Minutes from the PhD committee opening meeting and ordinary meeting

Time: Wednesday, 16 January 2019 at 10.15-12  
Place: Building 1520, room 737, Ny Munkegade 120, 8000 Aarhus C

Present: Ernst-Martin Füchtbauer, Kurt Thomas Jensen, Henrik Stapelfeldt, Anders Møller, Frederik Thorning Frederiksen, Lisa Bjerregaard Jørgensen, Louise Marie Kragh Dalskov, Lis Wollesen de Jonge, Jan Tind Sørensen (for Marianne Hammershøj) and Jes Madsen

On videolink: Sundas Rani and Peter Weber Jensen

Apologies for absence: Alice Puk Skarbye, Lotte Victoria Winther Stagsted, Carmina Falcato Cabral and Marianne Hammershøj

GSST secretariat: Damian Goldberg, Liselotte K. Heller and Rikke J. Ljungmann

Agenda – opening meeting:

1. Rules of procedure for the PhD committee
2. Information concerning the PhD committee’s tasks
3. Election of chairman
4. Election of vice-chairman
5. PhD Committee meeting dates in 2019

Agenda – ordinary meeting:

7. Approval of minutes from the PhD committee meeting – 20 June 2018
8. Approval of agenda
9. Announcements – Overview of assessment committees, exemptions, etc. for the period 12 June 2018 to 8 January 2019
10. Consultation response: Basic principles for doctoral education at AU
11. Announcements:
   a. Course in Public sector consultancy
   b. The AU webpage Vi siger fra/Zero tolerance and related procedures
12. Misc.
Minutes from the opening meeting:

Ad 1. Rules of procedure for the PhD committee
The retiring chairman of the PhD committee Kurt Thomas Jensen informed the committee members of the Rules of procedure for the PhD committee.

There are 12 members, namely 6 members of staff and 6 PhD students. The former are elected for three years and the latter for one year at a time. The members meet regularly – usually three to four times a year – and can invite other people to the meetings as observers if necessary, however the latter do not have the right to vote. Agenda for the meeting will be sent to the members four days before the meeting.

All members can submit items to be discussed at the meetings. When voting on a subject, it is a question of simple majority – only members can vote. At least half of the statutory members must be present to make the PhD committee quorate.

This coming year four of the PhD student members have been elected. One other PhD student has the role of observer with no right to vote.

All members and observers are subject to confidentiality.

Ad 2. Information concerning the PhD committee’s tasks
The retiring chairman of the PhD committee Kurt Thomas Jensen informed the committee members of the PhD committee’s tasks. These include for instance:

- Approving GSST transferable PhD courses
- Approving applications for credits, exemptions, etc.
- Making recommendations regarding the composition of assessment committees
- Discussing various matters relating to the PhD school and making recommendations hereon to the head of PhD school.

The chairman and the vice-chairman prepare the agenda for each meeting and can also make decisions in between meetings, if necessary.

Ad 3. Election of chairman
Associate professor Kurt Thomas Jensen (Department of Bioscience) was re-elected.

Ad 4. Election of vice-chairman
PhD student Peter Weber Jensen (Department of Agroecology) was elected.

Ad 5. PhD Committee meeting dates in 2019
Kurt Thomas Jensen suggested that the PhD committee meetings would be held in connection with the heads of programme meetings.

None.
Minutes from the ordinary meeting:

Re 7. Follow-up from the PhD committee meeting – 20 June 2018:
The minutes had been approved.

Action points:
Follow-up on the course portfolio: These were in particular:
- The two new suggested courses were approved and will be incorporated in the course portfolio provided that they do not overlap with the present course ‘Scientific Writing and Communication’.
- Note that the new course ‘Approaching science writing’ must be adjusted to 2 ECTS.
Jes Madsen mentioned that discussions on the communication courses are taking place, but not finished yet.

Look further into data regarding study time extensions and specific cases: Not possible to provide.

Look into the decided options regarding follow-up on the issue of stress: These were:
- Look into options for including more information at GSST’s introduction day: This has been included.
- Look into options for offering the PHAUST/GSST workshop in Foulum/Roskilde and perhaps for fewer programmes at a time: GSST will discuss this with PHAUST.
- Consider options for the GSST website: A webpage has been created on the issue. Please see here: http://phd.scitech.au.dk/for-phd-students/preventing-managing-stress/

E-mail Heads of programme and programme secretaries when election deadlines for the PhD committee are announced: Done

Remind Heads of programme to mention the elections at the next Programme committee meeting: Done

Look into the issue on providing feedback to the departments regarding nominated PhD students: Jes Madsen mentioned that the dean’s office is working on this, but in some cases are not allowed to provide feedback.

Next meeting: Discuss how to better include PhD student representation from all fields for the PhD committee.

Re 8. Approval of agenda
Approved.

Re 9. Announcements – Overview of assessment committees, ex-emptions, etc. for the period 12 June 2018 to 8 January 2019/30 November 2018
Approved.

Re 10. Consultation response: Basic principles for doctoral education at AU
Based on a process including two conferences, the four Heads of PhD schools had prepared a draft for common basic principles for doctoral education at AU. The PhD committees and the Academic Councils at all four faculties have been asked to provide a consultation response to the draft.

Summing up:
In general, The PhD committee found the document fitting. However, there were a few comments:
- The issue of the development of independence should be stressed, i.e. that it is a learning process along the way during the PhD study.
- The role of the supervisor ought to be described and stressed in more detail, i.e. what is good supervision and how to guide and supervise the PhD student into becoming more independent.
- In the first paragraph: Include a few words on doing independent research alongside the text on teamwork and interdisciplinarity.

**Action:** Kurt Thomas Jensen will draft the consultation response and discuss with Peter Weber Jensen before GSST sends it.

**Future meeting:** Follow-up on the basic principles when the document has been approved.

**Re 11. Announcements:**

**Re 11a. Course in Public sector consultancy**
A transferable skills course in Public sector consultancy has been set up for specific groups of employees at Science and Technology. PhD students are also able to participate. The course was approved in between meetings by the Chair of the PhD committee Kurt Thomas Jensen and the then Vice-Chair Alice Puk Skarbye.

**Re 11b. The AU webpage Vi siger fra/Zero tolerance and related procedures**
Following a survey by Danske Universiteter and Danske Studerendes Fællesråd on various kinds of abusive behaviour at the universities, GSST has created a webpage to inform GSST PhD students about who to contact if they experience abusive behaviour. See the webpage: [http://phd.scitech.au.dk/for-phd-students/no-to-abusive-behaviour/](http://phd.scitech.au.dk/for-phd-students/no-to-abusive-behaviour/)

**Re 12. Misc.**
None.

The meeting ended at 11.00.

**Action**
Draft the consultation response and send

**Who**
Kurt Thomas Jensen, Peter Weber Jensen and GSST

**To be discussed at the next/future meetings:**
- Discuss how to better include PhD student representation from all fields for the PhD committee.
- Follow-up on the basic principles when the Basic principles for doctoral education at AU have been finally approved.