

Graduate School of Technical Sciences (GSTS) PhD Committee meeting

Time: 22 May 2024 at 12.00 – 14.00

Meeting place: 1520 – 737, Ny Munkegade 120, 8000 Aarhus C.

Minutes

Participants:

*Stefan Hallerstede, Martin Holmstrup, Lis Wollesen de Jonge, Ole Højberg,
Julia Prangchat Stub, Tiziana Svenningsen, Brian Vinter*

Participating online:

- *Thea Quistgaard*

Apologies for absence:

- *Ida Marie Gerdes, Ameesh Khatkar.*

Secretariat:

- *Rikke J. Ljungmann and Frederikke Kongsted Hansen.*

1. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Announcements – Overview of assessment committees, exemptions etc. for the period 06.01.2024 – 03.05.2024

*Approved with no comments. If anyone has any comments or corrections, they
should be sent to Frederikke Kongsted Hansen, fk@au.dk.*

3. The transferable skills PhD course portfolio GSNS and GSTS for 2025

The PhD Committee approved the course portfolio for 2025.

*The committee noted that the waiting lists for several of the courses are too long and
that reducing them is important.*

4. News from the Course Committee



In addition to recommending that the PhD Committees approve the transferable skills course portfolio for 2025, the Course Committee passed on four additional recommendations. The GSTS PhD Committee discussed these, and the following was concluded:

- *Recommendation regarding guidelines*
The committee supported this recommendation, incl. that the Course Committee itself prepares the guidelines. The administration will inform the Course Committee at the next meeting in August, so that this work can be initiated.
- *Recommendation regarding statistics courses*
The committee supported this recommendation. Input was given to the content of the course. It was emphasised that the PhD students must have some experience with 'Python' before taking the course, and it should therefore be considered if there is a need for more of the 'Basic Data Science in Python' courses. The PhD administration will follow up and investigate the options.
- *Recommendation regarding the course descriptions*
The committee supported this recommendation. It will be added to the course description template that lecturers must specify what the PhD student can expect on each course day and which teaching methods the PhD student can expect to be used. The administration will follow up.
- *Recommendation regarding lecturers discussing possible overlap*
The committee supported this recommendation. The administration will follow up.

5. Courses

5a. Course in BSc/MSc supervision

The PhD Committee agreed that such a course could be interesting and useful for the PhD students at GSTS.

It was agreed that the involvement of someone with practical experience from the laboratory and the possible overlap to the Science Teaching course should be discussed with CED. To distinguish the course from the Science Teaching course, it was suggested that emphasis may be placed on 'conflict solving'. In addition, it was agreed that giving feedback is a central part of supervising others and therefore naturally must be a focus in this course as well.

Action: The administration will contact CED regarding the option of offering a course in supervision to the PhD students at GSNS and GSTS.

5b. How to manage your PhD project

The PhD Committee agreed that the content of the course at KU is interesting and relevant also for PhD students at GSTS.

Regarding the timing of taking the course, it was noted that it could be useful both at the start of the PhD study and later. It should therefore be discussed with the lecturer whether it is possible to adapt the course so that it becomes relevant for PhD students who are in different phases of their PhD studies.

It was suggested that the course lecturer is made aware that the PhD students are expected to regularly fill in a PhD plan in the MyPhD system - and what this means - so that the lecturer can take this into account when teaching the course.

Action: The PhD administration will contact the course lecturer at KU to discuss the above and the possibility of offering a course to the PhD students at GSTS.

6. Supervision counting as working hours?

Stefan Hallerstedte introduced the item. Brian Vinter explained how the funding works in terms of teaching, supervision, and work obligations for employed PhD students. Furthermore, he emphasised that supervising Bachelor/Master students should count as working hours.

7. Writing camp retreat

Thea Quistgaard presented the proposal for the programme and plan completed by the working group.

Thea Quistgaard noted that there are quite a lot of practicalities to handle during the three-day writing camp. Rikke J. Ljungmann mentioned that the PhD administration can offer support in relation to practical tasks leading up to the writing camp, such as registration, booking of Sandbjerg and catering, and transportation.

Brian Vinter mentioned that a new Vice-dean will soon be taking over as Head of School, and that this person should also be involved in discussions relating to the writing camp.

Rikke J. Ljungmann pointed out that the expected timing of the writing camp (end of September/start of October 2024) will have to be adjusted as this is quite soon. Time must be set aside to both advertise the writing camp and make the necessary bookings.

It was agreed to postpone the writing camp to be held in Spring 2025 (preferably April or May). This postponement will also enable the new Head of School to contribute.

Action: The working group will complete a 'course description' that can be used for advertising the writing camp in the PhD Course Management system (the administration will provide a template). The course description should be discussed at the PhD Committee meeting in September. At this meeting, the administration will also present possible dates in Spring 2025 on which the writing camp may be held.

8. VIVE report

Brian Vinter gave a short presentation of the report's results and how the faculty will proceed with the issues. It was emphasised that the faculty takes it very seriously.

It was asked if it is possible to report incidents anonymously. It was confirmed that this is an option, as Aarhus University has a whistle blower scheme. Brian Vinter underlined that no one should be afraid to report it if they experience or witness sexist incidents. It will of course not have any negative consequences for the person reporting an incident.

The committee was informed that discussions will continue in both the Research Committee, the Heads of School Committee, and in the Committee for diversity and gender equality.

Extra information added after the meeting: In addition, discussions will continue in the Academic Council to Technical Sciences, where a working group has been set up. The group is to discuss both how to avoid sexist incidents and how to ensure that it feels safe for everyone to report incidents.

9. News from the PhD students

No news.

10. For your information

- *The Well-being committee*

The PhD Committee was informed that the Well-being committee has been terminated. Instead, the Heads of School will invite AUPA (Aarhus University's PhD association) for a dialogue once or twice a year.

It was noted that if the PhD students in the PhD Committee would like to bring attention to issues related to the well-being of PhD students at GSTS, these can of course be brought up in this committee. It was agreed that this will be sub-item in the upcoming agendas in connection with the fixed item 'news from the PhD students'.

- *List of social activities at the GSTS website*
A list of social activities has been made available at the GSTS website. The list will be updated continuously.

11. Any other business

Brian Vinter mentioned that a new Vice-dean will soon be taking over as Head of School at GSTS.