

Minutes, PhD committee meeting 17 January 2023

Information: **GSTS PhD Committee meeting**

Opening meeting at 12:00-12:40, ordinary meeting at 12:40-14:00.

Time: Tuesday 17 January 2023 at 12:00 - 14:00

Place: Building 1520-731 (Sea View) Ny Munkegade 120, 8000 Aarhus C

Participants: Lis Wollesen de Jonge, Stefan Hallerstede, Brian Vinter, Marianne Hammershøj, Julie Frost Dahl, Anne-Cathrine Storgaard Danielsen, Thea Quitsgaard, Aaron Hurst

Apologies for absence: Claudia Nielsen, Emilie Nicoline Stepien, Hadi Sehat, Ida Marie Gerdes, Morten Frederiksen;

Secretariat: Lone Iversen, Rikke J. Ljungmann

Item 1: Round of introduction (5 min)

The retiring chairman of the GSTS PhD Committee, Stefan Hallerstede, started by welcoming all new members to the committee and thanking the retiring members. Thereafter there was a round of introduction.

Item 2: Rules of procedure for the PhD Committee (10 min, Stefan Hallerstede)

The retiring chairman of the GSTS PhD Committee, Stefan Hallerstede, informed the committee members of the Rules of procedure for the PhD Committee.

There are 8 members, namely 4 members of staff and 4 PhD students. The former are elected for three years and the latter for one year at a time. The members meet regularly - usually 4 times a year – and can, if necessary, invite other people to the meetings as observers, however these do not have the right to vote. An agenda for the meeting will be sent to the members no later than four working 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.

All members and any invited observers are subject to confidentiality.

The Committee also has representatives in the joint NAT and TECH Course Committees.

Information regarding the PhD Committee, agendas and the rules of procedure can be found on [GSTS' website](#)

Item 3: Information concerning the PhD Committee's tasks (10 min, Stefan Hallerstede)

The retiring chairman of the PhD Committee, Stefan Hallerstede, informed the committee members of the PhD Committee's tasks. These include for instance:

- *Approving GSTS 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 hereof to the Head of Graduate School*

The chairman and vice-chairman prepare the agenda for each meeting and can also make decisions in between meetings, if necessary. All committee members can submit items to be discussed at the meetings.

Item 4: Election of 1) chairman, 2) vice-chairman, 3) representative for the joint course committee GSNS and GSTS and a representative for the AU well-being committee (10 min, Stefan Hallerstede)

As per the Rules of procedure, a chairman must be elected from among the academic staff of the PhD Committee.

Stefan Hallerstede was reelected as Chair.

As per the Rules of procedure, a Vice-chair must be elected from among the elected PhD student members of the PhD Committee.

Anne-Cathrine Storgaard Danielsen was elected as Vice-chair.

As per the Terms of reference for the joint Course committee between the two graduate schools GSNS and GSTS, a joint Course committee is set up. The Chair and Vice-chair of each of the two PhD committees are born members. One other member from each of the two PhD committees must be elected.

Aaron Hurst was elected.

By the end of 2021, a Well-being committee was set up to discuss and ensure the well-being of all AU PhD students – in Danish 'Trivselsudvalg'. The committee consists of all five Heads of School at AU, representatives of AUPA (Aarhus University PhD Association) and one PhD student representative from each of the five PhD Committees.

Thus, one PhD student must be elected.

Julie Frost Dahl was elected.

Item 5: Any other business (end of opening meeting) (5 min, Stefan Hallerstede)

No further business.

Item 6: Approval of minutes from the PhD Committee meeting on 21 November 2022 (start of ordinary meeting) (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)

The minutes were approved.

Item 7: Approval of agenda (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)

The agenda was approved.

Item 8: Announcements – Overview of assessment committees, exemptions, etc. for the period 18 November 2022 to 10 January 2023 (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)

The announcements were approved.

If anyone has any comments or corrections in this regard it should be sent directly to Lone Iversen.

Item 9: Exemption from ECTS requirements (10 minutes, Brian Vinter)

A discussion took place and pros and cons were debated regarding whether to keep the current limit of 31 ECTS.

The Committee recommends keeping 28-31 ECTS and applying for an exemption if you have less than 28 ECTS or more than 31 ECTS. This will also be discussed at the Programme Chairs meeting.

Item 10: Status on Action Plan (10 minutes, Brian Vinter)

The subject of well-being of the PhD students is very much on the agenda. Brian Vinter is open to the programmes coming up with ideas and events, no matter whether it is a scientific event or a social event – gives DKK 5,000 per year or even per semester. It was commented that it is important that it also reaches the VIPs, not just the PhD students.

Brian Vinter also stressed that it is most important for junior researchers at the department and part of the research groups – so the first go-to is the research group and the local environment. This does not only apply to PhDs but to everyone in the scientific environments at TECH.

It was mentioned that it would be good to have some transferable skills PhD courses in both Risø and Foulum.

Action: *This will be discussed more thoroughly at a later meeting.*

Action: *Lone Iversen sends the Action Plan to the PhD Committee members*

Item 11: Topics on the agenda throughout the year (5 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)

Suggestions for each meeting:

- *News from the Well-being Committee*
- *News from The Course Committee*
- *News from the PhD students*

Suggestions for a later meeting:

- *Change of Environment*

Action: *Send to Lone Iversen if you have more ideas.*

Item 12: A course on “How to manage your PhD project” (10 minutes, Rikke J. Ljungmann)

Various suggestions were brought up, e.g. time management, alignment of expectations, collaboration in your research group and outside, e.g. with other institutions, different working methods.

Action: *Rikke J. Ljungmann follows up in the Course committee*

Item 13: For your information (2 minutes, Chair of PhD Committee)

- *The Course committee will continue to follow up on evaluations from the Science Teaching course.*
- *Science Teaching: Supervisor writes an approval in terms of the 0.5 ECTS that the PhD students have to take locally in future courses. The PhD students will then have to add this in MyPhD as approval of the 0.5 ECTS.*

Item 14: Any other business (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)

- a) *Well-being Committee: Brian Vinter strongly suggests that we work together on the subject of well-being among the PhD students and encourages students to talk to their supervisors but also to Brian Vinter if there is something really serious. Finding solutions is important. It was commented that it is also important to include international students in the Well-being catalogue.*

- b) *Don't steal my work: This will be included in the annual research ethics workshop done at departmental level. The Vancouver rules will apply.*

GDPR: Brian Vinter mentioned the URIS report and the recommendations regarding GDPR. He also mentioned that he is part of a national committee which is working towards a national list and national documents.

AU has set up a URIS committee which works on how to implement these rules and procedures.

For more information see the URIS [Report](#)

- c) *How to encourage more students to join the PhD Committee: Other form of communication were called for as news letter alone are not efficient enough. It is suggested Brian Vinter joins the PhD days to talk about the influence of students at the PhD Committee. Brian Vinter will be in the proverbial "hot chair" to answer questions.*

Action: *The programmes should contact Brian Vinter.*

Decision: *To be discussed at the next PhD Committee meeting.*