

Graduate School of Natural Sciences (GSNS)

PhD committee meeting

Time: Tuesday, 16 May 2023 at 14.15-16.00

Place: Ny Munkegade 120, bldg. 1520, room 732

Minutes

1. Meeting information

Participants:

Ernst-Martin Füchtbauer, Ditlev Egeskov Brodersen, Duncan Sutherland, Anders Møller, Pernille Nedergaard Madsen, Niklas Lawaetz Østergaard, Andreas Dueholm Bertelsen, Erik Asbjørn Mikkelsen Jensen, Juan Carlos Zamora Luria, Mathias Østbjerg Vang, Anders Sten Kortegård, Anne-Kathrine Kure Larsen, Harith Rathish, Carlo Klapproth and David Lundbek Egholm

Participating online:

Jens Kristian Refsgaard Schou

Guests during item 5:

Camilla Lønborg Nielsen and Heidrikur Mortensen

Apologies for absence:

Sebastian Harald Riedelbauch, Simon Panyella Pedersen and Tammy Ai Tian Ho

The secretariat:

Karen Konradi, Mie Meulengracht Christensen and Rikke J. Ljungmann

2. Round of introduction

There was a round of introduction to meet and greet everyone.

3. Approval of minutes from the PhD committee meeting on 24 January 2023

The minutes were approved.

4. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved.

5. Visit from the two PhD student members of the Academic Council at NAT

Camilla Lønborg Nielsen and Heidrikur Mortensen introduced the Academic Council and their organisation, including the number of VIP's, TAP's, PhD students, and regular students at the Faculty represented.

The issue of having only two PhD students representing all PhD students at the Faculty of Natural Sciences was raised. More input to the agendas and discussions would strengthen their work.

It was therefore agreed that the PhD students in this committee could receive the Academic Council agendas to comment on the topics and offer more diverse input to the two Academic Council PhD student members. Furthermore, important information can be discussed here based on the topics raised by the Academic Council.

Action: Mie M. Christensen will contact the PhD student members of this committee and ask for their approval to receive agendas from the Academic Council meetings. The members of the Academic Council will be introduced in a Newsletter from GSNS.

6. Announcements – Overview of assessment committees, exemptions, etc. for the period 14 January to 4 May 2023

As usual at each committee meeting, an overview was presented of the following:

- Defences – assessment committees
- Qualifying exams
- Requests (incl. credit transfer granted during the PhD study, if any)
- Credit transfer granted in connection with admissions process (NB: None have been granted during the period – therefore no appendix)
- Covid-19 extensions applied for and approved during the period

David Lundbek Egholm mentioned that there was nothing to notice out of the ordinary.

Duncan Sutherland commented that a few extensions due to corona were accepted without salary. David Lundbek Egholm explained that these were PhD students funded by a non-AU stipend where the funding body extended the stipends instead.

7. News from the PhD students

It was discussed how PhD students should call in sick when they have to teach and if it was their responsibility to find a new TA to teach on the given day. Some experience that they have to find a TA, and that they "owe" the substitute teaching hours, adding to the workload.

Action: David Lundbek Egholm and the Faculty Management will talk with the departments about how they handle teaching to see if it can be aligned at the departments. He will happily receive input on this topic to discuss further with the departments.

7a. A topic for inspiration and discussion

At the annual Physics and Astronomy PhD Day, Erik Asbjørn Mikkelsen Jensen and Simon Panyella Pedersen together with the local programme committee PhD student member gave a very useful presentation on PhD related matters, incl. the differences between the programme/department and school committees.

It was agreed at the meeting that it could serve as a great inspiration for other programmes.

7b. Wellbeing initiative - AU GSNS Hoodie

Harith Rathish and Jens Kristian Refsgaard Schou had proposed that new PhD students are given a free AU GSNS hoodie with logos as a wellbeing initiative. The purpose is for new PhD students to feel part of GSNS and AU.

Following a discussion, it was approved that all GSNS PhD students, both currently enrolled and future PhD students, should be offered a free GSNS Hoodie.

Action: David Lundbek Egholm, Rikke J. Ljungmann and Mie M. Christensen will discuss further and find a solution regarding ordering.

8. Individual PhD courses:

8a. PhD course in BSc/MSc supervision

It was discussed whether the course would be relevant / of interest for the PhD students. The focus should be on the practical part and not so much on the theoretical part.

Action: Rikke J. Ljungmann will discuss this with the Course Committee.

8b. Sustainable changemakers

The course was approved.

Action: Mie M. Christensen informs the relevant parties about the decision.

8c. Applied Statistics

The course description has not yet been finalised but is expected to be so shortly, it will be discussed through a written e-mail hearing.

9. The transferable skills PhD course portfolio GSNS and GSTS for 2024

The portfolio was approved.

Action: Mie M. Christensen informs the relevant parties about the decision.

10. The purpose of the Well-being Committee and follow-up from the first 2023 meeting

The Well-being Committee consists of one PhD student member of each of the five graduate school PhD committees at AU, the Heads of the graduate schools and AUPA representatives. The aim is to further the well-being of all AU PhD students and share knowledge in this regard.

Among other things, the focus on the first meeting in 2023 was SDD (Staff Development Dialogues) (in Danish: MUS (Medarbejderudviklingssamtaler)). The content of the SDDs was discussed, and it was emphasised that it is obligatory to hold SDD with all employed PhD students – and urged to hold them also with the non-employed PhD students.

At the next meeting in the Well-being Committee, offboarding will be discussed. The following meeting will focus on International PhD students, and input will be appreciated.

Action: Mie M. Christensen adds the topic on international PhD students for later discussion at a meeting in this committee.

11. PhD student member of the committee at the Introduction day

As part of making more PhD students aware of the PhD committee and the committee work, it was suggested that one or two of the PhD student members of the PhD committee participate at each GSNS introduction day to talk about the PhD committee.

This was approved.

Action: Mie M. Christensen sends out an e-mail to PhD students in the committee to ask who might be interested.

12. Co-authorship conflicts

A discussion was initiated on the topic, and it was decided to discuss it further in a later meeting.

David Lundbek Egholm mentioned the [whistleblower scheme at AU](#). To ensure there is no conflict of interest a third party handles the scheme. It is also a possibility to talk with the [Advisers on the responsible conduct of research and freedom of research at NAT](#), Karsten Riisager and Marit-Solveig Seidenkrantz.

Action: Mie M. Christensen adds the topic for a later meeting.

13. For your information:

13a. Honorarium for PhD student participation in PhD committee work

In connection with the GSNS Action plan it was discussed whether the Graduate School could grant an honorarium to PhD students for participating in PhD committee work. This has been examined further. Unfortunately, as it turns out, there is no legal basis for paying an honorarium for PhD committee work. Since it is not a possibility it was discussed whether the PhD students could receive either teaching hours or ECTS for committee work, preferably teaching hours.

Action: The committee recommends that the PhD students get teaching hours for their committee work. Since the committee does not have decision-making competence in this respect, David Lundbek Egholm will have this discussed with the Head of Departments, who can make the decision.

13b. Minutes from the course committee meeting

The minutes had been attached for the committee members' perusal.

14. Any other business

Ernst-Martin Füchtbauer will be retiring as of 31 July 2023. Hence, he will also be retiring both as member and as Head of the PhD committee. He suggested that Ditlev Egeskov Brodersen from Molecular Biology and Genetics enters the committee, which was approved. Duncan Sutherland was suggested new Chair of the committee as of 1 August 2023, which was approved.

David Lundbek Egholm gave on behalf of the entire committee a sincere thank you to Ernst-Martin Füchtbauer for his great work throughout the years.