



**Meeting Minutes – Meeting of the Doctoral Board, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021 15:15 – Zoom meeting**

**Attendees**

Oliver Degerstedt, *Chair*

Irene Muli, *Vice-chair*

Elena Prats, *Vice-chair and HDR representative*

Ayesha Mae Bilal, *Secretary*

Haro de Grauw, *Student and PhD student ombud and University board representative*

Fabiola Stein, *UDR representative*

Markus de Ruijter, *MDR representative*

Daniel Schmitz, *MDR representative*

Antonia Degen, *SDR representative*

Matthew Rosenberg, *FDR representative*

Philipp Rönchen, *HDR representative\*\**

Erik Bowall, *TNDR representative\**

Emma Sundström, *TDR representative*

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

Meryem Saadi, *Equal Opportunities Advisory Board representative*

Stamatina Roussou, *Gender Mainstreaming Reference Group representative*

Johan Ljungberg, *Joint Committee on Work Environment Issues*

Daniel Rosenblum, *CEMFOR representative*

Angelika Drigo, *INRÅ representative*

Daniel Busk, *UUFS representative*

\*joined ca 15:30, \*\*joined ca 16:00

**§1 The meeting was declared open by the chair**

**§2 Markus de Ruijter was elected as the adjuster for the meeting minutes**

**§3 The board approved the agenda**

**§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)**

Haro de Grauw: requested PhD students to get in touch with him with suggestions or concerns to pass onto the university board.

TDR: nothing to report.

Angelika Drigo: nothing to report.

Ayesha Mae Bilal: nothing to report.

MDR (Markus): attended the meeting regarding the dissolution of neuroscience department. Inquired about the reason for allocation decisions of various groups and how finances will be allocated. General positive feeling among people in department.

FDR: updating and reviewing the supervisors guide for faculty, focusing specifically on breakdown of how many contracted hours need to be dedicated to specific duties related to supervision, separate from teaching and research, and a breakdown of exactly what supervision entails. Will be ready to share early next year with other faculties as well.

Irene Muli: working group for revising student influence guidelines is working on two documents focused on general guidelines and on how to work with guidelines. Deadline to submit guidelines in January. Discussed that while student representatives should ideally be a student, it should be open even to those who are elected by unions but are not students. However, since there are many student applicants, it would not be problematic to select a student.

Daniel Rosenblum: nothing to report.

Meryem Saadi: nothing to report.

Daniel Busk: nothing to report.

SDR: nothing to report.

MDR (Daniel): nothing to add.

UDR: department of education will undergo reorganization. Head of department is including the PhD students in focus groups with representatives of different research lines.

Elena Prats: nothing to report.

Johan Ljungberg: nothing to report.

Philip Karlsson: nothing to report.

Stamatina Roussou: nothing to report.

Erik Bowall: nothing to report.

Oliver Degerstedt: digital ISP working group will get a demo of the digital ISP system most commonly used at Swedish universities. SLU will also send a demo of their system as it is different. Pre-study report should be complete by early January and will be passed onto management. Prolongation guidelines for PhD representation process has been delayed. Will likely not come into action until July 2022. DN presidium is invited to the SFS-DK meeting on December 1st.

### **§7 PhD Representative for:**

- Working group on revision of UUs model for education evaluations
- Reference group for creation of a UU Employee policy

The chair (Oliver Degerstedt) will represent PhD students in these two groups.

### **§8 Visit by Deputy Vice-chancellor (*Prorektor*) Coco Norén (16:00-17:00)**

This part of the meeting was attended by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Coco Norén. The important questions discussed within the three topics are outlined below.

**DN Language / Internationalisation report** – what's the next step and how to link to the advisory boards on internationalisation and equal opportunities.

- Quotations from students regarding xenophobia and discrimination are especially concerning to the university: how reflective are these quotations of the general opinion? Is it possible to categorize answers from different faculties? How can we overcome these issues?
  - The sentiments described are generally representative of what most students would think considering that the same problems would exist as barriers for other non-Swedish speaking students such as difficulties in understanding emails in Swedish, joining different boards, accessing teaching opportunities, handling documents. Survey was not designed to measure the size of the problem, only to get a general picture of what problems exist. Information about respondent's departments was not collected to preserve anonymity. Recognition of the issue by all faculties would be a start to tackling it and exploring what the size of the issue is and where the issues exist.
- Coco requested access to the raw data to further understand the findings of the report.
  - Since data cannot be considered strictly anonymous as it can contain self-reported identifying information, the DN board decided not to share the data. Any further analysis needed to be performed can be done by the board.
- Concerns about Swedish-speaking employees finding it challenging to speak English in seminars or meetings.
  - It was argued that using English more would be conducive to the growth of an international research environment which is in the interests of UU.
- Is there a pre-conceived expectation from students for English to be spoken?
  - UU promotes itself as an international university, which is misleading for applicants, since all email communication, grant applications and even employment contracts are in Swedish. It is also challenging for students to learn Swedish since there is only one Swedish course in the university and it does not offer any credits or prolongation. The dept. of Scandinavian Languages reported that the 4 levels of courses that exist would not be enough for students to reach a level of Swedish where they can teach and present their work.
- Suggestions based on the report are presented.
  - Coco recommends that while composing emails in both English and Swedish is a good idea, it would practically be difficult and costly to accomplish. Would be cost-effective to categorize what kinds of emails or documents need to be prioritized for translation? While more resources can be allocated towards translation, they would need to be taken out of somewhere else.
  - Using students who are studying to be Swedish as a second language teachers to teach international students as a form of training experience would be a good idea.
  - Coco recommends putting suggestions into a formal request and submitting it to management or to the department of Scandinavian languages. The board argues that it should be a priority of the university to push for funding for sufficient courses to be offered.

**Changes in the Aliens act** – it is the employer's responsibility to adapt says parliament – what more can UU do?

- Coco reports concerns about offering contracts for 18 months after PhD leading to people being hired not based on merit but on legal situation. Important to consider if it is more important to help people to remain in Sweden or excellence in research and education?
  - It is likelier to lose excellent researchers by not offering this support, and also due to many not applying to Sweden with the knowledge that support will not be offered to them to remain after their PhD.
- Coco emphasizes that the university sympathizes with the students and is concerned about the separation of families due to the employment contract requirement applying to spouses and partners as well.
  - The DN board urges the university to make a public statement to express that support.
- Is it possible for the University to offer 18-month+ contracts from now on and is somebody investigating this? Who would one talk to for the length of their contract?
  - Coco suggests speaking to your department. The best person to speak with about the contract lengths is head of HR division, Eliane Forsse.

**UU Climate Inventory** – prepare by looking though the recent article and report:

<https://mp.uu.se/en/web/nyheter/-/storst-utslapp-fran-flygresor>

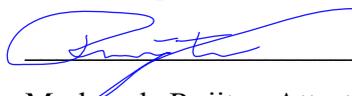
- How is university planning to take it forward besides the environment and climate plan? How can PhD students contribute?
  - Next week there will be a meeting with the heads of all departments. The director of Environment will talk about this report and what actions to take. Difficult to make concrete suggestions beforehand because they may not suit all departments.
- Getting more people travelling by train vs plane.
  - Train travel compromises on time, but if it is the preference of the individual, they can opt for it. Coco is confident that the vice chancellor will recommend concrete actions to be taken.

It is concluded from the meeting that a brief report can be drafted about the findings regarding discrimination in the language report, clarifying how big an issue it may be so a budget can be discussed. It may be beneficial to work with the department of Scandinavian languages to acquire greater funding for language classes as it is in their interest as well. Oliver will set up a meeting with a department representative. The survey and report working group has now completed their mission and it is suggested that three focus groups can now be formed to investigate the following issues in more detail: language and internalization issues, email and document translations, and the exclusion issue.

### §9 Closing of the meeting

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Oliver Degerstedt, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Markus de Ruijter, Attestant

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ayesha Mae Bilal, Secretary