

Minutes DS Board Meeting: #HT16-2, 2016-11-14

Date: 2016-11-14, 14.00-17.00

Location: Fasrummet A8020, MC2 Building CTH

Participants: Linnea Qvirist, Maria Ekström, Elke Miedema, Oskar Thulin, Jonas Sundell, Anna Köhler, Joakim Strandberg, Johan Wendel, Marco Longfils, Onur Kaya, Cristina Rigato, Sankar Menon Cherubala Pathayapura, Naghmeh Taghavi Nejad, Aljoscha Lautenbach (total= 13 board members + 1 guest)

Attachments: List of participants

#1. Opening of the meeting

Linnea declares the meeting open.

#2. Election of meeting officials

Elected Chair: Linnea Qvirist

Elected secretary: Cristina Rigato

Elected to adopt the minutes: Oskar Thulin

#3. Potential new member from CSE

Aljoscha Lautenbach is introduced to the board as a potential member to represent CSE. The nomination committee has proposed the doctoral students to elect Aljoscha in the General Assembly of 2016-30-11. As not officially a board member yet, Aljoscha is invited by the board to attend the meeting but will not be receiving financial compensation nor having the right to vote.

#4. Approval of agenda

The agenda is approved, with an added request to talk about the new departmental structure in CTH.

#5. Meeting notice in due order

The meeting and its agenda were announced in due order.

#6. Minutes from previous meetings

The minutes from previous meeting (2016-09-09) were approved during this meeting.

#7. Key topics from the committees

1- AJK

Onur reports that the DS representative shall attend 100% meetings with AJK.

2- Chalmers AB board

One meeting was held with CTH AB board where the following key points interesting for PhD students were covered:

- update of ethics policy and procedure to report suspicion of research misconduct;
- structural changes at CTH discussed in terms of potential loss of visibility for certain departments (e.g. architecture)
- VISA and permanent resident permit for PhD students from non-EU countries: it is important that the PhD student has the right Visa from the start of the PhD employment, so that the right amount of years will be recorded and accounted in case of wanting to file an application for permanent residence permit after finalized PhD studies;
- New Swedish rule PUL: stricter requirements on handling of personal number and other sensitive information;

3- CHARM

Joakim reports that everything is proceeding as planned, the event is booked for February 7-8 and requests for recruiting volunteers will be sent out in January. Suggestions from other board members are to send the requests with more advance and to account for time budget before and after the event for logistic needs.

4- CKI

Cristina has nothing to report. Linnea tried to take contact with the activity responsible (Gustavo) but without success. The activity is dropped and Cristina will be probably re-assigned to some other task when needed.

5- DS homepage

Tomasz is not present at the meeting, but Linnea confirms that most of the committees' descriptions on the webpage were updated. Two are still missing: Library council/Repub and Research Misconduct.

6- Faculty council

Joakim reports on the attendance at two meetings with the faculty council.

The first meeting focused on the new faculty model and specifically on the distribution of funding. The compensation for supervision of PhD students was discussed as well because considered too low by some of the interested parties.

The second meeting was about concerns around new departmental structure in relation to possible loss of visibility for some departments and possible negative effects of merging together groups that focus on different research areas.

7- FUN

Linnea and Anna attended one meeting covering the following topics:

- New institutional structure: in relation to FUN meetings, a lower number of departments is considered as a positive thing as less people will be involved in meetings.
- Employee survey results: very positive survey outcome were reported by Johanna. For the PhD students' part, this seems not to match some of the board members' real-life experience. One issue with the survey is the anonymity in cases where, for example, very few female employees are present at the department. One suggested solution for these employees is to mark the "gender" option as male or undefined, even if this would confuse the results regarding gender trends. If any of the DS representatives would like to have specific results from their departments, they should contact directly Johanna.
- UKÄ survey: the survey will be initiated at a national level to compare different research schools around the country. PhD students will be interviewed from different research areas. The concern is how to have them talking without fearing personal consequences. One option would be to interview people not as individuals but as representatives of a bigger group. UKÄ will fund all the participants to the survey. An additional compensation is suggested in terms of departmental hours for those who would review the final rapport.
- Requirement for Chalmers employees to be able to supervise in Swedish after 2 years of employment: There is a Chalmers policy decision that all employees should be able to speak Swedish after two years from employment date. However, this is not followed through on throughout the organisation. The requirement is now included in most of the contracts, but is considered to be a potential deterrent for international candidates. It was discussed how to handle the issue, and whether the Swedish requirement should be kept or not. Further, it was highlighted by DS that if this requirement is kept, the departments may have to aid in the Swedish teaching, as the current course provided by Chalmers seems to be inadequate to fulfil the requirement.
- Amount of teaching for industrial PhD students: a percentage between 0-10% should be indicated in the ISP of the PhD student.
- PhD degree: a new procedure was proposed where Chalmers' president would sign electronically the doctoral degree. DS representatives, when asked, expressed their preference in maintaining also the traditional printed copy, which is signed by the president and sent by mail to the graduated student.

8- Introduction day

The first introduction day, on Friday 11/11, was successful. Elke received positive feedback from Johanna. Furthermore, Britt-Marie announced the availability of salary for 8 working days for two DS members to shoot a new movie on research culture, PhD studies at Chalmers, GTS courses and the city of Gothenburg in general. The aim is to use the movie not only during introduction days but also for other events to advertise CTH. The plan is to start shooting in spring 2017, for now ideas and potential candidates are most welcome to Elke.

The next introduction day will be the 3rd of May 2017.

9- Investigation of Departmental Duty

Nothing to report.

10- ISP

The Individual Study Plan working group will be meeting to start up the process of designing an ISP that will be improved from the different versions that exist around Chalmers. The new ISP will be designed to be integrated in an electronic portal. The first meeting has not taken place yet but it should be soon.

Another news related to this topic is that the Doctoral Student Portal capabilities that DS proposed to the Chalmers Development Portfolio seems to have stopped at the moment. However, a Doctoral Student Platform has been established that includes a section for GTS, the Doctoral Student Handbook, list of different research schools and some other services catering to doctoral students. The platform is available at: <https://student.portal.chalmers.se/doctoralportal/>

11- Library Council and Repub

No updates regarding the Library Council are reported.

Johan reports on one meeting he attended in October with Repub, where the following topics were discussed:

- new structure of libraries in Chalmers;
- the online CPL will be replaced by another system. Other board members suggest to ask in the next Repub meeting which information will be available in the new system, such as journal name, impact factor for each publication, etcetera.
- Wikipedia project, to encourage Chalmers researchers to actively participate in the online encyclopaedia development.

12- Election committee

The election committee contacted Aljoscha and proposes him as a new member of DS board to represent CSE that is currently missing representation. The general assembly will vote on the matter in the winter assembly.

13- Newsletter

The newsletter was sent to the board members for revision and will be soon published. Linnea expresses the wish of having two instances of the newsletter under spring 2017 and invites all members to send possible contributions to Sankar and Marco.

For the next year, the suggestion is to unify social activities, newsletter, Facebook page and other public relation activities and have the same responsible persons for all such activities.

14- PhD Satisfaction

Onur and Marco had a meeting with the previous year's responsible, Virginia, and are now waiting for her to send them information about which departments have not had the PhD satisfaction seminar yet. Best practice and activity description were updated.

15- Research Foundation

The activity is finished for the activity year. 201 applications for Chalmersska forskningsfonden were evaluated and a suggestion for how to allocate the budget of 1000000 SEK was successfully made. Cristina reports on the activity requiring a bit more than the expected 10 hours/person due to initial inefficient planning. The suggestion for next year is to make sure that all members of the committee have read the applications before the first meeting. This will be included in the final report of the activity. DS participation in this work could be included in our newsletter to market the activities we do.

16- Research Misconduct

Jonas participated in one meeting where the focus was on ethical aspects of the HSB living lab. The committee also invites all Chalmers employees to participate and contribute to the KUL conference about learning and education.

17- SACO and Wage negotiations

Jonas reports on one meeting where the salary ladder for PhD students was discussed. In the current situation, PhD students receive a salary increase in 3 steps, where the second step is after they hold the Licentiate level has been met, which is typically when the Licentiate degree or seminar has been achieved. This point is discussed because the Lic seminar is supposed to happen after 50% of PhD time, but the average time is instead 3 years, leading to a delayed salary increase. The DS representative first suggested to introduce a retroactive payment of the increased salary once the PhD student has his/her Licentiate seminar/degree. The offer was rejected by the employer because the salary increase would become dependent only on time and not on performance. The new bid from the employer is instead to have a 50% salary increase after 2.5 years and another 50% of the increase after the Licentiate seminar/degree. If accepted, this change would affect students employed from May 2017. The board expresses a positive reaction to this offer, which will be most probably accepted.

18- SFS-DK

Maria attended one meeting where they introduced the idea of carrying on a study that will focus on career paths after completion of PhD studies.

19- Social activities

Elke contacted the organizers of movie nights at Chalmers Student Union, but the collaboration does not seem to be possible due to long response time and lack of interest.

An interesting series about Research Ethics was found as an open source and the suggestion is to show it in some big lecture hall, which would not require any rent fee.

The board members are reminded about the PhD pub event coming up after 3 days, on 17/11.

20- Supervisor of the year

Naghmeh reports on a lack of nominations received so far. The invitation has been sent twice to all PhD students at CTH, but only 3 nominations have been received. The deadline, however, is on November 28th and experience from previous years shows that most of the nominations are sent close to the deadline. If this would not happen, an extension of the deadline will be considered.

One unclear aspect is whether a co-supervisor can be nominated for the prize. This will be further investigated and communicated with the next round of invitation.

#8. Financial and economic update

Maria reports on the financial situation, the budget is regular so far. The survey on department work will be most probably possible to initiate thanks to very likely increased money with the renewal of the compensation contract between Chalmers and DS for next year, and Naghmeh is encouraged to start thinking about the planning for the activity.

#9. General Assembly meeting

Linnea presents the agenda for the General Assembly meeting to be held in November 30th 2016. The agenda will be sent out on the 14/11. Important topics to be covered are

- Election of Aljoscha as new board member;
- Suggested change of statutes regarding the modality for electing the election committee and regarding the definition of the number of DS representatives in relation to the number of departments at CTH. The suggestion is to allow for members up to two times the number of departments as the number of departments is likely to be reduced significantly after the structural change at Chalmers. The current need for DS board member will likely remain unchanged to cover all the activities. Suggested changes to the statutes will be sent out to the members by Linnea and discussed over email before being brought to the GA.

#10. Actions or follow up from last meeting

- a) Licentiate contract issues
In the TME department a new contract form is being suggested, where the doctoral students would be employed only until Licentiate degree. The supporters' main reason is that in this way the status of Licentiate degree would raise to a self-standing title. The board members are instead worried that this would lead to impossibility to complete PhD studies due to financial issues arising after the Licentiate seminar. The most important aspect is that the candidate signing this kind of contract should be clearly aware of the limitation. The board are also worried that TME would make would be less competitive as a place to do a PhD when only funding for the licentiate is covered. The licentiate is also only used in Sweden and Finland making the argument that the Licentiate degree should be raised to a self-standing title weak in the international competition.
- b) Industrial PhD contracts: Taken care of and detailed in #10.7.
- c) Research misconduct information: the information on research misconduct is now available online in Insidan and the link has been added to the DS page and sent via newsletter.
- d) Committee descriptions: Still on the todo list, detailed in #10.5.
- e) Internationalization committee: Status is now known and is detailed in #10.4
- f) Swedish course/requirements for Swedish knowledge after 2 years of hiring: Have been raised with Chalmers management team and the topic is detailed in #10.7

#11. Other issues

- 1- Linnea initiates a discussion on how to interpret the DS statutes concerning requirements for DS members. The main question is whether an elected member of the board can continue to be in DS if during the 1-year contract with DS he/she obtains a PhD degree. The interpretation of the statutes in this concern will affect the chairman Linnea as she will obtain her PhD degree within the end of November, one year earlier than originally planned due to sudden changes of her work situation. As she is personally involved, she leaves the room to let the other board members discuss the matter.

Paragraphs 1.2 and 4.2 of the statutes are mainly discussed. After an exchange of opinions, the board concludes that: the requirements of being registered as a doctoral student and being registered at the Chalmers Student Union are necessary at the moment of the election of a DS board member, but nothing in the statutes indicates that the member should resign if the requirements are not fulfilled anymore during the contract duration. A close vote was made to verify the unanimity of the decision on the interpretation of the statutes. 11 members participated to the vote (one member had to leave earlier, Aljoscha and Linnea did not vote) and the interpretation was unanimous.

- 2- Linnea commented on the structural changes at Chalmers and reorganization of departments related to how this could affect PhD students. It seems that doctoral students will not be really affected by this reform, but all the board members are encouraged to pay special attention to detect cases that could be problematic. Regarding local PhD councils, they are incited to merge and promote collaboration between the groups coming from different areas.
- 3- Oskar briefly commented on the possibility of creating a sports association within the Doctoral Student Guild. This would allow groups be able to book weekly times in the sports hall located in the Student Union building throughout the term, which is not possible otherwise. This could also enable PhD students to meet over the department and division boundaries. Investigating the feasibility and possible implementing such project could be a task for the new member of DS once officially elected in the GA on November 30th. Oskar will collect information and prepare for the project to be handed over.
- 4- Elke seeks information on how the Chalmers doctoral guide book is updated and how are we notified about it. She is advised to ask Tomasz, who is responsible for the DS homepage.

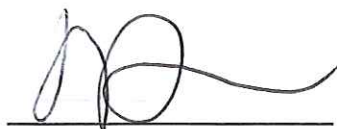
#12. Actions for next meeting

TASK	RESPONSIBLE
Invite someone to present the results of the employee survey.	Onur
Plan dates with departments that have not had a PhD satisfaction seminar.	Onur and Marco
Send template for DS member(s) introduction interview for next newsletter	Sankar to Linnea
Descriptions of committees Repub/Lib and Research misconduct to the webpage	Johan
Fill in Time records	All
How is the handbook for PhD studies updated, and how can DS be informed?	Elke will check, also ask Tomasz
Ask in the next Repub meeting which information will be available in Research (new CPL)?	Johan
Is it specified by Chalmers whether the supervisor of the year can be both main and co-supervisor, or not?	Linnea will check agreements

#13. Closing of the meeting

Linnea declares the meeting closed.

Signatures:



Chair, Linnea Qvirist



Secretary, Cristina Rigato





Adopting minutes, Oskar Thulin

Upcoming meetings:

- **GA (General assembly)** Wednesday 30/11, 12-13, room HA1, secretary Jonas, reviewer1 Anna, reviewer2 Joakim
- Thursday 2/2, time 14-17, room Luftbryggan A810, secretary Tomasz, reviewer Johan
- Tuesday 28/3, time 14-17, room Luftbryggan A810, secretary Marco, reviewer Silvia
- Tuesday 16/5, time 14-17, room Luftbryggan A810, secretary Gunnar, reviewer Onur
- **GA (General assembly)** Thursday 1/6, lunchtime, room TBA, Secretary Sankar, reviewer1 Naghmeh, reviewer2 Rakesh (need replacer)

Attachment: attendance list

Attendance list DS board meeting November 14 2016

First name	Last Name	Department	Signature
Linnea	Qvirist	Inst B	
Maria	Eström <i>✕</i>	Inst MC2	
Elke	Mediema Miedema	Inst A	
Tomasz	Kosinski	Inst AIT	—
Oskar	Thulin	Inst AM	
Jonas	Sundell	Inst CEE	
Aljoscha	Lautenbach	Pending member Inst CSE	
Anna	Köhler	Inst EE	
Joakim	Strandberg	Inst ESS	
Gunnar	Simonarson	Inst K	—
Johan	Wendel	Inst MMT	
Marco	Longfils	Inst MV	
Silvia	Tuzi	Inst P	—
Onur	Kaya	Inst PPD	
Cristina	Rigato	Inst S2	
Sankar	Menon Cherubala Pathayapura	Inst SMT	
Naghmeh	Taghavi Nejad	Inst TME	