

Minutes – DS General Assembly

#HT13-2-2013-12-9

Time: 12:00-13:00

Location: HA3

Attending: See the attached list.

Number of pages: 4 with four attachments (the agenda, the letter from the auditor, the annual report and the attendance list)

Points on the agenda

§1. Ronja Thies opened the meeting

§2. Ronja Thies is elected as the Chairwoman, Nojan Najafi is elected as the secretary and Karin Jonsson is elected to adopt the minutes.

§3. The electoral register is approved.

§4. The agenda was approved.

§5. The assembly approved that the meeting notice has been in due order.

§6. Previous meeting minutes are approved with no comments. The minutes are available on our website.

§7. The annual report was presented by Viktor Andersson. The report included the points from the attached annual report. Due to the lack of the financial report, the freedom of the last board from liability was postponed to the next general assembly. The following were specifically focused and discussed:

- DS representation in the introduction days and different decision making bodies at Chalmers.
- Two general assemblies have been arranged.
- Five board meetings have assembled.
- The second number of the newsletter has been issued. One or two more will be issued in the coming year.
- DS finally has a representative in salary negotiations.

- The possibility for the PhD students to administer their educational progress themselves (access to something similar to the student portal) is being discussed and campaigned for by DS.
- The auditor approves the financial statement, even though the financial statement was not presented to the general assembly. The approval letter from the auditor was, however, presented.

§8. A new DS board member:

- Fatemeh Ayatollahi is elected as the new representative from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering.

§9. Reports on current issues:

- Salary negotiations:

- o The negotiations have concluded last week, but the official minutes are not signed yet. So, no official report can be given.
- o The PhD students have received a raise close to the raise they have received in the past years, and the raise is close to what other universities, comparable to Chalmers, will receive.

- The visa issue for non-EU PhD students:

- o The DS is in contact with SFS-DK, the national Swedish organization for PhD students, who is following up the issue.
- o There is a motion in the parliament to address this issue. It is up for vote in 2014.
- o There is a group of PhD students at Chalmers that are trying to proactively take up the issue. For cooperation with this group, the DS board has decided to wait until the issue is taken up by the Swedish parliament.
- o According to one of the attendees in the general assembly, the motion has an administrative issue that is problematic in relation to the practices of the government. So, until the government has not solved the administrative issues, motions of this kind cannot help solving the problem.

- Workgroup for satisfaction in PhD studies:

- o The workgroup was established to identify the problems that the PhD students experience during their studies. A survey was designed and conducted that received almost 25% response rate from the PhD students. At the moment, the workgroup is analyzing the survey. Some initial identified problems were presented.

- Time to receive feedback: It takes less than a week for 62% of the respondents to receive feedback on written material from their supervisors. However, for many it takes more than 2 weeks, which is a problem.
- Frequency of supervision meetings: Most of the respondents who are unhappy with their situations have reported that they meet between once in every 2 weeks to once in every two months. This shows that low frequency of meetings with supervisors has a correlation with low satisfaction of the PhD student.
- Supervision time: With rough calculations it was shown that around one-third of the respondents receive less than 15 hours of their supervisors' time in a whole year in terms of supervision meetings.
- Master suppression techniques: Around 15% of the respondents have been subject to master suppression techniques, while around one-third of them do not know what master suppression techniques are. This means that work needs not only to focus on elimination of master suppression techniques but also on increasing the knowledge about master suppression techniques. It is to be discussed in the board how to best bring this point forward. A suggestion is to address it in the compulsory introduction days for PhD students.
- Q&A:
 - Maybe the respondents are biased towards a higher percentage of unhappy PhD students compared with Chalmers in general?
 - The point is to show the existence of certain problems and to identify further problems using the open comments. So, even biased answers are useful for the purpose of this workgroup.
 - Are the results being compared with the results from the employee survey?
 - Yes, it is planned.
 - Frequency of supervision meetings should be discussed (to a greater extent than today) by the director of studies at the follow up meetings for the individual study plan.
 - There are problems with the practice of using the study plans. However, the common template includes information about supervision meeting frequency. When DS talks about the importance of study plans at the introduction day, this should be emphasized.

- The issue can be addressed with the help of FUN, where the directors of studies are present. FUN has already expressed interest in hearing about the results of our survey.
- Not many people are here (in the General Assembly) today. What can we do to increase awareness and engagement of the PhD students?
 - This should be taken up by the board. The newsletter and the introduction days are the most important tools used at the moment. Perhaps this should be expanded.
 - The departmental DS representatives need to be more visible and active in their departments.
 - The PhD councils could take a more active role in spreading the word.
 - There is also a spamming issue, if too many emails are sent to the students. Also, a disadvantage of being too visible as DS may be that DS and the departmental PhD councils may enter an unnecessary competition.

§10. Other issues:

- SFS-DK: DS finally has a representative in the SFS-DK. Ragnar Larusson has very recently been elected as a board member in SFS-DK.

Ronja Thies 16/12-2013 Göteborg
Ronja Thies (Chairwoman)

Nojan Najafi 10/12-2013, Göteborg
Nojan Najafi (Secretary)

Karin Jonsson 12/12-13 Göteborg
Karin Jonsson (Secretary of the minutes)

Agenda, DS General Assembly #HT13, 2013-12-09

Time: 12.00-13.00

Place: HA3, Hörsalsvägen, Johanneberg

- Point on the agenda Rapporteur
- §1.** Opening of meeting
- §2.** Election of meeting officials
- Chairman
 - Secretary
 - Someone to adopt the minutes
- §3.** Approval of electoral register
List of attendees who have the right to vote
- §4.** Approval of agenda
- §5.** Meeting notice in due order
Preliminary notice should be sent out no later than 2 week before the meeting, and final notice and documents no later than 1 week before
- §6.** Minutes from previous meeting
General assembly May 2013
- §7.** Annual report and financial statement DS board 2012-2013
Including statement from the auditor
Decision of freedom from liability for last year's board
- Viktor Andersson, chairman 2012/2013.
Francesco Mazzotta, vice chairman 2012/2013
- §8.** Election of new board members
Fatemeh Ayatollahi, CSE
- Francesco
- §9.** Reports on current issues
- Salary negotiations
 - Visa for non EU PhD students
 - Workgroup for satisfaction in PhD studies
- Viktor
Francesco
Francesco
- §10.** Other issues

§11. Closing of the meeting

Auditors report 2012-2013

Doctoral Students Guild, part of Chalmers student union

I have audited the balance sheet of Doctoral Students Guild as of 2013-06-30, total assets 357 329,75 SEK, and the related profit and loss statement as well as verifications and minutes from general assemblies and board meetings. The financial statements are the responsibility of the board. My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements based on my audit.

I have conducted the audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in Sweden. Those standards require that I plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. I believe that my audit provides a reasonable basis for my opinion.

In my opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Doctoral Students Guild as of 2013-06-30, and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in Sweden.



Paul Holmström

(bachelor of business administration with major in finance and accounting)
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Annual Report Chalmers Doctoral Student Guild 2012/2013

1 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 briefly be mentioned. During the year 2012/2013 the board consisted of:

Name	Position	D
Viktor Andersson	Chairman	E
Francesco Mazzotta	Vice chairman	A
Karin Jonsson	Member	C
Kristina Liljestrand	Member	T
Laleh Pirzadeh	Member	C
Matteo Molteni	Member	M
Johan Löfgren	Member	E
Rajet Krishnan	Member	S
Rakshit Nugehalli Sachitanand	Member	C
Richard Hedman	Member	M
Mohammad Reza Shoaef	Member	S
Erik Lindskog	Member	P
Sadegh Seddighi	Member	E
Steven Mallam	Member	S
Yazdan Shlrwany	Member	S
Nojan Najafi (since December 2012)	Member	T
Joel Schlee (since December 2012)	Member	M
Arezou Babaahmadi (since December 2012)	Member	B
Stig Anton Nielsen (since December 2012)	Member	A
Ronja Thies	Member	FP

2 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.

3 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 itself 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 has been the construction of the Johanneberg Science Park and evaluations regarding the implementation of tuition fees from people outside the EU. There has also been discussion regarding KPI's for Chalmers, and what kind of KPI we should have.

4 Discussing work environment and equality issues in AJK

The work environment and equal opportunities committee (AJK) is a body of representatives discussing and working for a positive work environment and equal opportunities for all students and employees at Chalmers. AJK meets 4 times during a year.

DS has tried to emphasize that communication issues at Chalmers still remain. Most of the communication at Chalmers is carried out in Swedish. This has a huge impact on the work environment and opportunities that English speaking PhD students have at Chalmers. Chalmers has during the spring/summer of 2013 developed a language policy, which hopefully will result in improved availability of information in English. There was also a discussion that course evaluation forms should not be possible to fill in at night to avoid nasty comments.

5 Faculty senate

The faculty senate is the representative body for the teachers and researchers at Chalmers. They assemble representatives from all departments at Chalmers and have a counselling role to the management of Chalmers. The DS is represented at their meetings, as well as the Student Union. They meet approximately once per month, and discuss current issues and appoint the Honorary Doctors each year. This year discussions included how PhD students should be categorized - under research or under education?

6 The Board of Research Education (FUN)

The Board of Research Education gathers all the pro-prefects responsible for research education at each department. 2 persons represent DS. The board meets approximately 5 times/year, and during the year a number of different topics have been discussed.

- One of the major issues that DS raised was the fact that the salary increases ("the salary ladder") does not work properly everywhere at Chalmers. We have therefore proposed a more formalized way of getting the "licentiate increase". It was difficult to find good statistics and therefore hard to discuss the issue properly.
- The course for supervisors, Handledarforum, is coming to an end. In the end 98% of the supervisors took it, but up until they were threatened with loss of funding, approximately 75% participated. A discussion has been started regarding what will replace Handledarforum. It seems to be a broad agreement that it should be done centrally and not on department level.

7 Nominating Supervisor of the year

The Supervisor of the year award was attributed to Erik Agrell, Professor of Communication system at the Department of Signals and Systems. His most valued word when it comes to supervision is "progression", and he tries to custom make the supervision for his PhD students as much as possible.

DS received a total of 11 eligible nominations. The board appointed a committee, which after thorough reading met to decide upon the most suitable candidates and proceed with interviews with some of the nominating PhD students. After the interviews, the board committee met to summarize the impressions and present a motivation for final selection at DS board meeting. A motivation letter with the nomination was sent in February to Alf-Erik Almstedt, who made the final decision. Erik Agrell was awarded the prize at the Doctoral awards ceremony.

8 Representing Chalmers Doctoral Programmes at CHARM Each year, DS represents Chalmers Doctoral Programmes at CHARM, the labour 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 50 students came to visit us in our stand, a turnout that is quite acceptable.

9 National PhD issues

The joint national PhD forum of SFS doctoral student committee and SULF's doctoral student association has been rather un-organized during the year. DS appointed a representative to go to the meetings, but due to organizational problems there was not much happening in the council. DS acknowledges that SFS-Dk is an important group to be in, and hope that the coming years will bear more fruit.

10 The general assembly meetings

During the year, DS has had 2 general assembly meetings.

Dec 2012

- Annual report and freedom from liability for the board of 2011/2012.
- Election of 5 new board members (Joel, Stig, Ronja, Pär och Arezou).

May 2013

- election of a new board and auditor for 2013/2014

11 The board's work

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

The board has initiated a workgroup for better working environment for PhD students. The working group tries to look into how everyday life for a PhD student could be improved, e.g. in respect to getting feedback on your papers, time with your supervisor and the organization of departmental services. This was done through a survey that was filled out by 258 PhD students.

To further improve the work with communicating with the PhD students a newsletter has been created. The newsletter should be distributed approximately 3 times/year and be a very brief summary of the recent activities.

After some discussion, DS has now been allowed to have a representative in the union negotiations with Chalmers. Mostly we can have access to salary negotiations, but we can also have opinions on other matters discussed.

A discussion regarding PhD students access to self-administration regarding courses was initiated and will be followed up in the up-coming year.

The board of the Doctoral Student Guild 2012/2013 through



Viktor Andersson
Chairman

List of attendees

NAME	DEPARTMENT
Ali Rabiei	Energy and Environment
Viktor Andersson	"
Mokhtar Mapar	Applied Physics
Yevgeniy Korniyenko	MC2
Fatemeh Ayatollahi	CSE
RAJET KRISHNAN	S2
TILAK RAJESH	S2
Pier Paolo Aveiro	MC2
SILVIA TUZI	APPLIED PHYSICS
BENIAMINO IANDOLO	APPLIED PHYSICS
Eskil Varenius	ESS
Oskar TALLOTH	S2
Ida Maria Svensson	MC2
Adeboye Peter Temitope	KB
Ioannis Nikolakopoulos	CSE
Naga V. Irukulapati	S2
Daniel Sääf	Fundamental Physics
Matteo Molteni	MV
Timo Hirscher	MV
David Gustafsson	MC2
Ragnor Larsson	AM
Jóna María Ólafsdóttir	AM
Mohammad Reza Shakeri	S2
Sara Heimersson	KB
Cecilia Tullberg	KB
Anna Palme	KB
Karin Jonsson	KB

Fabrizio Moldenhauer

EOM

Rouja thies

FF

Nujan Najati

TME