Minutes – DS General Assembly #VT14

2014-05-15

Time: 12:00-13:00
Location: HC1, Hörsalsvägen, Johanneberg
Attending: See the attached list.
Number of pages: 3
Attachments: Attendance list, presentation used through the General Assembly.

§1. Opening of the meeting
Francesco Mazzotta declared the meeting open.

§2. Election of meeting officials
Francesco Mazzotta was elected chairman. Ronja Thies was elected secretary and Ragnar Larusson was elected sealer of the minutes.

§3. Approval of electoral register
The electoral register was approved. List of attendees is attached.

§4. Approval of agenda
The agenda was approved. No points were added.

§5. Meeting notice in due order
It was approved that the meeting notice and agenda were in due order.

§6. Minutes from the previous meeting
The minutes from the previous General Assembly (2013-12-09) were approved.

§7. Annual report and financial statement DS board 2012-2013
The annual report and statement from the auditor were presented in the previous General Assembly. The missing financial statement was presented, see the attachment (slides 9-11). During the period 2012-07-01 -
2013-06-30 DS had revenues of 352498.65 SEK and costs of 325238.95 SEK, thus the result of that period is a plus of 23259.70.

It was decided that the board of 2012-2013 is free from liability.

58. Election of the DS board 2014-2015

A summary of candidates for the board was presented, see slide 14 in the attachment. Oskar Thulin, candidate for chair of the board, introduced himself shortly. Virginia Claudio, candidate for vice-chair of the board could not be present and presented herself through slide 15 in the attachment. The position of auditor was still open and the question for candidates was raised. Amirreza Movaghar proposed himself, having several years of experience in accounting.

All candidates were elected to the board of 2014-2015.

59. Reports on current issues

New rules of procedure for graduate education (arbetsordning för forskarutbildning)

There has been a major revision of the rules of procedure for graduate education. DS has put the new document (only in Swedish) together with an unofficial translation on its webpage (http://www.dokt.chs.chalmers.se/2014/04/newrules/). An official translation is in progress at Chalmers. The major areas changing are the licentiate seminar, the change of supervisor and the termination of education. DS has worked hard to make sure that point of view of the PhD students was presented and included in the new version of the document. However, the final decision does not lie with DS but with the Vice-Rector for Research Education. Two major changes were illustrated in more detail, see attachment:

- Licentiate seminar: slides 18 - 19
- Change of supervisor: slides 20 – 21

Visa for non-EU PhD students

This is an issues which DS has raised 3 years ago to SFS-DK (swedish doktoral student council), and has been monitored since then. There have been a lot of initiatives by different groups of students lately and even media coverage by newspaper and radio. The government has proposed a bill to the parliament and the voting is planned on it 17th of June 2014. The main point of the bill was shown in slide 23 with an unofficial translation.

Outcome of the DS survey

In June 2013 DS performed a survey among its members in order to find out which parts of their education need to be improved, i.e. to identify structural problems. The report by the working group
analyzing the report is available on the DS webpage
(http://www.dokt.chs.chalmers.se/documents/2014/05/report-activities-findings-workgroup-
satisfaction-phd-studies.pdf). Parts of the results were presented by Nojan Najafi, see slides 25 – 34.

§10. Other issues

The PhD pub open to all PhD students in Gothenburg was advertised (slide 37).

§11. Closing of the meeting

Francesco Mazzotta declared the meeting closed.

Francesco Mazzotta (Chairman)

Ronja Thies (Secretary)

Ragnar Larusson (Sealer of the minutes)
## Attendance list – General Assembly 2014-05-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anne Tenerci</td>
<td>TME</td>
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<td>Yasir Mansoorii</td>
<td>TME</td>
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<td>Sima Ajdari</td>
<td>EoM</td>
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<td>Stefania Ask Gardarothir</td>
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<td>Isabel Ordoñez</td>
<td>PPD</td>
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<td>Lars Lundberg</td>
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<td>Andreas Bergman</td>
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<td>Soheil Safdar</td>
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<td>Anne Markkiaia</td>
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<td>Raquel Liebana</td>
<td>WET</td>
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<td>Eshil Vareninis</td>
<td>ESS</td>
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<td>Mikaela Lindgren</td>
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<td>Henrik Linander</td>
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<td>Manfred Kerner</td>
<td>M/KMF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicole Espino</td>
<td>EEF/EEF</td>
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<td>Alexandria Paul</td>
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<td>Bart van Delft</td>
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<td>Erik Lindsleg</td>
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<td>Hamid Ebad</td>
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<td>Karin Jonsson</td>
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<td>Simon Lindberg</td>
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<td>Victor Anderson</td>
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<td>Rayja Thies</td>
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<td>Nojan Najafi</td>
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<td>Dinesh MalliReddi</td>
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<td>ALBERO ALAMIT</td>
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<td>David Gustesson</td>
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<td>Dimosthenis Floros</td>
<td>MP Applied Mechanical</td>
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<td>Patrick Moldenhauer</td>
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<td>J. LAUTENBACH</td>
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<td>Liu Jun</td>
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<td>Wei Zhang Li</td>
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<td>Anh Haing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pomya Tabib Zahedi</td>
<td>AP</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAXIME VAN DEN BOSSCHE</td>
<td>AP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deborah Rupert</td>
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<td>BENIAMINO IANDOLO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yeugeniy Korniyenko</td>
<td>MC2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suzana Sabarova</td>
<td>MV</td>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ida-Maria Svansson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maria Ekström</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Bergman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrea Roschin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bapi Chatterjee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anna Demeis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muhammad Amini</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amirreza Movaghar</td>
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<td>Matteo Molteni</td>
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<td>Oskar Thulin</td>
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<td>Ragnar Larsson</td>
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General Assembly DS

2014-05-15

Election of meeting officials

• Chairman
• Secretary
• Someone to adopt the minutes
Approval of the electoral register

Make sure you sign the attendance list that is passing around

Approval of the agenda

Other issues?
Meeting notice in due order

The final notice and documents were sent to the members 2 weeks before the meeting

Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes have been available on our website in the Documents section

Annual report and financial statement DS board 2012-13

Decision of freedom from liability for the last year's board

Financial summary 2012-13

Revenues - Total of 352498,65 kr

- Membership fees
- Contribution to DS
- Contribution to Domb
Financial summary 2012-13

Costs - Total of 329238.95 kr

Software
Travel costs - Domb
Meetings
Activities
Salary DS
Salary DS - dep duties
Salary Domb
Other costs

Financial summary 2012-13

Revenues 352498.65
Costs 329238.95

Result 23259.70
Annual report and financial statement DS board 2012-13

Decision of freedom from liability for the last year’s board

Election of DS board 2104-15
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oskar Thulin</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia Claudio</td>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Vice Chairman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ronja Thies</td>
<td>FP</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ragnar Larusson</td>
<td>AM</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Francesco Baldi</td>
<td>SMT</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emma Qingnan Zhang</td>
<td>CEE</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td>Matteo Molteni</td>
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<td>Alexandra Bergman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fatemeh Ayatolahi</td>
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<td>Dinesh Mallipeddi</td>
<td>MMT</td>
<td>Member</td>
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<td>Ceena Joseph</td>
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<td>Alberto Alamia</td>
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<td>Member</td>
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**Virginia Claudio**  
virginia.claudio@chalmers.se  
PhD student @ Applied Physics (TF)  
Member of the Graduate Studies Group @ TF

Over the past years I have been actively discussing issues ranging from Graduate Studies education to work environment and equal opportunities.

I’ve been following the work of DS (and FFF).

I'm attentive to Chalmers policies and dynamics, and I'm interested in PhD students scientific and professional development.

I believe that each part of the whole counts in reaching work/educational goals, safe-guarding rights and promoting merit based opportunities.
Election of DS board 2104-15

• Advisor?

New rules of procedure for the graduate education

The document has gone through major revision and it has a strong impact on important topics like licentiate seminar, termination of the doctoral studies and change of supervisor.
Licentiate seminar

The individual study plan should be defined in such a way that the PhD student, in normal cases, should reach the licentiate level after 50% of the PhD time.

Licentiate seminar

The individual study plan should be defined in such a way that the PhD student, in normal cases, should reach the licentiate level after 50% of the PhD time.

A reminder about the licentiate seminar will be sent to the PhD student, the study rector and the main supervisor after 2 years and 6 months.
Change of supervisor

New formulation:
"En doktorand som begär handledarbyte, och bedöms ha skäl till byte, ska få byte eller annan likvärdig åtgärd beviljat." (A doctoral student who requests the change of supervisor, and is proven to have grounds to it, should have the change or another equivalent correction granted).

Visa for non-EU PhD students

A bill has been proposed by the government to the parliament to tackle this issue and it will be voted on the 17th of June.
Visa for non-EU PhD students

Directly from the bill: Ett permanent uppehållstillstånd får beviljas en utlännning som i sammanlagt fyra år under de senaste sju åren har haft uppehållstillstånd för studier som avser utbildning på forskarnivå.

(A permanent residence permit may be granted to an alien who for four years during the last seven years has had a residence permit for studies in doctoral education.)

Outcome of the survey
Workgroup on satisfaction in PhD studies

Report of activities and findings
Nojan Najafi, Francesco Mazzotta, Karin Jonsson

DS General Assembly
15/5 - 2014

Why

• Doing a PhD is tough!
• Supervision is key!
• Many of us are dissatisfied!
• DS exists to:
  – "... improve terms for doctoral students at Chalmers university of technology by:
    - representing doctoral students in several key boards and committés at Chalmers;
    - identifying, preventing and eliminating structural problems;
    - becoming a hub for doctoral students."
• Board meeting discussions, but are they enough?!
• The workgroup was initiated in 2011
What

• 2012 – 2013:
  – Preparatory discussions
  – First draft: recognizing some basic problems
  – Conducting a survey

• 2013-2014:
  – Analyzing survey data
  – Combining with other data
  – Doktorandombudsman
  – DS representatives
  – Issues form KB
  – Identifying categories of problems

Quantitative findings (1)

• Important for overall satisfaction:
  – Satisfaction: length of meetings
  – The availability of supervisor(s)
  – Satisfaction: Quality of meetings
  – Satisfaction: Frequency of meetings

• Important for satisfaction about the relationship:
  – Satisfaction: length of meetings
  – The availability of supervisor(s)
  – Satisfaction: Quality of meetings
  – Satisfaction: Frequency of meetings
  – Competence of the supervisor
Quantitative findings (2)

• Frequency of meetings
  – No standard, but pays off!
  – Still, 78% of the happy ones meet more often than once in every 2 weeks
  – Minimums to be defined?

• Length of meetings
  – Not too long, not too short
  – A need for dialogue for adjustment

• Rough cut calculations on supervision meetings
  – 30% of the respondents: Less than 15 hours a year (<1%)
  – Further investigation is needed

• Master suppression techniques
  – 33% don’t know what they are!
  – 15% answered YES!

• Departmental duties
  – Improved transparency can help, but not in all cases

Qualitative findings (1)

• Supervision: Social issues
  – Problems regarding the relationship between the supervisor and the PhD student
  – Dictatorial supervision
  – Supervisor not interested in the PhD student
  – Supervisor views the PhD student as a competitor
  – Change of supervisor results in problematic relationships
  – Problems related to bad communication
  – Conflicting ideas in supervision
  – Not valuing the PhD student’s time
  – Problems related to master suppression techniques
  – Harassment
  – Using information as a means of power
  – Hostile or problematic meeting environments
  – Humiliation
  – Other master suppression techniques
Qualitative findings (2)

• Supervision: content-related issues
  – Problems related to the competence of the supervisor
  – Incompetent supervisor
  – Lack of confidence between the supervisor and the PhD student
  – Problems that directly cause hinders in the PhD process
  – Misuse of the study plan
  – Lack of sufficient scientific discussions between the PhD student and the supervisor
  – Ambiguous PhD project
  – Lack of focus on the development of the PhD student as a researcher
  – Problems regarding the prioritization and efforts of the supervisor
  – Too limited availability of supervisor
  – Too little effort by the supervisor

Qualitative findings (3)

• Organizational problems
  – Intentional misbehavior
  – Violation of rules
  – Mutual problems amongst supervisors
  – Problems related to intellectual property rights
  – Problems related to publication policy
  – Lack of evaluation of the supervision process and problem-solving procedures
  – Absence of director studies in follow-up readings
  – Not finishing PhD within predicted time-frame
  – Lack of administrative and material support
  – Too vague pace of dealing with problems
  – Students do not know where to turn in such matters
  – Lack of possibilities to discuss supervision problems
  – Lack of a feedback and quality control system for supervision of PhD studies
  – Problems with travelling and international collaboration
  – Travel allowance hardly provided
  – Lack of rules about travel funding
  – The division/department does not proactively encourage travels for PhD students
  – Lack of support from the division/department on funding
  – Problematic choice of supervisor
  – Too many PhD students for one supervisor
  – The PhD student has to receive supervision from someone else than his/her own supervisor
  – Supervisor was not assistant professor in the beginning
  – Supervisor not affiliated at Chalmers
  – Coordinator of the work supervision not the main person
  – Unfairness in the conduct of departmental duties
  – Vague definition of departmental duties
  – Unequal departmental duties
  – Problematic change of supervisor
  – PhD student does not get help to change to another supervisor
  – It is difficult to change supervisors because there are not many choices in some areas
  – When not able to change, the PhD student begins working closely with someone else
  – Financial problems
  – Complex knowledge transfer situations
The project

• Strategic directions:

A. Gaining a better understanding of what needs to be improved in the Ph.D. students’ work conditions

B. Developing guidelines and suggestions for improving the Ph.D. students’ satisfaction in their work

C. Applying the findings

D. Developing a mechanism for continuous improvement of the Ph.D. students’ satisfaction in their work

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone 1</th>
<th>Oral report (presentation) for the DS General Assembly</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Identifying further problems and/or possible causes of the problems</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Qualitatively analyzing the comments of the two surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Detailed report on the identified problem areas</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone 2</th>
<th>Finding certain problematic issues and discussing them with the directors and ombudsman (focusing on finding possible solutions)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Discussing the issues with the PhD students anonymously, if possible</td>
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<td>Analyzing the findings with regard to the results of the previous analyses (with a focus on finding possible solutions)</td>
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<td>Discussing the results of all previous analyses and preparing preliminary suggestions for guidelines and improvements</td>
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<td>Finalizing the suggestions through discussions with different bodies (the DS board, the ombudsman, experienced senior researchers, etc.)</td>
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<td>Updating the report with ideas on possible solutions and directions</td>
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<th>Milestone 3</th>
<th>Publishing the results online</th>
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<td>Providing the UU board members with overall and departmental analyses to present to their respective departments</td>
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<td>Possible information/discussion meeting with Chairmen vice-president for Ph.D. studies</td>
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| C           | Aligning the DS policies with the guidelines developed by the workgroup |
|             | Making this a routine |
|             | Discussing the findings with DS representatives in different decision-making bodies and creating clear guidelines or points of interest to consider when taking part in discussions in their respective committees |
|             | Developing guidelines for an annual revision of this procedure for the workgroup and DS to stay up-to-date |
|             | Creating organizational routines for involving the workgroup or the results of its work in decision-making in DS |
|             | Finalizing the report with guidelines for different parts of DS and other implications if any |
Other issues

PhD Pub @ Haket tonight!

18:30, 15/5
Haket pub, Första Långgatan 32

talk:
"Mercury research among penguins and whales"

A winter trip to Antarctica"
by Michelle Nerentorp
Closing of the meeting