

CPPC board meeting 2020-11-10

by Mathias Hoppe

November 10, 2020

Participants to the meeting Adriana Canales, Mathias Hoppe, Sara Nilsson, Nitesh Raj Jaladurgam, Daniel Andrén. Konstantinos Papadopoulos was absent.

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1 Opening

The meeting was opened by Sara. Mathias was made secretary.

2 Establish agenda

The proposed agenda was approved by the board.

3 Discussion with Daniel Andrén

Last year, a PhD program in *leadership and gender equality* was run through the Genie project. Three people attended from the Physics department, among them Daniel. Afterwards, the three participants to the course at Physics were invited to a discussion with representatives of the Physics department (Thomas Nilsson, Göran Wahnström, Andreas Salomonsson). The representatives suggested that a gender equality group, consisting of both PhD students and faculty, be founded. The launch however seems to have been delayed, potentially because of Economy in Balance (EiB) and the coronavirus pandemic.

Some issues and potential actions:

- A program is supposedly being developed at Physics for PhD students and their supervisors to attend together.
- The work on the topic of gender equality does not seem to be very visible at the department. It is probably going on “behind the scenes”, but could benefit from being more visible.
- There seems to be some pushback against gender equality work among some who think men are being fully excluded from, especially, faculty or tenure track positions.
- One suggested potential (partial) solution to the gender imbalance at the department has been to do “top recruiting”, i.e. recruiting established female researchers. This does not however solve the underlying imbalance, which must rather be solved by increasing the number of women at all levels of academia (undergraduate, graduate, post-doc etc.)
- One major issue preventing gender equality is the cognitive biases which most, if not all, people have. It has been shown in scientific studies that men and women are generally treated differently despite having the exact same qualifications.
 - It was suggested that the people at Genie could put out a survey (or similar) to allow people to reflect about their biases. **Adriana will contact the project leaders about the suggestion.**
 - Daniel mentions that a progressive Australian university uses workshops to help staff reflect over their cognitive biases.
 - An idea could be to include a cognitive bias section in the former “Career planning” GTS course (which is mandatory and will soon be redesigned). Daniel warns that one should make clear what the purpose of the course is before students take it, though, as an excessive unadvertised focus on gender equality issues may have a negative effect on students’ perception of the course, and may negatively impact their willingness to reflect.
- Based on Daniel’s interaction with PhD students at other departments, it seems that the Genie project has been more visible at those than at Physics. Maybe this is related to a more general problem of poor information dissemination at the Physics department? (c.f. gender equality work mentioned a few points above, the poor amount of information of EiB spread officially at the department etc.). It may also be that the culture at Physics is somewhat different than at other departments. Perhaps people are expected to focus more whole-heartedly at physics at the Physics department, and not care so much for non-physics issues.
- At the course attended by Daniel, participants were divided into a male and a female group. The female group summarized their work in an extensive report. **Daniel will email this report to CPPC.**

4 Follow up on previous meeting

- Nitesh set up a Choodle poll. A PhD student intro meeting will be held Thursday November 12th at 16:00.
- Adriana created graphics for “Safe at Chalmers”, but has not yet contacted Helen Rosenfeldt.

5 Annual assembly

(i) Nominees

- CPPC board members: Andrea Fazi (microstructure physics), Björn Lönn (Chemical Physics), **Mathias will check at the division of condensed matter and materials theory, Matt will check at the division of materials physics.**
- Chair: Adriana, vice chair: Mathias
- Auditors: Sara, potentially Daniel Andrén?
- Nomination committee: potential candidate at Chemical Physics, **Adriana and Nitesh will check with people at their divisions**

(ii) Summary of our work the past year

Sara will need some help with finalizing the annual report.

- Survey about work situation during pandemic (led to conversations with division heads)
- Start dialogue with Jakob Welander about teaching distribution (increase ability for non-Swedish-speakers to teach)
- Introduction of lab tour (which didn't go through due to pandemic)
- ESP development
- Work to improve gender equality at department

(iii) The chair and secretary of the meeting

Mathias will check with two MSc students. Adriana will check with a former MSc student.

6 Summary of talk with Tünde Fülöp, faculty assembly chair

Sara will join the next meeting with the faculty assembly.

Tünde mentioned that when she was a PhD student, she had access to a female mentor who could help her with her academic career. Sara feels it could have been beneficial for her to also have a female mentor. Apparently the Genie project has mentorship programs such as these, but it does not seem that the information has reached students at the department of Physics.

Tünde also explained that it will not be possible for CPPC to have a permanent spot on the faculty assembly because of its rules, but we will be invited to attend regularly (a few times a year), whenever topics of interest to the PhD students are being discussed.

7 Other matters

No other matters were brought up.

8 Next meeting

A hand-over meeting will preliminarily be held on December 7th at 13:00.