeneous interests during extreme situations through interviews and observations, analysing the Swedish Migration Agency's management controls and study routines during the peak of the European Migrant Crisis.

Carlsson-Wall, M., Kaarbøe, K., Kraus, K., & Meidell, A. (2021). "Risk management as passionate imitation – the interconnections among emotions, performance metrics, and risk in a global technology firm". *Abacus*, 57(1), 72-100. <https://doi.org/10.1111/abac.12193>

This paper traces the evolution of risk management practices in a global technology company between 2000 and 2015. We extend recent research that has highlighted the emotional aspects of riskwork. We detail how a passionate interest—'we can do better at risk management'—emotionally 'hooked' the staff in the company's Sourcing Unit. Risk management, emotion, and management controls were intertwined.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Chua, W. F., Graaf, J., & Kraus, K. (2021). "Mapping and contesting peer selection in digitalised public sector benchmarking". *Financial Accountability & Management*, <https://doi.org/10.1111/faam.12306>

Based on a case in a large Swedish local government municipality, this paper investigates the impact of a digital database and benchmarking device – Kolada, used to compare the performance of Swedish municipalities. Tracing the introduction, development, and use of the digital database, the study moves beyond a focus on "technical problems" and shows how digitalized benchmarking was not a politically neutral or asocial process.

Eugster, F., Kallunki, J., Nilsson, H., & Setterberg, H. (2021). "IQ and corporate insiders' decisions to time insider and outsider trading". *European Financial Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/eufm.12302>

The article examines how corporate insiders' cognitive ability (IQ) affects their decisions to time insider and outsider trading before abnormal stock price changes based on archival data analysis on male corporate insiders in Sweden.

Eugster, F. & Wagner, A. (2021). "Earning investor trust: The role of past earnings management". *Journal of Business Finance and Accounting*, 48(1-2), 269-307 <https://doi.org/10.1111/jbfa.12477>

The paper examines whether earnings management, albeit legal, hinder investor trust in reported earnings as well as whether investors regard earnings management as a way for firms to convey private information, or simply as a neutral feature of financial reporting. The findings suggest that past abstinence from earnings management increases investor responses to future earnings surprises.

Gatti, S., Ivanova, M. N., & Pündrich, G. (2021). "Corporate Bankruptcy and Directors' Reputation: An Empirical Analysis of the Effects on Public Debt Contracts". *Journal of Accounting, Auditing & Finance*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0148558X211015533>

This article investigates the link between board members' past professional experiences and the terms and conditions of the debt contracts of their current firms. In particular, we examine whether directors' past bankruptcy experience affects the pricing and nonpricing terms of public debt contracts. Using a sample of 8,142 bond issues in the United States in the period 1995 to 2015, we document higher credit spreads and smaller bond sizes for firms with such directors, suggesting that bondholders are concerned about past bankruptcy experience.

Goretzki, L., Löhlein, L., Schäffer, U., Schmidt, A., & Strauss, E. (2021). "Exploring the Role of Metaphors in Social-Identity Construction: The Case of the German Controller". *European Accounting Review*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638180.2021.1882318>

This study explores the rhetorical strategies underlying the discursive construction of the German controller social-identity in the mid-1970s. This study complements previous research on management accounting professionals struggle with different role models for the management accountant, investigating how broader ideas about the management accounting professional are discursively constructed.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Goretzki, L., Reuter, M., Sandberg, J. & Thulin, G. (2021) "Making sense of employee satisfaction measurement – A technological frames of reference perspective". *The British Accounting Review*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bar.2021.101032>

Based on a qualitative case study investigating the application of a new employee satisfaction measurement system in a large camping chain undergoing a post-merger integration, this study provides a phenomenological perspective that illuminates how groups of actors interpret and enact the means and ends of employee satisfaction measures in situated and emergent patterns of use. This study highlights how the organizational role of an employee satisfaction measurement system is not determined a priori by its intended purpose or inscribed structural features, but subject to actors' sensemaking.

Graaf, J. (2021). "Can Sell-side Analysts Compete Using Public Information? Analysts as Frame-makers Revisited". *European Accounting Review*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638180.2021.1942945>

This paper extends qualitative research on sell-side analysts by investigating how analysts compete against each other in the market for investment advice. The paper challenges the assumption that analysts must utilize private information in such competition, and investigates the role of a public setting – the quarterly earnings presentation – for analysts' analytical work and client communication.

Graaf, J., Kraus, K., & Strömsten, T. (2021). "The problematics of financialization– On the important (but neglected) horizontal axis of organizational action". *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2021.102339>.

This study traces the financialization of the Swedish telecommunications company Ericsson from 1990 to 2000. Previous research has explained financialization in terms of the influence of actors (e.g., fund managers and financial analysts) and accounting technologies (e.g., increased use of stock options and financially oriented incentive systems) associated with what Hopwood (1983) labelled the vertical axis of organizational action. Our case, however, shows that the horizontal axis of organizational action (Ericsson's inter-firm relationship with the lead firm Vodafone) played a pivotal role.

Hellman, N. (2021). "Discussion of 'Accounting for intangible assets: suggested solutions'", *Accounting and Business Research*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00014788.2021.1984906>

The paper offers a discussion how normative accounting research, relevant to standard setters is relatively underdeveloped, and that empirical research is constrained by accounting practice. The discussion focuses on three areas: (1) single project vs. portfolios, (2) internally generated vs. purchased assets and (3) measurement after recognition.

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

Ivanova, M. N., & Prencipe, A. (2021). "The Effects of Board Interlocks With an Allegedly Fraudulent Company on Audit Fees". *Journal of Accounting, Auditing & Finance*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0148558X20971947>

Drawing on prior literature on audit fees, client reputation, and corporate governance, the paper posits that a material adverse event at a firm, such as a financial fraud allegation, leads to an increase in the audit fees of firms connected to the former by a board interlock.

Lewensohn, D., Sjögren, E., & Sundberg, C. J. (2021). "Does Productive Mean Active? The Behavior of Occasional and Serial Academic Inventors in Patenting Processes". *Triple Helix*, 8(1), 163-215. <http://doi.org/10.1163/21971927-bja10021>

Based on interviews with twenty Swedish academic inventors of diverse patenting experience, this paper analyses how serial and occasional inventors acted in patent initiation, patent application and subsequent patent management for specific inventions. findings suggest that commonly used volume-based classifications of academic inventors obscure potentially relevant behavioral differences.

Schrøder, I., Cederberg, E., & Hauge, A. M. (2021). "What is good work in a hybrid organization? On the efforts of sequencing registers of valuation". *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AAAJ-12-2019-4328>

This paper investigates how different and sometimes conflicting approaches to performance evaluations are hybridized in the day-to-day activities of a disciplined hybrid organization—i.e. a public child protection agency at the intersection between the market and the public sector, based on a one-year ethnography.



PHOTO BY JULIANA WIKLUND

RESEARCH IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Exploring the implications of cloud-based enterprise resource planning systems for public sector management accountants

Recently published research from Associate Professor Lukas Goretzki, Associate Professor Martin Carlsson-Wall and Professor Kalle Kraus in Financial Accountability & Management explores how the implementation of a Cloud-based Enterprise Resource Planning (CERP) system in a public sector organization affects its management accounting function.

Like traditional ERP systems, CERP includes multiple organizational functions such as accounting, procurement, and production; however, the software is no longer stored or developed in-house. Cloud-based computing is proclaimed to be a key digital trend for both private and public sector organizations informing their strategies and changing the way information technology is delivered, deployed, used, maintained, and resourced.

Based on a case study of a large Swedish local government municipality, the paper captures the complexity of a CERP system implementation, by unpacking the effects of how cloud-based systems are used in practice and how they are implicated in the performance of management accountants' role. CERP systems can pose a double-edged sword for public sector management accountants—enabling and constraining their role. Consequently, this research looks at how the CERP system is developed; who “controls” the system, and ultimately decides on the features to include; the ideology embedded in the system; the kinds of expertise inscribed in the system; and how this, in turn, enables or constrains

management accountants to mobilize their specific expertise in performing their roles.

The findings suggest an ambivalent role of cloud-based technology in the context of the work of public sector management accountants due to varied experiences amongst central management accountants versus the local management accountants.

The CERP system enabled central management accountants to mobilize their specific expertise as it eliminated manual work, increased transparency, and made them feel more comfortable with the numbers. However, the less flexible features of a CERP system provided by external vendors, such as limited customization, posed a challenge for the local management accountants in serving the different needs of a diverse range of managers and business units.

Although both focal groups of analysis belonged to the same occupation, looking at the different attitudes that central and local management accountants developed toward the CERP system, the study found that they framed the role of technology differently. While local management accountants expected a tool that should enable drawing on local expertise to produce tailor-made information for their local units, central management accountants saw the CERP system as a tool that allowed them to consume prefabricated “high-quality” information to assure efficient and risk-free accounting processes throughout the entire organization.



The implications from these findings suggest that cloud technology constitutes a risk if accounting and control processes become unduly inflexible and cumbersome at the local level. Coping with an inflexible cloud-based system may there-

fore add to the list of challenges that public sector management accountants experience when trying to be (come) business partners.

Making sense of employee satisfaction measurement

New article co-authored by Associate Professor Lukas Goretzki and Assistant Professor Marek Reuter published in *The British Accounting Review* invites a more critical reflection on employee satisfaction measurement as a means to manage employee morale. The measurement of employee satisfaction has assumed a status as a taken-for-granted representation of an organization's "social bottom-line". This study, however, highlights how the organizational role of an employee satisfaction measurement system is not determined a priori by its intended purpose or inscribed structural features, but subject to actors' sensemaking.

Based on a qualitative case study investigating the application of a new employee satisfaction measurement system in a company undergoing a post-merger integration, this study provides an in-depth perspective that illuminates how different groups of actors can interpret and enact the means and ends of employee satisfaction measures in various and at times conflicting ways.

This research demonstrates how employee satisfaction measurement systems

can be subject to actors' incongruent sensemaking, eventually leading to tensions within the organization. More specifically, it illustrates how actors might interpret employee satisfaction measurement as a form of non-traditional results control, as an empowerment tool, or a merely ceremonial practice with little or no significance. The study furthermore shows how for employees who interpret employee satisfaction measures as empowerment tools, the application of such systems is prone to elicit members' hopes, desires, and expectations vis-à-vis management relating to their 'voice' within the organization. The realization that an employee satisfaction measurement system does not trigger the hoped-for discussions among managers about employee wellbeing might spur dissolution and frustration amongst employees. The study in this sense cautions us that one should be careful assuming that both subordinates and superiors or even different (groups of) subordinates engage with an employee satisfaction measurement system with similar motives in mind.

Mapping and contesting peer selection in digitalised public sector benchmarking

New publication in *Financial Accounting & Management* by Assistant Professor Johan Graaf, Professor Kalle Kraus and Professor Wai-Fong Chua offers insights into the digital transformation of the public sector by investigating the influence of digitalization on the process of benchmarking and, in particular, the peer selection process. The use of information technology is extensively embedded in the public sector bringing efficiency and speed to the delivery of public services. However, the use of information technology also raises concerns—ranging from data security to privacy breaches and algorithmic governance.

Based on a case study conducted in a large Swedish local municipality, the paper investigates the impact of a digital database and benchmarking device – Kolada, used to compare the performance of Swedish municipalities. Tracing the introduction, development, and use of the digital database, the study moves beyond a focus on “technical problems” and shows how digitalized benchmarking was not a politically neutral or asocial process.

The emergence of benchmarking has followed the rise of new public management and the “modernization” of the public sector, similar to many other management control techniques. Consequently, different types of public sector organizations have seen the adoption of benchmarking, often in response to a lack of generally accepted evaluation criteria for operations. Such relative evaluations have been assumed to reduce uncertainty regarding an organization’s quality, productivity and efficiency, thereby enabling decision makers to

implement more focused strategies for improving organizational performance. One of the key impediments to benchmarking of the Swedish municipalities in the past was that information was collected, arranged, and made available by over 50 different organizations (e.g., various governmental agencies). Following the introduction of Kolada, all Swedish municipal statistics are held in one database, irrespective of their source. The database contains thousands of different performance indicators for hundreds of municipalities, all of which can be used to quickly compare and rank any selection of municipalities. The Comparer function of the Kolada guides users by dividing a municipality into different service areas, to then display a selection of indicators for comparison. For quality controllers, working in central administrative departments of municipalities, Kolada enabled a more abstract, acontextual form of algorithmically supported benchmarking that was quickly performed from office desks. The quality controllers viewed Kolada’s comparative options as enabling a more fact-based, “objective” choice of comparative peers, which aimed to appeal to a broad set of decision makers. However, politicians and practitioners “on the ground,” in comparison, were interested in detailing what peers (as competitors and/or role models) were doing and how they were improving their services. Being interested in “applied science”, Kolada’s outputs—which lacked localized detail—failed to persuade the practitioners. Pure science was too generic, too decontextualized, and the more singular forms of comparability generated by Kolada’s

digital algorithms were considered less important, both cognitively and affectively, than “imperfect” and localized forms of comparison with neighbours that had constituted past practices.

The findings indicate that choosing peers that “matter” is a critical decision due to the affective ties in the benchmarking process. The benchmarking peers that mattered over time would turn into role models, collaborators, competitors, and much more, and this engaged a broad range of stakeholders and associated emotions. The risk in employing benchmarking without affective ties to those who are selected as “peers” is that attention is put on the indicator values and average scores rather than on the

learning process.

Furthermore, the study suggests that flexibility and freedom in the peer selection process can counteract the some of the more problematic features of benchmarking (e.g., competitiveness and gaming behaviour). Different peer groups are associated with different legacies and afford different responses to the indicators. Such flexibility in peer selection could thus aid public sector organizations to accommodate the many different demands and needs of their stakeholders and create some independence from a single perspective on performance.





TEACHING

TEACHING

Our teaching is highly appreciated by both students and executives and our faculty is engaged in teaching at the bachelor, master, MBA levels as well as at SSE Executive Education. We offer, for instance, a two-year Master Program in Accounting, Valuation and Financial Management, known for its practical relevance and excellent placement of the students. Following the extension of the pandemic-related working conditions throughout 2021, the department's teaching activities adjusted accordingly, with faculty delivering courses in fully digital or hybrid format (following the easing of pandemic restrictions). In October 2021, the school enthusiastically saw the return to the physical classes and welcomed students to the full classrooms. Having to accommodate to the changing government health recommendations resulted in the acquisition of new streaming studio equipment as well as the further development of faculty teaching skills, routines and practices applicable to diverse modes of delivery.



PHOTO BY JULIANA WIKLUND

NEW INITIATIVES

We have re-designed the mandatory bachelor courses in the Business and Economics bachelor program. During 2020 and 2021 they went live. We now offer two mandatory courses, BE301 Accounting I: Understanding Financial Reports; and BE302 Accounting II: Analysing Performance.

Description of BE301 Accounting I: Understanding Financial Reports

Accounting and organizations. Why is accounting so important in business life? What is the difference between financial accounting (one of the two accounting 'dialects') and management accounting (the other 'dialect')? This introduction will put accounting in a broader perspective. The language of financial accounting. Financial accounting captures the financial consequences of both strategic and operational business decisions. You should be able to use and understand an annual report. This means understanding the form and contents of the income statement, the balance sheet

and the cash flow statement. It also means understanding the links between the three reports, as well as the effects of specific company decisions on these financial reports. For example: What is the difference between profit and cash flow? How is development of new products represented in the financial reports? What happens in the reports when a company issues new shares? How does a firm's growth strategy show up in the balance sheet? The language of management accounting. Management accounting is useful for describing and analysing an

organisation's activities as projects with different periods. Managers often think of everyday activities as projects/investments. How are investments evaluated from a management accounting point of view? We will learn common capital budgeting techniques such as the net present value and payback method. Financial accounting is typically concerned with finding annual (or shorter) periodic measures of performance. What tensions does that create when, for instance, trying to measure quarterly profits in an infrastructural project whose useful life might be 60 years? Man-

agement accounting is also useful for analysing costs, which is important for both production and pricing decisions. We will compare and contrast the view of costs from a financial accounting (i.e. income statement) perspective with the view of costs in management accounting reports (i.e. internal financial reports). What methods do we have for product costing? We will learn break-even analysis, direct/contribution costing and full costing and these methods will be discussed in relation to the costs seen in the income statement.

Description of BE302 Accounting II: Analysing Performance

The course is divided into three blocks. The first block deals with liquidity and working capital management. Working capital is a strong indicator of companies' financial health. We will evaluate whether companies have adequate cash flows to be able to run its operations, and how to optimize the working capital and companies' funding. Therefore, we will also talk about source of financing. The second block deals with mergers and acquisition. M&As are often an inherent part of companies' growth strategies. In the course, we will look at their consequences for financial reporting. This knowledge will be crucial for the third block. In performance evaluation we need to have a good understanding of group structures and their effects on financial statements.

The third block is about value creation. We will analyze operating profitability as the primary source of value creation. We will then introduce the concept of financial leverage and its implications for the owner's profitability. Further, we will look into growth strategies and their consequences for financials. Companies can grow in an organic way or by mergers and acquisitions so we will link to block two. Companies need good cash flows that support the growth and find optimal financing so we will link also to block 1. Finally, we introduce sustainability as a crucial value driver and integrate non-financial performance measures into the overall performance analysis.



We also took the opportunity to talk to **Assistant Professor Katerina Hellström** who is the Course Director for course BE302 and has been in charge of designing and delivering the course.

Katerina: "Starting a new bachelor course is always challenging and as faculty you wonder: How will the course be accepted? How will I engage 300 students? Is everything on place or did I forget anything? And then you start. You do not sleep, you worry, you try to

feel the atmosphere, you need to know! Then you start to get the feedback from students and your pulse goes down. You can sleep again. Everything will be fine."

Katerina continues: "Autumn 2021 I have learned three things that are crucial

for a course success. The first is faculty engagement. Without enthusiasm you do not get anywhere, you have to have fun as teacher. Show a genuine interest in students as a group and as individuals. The second is you should not be afraid of trying new things. Test new digital tools, test new methods, test new cases, learn yourself while you make others learn. The third is words I have heard from a SSE colleague: "Teachers try to cover the

material. But what you should rather do is to uncover material."

Katerina: "And finally some bullet points:

- Clear and logical structure is A and O
- Digital tests throughout the course enhance learning from the very beginning of the course
- Focus on principles and the big picture rather than small details"

3313 - Investments and Value Creation in Global Sports

During the fall of 2021, Martin Carlsson-Wall, Tomas Hjelström and Per Strömberg (Finance Department) delivered a new course called "Investments and Value Creation in Global Sports". The course was given digitally and offered to students in SSE's international networks GNAM (Global Network for Advanced Management), CEMS and Civica. In total, 68 students from 19 schools in 16 countries participated.

Some of the more well-known schools were Haas School of Business, University of California Berkeley, Yale School of Management, HEC Paris, ESADE in Barcelona, Hertie School of Governance in Berlin, Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, National University of Singapore and University of New South Wales in Sydney.



Below **Associate Professor Martin Carlsson-Wall** reflects on the design and delivery of 3313.

Martin: "Conducting the course digitally, it truly offered a global experience. For example, when we started lectures at 15.00 in Stockholm, the time was 01.00 in Sidney and 06.00 in San Francisco. Digitalization also enabled us to get global thought leaders as guest lectures. Dan Singer (Global Head of Sports and Entertainment at McKinsey) called in from New York, Ebru Köksal (former CEO of Galatasaray Football Club and now Chair of Women in Football) tuned in from Turkey and Ricardo Fort (former Global Director of Sponsorship for both Coca-Coca and VISA) gave his guest lecture from Atlanta in Georgia (US)."

Martin continues: "However, finding inspiration in SSE President Lars Strannegård's vision for future education, the course experimented with both digital and physical elements. According to Strannegård, the future education of SSE

could be built around five C:

- Content
- Context
- Community
- Contacts
- Confidence

Starting with content and context, they are ideal for digital tools. In terms of content, we can leverage global guest lecturers and in terms of context, students can understand sport from different perspectives. However, community, contacts and confidence are more difficult to gain through digital means. Here, one needs physical experiences where all senses of the human body are activated. Because of this, we "extended the physical classroom" for the SSE students that were present in Stockholm. As a start, we had a joint dinner where we had time to get to know each other. This was followed up by field trips to football clubs

and ice hockey clubs where we also watched games. In terms of developing relationships with future employers, we created a “sports day” with one of the most distinguished Sport Tech companies in Stockholm. This included playing padel with their senior partners, hearing

lectures about the growth of the padel industry and then meeting at night for another dinner. Extending the classroom experience both digitally and physically worked well. Here are some quotes from the course evaluation:

“The expertise and quality of the guest lecturers and professors were outstanding. I found it extremely valuable and insightful to be exposed to such high-profile industry professionals.”

“The combination of theory and practice was the main strength. It was amazing to have so many different perspectives on how to work with sports and what different career paths are available for us after leaving SSE. Also, a big highlight needs to be given to the incredible outside Zoom events such as the kick-off dinner with Citibank, the football and ice hockey matches with Djurgården, the dinner with Jonas Persson [Sport Tech CEO], the visit to the Swedish Hockey League and the tour of Tele2 Arena. This was a course I will always remember and be thankful to SSE that they organized because it was really a match between my passion and interests.”

“I have been sharing my learnings about this course with my network and I think I have been very effective about evangelising potential students for the future. In brief, this course will provide you with tools to understand the mechanics of sport as an industry as well as a passionate interest. It will allow you to look a bit deeper behind the headlines to understand what is actually going on and what it might be for the future of the sport you are interested in.”



We also asked **Assistant Professor Marek Reuter** to provide some reflections on his teaching in the **B&E Reflections Series**, a brand-new course in the Business and Economics Bachelor program.

Marek: “In 2020 and 2021 I had the chance to, as a teacher, take part in a novel, and as I perceive it rather exciting and fruitful, educational initiative at SSE – The B&E Reflection Series. ‘The Series’, as faculty members and students came to informally call it, is a pioneering effort, the overall purpose of which is to promote students’ reflective thinking abilities beyond what is encountered in most other vocational skills-oriented courses. The idea is to nurture a spirit of life-long learning with a creative eye towards the future. Hereby individual student development is encouraged and the SSE FREE-acronym is substantiated. In particular the traits of ‘Reflective and self-aware’ and ‘Empathetic and cultur-

ally literate’ are shouldered within the realms of The Series.”

Marek continues: “The course is organized in smaller seminar groups of 20 participants each, all of which undergo 7 colloquia over the course of one and a half years. Although the specific seminar contents would be designed by the respective seminar group teachers, there are two basic elements: (1) course coherence and (2) a lead read. In context of the former, the students are prompted to reflect upon their study program as an integrated, coherent whole, as opposed to assemblage of single courses. Here, science philosophy, that is the positivist, interpretive, and critical research paradigms, as well as

the B&E program vision were mobilized as reflection devices to make sense of the various courses and how they relate to each other from a meta-perspective. The second element, the lead read, was meant to further expand this towards a broader exercise of self-reflection. The Self here being conceived as a member of what many think of as a prestigious business school. This perspective evoked many interesting discussions about questions such as for example: What is my professional identity and career path? What are the privileges and responsibilities in society that this role brings with it? What is success and what is a meaningful career? All The Series teachers chose their own lead read. I personally went for Johannes Anyuru's novel 'A storm blew in from paradise'. Interestingly, teacher meetings revealed that despite the different choices in literature many seminar groups ended up in pursuing similar paths; which we

commonly understood as emerging from an apparent desire and need at the site of students to discuss questions like those stated above. [...] Reflecting back, I experienced co-designing and teaching The Series to be both an at times intimidating and humbling challenge and a horizon-broadening opportunity. A challenge, as the envisioned contents of The Series go well beyond the confines of traditional management or organization studies knowledge and as such required us, as teachers, to stray from well-trodden paths and enter unfamiliar territory. An opportunity, as I had the chance to get to know an incredibly inspiring group of students over the course of a longer than usual timespan and delve together with them into topics that I did not expect to ever discuss in a business classroom setting. Topics which I, and the students alike, nonetheless found immensely important to be given a platform in context of a study program."





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GUEST LECTURERS

Going a step further in merging teaching and practice, as the cornerstone of our ACE partnerships, our bachelor courses, our Master in Accounting, Valuation and Financial Management and Executive Education programs feature guest lectures and workshops from our ACE partners across all courses, field trips to partner companies and collaboration on master theses projects. Below are the 2021 guest speakers.

GUEST SPEAKER	POSITION	ORGANIZATION
Per Agebäck	Partner	Triton
Marie Ahlgren	Head of Customer and Business Development	ALMI
Terese Ahrens	Investment Director	Nordic Capital
Outi Alestalo	Senior Manager	EY
Sophie Arnius	Head of Investor Relations	Electrolux
Daniel Beiderbeck	Senior consultant	McKinsey
Lena Bergholtz	CFO	Swedish Hockey League
Magnus Björch	District Controller North	Scandic Hotels
Richard Brisius	Chairman	Oceans Race
Magnus Carlsson	CFO	Duni
Anna Danell	Head of Sustainability	Vasakronan
David Dellea	Director, Sports Business Advisory	PwC
Adrian Fintling	Senior Manager	Deloitte
Ricardo Fort	Founder	Sport by Fort
George Foster	Professor	Stanford Graduate School of Business
Nicolas Frevel	Head of Strategy	Hertha BSC
Christina Friborg	Head of Sustainability	SSAB
Håkan Gabrielsson	CFO	Boliden
Jordan Gardner	Chairman	FC Helsingör
Amanda Geijer	Vice President Business Control	Essity
Kiran Gokathoti	Sustainability Manager	H&M Group
Therese Hansen	Sustainability Developer	Apoteket
Daniel Herrmann	Managing Director	Weekday
John Howchin	President ethical council	API
Anders Jernhall	CFO	Holmen
Ebru Köksal	Chairman	Women in Football

GUEST SPEAKER

Lova Liif
Fredrik Lindegren
Oskar Lindström
Filip Lundberg
Cecilia Nordenadler
Norman O'Reilly
Magnus Persson
Carl Johan Renvall
Jasmine Robinson
Charlotte Rydh
Mikael Scheja
Dan Singer
Jon Sintorn
Tea Stefani
Per Strömberg,
Håkan Thorsell
Ivanka Visnjic
Björn Zoega
Claes Magnus Åkesson

POSITION

Senior Manager
Head of Corporate Control
Senior Analyst
Head of Sustainability
Senior Manager
Professor and Dean
CFO
Partner
Partner
Secretary General
Partner
Senior Partner
CEO
Brand Project Manager
Professor and Head
PhD
Associate Professor
CEO
CFO

ORGANIZATION

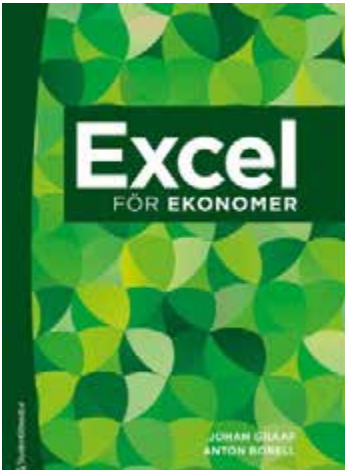
EY
Scania
Danske Bank
Djurgården
PwC
The University of Maine Business School
Skanska
Triton
Causeway Media Partners
Giva Sverige
PWC
McKinsey
Nobia
AS Monaco
Swedish House of Finance
SSE
ESADE Business School
Karolinska University Hospital
JM

TEXTBOOKS

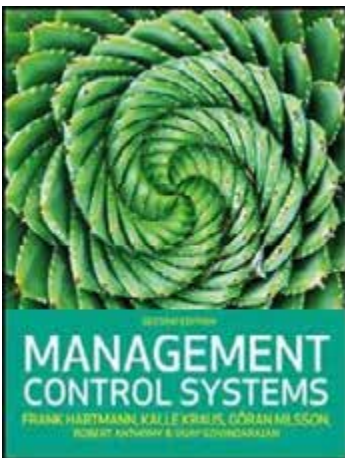


Isabella Nordlund (with co-authors) published a new edition of the book 'Den Nya Affärsredovisningen' [in Swedish, 'The New Business Report'].

The focus of the content of Den Nya Affärsredovisningen is financial accounting, encompassing the underlying principles and carrying out basic bookkeeping as well as composing and analysing the financial reports. The pedagogical idea of the book provides two main approaches, where one can either focus on the events of the case company used throughout the book and thus follow the process of bookkeeping and closing the books in the sequentially order of the chapters, or initially focus on the understanding of the overall picture in terms of the combination of the income statement and the balance sheet and then turn to the particulars (such as the process of bookkeeping). Regarding the last edition, the solutions to the exercise book have been complemented with additional, explanatory commentaries, both in order to further enhance the pedagogy but also to strengthen the connection to the text book. In addition, another aim of the last update was to increasingly incorporate discussions about sustainability accounting throughout the text book, instead of limiting it to certain paragraphs and chapters.



Johan Graaf (with co-author) published “Excel för Ekonomer” [Excel for Business Professionals]. This is a new textbook on Excel with applications to the problems and practices of business professionals, including accountants. The background to the book is the many interactions we have had with students and professionals who feel underprepared for the demands of efficient Excel usage. As such, we have also encountered countless unrealized efficiency improvements in organizations and we believe that even a moderate increase in the average proficiency level could have a rather dramatic effect. The book’s target audience consists of students or practitioners with little to intermediate experience with Excel. The book can be used for self-study but it is also designed to be integrated with other coursework so that the software is practiced in parallel with business studies. One key pedagogical principle has been to organize the book around central forms of Excel usages – for instance, model-making, data management, and communication – to show the relevance of the software for a broad range of users. Furthermore, we have included a large number of exercises to practice Excel functions in business scenarios, such as making budgets or preparing presentations. Our ambition with this pedagogy is to enable readers to also develop new efficient solutions for their specific tasks.



Kalle Kraus (with co-authors) published a new and significantly updated version of the “Management Control Systems” textbook. The fully updated, second edition of Management Control Systems supports students to develop an investigative approach to implementing planning and control systems for strategic success. With strong links between theory and modern real-world practices, the new edition reflects developments in global management and business, plus contemporary design and use of management control systems. Students have access to a wealth of diverse analytical cases, balanced with current content and international examples.

Key features of this new edition include:

- Fully revised to incorporate current methods in management control
- New chapters on Managers, Human behaviour and Organizations, Risk Management and The controllers - past, present, future.
- New coverage of topics such as Risk management, Sustainability, Globalisation and Ethics.”.
- New end-of-chapter and additional cases that cover chapter topics and provide questions and discussion topics for students to put their knowledge to practice.
- Full coverage of current management control systems roles and responsibilities, including controllers, BU-controllers and the CFO

ALUMNI CATCH UP - PATRIK LIU TRAN



What have you been up to since finishing your degree at SSE?

Patrik: "I have a background from SSE (B.Sc in Business & Economics, M.Sc. in Accounting and Financial Management and Ph.D. from the Department of Accounting) and KTH (Civ Engineer in Engineering Physics with a M.Sc. in Machine Learning). Over the years, I have worked in the finance industry and as an advisor for top management teams when it comes to AI and data, helping them set and partially implement their AI and data strategies. Nowadays, I am the CEO of Validio, a software company offering a software solution for data quality monitoring and validation. We are currently a team of almost 20 people, where 85% are software engineers and data scientists and the remaining 15% are on the commercial side."

If you had to reflect on your time at SSE, what are some of the most stand out experiences/memories that come to mind?

Patrik: "One of the things that stood out the most to me was the course "Corporate Reporting and Control" taught by Kalle Kraus (who later became the supervisor for my PhD). It was the course that gave me the most "aha-moments", binding together a lot of the things that I had learnt previously during my studies at SSE. This course also sparked my interest to pursue a PhD within the subject. Another great memory was the very first day at SSE. I still happily remember back to the first time I walked through the giant oak door (which turned out to not be that giant after all, since the actual door is a lot smaller...) and met my classmates, many of which are some of my best friends today."

What would you say SSE has taught you during your studies that you will take with you in the future or that you have already applied since completing your degree?

Patrik: "A lot! I was relatively young when I started at SSE, since I graduated from high school at the age of 16 and started at SSE right afterwards. In other words, I knew very little when I started at SSE.

The single most important thing that I have learnt at SSE is the language of business. What do people in business actually mean when they communicate (through press releases, internal budgets, KPIs, quarterly reports, marketing campaigns, etc.)? What they say and what they mean is not necessarily the same thing. And when people ask you something in a business context, what is it that they really want to find out? This knowledge has helped me tremendously across all of the jobs I have had. Having worked with senior people (C- and board-level) early on in my career, I know that I have benefitted from being able to understand what they are asking for and being able to deliver just that.

Mastering the language of business has become even more important as the CEO of Validio. Everything is a blank canvas when starting a company, so you need to put a lot of things in place ranging from the organizational chart, budgets, financial models, compensation packages for employees, commercial contracts with customers, marketing material, etc. The list goes on. My time at SSE has helped me make good enough decisions when setting these things in place, freeing up time to be spent on other important tasks such as product development."

ALUMNI CATCH UP - AMALIA LIND



What have you been up to since finishing your degree at SSE?

Amalia: "After graduating from the Msc in Accounting and financial management in 2018, I joined McKinsey and Company as a Junior Associate in Stockholm. Today, ~3.5 years later, I'm an Engagement Manager at one of McKinsey's US offices. I spend most of my time in healthcare, where I help private and public clients across multiple topics including growth strategies, M&A, financial performance and diligences. I recently supported one of Sweden's leading University Hospitals, where we worked closely together with Associate Professor Martin Carlsson-Wall from the Accounting Department – who also was one of my previous teachers!"

If you had to reflect on your time at SSE, what are some of the most stand out experiences/memories that come to mind?

Amalia: "When looking back at my time at SSE, a couple of things stand out: 1) My fellow students at the MSC program - I especially recall the endless nights in the PC lab when we tried to build a DCF model for Thomas Hjelström's class, it was a really tough time, but we all pulled together and learned a ton! 2) great classes and seminars – I can truly miss the discussions we had during class – and the depth of analysis – since I spend most of my working life trying to be '80-20', 3) the network of friends, colleagues, professors – who all still continue to cross my path."

What would you say SSE has taught you during your studies that you will take with you in the future or that you have already applied since completing your degree?

Amalia: "I genuinely feel that my education gave me the best possible start for my career! I daily use skills I learned during my MSc studies including: 1) Synthesizing a lot of sometimes conflicting information and distilling the 'so what' of what we have learnt, 2) Analyzing financial and operational information and making informed decisions based on sometimes limited data, 3) Communicating (written and oral) difficult messages in an 'easy way', 4) Prioritizing my own time and commitment."



OUTREACH

OUTREACH

HIGHLIGHTS

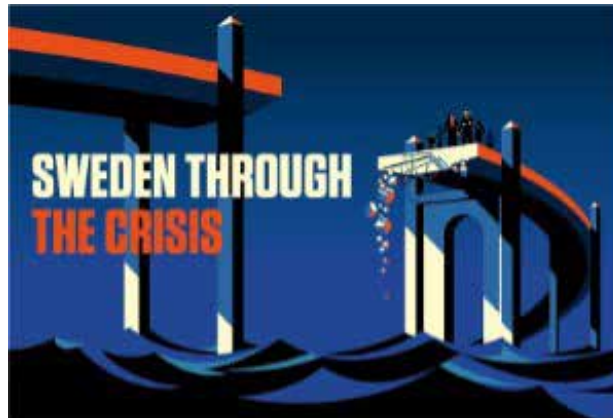
The Department of Accounting actively embeds outreach activities across departmental research and educational programs by identifying synergies and opportunities for increased impact and relevance. At the heart of our outreach activities is The Accounting and Financial Management Center of Excellence (ACE), a unique hub for student, faculty and business talent engagement and growth. ACE provides a platform for ongoing meaningful discourse between our research teams and practice, informing the knowledge banks of all members and providing opportunities for future collaborations with partner companies such as Atlas Copco, Ericsson, Skanska, Investor, Ratos, Deloitte, EY, PwC, KPMG, McKinsey & Company, Handelsbanken, Elekta and Nordea.

This year, we were proud to welcome Skanska and Elekta as new ACE partners.

Following the expansion of ACE activities, the department welcomed **Aleksandra Pop-Vasileva** in August 2021 as Lecturer with special outreach responsibilities. Aleks is Co-Director of ACE and part of the Program Team for the Master program while her outreach activities focus on three areas: Communication Channels (Department website and LinkedIn group), Events (3 ACE breakfast seminars per year, 1 CFO Forum per year, guest lectures), and Written reports (Research news, Academic Insights, Newsletters, Department reports). In the beginning of 2021, the book "Sweden Through the Crisis" was published. The book is SSE's largest COVID-19 initiative and contains contributions from nearly 90 researchers. As one of the editors of the book, **Associate**

Professor Martin Carlsson-Wall was involved in hosting digital roundtables with the purpose of strengthening SSE's relationship with foreign embassies in Stockholm. The overall theme was called "Together Beyond the Crisis" and for each digital round table, the ambassadors from each country hosted the round table.

- March 24, Together Beyond the Crisis: Sustainable developments for the benefit of Business and Society: Insights from Sweden, Switzerland, Canada, Belgium and Serbia.
- April 21, Together Beyond the Crisis: Key Learnings from mass vaccination from Israel and Sweden but also how COVID-19 problems can be used to develop innovations that shape the future.



Martin delivered keynote speeches, following his involvement in the "Sweden through the crisis" project.

- May 26, Keynote speaker at Agenda CFO. This is one of the largest networks for CFOs in Sweden. The network consists of nearly 600 CFOs and they meet twice per year. The topic was "Sweden Through the Crisis – how can CFOs learn from COVID-19".



- November 19, Keynote speaker at Agenda CFO. The topic was “The modern finance function – how it will change after COVID-19?”

Professor Henrik Nilsson received repeated media attention throughout the year. This kind of media presence attests to the relevance of the research and expertise of our faculty and department overall.

On January 12, 2021, Henrik was interviewed by the professional magazine Balans on the topic “The Importance of Leadership Ability in the Audit Industry, while on September 7, he was interviewed by national television news (Rapport, SVT) on the topic ‘Why do insiders sell their stocks?’ related to his research on insider trading.

Associate Professor Ebba Sjögren served as the external expert/reference person

for the Swedish National Audit Office’s review of the Swedish Pharmaceutical Benefits Board. The report was published in May 2021 (Mesta möjliga hälsa för skattepengarna – statens subventionering av läkemedel, RiR 2021:14).

Assistant Professor Mariya Ivanova delivered a presentation of the results of “Financial Statement Comparability in the Extractive Industry” with Acting Professor Niclas Hellman and PhD student Zeping Pan and discussion of relevance and implications for the IASB decision process for the representatives of the IASB, IAAER, and KPMG.

Associate Professor Torkel Strömsten and **Assistant Professor Marek Reuter** participated as speakers/moderator at the MISUM Annual Forum took place on the 8th of October. <https://www.hhs.se/en/research/institutes/misum-startpage/events/misum-annual-forum-2021/>



left Henrik Nilsson on Rapport



top to bottom Ebba Sjögren, Mariya Ivanova, Torkel Strömsten, Marek Reuter

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Associate Professor Ebba Sjögren

The National Audit Office is an independent authority the Swedish Riksdag (Parliament). Part of the organization's remit is to undertake performance audits of governmental agencies' efficiency, to ensure that the interests of the general public are being appropriately served. The outcome of an audit of the public pharmaceutical benefits scheme was published in July 2021 (RiR 2021:14; <https://www.riksrevisionen.se/en/about-the-swedish-nao/communication-and-media/nyhet-sarkiv-eng/2021-07-05-need-to-improve-cost-effectiveness-in-the-use-of-medicines.html>). Ebba Sjögren, Associate Professor, served as the external reference person for the audit.



What did the role of reference person entail?

Ebba: "I had two primary functions: the first was to review the initial plan for the audit, prior to the start of the project. The second was to assess a draft report in a late stage of the project to ensure its consistency with the agreed audit plan. Because the project was extended, I also had the opportunity to comment on a mid-way report.

My role presumed deep knowledge about the Swedish pharmaceutical benefits scheme. I have worked in the area for almost twenty years: my PhD thesis (defended in 2006) was based on a study of the Dental and Pharmaceutical Benefits Agency (TLV). I also have an on-going project funded by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond which involves the cross-country comparison of valuation and pricing of oncological specialist drugs. I jumped at the rare opportunity to work with precisely my area of expertise."

What notable similarities and differences are there between an NAO audit and an academic research project?

Ebba: "One clear similarity is the preoccupation with methodology and methods. What question(s) you ask and what data you use shapes the kinds of answers that are possible to give.

One important difference is the imperative for the NAO project group to reach normative conclusions and make actionable suggestions based on their investigation. While I have a long-standing involvement in the academic think tank Leading Health Care, whose purpose is to translate research findings into practical relevant insights, their work is a more drawn-out process that involves different stakeholders in the healthcare sector. The NAO has a much more defined audience for its conclusions."

What surprised you?

Ebba: "I was struck by the massively steep learning curve for all the NAO project participants. Few if any team members had any experience from the healthcare sector, much less the pharmaceutical benefits scheme, going into the project. This meant that early on in the project, there were some issues that were difficult to articulate, because of their situated character. One year later, that was most definitely not a concern. As a researcher, I was a bit jealous of the access that the NAO project team had to both quantitative and qualitative data. However, as a citizen, it was satisfying to get practical insight into the effort, resources and rigor that were brought to bear in the audit process."

ACE ADVISORY BOARD

The ACE Advisory Board consists of thought leaders from our ACE partner companies and senior established executives from the forefront of innovation such as:



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CFO Investor



Carl Cederschiöld,
CFO Handelsbanken



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ACE EVENTS

Following pandemic-related changes to the school's events, the Department of Accounting and the Accounting and Financial Management Centre of Excellence (ACE) resumed ACE events and hosted the ACE Breakfast Seminar on October 13, 2021, the first in a series of events to take place throughout the 2021-2022 academic year. The ACE events aim at facilitating an ongoing discussion between practitioners, students and faculty on topics emerging from current faculty research insights.



ACE Breakfast Seminar

The Breakfast seminar saw Professor Henrik Nilsson and Assistant Professor Ting Dong deliver findings from their recent study in a presentation entitled "Talent management challenges in the Swedish auditing profession – Are the best staying? What can we do to keep them?" setting the scene for a thought-provoking and dynamic discussion from the audience.

Following the prominent attention on leadership by the Big Four auditing firms across numerous media outputs, surveys and career programs, the study examined the importance of innate leadership ability of auditors and its relationship with different career outcomes. Specifically, the study aimed at examining the following questions:

1. How is leadership ability compensated by the profession?
2. Why is leadership rewarded: Is it compensation for revenue-generating capacity and/or audit quality?
3. What is the relative importance between leadership ability and cognitive ability?

The findings from a sample of qualified Swedish CPAs indicate that leadership ability does not appear to be rewarded for CPAs below the age of 40, suggest-

ing that the audit industry compensates leadership talent relatively late, possibly explaining the high turnover and recruitment barriers audit firms face. In respect to cognitive ability the findings document that CPAs' income – in the form of salary and dividends from partnerships – was positively associated with their leadership scores and more important than cognitive ability.

The topic was considered highly important and exceedingly relevant, often subject to discussion amongst practitioners in the audience, and within the profession at the moment. The importance of leadership skills of auditors was echoed amongst the practitioners in the audience, however there was a varied level of surprise in respect to the findings indicating later compensation of these skills within the auditing career. The shared view amongst the Big Four practitioners was that leadership abilities are developed and grown upon talent recruitment, often in conjunction with the development of a broad range of skills such as professional expertise, trustworthiness and particularly audit quality. Several factors were considered as prerequisite traits for leadership such as strong business acumen, commercial

instincts, curiosity, ability to self-lead and a macro understanding of the complexities of the world which in itself requires a greater variety and diversity of skills. While there was a consensus regarding the delayed compensation of leadership ability in the auditing career, the research presentation raised poignant questions for discussion related to how leadership is rewarded, the appropriateness of the traditional partner model and the challenges associated with the auditor's career path. While the practice admits slower recognition of the need for different career opportunities for diverse affinities and attributes of talent, there has been a trend and a commitment expressed towards introducing changes to the recruitment process in the Big Four to include a different skills and diverse qualifications. The profession shared seeing challenges regarding the turnover rates of auditors, particularly before reaching authorization and the need to attract and keep talent. Learning from exit surveys the profession expresses increased awareness

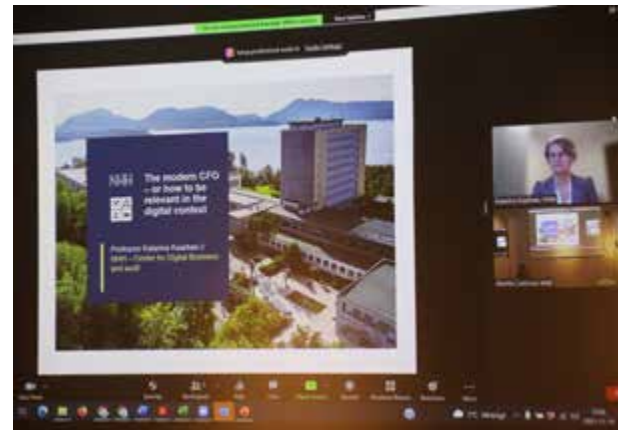
of the factors contributing to the decision to leave the companies. While payment has been on the list, other factors were deemed of greater importance such as career path, development, knowledge sharing, and work-life balance. These insights are deemed to create a tension between the old profession traditions and the exceedingly increasing demand for business compliance. A forward look into the future of the profession and the collaboration with academia in addressing talent development revealed a need for establishing digital skills at the university level. Moreover, a need to constantly (re)define the auditing profession was expressed beyond solely "checking numbers" and establishing a broader understanding among students of auditing as corporate governance. Such perspective is considered more consistent with the evolution of the profession which arguably increases the attractiveness of the auditing career path further.



ACE CFO FORUM

On Friday November 19th, 2021 The Department of Accounting and the Accounting and Financial Management Centre of Excellence (ACE) proudly hosted the annual ACE CFO Forum. The CFO Forum provides a unique opportunity for the research frontier and the practical frontier to join in thought-provoking discussions, share experiences and facilitate new insight. The Forum included presentations from six keynote speakers from diverse academic and business background and discussions under the broad title "What will the modern finance function look like in the future?". Professor Katarina Kaarbøe from the Norwegian School of Economics opened the event with a research-informed overview of the changing nature of the modern CFO role and the challenges in maintaining relevance in a digital context. Katarina's presentation provided contextual foundation for the discussions of the day focusing on technological developments impacting the accounting and finance function and the emerging challenges for the relevance and boundaries of the future controllers/accountants. The use of Big Data, the rise of new business models and the pursuit of value creation were identified as areas of emerging challenges and opportunities for the modern CFO, setting the scene for a dynamic discussion and reflections in the audience attended by advisory board members, business partners, finance executives and professionals, faculty and master students. The Forum continued with three CFO presentations, reflecting on the changing nature of the finance function, providing

voices/perspectives from three diverse business areas. Alexander Hartman, CFO of Northvolt, reflected on the start-up journey of rapid growth since Northvolt's ambitious beginnings in 2016 in the establishment of Europe's greenest battery production. Starting from a small team of five and an enthusiastic vision of the sustainable future, Alex provided insights into the challenges and milestones of raising capital while developing strong alignment and support of industry, policy-driven institutions and investors. Northvolt's unique technology, vision and internal entrepreneurial execution required navigating uncharted waters in respect to building the organization from scratch, including reimagining the modern finance function in order to go beyond "mere" controlling to facilitate driving the business forward. Throughout the rapid growth talent acquisition has shown to be immensely important in keeping the overall entrepreneurial mindset, boldness and maintaining a strong culture of wanting to make a difference. Carl Cederschiöld, CFO of Handelsbanken, offered the perspective from the established banking instruction going through transition and the challenges of maintaining the strong values and identity of the company. The banking sector has been increasingly impacted by megatrends in respect to technology, client behaviours, increased regulation and increasing awareness of sustainable development needs. Carl reflected on the bank's transitional journey and the challenges faced in respect to the tension between centralisation and decentralisation in different aspects of the bank, keeping a strong culture and morale in times of change and the balance be-



tween restructuring and keeping valuable talent. At its core Handelsbanken has maintained the same steering system based on strong values such as client-centred structure, strategic and dynamic planning and resource allocation, simplified benchmarking, incentive system, trust and individual responsibilities.

Anna Ernestam, the Secretary General of SOS Barnbyar contributed with the voice of NGO/charity organization, highlighting the importance of emotions in the area of donations and reflected on the types of emotions that make a difference in the charity/NGO domain. Anna shared her experiences from her extensive NGO background and talked about the challenges of applying common performance measurement principles in the charity domain. She furthermore reflected on broader societal implications of measuring and incentivizing the right decisions. In large part, performance measures often are shown to be unable to fully capture the organizational purpose or the true outcomes of operations and initiatives. Humanitarian organizations such as SOS Barnbyar face an increasing tension between short-term and long-term investment decisions whilst keeping the main purpose of the organization in sight. Equally interesting discussions emerged regarding the challenge of impact reporting the potential of rethinking the concept and understanding of societal impact and its subsequent measures.

The final keynote presentation turned the

discussion focus towards the accountant as the subject of control. Associate Professor Lukas Goretzki, Stockholm School of Economics and Adjunct Professor Jan Pfister, Turku School of Economic, shared academic insights from an in-depth case study in a large multinational technology company.

Their study reveals interesting tensions between, on the one hand, the measurement of accountants' productivity and efficiency and, on the other, the identity of the modern accountant as a "business partner". Jan and Lukas discussed how focussing too much on measuring accountants' productivity and efficiency (and the corresponding idea of doing more with less) may result in neglecting important activities that cannot be fully captured in productivity measures. The presentation thus triggered reflections on what can be appropriate performance measures and procedures for accountants who are part of a modern finance function. Those accountants usually see themselves as "business partners" who perform strategically important and innovative tasks rather than "bean counters" who focus mainly on routinized activities that can more easily be captured through productivity measures but that are also more and more automated or outsourced. Based on those insights, the speakers discussed the challenge of avoiding mindless quantification and the need for more mindful quantification that considers the importance of nurturing a reflective mindset in the performance measurement process and the potential of embedding metrics in broader performance narratives.



