

Minutes – PhD committee meeting
Tuesday, 17 September 2024 from 13.15 to 16.00
Meeting room: 1520-732, City View

1. Meeting information:

Participants:

Brian Julsgaard, Christian Saugbjerg Lange, Cyril Matousek, Ditlev Egeskov Brodersen, Duncan Sutherland, Hans-Jörg Schulz, Jacob Christian Warming, Jens Kristian Refsgaard Schou, Jeppe Bayer Pedersen, Mads Ramsgaard Stoltenberg, Malthe Kjær Bendtsen, Marie Vogel Kolte and Ole Bækgaard Nielsen

Participates online:

Lasse Messell Desdorf

Apologies for absence:

David Terrence Nkansah

The secretariat:

Rikke J. Ljungmann, Frederikke K. Hansen and Mie M. Christensen

2. Short round of introduction

There was a short round of introduction.

3. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved.

4. Announcements – Overview of assessment committees, exemptions, etc. for the period 4 May 2024 to 6 September 2024

At each PhD Committee meeting an overview is 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 admission process
- Covid-19 extensions applied for and approved during the period. *Please note no extensions due to Covid-19 have been granted in the given period.*

It was decided to keep the spreadsheets with the current information to ensure transparency. It has been delegated to the Heads of programme and Head of School to approve assessment committees, requests and credit transfer, hence the overviews are to look out for undesirable patterns.

5. Teaching hours for supervision

Most PhD students are not granted teaching hours for supervision, leading to some PhD students experiencing an extra workload, e.g. if they are part of a larger group with many Bachelor and Master students.

Action: Ole Bækgaard Nielsen will discuss the matter with the Faculty Management Team, i.e. the Dean, Vice-Deans and Heads of department.

6. Retreats and autumn schools at MBG and iNANO

The retreats at Molecular Biology & Genetics (MBG) and iNANO respectively was presented.

At MBG the conference is mandatory and lasting three days during the work week. PhD students from the department plan the conference, and the department pays for it. All PhD students introduce their work to fellow PhD students, there are different workshops, and previous PhD students participate in an alumni panel. The focus is also on creating a space for PhD students to connect across the programme to increase the well-being. Participants are granted 2 ECTS.

At iNANO the Autumn School is voluntary and lasting three days during the weekend. The event is planned by PhD students, supervisors, head of programme, and the iNANO administration. All PhD students introduce their work to fellow PhD students and there are different workshops. The focus is also on creating a space for PhD students to connect across the programme to increase the well-being. Participants are granted 2 ECTS.

At Biology a mandatory conference for all PhD students are held every year lasting one day. No ECTS is granted.

7. Support groups at the programmes

It was decided that PhD students from MBG, CS, GEO and Biology should not give a short presentation of the organisation and the purpose of the support groups at their programme as this had already been discussed in various connections during other meetings.

8. Well-being sub-committee

It was decided that a Well-being sub-committee should not be formed as it is a matter for the entire PhD committee to discuss.

Ole Bækgaard Nielsen stressed, that for him to proceed with initiatives and present these in other fora, they have to be concrete and well-described.

The labour union DM and Danish universities have collaborated on creating an inspirational catalogue addressing different aspects and arenas where universities can work with well-being for PhD students and with examples from all Danish universities. The 'Inspirational catalogue on the well-being of PhD students' can be found here:

https://dkuni.dk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/dkunidm_well-being_in_phd_education_an_inspirational_catalogue-1.pdf

9. GSNS travel grant – Mobility grant

The current rules for the GSNS Mobility grant were discussed. It was decided to make the rules more flexible, but to keep the current requirement of the stay lasting a minimum of 90 days.

Since the research environment change can be divided into several stays, and the PhD student does not always know when all the stays will take place when planning the first stay, it will be possible to apply for the mobility grant for the stay where the PhD student reaches 90 days. The PhD student cannot be refunded for previous stays, but expenses up to DKK 20,000 can be covered for the upcoming stay(s).

Action: The PhD secretariat will incorporate the new rules.

10. News from the PhD students

Any issues that the PhD student members might wish to bring forward for discussion.

10a. Equality and transparency of ECTS points

The rules for getting ECTS for PhD activities other than regular courses were discussed.

It was decided that the arguments from this discussion should be presented to the Heads of programme.

Action: The item will be added to the agenda for the next Heads of programme meeting in December 2024.

11. News from the Course Committee

11a. PhD course in Data Visualisation

The PhD course was approved.

Action: The PhD course has been announced along with the other PhD courses for 2025. The PhD courses can be found here: <https://au.phd-courses.dk/>

11b. PhD course with focus on 'Outreach'

There is an interest in a course about 'Outreach'.

Action: The Nat/Tech Course Committee will discuss a course in 'Outreach' at the next meeting.

12. For your information

12a. URIS

Ole Bækgaard Nielsen informed that AU along with all the other Danish universities will start screening candidates from certain countries before admission. This will start with the call for applications with deadline 1 February 2025. The list of countries is updated by Police Intelligence Service (PET).

12b. VIVE report

Ole Bækgaard Nielsen informed that the NAT Diversity & Gender Equality Committee has mapped out what has been done since the VIVE report was conducted and what needs to happen next. This applies not only to PhD students, but generally throughout the Faculty.

12c. AU election coming up

The temporary timeline for the upcoming AU election is available here:

<https://medarbejdere.au.dk/en/strategy/universityelection/schedule-2023>. Information is available at the GSNS website, and the Graduate School has sent out newsletters to both PhD students and supervisors. The administration has also sent out a separate e-mails to the PhD committee and Programme chairs.

13. Any other business

13a. Self-plagiarism

Ole Bækgaard Nielsen informed about self-plagiarism and what to be aware of. You are welcome to share the attachment with your fellow PhD students, if desired.

Appendix:

- 13a. Self-plagiarism in PhD dissertations

13b. Network for pregnant/parent-to-be researchers and researchers with young children (nursery/kindergarten) who will return, are returning, or have recently returned to work at Nat

Ole Bækgaard Nielsen informed about a new initiative for researchers at NAT called Parents@Nat-AU. PhD students are very welcome to participate. It is held the last Monday of every month from 10.00-12.00. You can read more about it here:

<https://nat.au.dk/en/about-the-faculty/career/parentsnat-au>