

Annual Report Chalmers Doctoral Student Guild 2013/2014

Introduction

The Doctoral Student Guild board (DS) has during the year been actively representing the Doctoral Student Guild in a number of different committees and activities within Chalmers and outside, which will be accounted for in this report. Further, the internal activities will also be briefly mentioned. During the year 2013/2014 the board consisted of:

Francesco Mazzotta	Chairperson	AP
Ronja Thies	Vice chairperson	FP
Amir Malakizadi	Member	MMT
David Gustafsson	Member	MC2
Dinesh Mallipeddi	Member	MMT
Emma Qingnan Zhang	Member	CEE
Eskil Varenus	Member	ESS
Erik Lindskog	Member	PPD
Francesco Baldi	Member	SMT
Fatemeh Ayatollahi	Member	CSE (from December 2013)
Matteo Molteni	Member	MV
Nojan Najafi	Member	TME
Patrick Moldenhauer	Member	EE
Ragnar Lárusson	Member	AM
Rajet Krishnan	Member	S2
Seyed Mohammad Reza Shoaee	Member	S2
Stig Nielsen	Member	A

Viktor Andersson	Member	EE
Karin Jonsson	Member	KB

Introduction days

During the introduction days for PhD students, DS has been represented and held a presentation of DS, what DS actually is, what DS does, some examples of the current projects and issues that have been addressed during the last year, how one can join DS and contribute as members and also contacts for representatives at each department and encouragement of participation in local departmental councils.

The university board

The University board is the highest decision making body within the University (excluding the board of the Chalmers Foundation), and DS is given the right to have a person attend and speak, but not to vote. In this forum, the DS and the Student Union present themselves as one voice, and we have established a good tradition of having preparatory meetings before each board meeting to discuss the current agenda. The University Board discusses issues of strategic value to Chalmers, and the major issues this year have been the discussion of new models for the repartition of funds to the departments, the creation of research infrastructure which should function as poles for the creation of clusters of instruments and the redefinition of the recruitment policies from an internationalization and gender equality driven perspective.

Work environment and equality (AJK)

The AJK (Arbetsmiljö och jämställdhetskommitee, work environment and equality committee) discusses issues concerning work environment (in all its aspects) and equality. It usually focuses on all employees and not on a specific group of employees. A summary of the main topics is given below:

- Employee survey: Chalmers is in general slightly better in the index than other Universities, but the trust in the management is quite low. Worth mentioning with the worst results are feedback and appropriate workload.
- Possibilities to improve the situation for taking the bike to Chalmers (availability parking and lockers/showers).
- The way Chalmers works for a more equal distribution of sexes among professors at Chalmers.
- The yearly summary from the company health service was given and as usually the case PhD students and administrators are those with most stress related problems and problems in general.

- Discussion about the effects of the new division of the academic year. There will be a review to see if there is a negative effect on students.

Faculty Senate

The Faculty Council is the representative body for the technical faculty teaching staff. The Faculty Council works as a consultative body between the faculty and the rector; it is a forum for research and educational issues of principle and long-term strategic issues of importance to Chalmers development is initiated and discussed. The Faculty Council should also encourage interaction with society and business. Some general focus points are to safeguard a good intellectual environment at Chalmers as well as monitor and critically assess quality from an academic perspective. The topics discussed throughout the year are summarized below:

- Ranking – what does it mean for Chalmers and how should we relate to it?
- The evaluation of the Areas of Advance during these first years of operation.
- Repartition of faculty funding
- Discussions about the governments' recruitment targets for gender balance among professors and Chalmers' work to achieve this.
- Pros and cons of open access.

The board of research education (FUN)

The board of Research Education gathers all the pro-prefects responsible for research education at each department. Two persons represent DS. The board meets approximately 5 times/year, and during the year a number of different topics are discussed. There have been 5 main topics with recurring discussions this year:

- new rules of procedure for research education
 - DS had worked already the previous year in order to achieve a clearer formulation around Licentiate level. The main points subject to change were formulation around licentiate level, change of supervisor and abortion of research education. The formulation concerning licentiate was not so complicated to achieve, while the other two were more difficult and we did not succeed to get DS opinion through, but we made a significant impact. The original suggestion concerning the change of supervisor was: "The doctoral student has the right to have the change of supervisor tested." which we managed to change to: "A doctoral student who requests a change of supervisor and is deemed to have good reason to do so shall be granted a change of supervisor or some other equivalent measure."
 - The formulation for termination of research education is now sharper, but the rules/guidelines for it make it a much clearer process and we managed to emphasize the role of the study plan.
- the next generation HAL (handledarutveckling, supervisor education/development)
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- GTS, generic and transferable skills
- licentiate level / salary increase and flag from HR (human resources)

The formulation in AO and the contract is now clearer. However DS also suggested having a flag sent out to the supervisor, student and examiner after 2 years 3 months and again after 2 years and 9 months if no licentiate was reported. In the end, the decision is that the flag is sent out after 2 years 6 months. Whether it is also directly sent to the PhD student is so far unclear.

- **Nordic5Tech**

N5T is a database for PhD-level courses of the 5 big technical Universities in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. The courses are free to read by any PhD student of these Universities. The database has been put in place during the past year.

Nominating Supervisor of the year

The Supervisor of the year award was attributed to Jonas Ringsberg, Professor in Marine Structures at the department of Shipping and Marine technology. Jonas Ringsberg is an enthusiastic, dedicated and motivated supervisor, who guides and supports his PhD students through the whole journey of PhD studies with his creative, open-minded and interdisciplinary approach.

DS received a total of 15 eligible nominations. The board appointed a committee, which after thorough reading met to decide the most suitable candidates and proceeded with interviews with some of the nominating PhD students. After the interviews, the board committee met to summarize the impressions and presented a motivation for the final selection at a DS board meeting. A motivation letter with the nomination was sent in February to Alf-Erik Almstedt, who made the final decision. Jonas Ringsberg was awarded the prize at the Doctoral awards ceremony.

Representing Chalmers Doctoral Programs at Charm

Each year, DS represents the doctoral programs at Chalmers at CHARM, the labor market fair organized by the Student Union. Several board members participated in manning our booth and providing information for curious students about what it really means to be a PhD student. About 160 students visited our booth which is a consistent increase from the 50 students in 2013.

National PhD issues

The joint national PhD forum of SFS doctoral student committee and SULF's doctoral student association met five times this year. CDSG has one representative in the board. SFS-DK conducted a survey among Sweden's major universities on their current PhD candidate employment status and what the future looks like for these universities regarding employment. A report is expected in the fall. SFS-DK closely monitored the progress on the migration bill, which was voted by the Swedish parliament in June. Other activities have been to strengthen the relationship between SFS-DK and PhD councils of SFS student unions, this involves sending out a "newsletter" in an email. The chairperson has further participated in public debates that touch upon issues concerning PhD candidates in Sweden. SFS-DK also sent a representative to the Eurodoc meeting in Budapest in March.

Library Council

This council discusses topics and priorities relative to Chalmers library. The Library council should, within the library's activities, identify and consider the overall strategic issues of importance to the library's long-term development and other matters of principle. The library council should support the library management and provide a communication link between other departments at Chalmers. The council meets two times a year, one time each semester. Topics discussed this year were:

- There is an ongoing process of reorganizing the library, with a focus on creating new divisions. The new organization consists of three divisions: Scientific communication, Internal services, and Informationdistribution.
- The work with developing CPL is very important for the library and ongoing. The goal is that all publications should be published as Open Access and in CPL. The library is working close with ITS to develop additional functions to CPL and the library website, such as the connection to ORCID.
- There is a pilot project ongoing regarding how alumni from Chalmers can get access to the digital information at the library after graduation.
- The library is developing a new portal, research.chalmers.se, that will be used for presenting for example statistics of publications in databases such as CPL.
- There is an ongoing discussion regarding the document describing the responsibilities of the library, which is found outdated and should be updated.

E-publishing and Open access publishing (RePub)

The DS board has been represented in the reference group for e-publication, mainly discussing issues related to CPL and the way to meet Chalmers open access policy. Topics discussed this year were:

- Current and future development of CPL. A new function this year is "My CPL", where authors can view and edit their information.
- Chalmers is now a partner in the ORCID, which is an ID for researchers. A connection to ORCID is now available in CPL.
- The open access policy was established in 2010 and it is now time to make a revision of the policy. Discussions are ongoing regarding what changes to be made.
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- QlikView is a decision support system that Chalmers is introducing for internal publication statistics. The library considers right now how database sheets would look like in Qlickwiev.

The general assembly meetings

During the year, DS has had 2 general assembly meetings. The minutes from the meetings are available on DS website.

Dec 2013

- Election of Fatemeh Ayatollahi as a new board member.
- Presentation of the plan of operations for the year 2013/14.

May 2014

- Annual report and freedom from liability for the board of 2012/13.
- Election of a new board and auditor for 2014/15.

The work of the board

During the year, the board has had 5 meetings, approx. 3 h each.

As agreed to on the general assembly in May 2013 DS actively worked for the possibilities for PhD students to:

- print out their LADOK records themselves
- register for courses read together with master students online
- register for exams in the above courses online

These possibilities are all offered by the student portal to undergrad students. The matter was brought up in FUN which supported it. With the help of the central administrative personal for PhD education this matter was brought further and the first point is realized since June 2014. The other two points are more intricate but are on their way.

Since DS got to know of the Employee Survey in the beginning of 2013, DS sought after being part in formulating the PhD student questions and getting access to the answer data. When Chalmers ordered the Employee Survey this year after the pilot last year we were able to put in suggestions for requirements. We were also very active in changing / complementing the PhD student specific questions. This was helped by the input from the survey we conducted in 2013. The access to the answers is not finally settled, but most probably one board member will get the responsibility.

Previous year DS decided to initiate a series of discussions in the form of a workgroup on how certain problems that many PhD students deal with can be addressed. The first step was to prepare a working document to find a focus for further follow-ups and improvements in the Ph.D. students' satisfaction in

their work. That document was first made in autumn 2012, and the members of the workgroup continuously contributed to improving it by conducting various discussions in and outside the workgroup. In spring 2013, the document was finalized as input to a brief survey that aimed to specifically examine if the identified issues were of importance or in fact problematic from the viewpoint of Ph.D. students. This year the survey was analyzed and problems categorized. The findings from the survey and the results of combining them with information from other sources are presented in a report available on DS webpage. The report ends with a brief description of the process that the workgroup has gone through and suggested plans for the future. The identification and categorization were used as input for questions in the employee survey.

The board works on improving the communication with its guild members. As one measure a newsletter was established which is out 3 times a year. DS maintained its website (with RSS feed), Facebook and Google+ accounts.

Last but not least, the approval of a bill which allows PhD students to stay in the country after the end of the PhD studies to look for a job. DS has been one of the driving forces behind this process together with Chalmers, the union, the national council for students in Sweden and every autonomous student organization.

DS Chairman 2013-14

Francesco Mazzotta

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Francesco Mazzotta', written over a horizontal dashed line.