

Meeting Minutes – Meeting of the Doctoral Board, 25th October 2022 15:15 – Hybrid meeting in Tuvstarren in Segerstedt and Zoom

Attendees

Topias Tolonen, *Chair**

Elena Prats, *Vice-chair, representative for HDR, Advisory Board for External Collaboration, and Centre for Research Ethics and Bioethics Board**

Ayesha Mae Bilal, *Secretary**

Oreste Affatato, *Event Manager**

Fabiola Stein, *UDR representative**

Qinya Feng, *SDR representative**

Matthew Rosenberg, *FDR representative**

Gabriel Echazu, *TDN representative**

Jila Shamslatifi, *TNDR representative**

Lennart Spode, *TNDR and Advisory Board for Internationalization representative**

Erik Grahn, *JDR representative**

Emmy Shield, *UUFS representative*

Laleh Aftabi, *UUFS representative*

Julia Ekman, *PhD student ombudsperson*

Moa Inge, *PhD student ombudsperson*

Jakob Beise, *Board for Investigation of Misconduct in Research (NUAF) representative***

Xin Mao, *representative of PUMA Steering committee, and Steering committee for the language workshop*

Johan Hagelin, *Scholarship Board representative*

***Joined at 16.00*

**These meeting participants had voting rights during the §7 DN elections*

§1 The meeting was declared open by the chair at 15:16

§2 Jila Shamslatifi 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 Hybrid Meeting and Voting Guidelines for DN meetings (decision)

The chair has prepared a document where DN states guidelines for its own meetings:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/12SuEFURooyh-12mtxcAeRiwaI8aDKNKUnhMJynkaRoo/edit?usp=sharing>

The chair presents the document. The board approves of the guidelines.

§7 Selection of PhD Student Representatives (decision)

Regarding these two sections, in the Regulations of DN it is stated that if DN does not elect PhD representatives by October 1st, the right to nominate these students will go back to the student unions. The Union of student unions UUFS will discuss before the meeting whether DN can nonetheless appoint the missing positions.

7.1. Ordinary position Electoral College (Universitetskollegiet)

7.2. 2 suppleant positions for Electoral College (Universitetskollegiet)

The chair tells the Board that UUFS has approved of selecting the positions. However, the Board has received no applications to the positions with the exception that Bim Kilje, who has informed the chair that they will step down from the ordinary position of Electoral College and can instead be elected as a suppleant member.

The board elects Bim Kilje as a suppleant member to Gustaf Jansson Bjurhammer.

§8 Plan of Action for the current academic year (decision)

The purpose of the Plan of Action is to guide the operations of DN for the current academic year. The current version of the Plan of Action can be found here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UE0z_oIqihm6JgZdWR2pP0PFf4wvRAIHFIGUDXfmI_8/edit?usp=sharing

The chair presents the document. Following discussion points are raised:

- DN Liveability and Wellbeing working group is looking for volunteers to join. At least one volunteer from Uppsala and one from Gotland campus are sought. Interested parties can get in touch with Ayesha-Mae Bilal.
- Regarding information provided to incoming PhD students and planning an orientation, it is suggested for faculty representatives to find out what information is currently provided by the faculties/departments and in what form.
- Supervision guidelines working group is continuing with its efforts.

The board approves of the document.

§9 Selecting of the Election Committee (decision)

Suggestion to nominally elect the chair as the sole Election Committee member until April, when there may be a need to elect a proper Election Committee for the upcoming elections.

The board approves unanimously.

§10 Retroactively approving the statement regarding students of Iran (decision)

The chair together with the Uppsala Student Union prepared a joint statement regarding the situation in Iran. The chair asked the board members if he could decide on his own about publishing the statement after consulting the board members and afterwards propose a formal decision at the October meeting. No board member was against the arrangement via email. Suggestion is to approve the statement retroactively. Statement can be found here: <https://uudoctoralboard.se/2022/10/18/statement-for-students-in-iran/>

The board approves unanimously of the statement published.

§11 Salary Thresholds for PhD Students (discussion)

In the September meeting it was discussed that there are some issues regarding salary increases for PhD Students in their 50% and 80% thresholds of their studies, respectively. It was suggested that board members were to ask about practices related to their own departments and faculties. Let us discuss how to proceed with the matter.

Following discussion points are raised:

- Is there a need to have some kind of university-wide guidelines regarding how the thresholds should be implemented?
 - Lack of unification of implementation guidelines is a problem. DN board had discussions regarding it 3-4 years ago, it would be useful for the current board to refer to those discussions when going forward. *Elena* is unsure but thinks that the DN and SULF were of the opinion that 50% after 2 years and 80% after 3 years is preferable.
- Issues in the unification of guidelines
 - Different departments have different expectations of how PhD student is to allocate time to reading, empirical research, etc. Should guidelines cover different types of PhD plans?
 - Matthew: local collective agreement by Saco already defines all 4 timepoints for salary increase. If certain departments are managing it in other ways, should they be pushed to align with guidelines?
<https://www.saco.fackorg.uu.se/laws-and-agreements/local-agreements/salary-agreement-doctoral-students/>
 - Elena: A problem with the collective agreement is that it's written in a way that opens it to each faculty's interpretation. Suggestion to check the document and consider if revisions are needed.
 - Erik: agrees with Elena. The document is ambiguous about what percentage of work would entail (would it include things like teaching?), especially when left up to the supervisor to decide.
- Suggestions from members of DN
 - Lennart: suggests each DN faculty representative find out what guideline each department implements, and what issues students have experienced with that system. Agrees to make the document less ambiguous.
 - Erik: if we opt for a strictly time-based plan, then the university is bound by the agreement to count only active doctoral studies.
 - Topias: suggests all DN faculty representatives find out how each department is interpreting these guidelines and what issues are experienced by students. Clear that we should produce an idea for reducing problems regarding salary thresholds and basing it on time.

§12 Writing Support Services for PhD Students (discussion)

Makoto Shigei from TekNat's graduate educational board (FUN) spoke with DN Board regarding whether PhD students should have institutional writing support services in Uppsala University, for example, Grammarly, Ref-N-Write, ProWritingAid, etc. Also discussed the idea for UU to subsidize "Visualize your Science" courses.

Following discussion points are raised:

- Makoto has received requests for financial support for academic writing support tools, such as Grammarly, and for “visualize your science” courses. The financial support would be for all students, not just TNDR.
- “Visualize your science” courses were given previously at UU, but are now privatized. Course admin offered a group discount if several students apply. Previously when this course was based in the university, two faculties were funding it. However, Makoto hopes to negotiate with university board members to fund this course.
- Makoto: What is the process for implementing this request at the university level? What should be prepared to take to the next step, to present to boards?
 - Elena: usually, each department decides what courses they want to fund. It may be difficult to have a university-wide funding.
 - Jila: suggests proposing it like the English/Swedish language courses, which are offered every semester and students only need their supervisors’ permission while the department pays for the cost of the course.
 - Topias: suggests discussing this with Coco. The best course of action may be to find a faculty/department that is willing to organize the course. For students coming from other departments, their respective department can be billed.

The Board suggests that after the FUN meeting the following day and the chair contacting Coco, the matter will be proceeded along the lines of the above discussion.

§13 Updates from the Working Group on Livability and Wellbeing (discussion)

Elena and Ayesha updated the board regarding the Working Group on Livability and Wellbeing. Volunteers to join the working group are welcome, both from Uppsala and Gotland.

§14 Updates from the Board Members, Student Representatives and other participants (discussion)

Jakob: Hållbar Framtid taskforce with UU event are organizing a discussion forum on 14th November to listen to PhD students’ ideas on sustainability and how UU can be a key driver of communication between science and society. The Board is suggested to circulate information among the PhD students.

Oreste: Last science fika for the semester is on 29th October. Received funding from the Department of Surgical Sciences to continue with events. For PhD academia/industry career development event, Oreste and Jila are thinking of creating a seminar series of events with workshops on practical skills such as writing grant proposals. Planning to create a working group, and will have a more formal proposal next meeting. Interested parties can contact Oreste.

Update from the meeting of språkverkstadens styrgrupp 19/10: Språkstadens styrgrupp encourages teaching PhD students to use their services, including workshops and materials concerning strategies for reading and writing to address possible challenges in their teaching when students are weak at relevant language skills. They also want to share this film with PhD students about the details of their service.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YV8mFIzPGTA>

JDR: The JDR is pursuing a biannual national conference for doctoral candidates in law. The Faculty of Law is exploring the possibility of instituting a seminar series with the purpose of allowing doctoral candidates from the whole faculty to present and get feedback on their research. This may or may not become a mandatory part of doctoral education. The JDR is working together with the faculty on the verksamhetsplan and forskningsutvärdering.

§15 For your information (discussion)

15.1. DN urges all faculty-level doctoral councils to apply for financial support as a form of operational grants from DN (maximum amount 2500 kr). Deadline for submission is November 15th.

15.2. Saco-S-föreningen vid Uppsala universitet and Uppsala University has negotiated new salaries for PhD Students, valid from October 1st:

<https://www.saco.fackorg.uu.se/lagar-och-avtal/lokala-avtal/loneavtal-doktorander/>

15.3. Just as a reminder: All PhD Student representatives elected by DN as well as DN Board Members are entitled to have a certificate of their job, which may be used for prolongation applications, for example. All such certificates are to be asked from the chair.

15.4. UU is reviewing riktlinjer and antalningsordningar regarding doctoral education. There was a remiss about this from August to October, but due to a communications problem, it did not arrive in DN. Unfortunately, doktorandrepresentant in the working group preparing the revision contacted Topias late last week and went through the changes. Major changes were about stipend-financed PhD students and their rights to transition to employment, supervisor education and qualifications, and regarding a failed dissertation. Latter of the changes is about stating that it is possible to resubmit a failed thesis/dissertation, but only after substantial improvements to the earlier work.

§16 Remaining meetings of the academic year

Tuesday 29.11. kl 15:15 Brunörten, Segerstedt

Tuesday 13.12. kl 15:15 A2:208b in BMC

Tuesday 31.1. kl 15:15 (Vice-reaktor visits the meeting) Nornan

Tuesday 28.2. kl 15:15 Brunörten

Tuesday 28.3. kl 15:15 Tuvstarren

Tuesday 25.4. kl 15:15 Tuvstarren

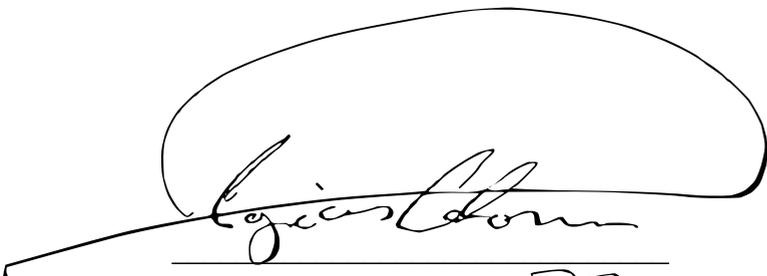
Tuesday 23.5. kl 15:15 (Election meeting) Tuvstarren

Tuesday 13.6. kl 15:15 (Filler elections) or Monday 12.6. kl. 15:15 Tuvstarren

§17 Other comments or issues

§18 Closing of the meeting

The chair closes the meeting at 16:59.

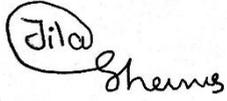


Topias Tolonen, Chair

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Ayesha Mae Bilal, Secretary



Jila Shamslatifi, Attestant