

PhD Council Spring Meeting

Meeting minutes

Friday 28 May 2021 at 15.00-17.23 via Zoom

Present: Kajsa Blomdahl, Jorge Laraña Aragón, Nadia Flodgren, Adam Johansson Andrews, Alexandre Adler, Alice Schmidt-May, Aliko Litsa, Ana Sagués Carracedo, Berna Arslanoglu, Cody Sterling, Fredrik Kalholm, Johan Sörngård, Kunal Deoskar, Lukas Rødland, Matti Jansson, Konstantina Dachlithra, Naemi Florin, Prim Pasuwan, Raka Paul, Roger Cattaneo, Sunniva Jacobsen, Tommaso Bertolini. **Speakers:** Per-Erik Tegnér, Sten Hellman, Elin Hamnergård, Åsa Storm, Emily Freeland.

Opening

1) Meeting formalities

- a) Election of secretary and adjuster
 - i) Secretary: Nadia Flodgren
 - ii) Adjuster: Jorge Laraña Aragón
- b) Confirmation of meeting being announced according to procedure
 - i) Meeting was pronounced 13 days before the meeting instead of the normal 14.
- c) Jorge explains the agenda. PhD pub postponed until the end of the summer due to corona restrictions regarding public gatherings.

2) Information

- a) Director of doctoral studies: Sten Hellman and Per-Erik Tegnér
 - i) PhD defence timeline has been adjusted. The pre-defence seminar has been moved forward, now it should be held at least 10 weeks before the dissertation. The requirement to send a pre-print of the thesis to the committee should be done 2 weeks before you send it to be printed.
 - ii) The committee for education and higher education are discussing how to shrink the budget for PhD education for the department due to the financial situation of the department. Higher rent is one of the factors to why the department has less money. The number of PhD students for the next couple of years will be reduced.
 - iii) The pandemic has affected the PhD students. Sten Hellman and Per-Erik have been discussing with the chairs of the PhD council board different ways to compensate for the losses for PhD students during the pandemic. The department management has been willing to help and is generally positive towards helping the PhD students. The issue of whether or not a blanket prolongation can be given is dealt with at the faculty level. Many departments have suffered even worse consequences than Fysikum. The current status is that applications for prolongation have to be done at the individual level and are decided by the faculty.

The applications should be focused on concrete difficulties and not general stress levels. Per-Erik is preparing material and guidelines on how to make one of these applications. They have not given up on some way of giving a general support to all the PhD students who have been suffering during the pandemic. If this should fail, they will be helping students make the individual prolongations.

iv) Regarding prolongation applications, at present individual applications can be sent to the faculty. Contact Per-Erik with your initial application and he will help you write an application to the faculty. To the faculty you have to motivate very clearly what your issues have been. You have to have an ISP and a covid-attachment to the ISP, preferably recently updated. Those who should file now are those who are close to ending their PhD studies. If you have a lot of time perhaps you can wait with your application. Even if you plan to wait with your application, you should document the effects the pandemic has had on your situation. Per-Erik will try to formulate some guidelines on what an application should contain. The final decision rests with the faculty but the financial responsibility rests with the department.

b) Administration: Elin Hamnergård and Åsa Storm

i) Elin Hamnergård is in HR, works mostly with postdocs, researcher and teachers. The last months she has been helping out with PhD students too. Åsa Storm is the main contact for PhD students, she also administrates the licentiate.

ii) Elin will email the presentation to Kajsa who will send it to the students. The presentation contains contact details to the administration, sick leave, temporary rules regarding sick leave during the covid 19 pandemic; the rules currently apply to June 30 2021 but might be extended to September. There is also information about wellness; we have 2 wellness hours per week until June 30 2021, normally we have 1 hour. We are reminded to register your vacation in primula (deadline was April 30). If you are not sure you can still register and change it afterwards. There is also contact information for obtaining certificates for your employment.

c) Career coach: Emily Freeland

i) Emily works for OKC and the math and physics section of SU. Half of the time she does career coaching for PhD students and postdocs about careers outside academia. There is the “jobs outside academia” seminars where she invites former students who work outside academia to come and talk to us. She also organizes workshops. You can book a meeting to discuss career related things with Emily. She also does some amount of career coaching within academia but since 9 out of 10 of PhD students will move from academia she is focused on jobs outside academia.

ii) Emily gives some advice. Academia sells a PhD studentship as an apprenticeship but that is not how it works. Don't wait for someone to teach you. The people who succeed best are the ones who already know how to manage themselves and their

supervisor. Managing up: you need to take some control of your work. Be more proactive about communication about your work, proactive about planning things related to your work. You will need to do the things a good manager will do because probably your supervisor is not doing them. These are hard things to do. Emily will send a document about this.

iii) PhD students are very integrated into the university. PhD representatives are in many committees and on the Fysikum board. Postdocs have none of this. She asks us to help the postdocs and share information with the postdocs. Since we as PhD students are in committees and boards we have power and can bring a point of view the faculty does not have. We can use our voice in the meetings to for example, promote teaching over research, who to hire (be on the lookout for biases from the people hiring). We should speak up. For example, a friend of Emily was told she does too much outreach in an interview for a faculty position. PhD students can speak up here and say that outreach is important. We can listen to the language and look for biases and discrimination in hiring committees. We do not have to do this role but can do it and it could be very important.

(1) Jorge emphasizes that seniors are often very willing to listen to PhD students and are happy when we speak up.

3) Approval of previous minutes

a) Autumn meeting (201126) minutes approved.

4) Reports

a) Information from NFR (Naturvetenskapliga fakultetsrådet): Alexandre Adler

i) NFR is the student union for the faculty of natural sciences. NFR has two purposes: disseminate information between departments and to elect representatives for positions for different faculty boards and committees. At the next NFR meeting they plan to discuss what happens after the pandemic, i.e. how to return to normal work. If you have suggestions on this topic you can email Alexandre.

b) Report from the PhD council board: Kajsa-My Blomdahl

i) In the last Autumn meeting we discussed problems PhD students have when they first arrive in Sweden and what they wished to have information on when they arrived here. A list of suggestions was put together by Kunal and sent to the administration. Kajsa reports that the list of suggestions has been implemented now and is given to new PhD students.

5) Elections of department representatives

a) Reports from the treasury: Kunal Deoskar

i) Kunal presents a treasury report. The total amount available in the treasury is 2465 kr (965 kr of this is in cash).

- ii) The revisors Alexandre Adler and Filip Backman should approve the report.
Alexandre has approved it but Filip has not. One of the new revisors elected today (Jorge Laraña Aragón) approved the report after the meeting.
 - b) Information about representation: Jorge Laraña Aragón
 - i) Jorge presents information about the PhD student representation at Fysikum and the Faculty of Science. SU is Swedens largest university and Fysikum is one of the largest departments so we have a lot of influence. The elections today are at the level of the department.
 - c) Elections are carried out. See Appendix A or attached excel file (positions2021).
- 6) **Other issues**
- 7) **Closing remarks**

Appendix A: Elections of department representatives

PhD Council Board

- a) Nadia Flodgren (CoPS)
- b) Jorge Laraña Aragón (CoPS)
- c) Kunal Deoskar (ELPA)
- d) Raka Paul (Atom)
- e) Filippo Schiavo (MSF)
 - i) Substitute: Tomas Palmqvist
- f) Cody Sterling (Chem)
- g) Roger Cattaneo (KOMKO)
- h) (Nadia) Konstantina Dachlythra (CoPS)
- i) Alexandre Adler (CoPS)
- j) Ana Sagués Carracedo (CoPS)

PhD Council Board Presidium

- k) Chair: Nadia Flodgren (CoPS)
- l) Vice-chair: Jorge Laraña Aragón (CoPS)

PhD Council Treasury

- Cashier: Kunal Deoskar
- Revisors
 - Jorge Laraña Aragón
 - Alexandre Adler

Fysikum styrelse (department board)

- PhD Board Chair (ordinary)

- Sunniva Jacobsen (ordinary)
- PhD Board Vice-chair (secondary)

Research education committee (KUF)

- Jorge Laraña Aragón (ordinary)
- Filippo Schiavo (ordinary)
- (Nadia) Konstantina Dachlythra (ordinary)
- Aliko Litsa (secondary)
- Berna Arslanoglu (secondary)
- Raka Paul (secondary)

Basic education committee (GUK)

- Sunniva Jacobsen (ordinary)
- Nadia Flodgren (secondary)

Committee for research strategy (KFS)

- Nadia Flodgren (ordinary)

Committee for equal opportunities

- Raka Paul (ordinary)
- (Nadia) Konstantina Dachlythra (ordinary)
- Ana Sagués Carracedo (secondary)
- Sunniva Jacobsen (secondary)

Committee for the working environment/Safety officer (arbetsmiljökommittén)

- Alexandre Adler (ordinary)
- Roger Cattaneo (ordinary)
- Ana Sagués Carracedo (secondary)

Budget committee

- Alexandre Adler (ordinary)
- Jorge Laraña Aragón (secondary)

Computer committee

- Filippo Schiavo (ordinary)
- Cody Sterling (ordinary)
- Raka Paul (secondary)
- Roger Cattaneo (secondary)

PR-committee

- Adam Johansson Andrews (ordinary)
- Kunal Deoskar (ordinary)
- Filippo Schiavo (secondary)
- Jorge Laraña Aragón (secondary)

Technical division committee

- Aliko Litsa (ordinary)
- Ana Sagués Carracedo (ordinary)
- Berna Arslanoglu (secondary)