



Minutes – Meeting of the Doctoral Board, 31st August 2021 15:15 – Hybrid meeting in Plantskolan (Segerstedt) and via Zoom

Attendees

Oliver Degerstedt, *Chair*

Irene Muli, *Vice-chair*

Haro de Grauw, *Student and PHD student ombud*

Elena Prats, *Vice-chair and HDR representative*

Ayesha Mae Bilal, *Secretary*

Evgenii Tikhomirov, *Event Manager*

Fabiola Stein, *UDR representative*

Markus de Ruijter, *MDR representative*

Daniel Schmitz, *MDR representative*

Antonia Degen, *SDR representative*

Philipp Rönchen, *HDR representative*

Erik Bowall, *TNDR representative*

Jana Rieger, *TNDR representative (deputy)*

Michela Di Criscio, *TNDR representative*

Emma Sundström, *TDR representative*

Erik Grahn, *JDR representative (?)*

Philip Karlsson, *NUAF (Board for Investigation of Misconduct in Research)*

Anna Ivert, *UUFS representative*

Carmen Pocrnja, *Student and PHD student ombud*

Meryem Saadi, *Equal Opportunities Advisory Board representative*

Daniel Michaneck, *Vice-chair of Rindi*

Stamatina Roussou, *Gender Mainstreaming Reference Group representative*

Johan Ljungberg, *Joint Committee on Work Environment Issues*

§1 The meeting was declared open by the chair

§2 Antonia Degen was elected as the adjuster for the meeting minutes

§3 The board approved the adjusted agenda

Adjustments to the agenda made: agenda item §7 to be postponed to next meeting as project leader for language survey reported that it's not ready for next step.

New item in agenda added: Meryem will present a brief introductory presentation on recent changes migration law.

§4 The board approved the call procedure

§5 The board approved the previous meeting minutes

§6 Brief updates from DN presidium, representatives and working groups (information/update)

Evgenii Tikhomirov: Suggestion to integrate on website guidelines for PhD students, particularly non-Swedish students, with information regarding getting personnummer, bank account, accommodation etc. Suggested creating work group for this.

Antonia agrees on creating guidelines but suggests also creating guidelines regarding mobbing and discrimination in the workplace as the comment section in the internationalization and language survey last year had some discriminatory and racist reports.

It was suggested to promote whistle-blower function because many PhD students don't know about that. Haro argues to wait a bit as there's no clear routine for how to handle information coming in from that channel yet.

TNDR (Erik): nothing to report

TNDR (Jana/Michaela): nothing to report

MDR: Still working on report from medical faculty language survey. Suggested combining report with DN language/internationalization survey.

HDR: nothing to report

SDR: reported issues with PhD students, especially Swedish-speaking students, not being interested in councils or faculty board meetings. Considering some promotional activities, but uncertain due to COVID.

TDR: had discussions about having 90 points of courses, which is quite high. Need to evaluate whether that is a good thing and if it maintains equality across different PhD programs.

UDR: planned to do a social event in September, but uncertain about doing it due to COVID.

JDR: new council elected. Reported confusion regarding whether ethics approval applications should be filled out and submitted. If projects involve processing of personal data, it makes sense to do so, but no clear guidelines provided from faculty. JDR requested advice regarding if it's rule or recommendation that prolongation due to covid is applied for in ISP. Could lead to problem for last year PhD students who may not be able to submit ISP before finishing projects.

Oliver clarifies that COVID prolongation needs to be documented in ISP for it to count. How to apply is being handled on case-by-case basis at each department. HSDU PhD students need to ask supervisor about prolongation, then take it to the director of PhD studies, then faculty board determines if they have a case. However, no one got prolongation yet. SDR reports 3/8 people from social and economic geography department for prolongation. Haro clarifies department should be able to update ISP anytime, not just once a year. ISP is there to protect students, document their plan; if situation changes, ISP should change.

Ombud Haro de Grauw: DN board last year investigated central university funding handed out to various department to deal with COVID effects on research and research education, but since not many students got prolongation, there is question of where money went. Problem because no mechanism exists to force department heads to account for allocation of money. In the Pharmaceutical Biosciences department, Oliver followed up and money was split among all research groups since no one asked for prolongation, and suggests asking each head of department in a friendly way.

UUPS: nothing to report

Rindi: have not yet allocated position for PhD representatives. If students want to get in touch about their studies, they can get in touch directly with Rindi.

Ombud Carmen Pocrnja: [new contact page on website](#) with contact forms in English, Swedish, and separate for PhD students. Carmen and Emma discussed with board last year the need for a system manage and organize all communications. Other Ombuds use the same system, but Ombud UU paid for their own to be able to share some statistics locally and nationally and see if problems UU PhD students have differ from other universities. Ombud UU works thoroughly to be able to categorize the data so we can see what kind of issues students experience.

Meryem Saadi: nothing to report yet.

Philip Karlsson: had first meeting last week, discussed two cases of deviations in co-author list and falsely stating title, were investigated for misconduct.

Stamatina Roussou: nothing to report

§7 Language survey report (discussion & decision)

§8 Meeting dates and format for the autumn & spring term (information)

Zoom will always be an option for DN meetings, additionally we will book a conference room (with hybrid meeting functionality) for the first and last meeting of each term.

The DN meetings for autumn 2021 and spring 2022 will be:

- Tuesday 31st August 15:15-17:00 (*Plantskolan, Segerstedt*)
- Tuesday 28th September 15:15-17:00 **with KoF 2023 interview (16:15-16:45)**
 - KoF- group are preparing for a big audit of quality and research in 2023. They want to get the perspective of PhD students and will send a project proposal draft. DN may have small introductory presentation on the draft since it is in Swedish.
- Tuesday 26th October 15:15-17:00
- Tuesday 30th November 15:15-17:00 **with Prorektor Coco Norén**
 - She is interested in discussing PhD questions
- Tuesday 21st December 15:15-17:00 (*Tuvstarren, Segerstedt*)

- Tuesday 25th January 15:15-17:00 (*Brunörten, Segerstedt*)
- Tuesday 22nd February 15:15-17:00
- Tuesday 29th March 15:15-17:00
- Tuesday 26th April 15:15-17:00 **with Prorektor Coco Norén**
- Tuesday 31st May 15:15-17:00
- Tuesday 21st June 15:15-17:00 (*Tuvstarren, Segerstedt*)

§9 What do we want to focus on this year?

DN monitoring

UU doctoral education survey: education survey will go out from quality department to supervisors and PhD students. All PhD representatives and faculty representatives encouraged to promote this survey to get a lot of responses as university reviews it every 5 years and evaluates statistics, especially for medical faculty to get clinically active students answering. Suggested it may be helpful to reach out to the hospital staff distribute the email too.

Digitalization of ISP: news from deputy vice chancellor and IT director on upcoming pre-study to investigate what kind of systems are available and used already, and how they can approach a bigger study next year. Discussion regarding digitalization of system only, not changes in system. Not optimistic about timeline, but we can see the report from pre-study. DN members agree it would be convenient to update ISP digitally, or certain parts can be automatically updated for example teaching hours.

Prolongation for representation guidelines: Oliver has draft of new guidelines in Swedish, need some volunteers to review 3-page document. Representative from planning department implemented most of DN's suggestions. Markus de Ruijter and Erik Grahn and Daniel Schmitz volunteered. New guidelines should come into effect on 1st of January 2022.

DN driving

Language survey continuation: report needs to be finalized by working group (Fabiola, Antonia and others) and is almost completed. Angelika is still leading the working group from last term.

Communications department is interesting in putting out the report to the university with highlights and key points. Discuss at next meeting when we have a revised report what changes we want to get implemented going forward. Antonia notes that the language report does not collect information regarding participant faculties or departments to preserve anonymity.

DN website: Haro will let Taha know to shut down old website and try to ensure traffic will be automatically redirected to new one. Oliver suggests having another website workshop since new website is meant to be easier for each faculty council to keep up to date and for PhD students to use it for all information related to healthcare etc. MDR agrees that having a workshop to be able to ask questions will be useful. Evgenii thinks it's a good idea to update information of the representatives. Will schedule for upcoming weeks.

PhD Handbook: on to-do-list for DN to update PhD handbook.

§10 Changes in migration law

Meryem: Främlingslagen (the "Aliens act") took effect 20th July 2021. States that PhD students need to have secured permanent employment or at least an 18-month long contract to qualify for permanent residence, and this is retroactively applied to finishing PhD students as well. Issue regarding fairness, student stress and lack of awareness by all PhD students about change in law. Students at KTH and KI trying to mobilize a response already, important to get UU actively involved and discuss this issue this year.

SULF is aware of issue and working on petition to talk to immigration agency. UU vice chancellor will be getting together with other universities. All universities were unprepared as they assumed that university sector would be exempt.

Lunch seminar on 3rd September regarding this, keep an eye out for emails.

Suggested that DN maintain pressure on the university to do something about it, get information out about it to all PhD students with detailed information about the changes in law and how it impacts them.

Additional links for those interested:

<https://www.thelocal.se/20210820/opinion-swedens-new-migration-act-will-damage-our-research-and-send-international-talent-elsewhere/>

<https://www.svd.se/nya-migrationsregler-kan-orsaka-forskarflykt>

<https://www.thelocal.se/20210820/foreign-doctoral-students-hit-out-at-swedens-new-and-unfair-permanent-residency-rules/>

§11 Other comments or issues

Philip: suggests DN should follow up on climate topic this year. Environmental plan we commented last year has been delayed. A report by an external consultant on UU emissions in 2019 will be published soon. Antonia suggested that if we as DN, get more involved it might be worth considering reimbursement in the form of prolongation for train rides to conferences to avoid planes.

§12 Closing of the meeting

Oliver Degerstedt

Oliver Degerstedt, Chair

Ayesha Mae Bilal

Ayesha Mae Bilal, Secretary

★ Antonia Degen

Antonia Degen, Attestant