

PhD council spring meeting

Meeting minutes

May 29, 2019

Present: Gustav Eklund (Atom), Kess Marks (Chem), Mikica Kocic (CoPS), Junior Gonzales (KOMKO), Naemi Florin (KOMKO), Jorge Larana (CoPS), Natalie Wilson (KOMKO), Patrawan Pasuwan (ELPA), Ahmed Aouelkomsan (KOMKO), Anton Ljungdahl (Atom), Johan Sörngård (Atom), Ludovico Giorgini (NORDITA), Axel Erbing (Chem), Cody Sterling (Chem), Filip Backman (ELPA), Axel Gagge (KOMKO), Dirk Wölbing (Instrument), Tomas Palmqvist (MSF), Nabila Shaikh (ELPA)

- **Meeting formalities**

- Election of secretary and adjusters
 - Elected Jesper (secretary) and Natalie and Naemi (adjusters)
- Approval of meeting being announced according to procedure
 - Approved
- Confirming the agenda
 - Confirmed

- **Approval of previous minutes**

- Spring meeting 2018 and Fall meeting 2019 minutes were approved.

- **Information**

- Administration
 - Åsa Storm and Olga Danetskaya introduce themselves. Åsa will take over the previous work of Lisa Välvainio, i.e. all administrative tasks related to PhD students, starting from the fall. Olga will temporarily handle these tasks until then.
- Committee for equal rights and opportunities
 - Naemi introduces the committee. The committee works on issues related to helping everyone feel welcome and comfortable in our working environment. It has in the last year, for instance, conducted a PhD student survey. The results of the survey do indicate that there are problems regarding e.g. stress and communication.
- Arbetsmiljökommittén
 - Kess introduces the committee. She is in the committee as the PhD student "safety officer". The committee deals with e.g. purely physical problems such as lab safety, but also psychological issues at work and e.g. ergonomic equipment and reports regarding work related accidents. All accidents occurring at (or in connection to, e.g. travel to or from) work

should be reported in the SAMIR system. The committee also takes part in the annual safety inspection round of all labs.

- Natalie and Jorge introduces Fysikshow. Fysikshow is an outreach program to incite interest in science, mainly aimed at high school students. Natalie and Jorge demonstrates one of the main experiments in the show: liquid nitrogen. Enthusiastic candidates among the PhD students are encouraged to apply for Fysikshow, which is considered a teaching task and thereby compensated with teaching hours for participation.

- **Reports from boards and committees**

- One of the most important points for PhD students in the last year is that the research education program in "Physics" has been the subject of a pilot test for evaluating the quality in education at SU. The report was mainly positive, citing, for instance, the strong research environment, but also suggested some improvements that KUF will work on in the coming year, in particular:
 - The number of PhD courses is currently very limited and should therefore be looked at. It has previously been brought up in the council that there are not enough courses available for some directions of research, so we look positively on this initiative.
 - The faculty is considering to impose a policy that all licentiate examinations should involve external participants in some form. Per-Erik and Sten have argued against this suggestion, and a majority of the PhD council has previously also opposed it. From the discussion in the meeting, it was concluded that the council is currently undecided on the issue as there are pros and cons for both sides, such as:
 - External examination could increase the pressure and expectations on the thesis and defense, which could push PhD students and supervisors to delay defenses.
 - But it could also provide a more critical assessment of the PhD project, to better help with the second half.
 - In some cases it could be particularly sensitive to have external insight into projects and data which are still unpublished. It should therefore be possible to at least apply for exemption.
 - Having external readers/opponents would increase the selection of candidates (making it possibly easier to get defenses underway) but could also increase the workload in organization.

- **Election of department representatives**

- Information about representation
 - Kajsa and Jesper gives a short overview of the PhD council website and information about the departmental governance also found on Fysikum's website. The Fysikum board (chaired by Sven Mannervik, soon to be Jan Conrad) makes all the decisions for the department, but issues are first prepared in various preparatory committees. The PhD council (i.e. all PhD students at Fysikum) elects their representatives to these board and

committees, in addition to 10 members of the PhD council board who meet on a monthly basis to continuously follow up on ongoing topics.

- A question arose regarding the prolongation given for participation in Fysikum boards and committees. The PhD council board and the Fysikum board are compensated in the "standard" 2+1 fashion (2 base days + 1 per attended meeting), but it was confirmed from Per-Erik that no decision has been taken regarding prolongation for the other committees (meaning that it is currently not given).
- Report from the treasury
 - The treasurer (Nabila) and revisor (Mikica) reports that the budget is in order. The second revisor (Ander Lundkvist) is not present at the meeting, but has not voiced any concerns.
- Elections
 - A separate spreadsheet (FysikumRepresentatives2019.pdf) contains the results of the elections.
 - As no prolongation is currently given for most of the positions, many of them would be left unfilled. It was therefore agreed that candidates could also be "conditionally" elected (marked with red in the spreadsheet), meaning that they are assumed to resign from their positions if prolongation is not given in the next year. Kajsa and Jesper will use this as an argument to discuss with Sven, Per-Erik and Sten about the possibility of giving prolongation for all the positions.
- **Other issues**
 - PhD pub
 - The PhD council is hosting PhD pub for the faculty of science directly after the meeting and all PhD students are encouraged to participate.