

PhD Committee Meeting no. 4 2023



MINUTES

8 MARCH 2024

Forum PhD Committee

Meeting held PhD Committee Meeting no. 4 2023

Place Bülowsvej 17, 1870 Frederiksberg, A126

Minute taker Charlotte Krenk (PhD Committee Secretary)

BÜLOWSVEJ 15

1870 FREDERIKSBERG C

DIR 45 35 33 37 32

chk@science.ku.dk

REF: CHK

Present

PhD Committee Members and Deputy Members

David B. Collinge (Chair) (PLEN/BIO), Henriette Steiner (IGN/History Museum), Niels Martin Møller (MATH), Stergios Piligkos (CHEM), Boris Bolvig Kjær (depute member MATH instead of Nena), Marie Højmark Fischer (BIO/PLEN), Kasper Hede Nielsen (deputy member NBI/CHEM instead of Teresa)

Guests

Lise Arleth, Else-Marie Baun (FS), Helene Lina Åhman Welden (FS), Pia Fredberg (FS), Ingelise Lundgaard (FS), Signe Lange Jespersen (FS), Nikos Hatzakis (depute member from CHEM), Lisa Anita Gotzmann (candidate for the PhD Committee 2024), Courtney Horn Herms (deputy member PLEN), Gabriele D'Oria (depute member FOOD), Max Frank (candidate for the PhD Committee 2024), Frederik Nygaard (SCI-FI), Johanna Marie E Ettingshausen (candidate for the PhD Committee 2024), Victoria Thusgaard Ruhoff (member NBI/CHEM in 2024), Frederik Nygaard (SCI-FI, ad. 9)

Apologies

Teresa Klara Pfau (member, NBI), Morten Arendt Rasmussen (member, FOOD/NEXS), Nena Battenburg (member, MATH)

Ad. 1 Welcome and Presentation of Agenda

David B. Collinge, Chair, welcomed everyone and presented the agenda. No comments were added to the agenda.

Ad. 2 Minutes from the Meeting September 13th 2023

David invited comments. Boris addressed the implementation of comments for the minutes sent in previously to this meeting which he found was not all included. David cleared the purpose of the minutes and invited Boris to include further comments.

Boris pointed to the critic of the decision-making process regarding the fundamental course packet and mandatory courses (Ad. 5 AOB in the minutes). The criticism of the process has not only come from a minority of MATH students. Secondly, Boris pointed out that as he recalled Lise had said at the meeting in September that there would not be changes made in the first 5 years.

Boris Bolvig Kjær comments on the first paragraph:

I do not find the wording of the first paragraph is sufficient and correct. I find it should be as follows:

David invited to comment. Boris addressed that the approval of the minutes had not happened according to protocol. Amendments and additions had been ignored whereafter the minutes were approved by the Chair before the following meeting without the recommendation of those Members who had raised comments. Standard procedure would have been to resolve the comments in some form of communication prior to or at the following meeting. David cleared the purpose of the minutes and invited Boris to include further comments.

Ad. 3 Student Representatives in the PhD Committee

David introduced the election. David suggested that it will not be a vote but the candidates get the break to discuss among them who is standing as member and who is standing for deputy member. Not all the candidates were present at the meeting so the election of candidates was postponed and should be settled after the meeting and thereafter be sent in to the KU election secretariat.

Teresa proposed that the PhD students should have the opportunity to get an official document to attest their participation in PhD

Committee when finishing their term in the PhD Committee. Lise supported it and pointed to this being in alignment with *academic citizenship* which is part of the criteria for getting a permanent academic position at the university and therefore very relevant. The PhD Committee decided that from now on this will be a possibility.

Ad. 4 Delegations of Tasks (Implementation of PhD Vision Project)

Lise gave an account of the work with the delegation of tasks which is part of the implementation of the PhD Vision Project as described in appendix 3.

Part of the delegation of tasks include delegation of an increased number of tasks to the deputy heads of department for research (the VILF's). As an effect the tasks and decision making will be made closer to PhD students.

It has been aired previously that at this PhD Committee meeting a proposal for a final decision regarding this topic would be presented. However, there is still some research regarding administration which needs to be finished. Therefor Lise asked if the PhD Committee would delegate this final decision to David and Teresa as chair and vice chair of the PhD Committee respectively.

Before the PhD Committee answered this Boris posed a question to the future decision-making process to ensure a feedback loop for the PhD Committee. So that the PhD Committee will be informed of what is taking place in the delegated forum. This point is part of what is still to be cleared regarding the administrative process.

It was concluded that no objections were made to the delegation of tasks presented at the meeting. However, the PhD Committee found that since there is still ongoing clarification for the final details of procedure, the final decision should be made by the PhD Committee as a whole and not by delegation to the chair and vice chair of the Committee. If time becomes an issue, an extraordinary PhD Committee can be arranged to be held over Zoom in order to make a decision.

Ad. 5 Approval of the Overall Course Programme for Fundamentals

Lise introduced the course programme for Fundamentals (as presented in the appendix 4.a-d) asking the PhD Committee to take

note of the following in regards to the last time the topic was presented to the committee:

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- There has been a change in terminology from compulsory to fundamentals to indicate the foundational character of the courses.
- Several workshops have been held with involvement of the PhD students, including one in October hosted by Teresa Pfau and Marie Højmark resulting in good input to the work with the course programme.

Since these workshops further work has been done on the course descriptions. Lise invited the committee to comment on course descriptions of module 1, 2 and 3 of Fundamentals.

Kasper Hede Nielsen (NBI) commented on Model 3:

- There is mentioned follow up but there is no previous element. That seems confusing. This turns out to be a typo. It will be corrected.
- The pedagogical element seems to be placed very late. Lise explained that this has been discussed a lot during the work process. The logic behind the current placement is that it should not be placed at the end but at the same time the students need to have some experience first. Kasper finds that this makes sense.

Henriette Steiner (IGN) commented:

- Peer mentoring - From her involvement in the process of the Fundamentals courses at an earlier stage she knows it has been an intention that PhD students from other institutions should be included in the courses as this can be very fruitful. As a consequence, they talked about creating an environment around peer mentoring. However, this is not as visible in the programme description as she wished. How then do we engage the PhD students in other ways of learning than classical instruction method and framework?

Lise recalled Henriettes input during the process and answered on the Henriettes question: In Modul1 peer mentoring is thought to be included but as it is how-we-do-it methodology this is not explicitly described. Henriette did not agree in this approach. Henriette found that it should

indeed be explicitly described to ensure a language and a platform to fight for different methods for learning and to ensure the creation of an environment around it. Lise stated that she could see her point.

Niels Martin Møller (MATH) suggested that a social event as a Friday bar could be added. Lise agreed that this would be beneficial, but it has been taken out. Henriette stressed to make room for this in the description. There were further talk of how this could be done. It was agreed that Marie Højmark Fischer (BIO/PLEN) and Henriette would draft a suggestion of how specifically this could be added to the description then sending it to Lise. This will give room to continue the process with the teachers to give them a broad mandate to work with the course descriptions.

David Colling (PLEN) commented:

- How to ensure that students do not need to do the same course twice? As students enrolled elsewhere (e.g. in an international programme) will have a different setup of ECTS. Double degree enrolments will need some specific practices. Lise suggested that double degrees are taken out of the equation. Fundamentals will therefore only be for the PhD students with a main supervisor at SCIENCE.

The possibility of dispensation from the Fundamentals was discussed. Lise answered that there will be a procedure for dispensation as there is at the graduate level. However, regarding Modul 1 dispensation will be difficult. Finally, a few typos were addressed which will be corrected.

Ad. 6 Process for the Approval of PhD Courses

Lise presented the topic which is an initiative to improve the PhD course approval process. The idea is that for the toolbox courses there will be a recurring process with 10 new courses to be approved each year. Regarding the specialized course the expectation is that there will be 20 course each year. It is a process run twice a year.

The PhD Committee is asked to decide whether the whole PhD Committee is going to be involved in the approving process or if the

approval is to be delegated to a subcommittee or to the chairmanship. As of now it is delegated to the chair of the PhD Committee.

Niels (MATH) commented that it is not so much an approval but a competition between courses. Lise could see his point but stressed that this is *not* to be the case anymore.

David (PLEN) asked: Do we get STÅ for this? Lise confirmed that yes but the details have yet to be settled. David elaborated his point pointing out that at the moment there is little motivation to organize PhD courses. It has been questioned whether this new setup also includes a motivational structure. Lise answered yes explaining that the idea is that there should be the same motivation to offer a PhD course as for a graduate level course.

Henriette (IGN) pointed out that there is also a quality assurance issue in the approval process.

Marie (BIO) asked for more details as to what type of approval this is. Is it just a formal matter to go through the course descriptions and look at the facts or can they question the context of courses? Lise answered that this is still to be decided. Marie asked: Can we reject a course if students think there is something missing or is it only checking it in reference to rules. Lise asked Ingelise Lundgaard (FS) to share how this works at the graduate level as it will be the same. Ingelise explains that at the graduate level the courses are to be approved by the Study Boards. It is done through a process of dialogue between the Study Board and the department responsible for the course with the administration facilitating the process.

PhD Committee decided to keep the approval with the PhD Committee as a whole.

Ad. 7 Miscellaneous Activities – Definition and Framework

David presented the topic (appendix 6). There has so far been a challenge as to how to define and calculate the ECTS from miscellaneous activities. The problem occurs when PhD students participate in conference, workshops etc.

Lise explains that if the PhD student has at least 27 ECTS from PhD

courses there is no problem as the 3 ECTS left can be miscellaneous activities. With the new structure this is fewer points than before but on the other hand *miscellaneous activities* will have a broader definition wherein conferences, journal clubs, language courses with relevant academic learning objectives will be included.

Lise answers questions from the PhD Committee:

- Q: Do the miscellaneous activities need to be in a university?
A: No, at the end of your PhD you will do a portfolio of miscellaneous activities.
- Q: What is the point with the half point?
A: This has to do with administrative standards as for not making up a new category.
- Q: As an example, if you do a PhD within the marine area and you want to take a scoper diving course hosted outside university (so no ECTS is assigned) will this do?
A: Yes, but not classified as classical university course.
- Q: Is the purpose of the miscellaneous activities to fill up ECTS?
A: no.
- Q: Then can the PhD students use their budget to pay for language courses?
A: The money discussion is not part of the discussion here.

A few final comments were added at the end:

- If you organize a conference or event, it is not part of this (miscellaneous activities) but you can register it as part of your academic citizenship activities.
- It was suggested that it should be explicitly explained how the summer school counts as this can be an issue, and already is now.

Lise closed by confirming that the work on this topic will be continued.

Ad. 8 Revision of the General Rules and Guidelines for the PhD programme

Lise presented in Marie-Louises absence. Lise presented the purpose which is to see if there are any revisions made which the PhD

Committee does not agree in stressing that there cannot be made changes in the rules as such.

Boris Bolvig Kjær (MATH) pointed to an inconsistency: It says *compulsory* will be used instead of *mandatory* but then goes on using *mandatory*. This needs to be corrected. Lise agreed. Lise added that these rules are used when things do not go according to plan.

No further objections or comments were made.

Ad. 9 Change of Scientific Environment – Pathways

Lise introduced by explaining the purpose of the pilot program Pathways. Frederik Nygaard from SCI-FI presented the outcomes from the first round of the pilot program Pathways (slides adjoint).

Frederik invited the PhD Committee to ask questions and comment.

Gabriele D’Oria (FOOD) asked, how can PhD students get IP rights when they participate in this program. Frederik answered that it is a good question. The PhD students were informed at the beginning of the program to be thoughtful in regards to what things to share. Also, the ideas and work are often co-authored and so rights are of KU and the company.

Niels (MATH) pointed out that often third or four parties are also involved as the supervisor might also have a company. This should also be considered and handled in such a program as Pathways.

Boris (MATH) asked, how the program is founded. Frederik explained that it is not as costly as could be expected. Lise pointed out that it is not sustainable on a long-term basis with only 5 PhD students but at the moment it is considered a pilot and therefore accepted not to be sustainable but if 20-25 students participate it will start to make sense economically too.

Marie (BIO) asked about the possibilities of one-to-one supervision when part of the program. Frederik explained that it varies how the supervision is handled according to the specific project.

Pathways will run a second time in 2024.

Ad. 10 Equality and Diversity at KU

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- Teresa was absent and it was decided to ask Teresa to send it by email instead.
- David shared the take-home messages from participating in a seminar for the Heads of Sections with the theme: how to include non-Danes. Also, he shared experience from participating in the last seminar hosted by Praksis Udvalget (the Practice Committee) which was held in Danish. There is still potential for improvement when it comes to inclusion.

Ad. 11 Status from the Working Groups

Due to time constraints this point was postponed to the next meeting.

Ad. 12 AOB

Nothing was broad up.

Appendix to the Minutes

Appendix 1 – Slides from Pathways presentation (Ad. 9)