

Chalmers Doctoral Student Guild Annual report 2016/2017

Linnea Qvirist DS chair

This report will briefly highlight what has been done in our different activities during the activity year of 2016/2017. To see more general information about activities and committees, please visit the DS web page <http://www.dokt.chs.chalmers.se/>

The doctoral student guild has had an active year representing the voice of Chalmers PhD students within and outside of Chalmers. The board of the doctoral student guild of 2016/2017 consisted of:

Name	Role	Department (pre re-structuring)
Linnea Qvirist	Chair	BIO
Maria Ekström	Vice Chair	MC2
Elke Miedema	Board member	A
Jonas Sundell	Board member	CEE
Oskar Thulin	Board member	AM
Tomasz Kosinski	Board member	AIT
Aljoscha Lautenbach	Board member	CSE
Anna Köhler	Board member	EE
Joakim Strandberg	Board member	ESS
Gunnar Simonarson	Board member	K
Johan Wendel	Board member	MMT
Marco Longfils	Board member	MV
Silvia Tuzi	Board member	P
Onur Kaya	Board member	PPD
Cristina Rigato	Board member	S2
Sankar Menon	Board member	SMT
Naghme Taghavi Nejad	Board member	TME

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Continuous activities in the DS board work

Chalmers Universitetsstyrelse, Chalmers University Board

The chair of DS is representing the voice of PhD students at Chalmers in the university board. The university board is the highest decision making body within the university, and DS is given the right to have a person attend and speak, but not to vote. DS and the Student Union representatives have had preparatory meetings before each board meeting to discuss the current agenda and what to bring up. The university board discuss topics of strategic value to Chalmers, but also has a special theme each year (for the last 3 years), this year research has been the theme.

Research education council (FUN)

During the year 2016/2017, the DS representatives in FUN was Anna Köhler and Linnea Qvirist.

All meeting agendas and minutes can be found on Chalmers Insidan, or through this link: <https://www.chalmers.se/insidan/SV/utbildning-och-forskning/forskarutbildning/institutionsadministrati/organisation-och/fun>

Some highlights from the year 2016/2017:

- UKÄ (Universitetskanslersämbetet)'s evaluation of the Universities in Sweden (see separate report for UKÄ work)
- DS again raises the issue about medarbetarsamtal, which should be held with the line manager.
- DS investigates the possibility to update the industrial PhD contract so that the specific amount of institutional hours in each contract is clearly written.
- The common study plans (allmänna studieplaner/Syllabus) – DS informs everyone in FUN that old versions must be archived properly by the institution when they are updated and revised.
- DS raises the importance of being clear in advertisement for research education positions only up until Licentiate, as department TME has been advertising positions with a contract only to licentiate (with potential possibility to extension) as “PhD position”. Further, admitting only to licentiate is allowed in *exceptional* cases according the rules of procedure, not something to be done on a regular basis.
- DS raises the importance of accurate financial compensation for scholarship and visiting PhD students at Chalmers. The supporting documents are also sent to everyone in FUN plus to local HR responsible persons. The doktoranrombud (DOMB) Moyra McDill has worked on two specific cases, both where the student was finally entitled to a back-pay (in one case this was 180 000 SEK).
- DS raises the question of giving PhD students course credits for abroad research visits to encourage internationalization.
- The PhD student portal, which was initiated from DS, has been launched, although still several features are not linked to the portal yet.
- Individual study plans (Individuella studieplaner) – The working group investigating the implementation of a common and digital study plan, has continued looking into which features to include and has during the year drafted a suggestion which will be reported around the

summer 2017. Lena Falk is responsible, and Oskar Thulin from DS is included in the working group.

- The format and purpose of FUN is also discussed, and more thorough work on this will be done during the fall of 2017.
- The GTS course(s) covering research ethics/research misconduct/sustainability will be changed or replaced during 2018. DS finds it important to have a course covering research ethics and research misconduct, being mandatory for all Chalmers PhD students.

Work Environment and Equality Committee (AJK)

Onur Kaya was representing DS in this position. They carried out feasibility study on having a document with rules on authorship. Chalmers does not have such document, but many other large universities does and it can aid in discussions about authorship.

Chalmers centrally has started a preventive activity to improve PhD student life in Chalmers. The details are not clear at this point, but, FUN, doktorandombudsman, and DS board chair are involved. The aim is to avoid and fix problems before they become too big.

SFS-DK (Sveriges Förenade Studentkårer, Doktorand kommittén)

SFS (Sveriges Förenade Studentkårer) is the Swedish National Union of Students, in which Chalmers Student Union is a member. SFS-DK is the PhD candidate committee of SFS. SFS-DK is also a member of Eurodoc, which is SFS-DK's counterpart on a European level. The goal is to represent all PhD students at Swedish Universities, also the ones which do not have member unions. Maria Ekström was the representative from DS during this year.

The goal of this year was to renew SFS-DK tasks.

- **Increasing visibility:** Last year SFS-DK initiated the work to become more visible with its only four board members and this year we doubled the number of board members. This was done via
 - updating the SFS-DK part of the webpage to English,
 - being active on the facebook page Doktorand i Sverige
 - being active on related facebook pages such as Högskoleläckan
- **Status of all PhD students at Swedish Universities:** SFS-DK wanted to check the status the PhD education and during 2015-2016 a survey was sent out investigating common issues for all PhD students at Swedish Universities. The work to analyse this survey was initiated during this year and we found that many PhD student felt a lack of information regarding career paths. SFS-DK wrote a report to SFS.
- **Monitoring Swedish research and research education:** A lot of SFS-DK's effort is to monitor and evaluate Swedish research and research education. This is done by evaluating UKÄ's and other agencies work. A lot of effort has been put into writing debate articles about PhD education in collaborative work.

Supervisor of the Year

The committee for the Supervisor of the years award consisted of Thomas Kosinski, Gunnar Simonarson and Naghmeh Taghavi. The award is based on the initiative from Chalmers centrally. The committee posts a call for nominations, and then goes through and evaluates all nominations, followed by

thorough interviews with the PhD students of the nominated supervisors. Professor **Aila Särkkä** was awarded the title Supervisor of the year for the academic year of 2016/2017.

Library council and REPUB (E-publishing and Open access publishing)

RE PUB is the reference group for electronic publication at Chalmers and is involved in everything related to the administration of publications. Members of this group are mostly connected to the library in some way, e.g. administration and management of the Chalmers Publication Library (CPL) and other library services, or are associated with various steering groups at Chalmers. As the council deals with publications it is natural that there is a PhD representative from the DS guild present at the meetings, this year this has been Johan Wendel.

The main responsibility of the representative is to attend the meetings and report back any news to the DS board with a particular emphasis of issues concerning the PhD students. There were two meetings for REPUB during the last academic year. Both of them were focusing on the implementation of the new Research portal (<https://research.chalmers.se/en/>) which is set to replace CPL. Other topics were the new national guidelines for open access policy for scientific information made by the Swedish Research Council which are yet to be defined but where discussions are ongoing.

Chalmers research foundation

Chalmerska forskningsfonden (Chalmers research foundation) aims to financially support young scientists. The fund is one of several administrated by Chalmerska stiftelsen. A working group consisting on two representatives from the DS and a senior researcher is appointed to provide suggestions for how the fund should be distributed. This year, the DS representatives were Cristina Rigato and Gunnar Simonarson. This year the fund received 201 applications, and granted money to 77 applications, for a total of 1,000,000 SEK.

Research misconduct

Chalmers' Ethics and Misconduct Committee addresses ethical issues related to research and education, as well as misconduct in research. The Committee offers support and advice on ethical issues related to research, education and utility, and it is available to all employees. The Committee also addresses cases pertaining to misconduct in research. When tasked by the president to do so, the committee will investigate suspected misconduct in scientific activities that are or were conducted at Chalmers, and in single cases determine whether scientific misconduct has taken place. Jonas Sundell has been the DS representative for this year.

This year, no issues were reported to the committee. In March, the committee arranged an open workshop on ethics and research misconduct with about 30 participants from Chalmers. The committee has also commented on a recent governmental inquiry on new procedures for cases concerning the investigation and handling of research misconduct. About six meetings have been held during the year.

SACO and wage negotiations

Saco, the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations, is a trade union confederation of 23 affiliated associations out of which six are represented at Chalmers. SACO represents trade union members in issues like job security, rights, salaries and the working environment. The DS representative this year has been Jonas Sundell.

The most important task for the DS representative is to take part in the wage negotiation, which is held between Chalmers and the trade union organizations SACO and ST in the beginning of every autumn. The DS member is responsible for the views and opinions of the DS board and members in this negotiation. This year, the new agreement means that for doctoral students hired after 2017-04-30, half of the salary increase will come automatically at the latest after 2 years and 6 months, and the other half after fulfilling licentiate degree / halfway seminar. For students reaching licentiate degree / halfway seminar before 2 years and 6 months, the full increase will be given as previously.

Faculty council

The faculty council is the representative body for Chalmers's teaching staff (i.e. Docent, associate professor, and full professors) and acts as an advisory body to the president and management of Chalmers. The PhD representative from DS was Joakim Strandberg. The Faculty Council is a forum where questions of long-term and strategic character, with importance to the development of Chalmers. During 2016-2017 most discussions were regarding the change in department structure as well as the new finance model for faculty staff. Other themes have been how to improve the equality at Chalmers, and how to prevent research misconduct.

For more information about the council and to take part of meeting minutes, visit link below (in Swedish): <http://www.chalmers.se/insidan/SV/om-chalmers/moten/fakultetsradet>

CHARM

To present PhD education as a potential career, DS is responsible for a booth at the Chalmers work fair CHARM. All board members in DS stands in the booth for one or two timeslots during the fair, so that there is always 2 persons present to talk to students and to answer questions. The PhD representatives explains about what PhD education is, that you are employed by Chalmers etc., and there are usually many students coming to talk to us. Joakim Strandberg and Silvia Tuzi was responsible for organizing the DS contribution to Charm this year.

DOMB

Our Doktorandombudsman (DOMB) Moyra McDill has had a busy year, which is sad since it means that many PhD students are having problems in their PhD education, at the same time as this high work load shows that more PhD students actually find their way to her, and can get her help. The work performed by the DOMB during 2016 is compiled in a document which is found on DS web page, where some statistics and typical cases are presented. However, as the DOMB is working under confidentiality, no specific cases or names are given. The contact person from DS for the DOMB has been the DS chairperson Linnea Qvirist, whom has also been involved in several cases where the DOMB and DS has been pushing for changes together.

General Assembly meetings

There were two meetings during the activity year, one in 30th of November 2016 and one in 1st of June in 2017. Due to the new departmental structure at Chalmers being implemented during the spring of 2017, going from 18 to 13 departments, DS also had to update the statutes to be in accordance with this. As the old statutes defined the size of the board based on the number of departments, this, plus some additional changes, were proposed and voted yes for in the two assemblies. After the Chalmers

student union has approved the new statutes, they will be published on the DS web page. The Minutes from the meetings are found on DS web page.

Web page

This task involved updating and maintaining the DS webpage based on content supplied by other board members and occasionally the DOMB. This involved e.g. updating links, updating the website security, updating the process of obtaining the PhD student emailing list to include also non-student union associated PhD students. This year we also initiated the planning of moving the DS web page to a new location. Tomasz Kosinski was responsible for this task during this year.

Newsletter

For the current year, Sankar Menon and Marco Longfils were responsible for the newsletter. The newsletter is an important platform for the sharing information to all PhD students in Chalmers. It covers information from legalities, activities of various student councils, social activities. The contents of the newsletter were prepared by help and approval from the other board members. Three newsletters were published for this year:

Topics covered in November 2016 newsletter were

- Research misconduct suspicion
- Nomination all for the supervisor of the year
- Interview with the director of GTS studies
- Survey about PhD students organized by SFS-DK
- Courses at GU and Chalmers

Topics covered in February 2017 newsletter were:

- Yearly report from the DOMB
- Regulations for PhD students
- New salary increase model after licentiate
- Information from Migrationsverket about residence permit
- Interview with our Chair, Linnea.

Topics covered in May 2017 newsletter were:

- Benefits of being a member of the student union
- Benefits of being employed as a PhD student
- Information on sick leave
- A message from the DOMB to PhD students not employed by Chalmers
- Recruitment to the board for the next year.

All newsletters can be found in DS Website: <http://www.dokt.chs.chalmers.se/newsletters/>

Introduction Day

During the year 2016/2017, the DS representative was Elke Miedema. There were 2 introduction days this year, and also initiation of a new PhD life movie to be used in the upcoming introduction days.

PhD Movie:

One of the highlights was the confirmation of funding for a PhD Introduction Day movie. The current movies, filmed a few years ago, are of poor quality. While the idea already formed in 2015/2016 (in collaboration with Alberto) it developed this year in an actual project funded by the GTS Office. The concept for the video is inspired by a clip from CBC's WireTap, "How to age gracefully", available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sycgL3Qg_Ak, with the plan to adapt it to our academic environment.

The basic idea is to involve people representing Chalmers academic life at different stages, from master thesis student to alumni and full professors. Each participant will talk to their younger counterpart, imagining to give advices to themselves when they were at their previous stage. For example, a newly employed PhD student would advise a master thesis student with PhD ambitions, a third year PhD student would advise a second year one preparing the Licentiate seminar, a post doc would advise a PhD student in his/her last year and so on.

The participants in the movie should be a mixed group representing the diversity of Chalmers. With this we expect to give the movie a more updated and personal touch, to show the new students something that they can connect to, to give them useful insights on what challenges are waiting for them including hints on how to prepare for it.

Social Activities

During the year 2016/2017, the DS representative was Elke Miedema. There were two events: 18th of April & 17th of May.

Event Research Ethics & Movie 'on being a Scientist': The Chalmers Doctoral Student Guild organized a film screening on research ethics based on the movie: On being a Scientist. This Fictional Film, also to be watched in shorter parts, is developed to 'tackles some major issues in modern science. In practice, millions of researchers around the world discover new things every day with professionalism and sound ethics.' (Leiden University MOOC, 2016). The University of Leiden developed the film as a reaction of several scientific fraud and misconducted cases in the Dutch media. The idea is that watching the movie with fellow academics will provide an opportunity to discuss 'the not so pretty side of academia'. At our screening, divided in two parts we also reflected on questions such as; What is science misconduct? How should conflicting interest be handled, and how to react when you discover misconduct by people who should be your example.

Election committee

The election committee did, with the help of the old board members, find suggestions for new members to the board of 2017/2018. This year the election committee had some extra work in finding the new members as they also had to take the new department structure and the new DS statutes into consideration. This year, both the chair and vice chair of 2016/2017 was stepping down, hence the election committee needed to find suggested candidates also for those two positions. The new board was successfully elected in the spring General Assembly meeting.

CKI (Not active)

The Chalmers committee for internationalization has not been active during this year, and according to the person in charge there is currently no plan to restart this committee during the upcoming year.

The DS representative Cristina Rigato tried to initiate this work again but there was no activity from Chalmers side.

New activities during 2016/2017

UKÄ evaluation

UKÄ (Universitets Kanslers Ämbetet / Swedish Higher Education Authority) is the national authority to evaluate education on university level. The representation in the UKÄ evaluation is a new task for DS as this was the first time they evaluated PhD education, i.e. the research schools. Anna Köhler from DS was in charge for this activity.

In 2016/2017 the (old) research schools (in brackets) connected to the following subjects were evaluated:

- Energy Systems (EoM and SMT)
- Computer Sciences (DoIT)
- Gummi-, textile- and polymer materials (K, MMT, P)
- Architecture

The evaluation includes self-evaluations reports (one from each topic), interviews (with PhDs, supervisors, etc.) and finally the feedback/grading from UKÄ.

Chalmers project leader was Barbara Sturn. Several meetings and workshops were held with both the writers (head of research schools) and the internal evaluation team. DS was mainly involved in discussions with Barbara Sturn to define DS' role in the evaluation and set-up:

- DS role is to inform involved PhDs about the evaluation and find experts among PhDs, who represent in the Chalmers internal review group
- DS role was not to recruit PhDs for UKÄ internal work
- DS (together with Ulrika Josefsson) wrote a draft for the chapter about the doctoral perspective in the self-evaluation report
- DS kept contact with the PhDs involved to see if support was needed

PhD reach out to local PhD councils

This activity did not exist formally in the past, so most of the work this year was the collection of information, and documenting the goal and available tools. Also, due to the department restructuring, it was hard to collect all relevant information, especially about the contact persons from each department's local PhD student councils. The aim is to create an up to date mail list to all chairs of the local PhD councils, where DS can reach out, but also where they can interact more easily between each other. There are many cases where it is fruitful to know how another local PhD council is working, what questions they are working on and how they handle various issues. The idea here is that DS will aid in creating a platform for local councils to meet and learn from each other. Also some type of lunch event has been discussed, where the local chairs can be invited to meet and greet, and where DS can briefly introduce ourselves and our work. The responsible person for this year was Aljoscha Lautenbach.

Sports association

In order to improve the social cohesion of PhD students at Chalmers, we are looking into the possibility of starting sub-organisations (societies) for particular sports. This would be a possibility to socialize in

a fun setting. Some information and ideas have been gathered by DS board member Oskar Thulin in November 2016. Some highlights:

Weekly booking of the sports hall in the student union building

The sports hall can be booked as follows: If there is a committee attached to DS, that committee could then book multiple weekly times in the sport hall for the coming term. The sports hall assignment is decided in a meeting with all sports associations, held by the Chalmers sport association, CIS (Chalmers Idrottssällskap), in the beginning of the year. So the sports association would need to be formed before the slots are assigned in the beginning of the year. Alternatively, the newly formed association could contact CIS to see if there are any left-over time slots.

Guiding principles in the statutes:

- It should be for all PhD students to be a part of.
- If interest is high enough, multiple times slots for different intensity level can exist.

How to structure it financially and who shall be able to come to their activities?

There are different options here, which will be discussed further in case this association will become realized during the upcoming year.

Proposed potential plan

1. DS can talk to groups that already play different sports in group, that already exist at Chalmers, as the possibility of booking weekly time slot is a unique selling point to them.
2. Structure how statutes, cooperation-agreement (learn from the other Chalmers associations, e.g. CIS) to get a few groups in the sports hall.
3. Market the opportunity to start similar groups within the Doctoral Students Guild, not necessary only groups that are interested in the gym hall.

Whether this will be included in the DS work for the year 2017/2018 will be decided by the new board in competition with the other work tasks performed by the board.

Work environment PhD students (w Helen Lejon and Magnus Åkerström)

As the number of PhD students visiting FeelGood is increasing, together with the number of sick leaves noted in Primula, Chalmers centrally has decided to look into the work environment for PhD students at Chalmers. The persons in charge from Chalmers centrally are Magnus Åkerström and Helen Lejon. Their role will be to evaluate and go through the statistics ("Hard facts") from FeelGood, Primula and the employee survey to see which patterns can be seen and see if anything specific reveals from there. To complement this work, specific type of cases and situations ("Soft facts") will be provided by Chalmers DOMB, by DS and probably by other groups at Chalmers. Although DS chair and the DOMB has knowledge of several situations at Chalmers, protecting the confidentiality of the students makes it hard to tell specific cases, and the information will be given in more general terms. Also, DS is planning a PhD work environment specific survey to go out during the fall 2017.

PhD work environment survey

For the year 2017/2018, a PhD specific work environment survey is planned. The survey has been drafted during the spring of 2017 and will be sent out during the fall of 2017. The chair of 2017/2017 Linnea Qvirist and the chair of 2017/2018 Maria Ekström are responsible for this activity.

New departmental structure

The new departmental structure was implemented during the spring of 2017. DS is not specifically involved, but are aware that the merging and rearranging of departments and divisions could potentially be problematic for some affected PhD students. DS role is and has been to keep eyes and ears open to any inconvenience for the PhD students in this re-structuring. Some worries and questions has been raised during the spring, but no incidents has occurred so far. DS will continue to monitor the changes for the PhD student's sake.

New frame work agreement between DS, the Student Union and Chalmers

The frame work agreement between DS, the student Union and Chalmers has been updated and signed during the spring of 2017 as a result of increased financial needs for DS work and for the DOMB. The main reasons were:

- The salary for a PhD student increases much more rapidly than the financial compensation DS receives from Chalmers (which increases by Konsumentprisindex). To be able to pay out the salary to the board members, the funding needs to increase.
- The work spent in the DS board should be possible to count as institutional duty (i.e. get included in the PhD employment time), but that costs about 2.5 times what the hourly rate is if the board members count hours as an "extra job" as has been done until now. For the change to happen, the funding must be increased.
- The workload for the DOMB has increased over the last year(s) and must therefore be increase in the frame work agreement.

New statutes for DS

Due to the departmental change, reducing the number of departments, the DS statutes needed to be changed accordingly. Since the size of the board was determined by the number of Chalmers departments, the writing in several paragraphs needed to be changed and updated to allow for the board size to stay in the approximately same size as before, with some increase flexibility to go up or down in number if necessary. The new statutes were approved in two consecutive general assemblies and will be published on DS web page as soon as they are formally approved by the Student Union.

Activities handed over or finalized during 2016/2017

Doctoral student portal

On initiative from DS a while back, a doctoral student portal has now been launched. The functionalities are not all in place yet, but the ownership and responsibility of the portal is not on DS, but on Chalmers centrally. DS is however contacted for input and advises whenever a new feature is added to the portal. Marja Janusson from Chalmers centrally has been the main person in charge of the portal, and the DS chair Linnea Qvirist has provided DS inputs on the work. During the summer 2017, also the possibility to sign up for exams was added to the portal.

Electronic ISP

A working group has been looking into the possibility to implement an electronic individual study plan for the PhD students. Oskar Thulin from DS has been included in that group. The group is writing a report in the beginning of the fall of 2017 of their main findings and suggestions for how to proceed this work, which features to include etc. It is not DS that are in charge of this process, but probably FUN and the director of research education at Chalmers will be the ones receiving the report and deciding on how to act next. Hopefully the implementation of an electronic ISP will be planned and performed shortly.

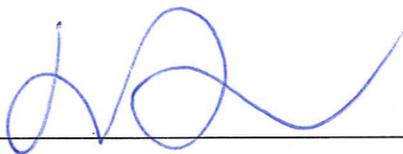
PhD satisfaction

The seminar series performed by DS during the last year (2015/2016) were continued and finalized during this year. Onur Kaya and Marco Longfils was responsible for conducting the seminars. The aim of the seminars was creating, increasing, and spreading awareness and knowledge about the optimum PhD student experience, and what kind of problems can arise, and what one can do to address them. The seminar has been held at the following (old name) departments:

1. FFF (Microtechnology and Nanoscience + Physics)
2. Architecture + Civil and Environmental Engineering
3. Materials and Manufacturing Technology
4. Technology Management and Economics
5. Biology and Biological Engineering + Chemistry and Chemical Engineering
6. Applied Mechanics
7. Signals and Systems
8. Energy and Environment + Space and Earth Science
9. Computer science and Engineering
10. Industrial and material science

Final remark

This report presents briefly the work performed by the DS board during the activity year of 2016/2017. While some activities and projects are mandatory for the board to perform, as defined by the frame work agreement from Chalmers, others are electable for the board. Each new year, the new board decides on a Plan of Operations document, which more specifically decides which activities to work on for that year. Some years it is not possible to perform all projects that we have, mainly due to time constraints and a tight budget for the working hours for DS.



DS chair of 2016/2017, Linnea Qvirist