

PhD thesis defences and Licentiate seminars – recommendations during the ongoing outbreak of the Coronavirus.

Travel restrictions and other consequences of the ongoing virus outbreak can on short notice impact the possibilities for opponents and members of the committees to physically take part in defences of PhD and Licentiate theses. It is also the case that public gatherings should be avoided in order to lessen the risks of spreading the virus, and rules about this may soon come to be stricter. For this reason, the Faculty of Science would like to clarify the situation regarding PhD defences and Licentiate seminars, and what can be done:

- It should be considered if the defence can be postponed.

- Opponents and committee members that cannot participate can be replaced through a decision by the Section Dean or Dean. This can be done on short notice.
- If a committee member is to be replaced it is often the best solution that the reserve becomes a member of the committee, and a new reserve is appointed.
- If the opponent is to be replaced it is often the best solution that one of the committee members becomes opponent, whereas the reserve becomes a member and a new reserve is appointed.
- Normally the Faculty appoints only one reserve, but under the current circumstances it is to be recommended that the department's representative has prepared other potential reserves, that could be appointed to functions on short notice.

- Opponents and committee members that cannot participate physically can take part via link (preferably via Zoom).
- In this case, all who participates via link should be able to see and hear the respondent, presentations given in the auditorium and if at all possible everybody who is speaking in the physical room.
- Participants in the auditorium should if at all possible be able to see and hear all who participates via link.
- It is to be recommended that all who participates via link leaves a phone number in advance so that they can be contacted by the chairperson in case of technical difficulties.
- It is to be recommended that there are potential reserves available in the room for all who participates via link, so that they can replace them if the link fails.

- Because of the current circumstances it is for the time being allowed that the respondent takes part via link if necessary.
- Completely virtual PhD defences/Licentiate seminars are also allowed for the time being. In this case the defence must be made public via posting of the link to the virtual room on the department's home page, and spreading of the link via mail to other departments in similar subjects. It is possible to change to a virtual format also after the nailing date. The completely virtual alternative should be used only if at least partially physical defences are not possible.
- The opponent must be able to take part of the respondent's presentation and participate in the entire opposition. Committee members must be able to take part in the whole defence. The audience must be able to pose questions at the end of the defence. If technique failure means that these demands cannot be met the chairperson should take the decision to redo/postpone the defence.
- It is the department that is responsible for arranging defences via link.

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