

# TECH PhD Committee (20-01-2022 11.00, TECH PhD Committee meeting)

20-01-2022 11:00 - 12:30

Online via Zoom

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## Information:

### **GSTS PhD Committee meeting**

Opening meeting at 11:00-11:30, ordinary meeting at 11:30-12:30.

**Time:** Thursday 20 January 2022 at 11:00 - 12:30

**Place:** Online via Zoom

**Participants:** Lis Wollesen de Jonge, Stefan Hallerstede, Morten Frederiksen, Ole Højbjerg, Laura Sofie Harbo, Mathilde Pauline Coutant, Hadi Sehat, Claudia Nielsen, Julie Frost Dahl, Ida Gerdes, Brian Vinter.

**Apologies for absence:** Marianne Hammershøj and Emilie Nicoline Stepien (by mistake, she was not invited to the meeting)

**Secretariat:** Liselotte K. Heller, Maria Fauerby Iversen

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## **Item 1: Round of introduction (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

There will be a round of introduction to meet and greet everyone.

## **Decision for item 1: Round of introduction (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

The retiring chairman of the PhD committee Lis Wollesen de Jonge started the meeting by welcoming all new members to the committee. Thereafter there was a round of introduction.

## **Item 2: Rules of procedure for the PhD Committee (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

The retiring chairman of the GSTS PhD Committee, Lis Wollesen de Jonge, will inform the committee members of the Rules of procedure for the PhD Committee.

Appendix item 2: Rules of procedure, PhD Committee at TECH

## **Decision for item 2: Rules of procedure for the PhD Committee (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

The retiring chairman of the PhD committee Lis Wollesen de Jonge 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 three to four 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, and in the well-being committee.

The 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 (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

Lis Wollesen de Jonge, retiring chairman, will inform about the PhD Committee's tasks.

### **Decision for item 3: Information concerning the PhD Committee's tasks (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

The retiring chairman of the PhD committee Lis Wollesen de Jonge 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 hereon to the Head of graduate school.

The chairman and the 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 (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

A new chairman (VIP) and vice-chairman (among the elected PhD student members) for the PhD committee will be appointed. The appointment is for the period 20.01.2022-31.01.2023.

The chairman and vice-chairman of the PhD committee are born members of the course committee (see appendix item 4). In addition, one additional member will be appointed. The appointment is for the period 20.01.2022-31.01.2023.

A member (PhD student) of the central AU well-being committee will be appointed. The appointment is for the period 20.01.2022-31.01.2023.

The Heads of graduate school at Aarhus University have established the well-being committee. All of the five Heads of graduate school are members along with the one PhD student representative from each of the five PhD committees at AU and representatives from the central PhD association at AU, AUPA.

Appendix item 4: Terms of reference\_Joint course committee GSNS and GSTS

### **Decision for 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 (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

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

**Stefan Hallerstedte was elected as Chairman.**

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

**Julie Frost Dahl was elected as Vice-chairman.**

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.

**Claudia Nielsen 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 member must be elected.

**Hadi Sehat was elected.**

### **Item 5: Any other business (end of opening meeting) (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

#### **Decision for item 5: Any other business (end of opening meeting) (5 min, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

No further businesses.

### **Item 6: Approval of minutes from the PhD Committee meeting on 15 November 2021 (start of ordinary meeting) (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)**

Minutes from the last PhD committee meeting on 15 November 2021

Appendix item 6: Minutes TECHPhDCommitteemeeting 15.11.2021

#### **Decision for item 6: Approval of minutes from the PhD Committee meeting on 15 November 2021 (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)**

6. Approval of minutes from the PhD Committee meeting on 15 November 2021 (start of ordinary meeting) (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)

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

8. Announcements – Overview of assessment committees, exemptions, etc. for the period 2 November 2021 to 12 January 2022 (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)

9. Suggestion to the Action plan based on the International Evaluation (15 minutes, Brian Vinter)
10. Revision of Rules and Regulations (10 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)
11. Approval of new PhD courses recommended by the course committee (10 minutes, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)
12. Suggestion for course evaluations (10 minutes, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)
13. Corona status (5 minutes, Brian Vinter)
14. For your information (5 minutes, Brian Vinter and Liselotte Heller)
15. Any other business (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)

### **Decision for 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 2 November 2021 to 12 January 2022 (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)**

Announcements - Overview of assessment committees, exemptions, etc. for the period 2 November 2021 to 12 January 2022.

Appendices item 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3: Reports from PhD planner

### **Decision for item 8: Announcements – Overview of assessment committees, exemptions, etc. for the period 2 November 2021 to 12 January 2022 (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)**

The announcement were approved.

If anyone had any comments or corrections in this regard it could be sent directly to Liselotte Heller.

### **Item 9: Suggestion to the Action plan based on the International Evaluation (15 minutes, Brian Vinter)**

The Head of Graduate school, Brian Vinter will share the status and the process of the action plan.

The action plan has been introduced at the Faculty Management meeting on 12 January 2022.

Comments/inputs from the members of the PhD committee is much appreciated.

Appendix item 9: Action plan

## **Decision for item 9: Suggestion to the Action plan based on the International Evaluation (15 minutes, Brian Vinter)**

The Head of graduate school Brian Vinter, informed that the outcome of the evaluation was overall positive but there were a few issues that need to be looked in to.

An action plan has been prepared to cover the issues from the international evaluation and the “Quality in PhD Process 2021” survey. Brian Vinter did not run through the action plan from A to Z, but emphasized some of the items.

- The graduate school will need to include more graphic illustrations in their communication to give a greater degree of understanding of the graduate schools structure and rules. This will be expressed both on the website but also in documents and guides hereunder in the Rules & Regulations. It will be conducted over time.
- The PhD order states, that the PhD degree programme is equivalent to 180 ECTS credits which correlates to 3 years full time study. Within this timeframe, the PhD students have to live up to several requirements. The time for doing research is therefore limited for PhD students in Denmark.

The timeframe of the PhD degree programme cannot be changed. The graduate school will look in to release as much of the time as possible so it can be used on doing research.

- The PhD fellows’ (PhD students employed at AU) work obligations hours should be spent on things that are related to the PhD project.
- The new funding strategy “the bonus model” has been communicated to all forums through the “One pager” memo to meet the concerns about securing sufficient funding.
- The definition of dissemination will be looked into. The Science teaching course has in this connection been made mandatory for all enrolled PhD students to ensure the required teaching skills regardless of whether they perform teaching as part of the dissemination or not.
- The lack of well-being amongst PhD students will be sought to be prevented by releasing more time to do research for the individual PhD student. There will also be a focus on drawing the supervisors’ attention to the challenge of the lack of well-being among the PhD students.
- It is important, that all PhD students feel they are a part of the same faculty despite the different locations. The graduate school has therefore assigned funding for a social event at the different locations; Aarhus, Foulum and AU sealand (Risø and Flakkebjerg). There are also plans to conduct some of the transferable skills PhD courses on other locations besides Aarhus.

After the introduction of the action plan the members of the PhD committee had different questions and a discussion to follow up. There were two issues which will need to be



followed up in the future which was raised by Mathilde Pauline Coutant and Julie Frost Dahl.

- Mathilde Pauline Coutant suggested, that there is focus on transport for PhD students as this can be a challenge with the faculty's different locations. Brian Vinter confirms, that there is focus on this issue and one of the things that is being discussed is carpooling.

Julie Frost Dahl called attention on the participant limit for the Science teaching course as it is now mandatory for all enrolled PhD student. Brian Vinter and Lis Wollesen de Jonge ensured that this along with the content and quality of the course is a focus point in the Course committee.

## **Item 10: Revision of Rules and Regulations (10 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)**

The Rules and Regulations are to be revised in the beginning of 2022. We would therefore kindly ask you to read the document and comment, if you find anything that you don't understand in the material or if there is anything, that should appear clearer.

Appendix item 10: GSTS Rules & Regulations

## **Decision for item 10: Revision of Rules and Regulations (10 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)**

The Rules and Regulations are to be revised in the beginning of 2022. The members of the PhD committee has therefore been requested to come with inputs to this work. It is the PhD students and supervisors who should be able to use the Rules & Regulations for finding the answers they are looking for. It is therefore the graduate school's top priority to make it as clear as possible and to state the rules so they are understandable.

The graduate school would therefore kindly ask the members of the PhD committee to read the GSTS' rules and regulations and comment, if you find anything that you don't understand in the material or if there is anything that should appear clearer. The graduate school encourage you to go back to the departments which you are representing and ask for inputs as well.

The suggestions should be sent to, Liselotte K. Heller, [heller@au.dk](mailto:heller@au.dk) latest on Monday, 21 February 2022.

## **Item 11: Approval of new PhD courses recommended by the course committee (10 minutes, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

The course committee will like the PhD committee to consider the following items:

- The course committee recommends that the two Phyton courses (see attachment) is approved and the courses will be start running in 2022.
- The course committee recommends that the decision regarding a new statistical course held by Rodigo Labouriau will wait until the end of 2022.

The course committee recommends that the two PhD committees approve that all the statistics courses are evaluated by the end of 2022 to provide a thorough and coherent picture of the entire transferable skills selection of statistics courses at GSNS and GSTS.

- A final course description for the course 'Applied Statistics' is not yet available. The course committee therefore recommends that it will be processed as soon as possible when the final course description is in place.

Appendix item 11.1: Course description\_Introduction to Python for Data Science

Appendix item 11.2: Course description\_Basic Data Science in Python

Appendix item 11.3: Course Description\_Statistics Laboratory for Scientific Application

## **Decision for item 11: Approval of new PhD courses recommended by the course committee (10 minutes, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

At the Course committee meeting 16 December 2021, a couple of new courses and other course-related matters were discussed. Below, the course committee's recommendations and the PhD committee's comments can be found:

a) Courses: 'Introduction to Python for Data Science' and 'Basic Data Science in Python'  
Recommendation: The course committee recommends that the two PhD committees approve the course descriptions and that the courses are organised.

**This was approved.**

b) Course: 'Applied Statistics'

Due to unforeseen circumstances, it was not possible to present a course description at the meeting.

Recommendation: The course committee recommends that the course description be discussed as soon as it will be available, if necessary through a written e-mail hearing first in the Course committee and then in the two PhD committees.

**This was approved.**

c) Course: 'Statistics Laboratory for Scientific Application'

It was agreed that the course looks interesting and ambitious, but to postpone the decision to the end of 2022. At the moment, priority should be given to creating a solid base of basic statistics courses before setting up more advanced ones.

Recommendation: The course committee recommends that the two PhD committees postpone discussion of this course.

**This was approved.**

Lise Wollesen de Jonge closed the item by mentioning that the Course committee's focus in 2022 is the statistical courses and an evaluation of these.

## **item 12: Suggested new template for NAT-TECH transferable skills PhD courses (10 minutes, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

As decided in the two PhD committees at GSNS and GSTS, respectively, the schools wish to develop a new template for course evaluation of the transferable skills courses. At the moment, only some of the courses are evaluated through the graduate schools, and the remaining courses are evaluated by the course lecturer(s). When the new

template is in place, the graduate schools will evaluate all the transferable skills courses provided.

Based on previous templates from both the former Science and Technology and from Health (both attached for comparison), a suggested template for GSNS and GSTS has been created. The template only concerns the questions that are to be asked by the two graduate schools and not questions from the course lecturer(s). The number of questions that the latter may pose awaits a discussion about resources.

Appendix item 12.1: Health\_Course evaluation of PhD course\_example

Appendix item 12.2: Nat-Tech\_Course evaluation PhD course\_example

Appendix item 12.3: Suggested template NAT-TECH transferable skills PhD courses

## **Decision for item 12: Suggested new template for NAT-TECH transferable skills PhD courses (10 minutes, Lis Wollesen de Jonge)**

The Course committee's recommendation: The course committee recommends that the two PhD committees approve that all the statistics courses are evaluated by the end of 2022 to provide a thorough and coherent picture of the entire transferable skills selection of statistics courses at GSNS and GSTS.

This was approved by the PhD committee.

There was a single comment from Hadi Sehat regarding an item for the evaluation questions. He suggested, that there should be a question regarding the course workload; does the indicated workload correspond to the actual workload of the course?

## **Item 13: Corona status (5 minutes, Brian Vinter)**

A short follow-up on the Corona restriction with focus on PhD defences and qualifying exams.

## **Decision for item 13: Corona status (5 minutes, Brian Vinter)**

Brian Vinter thanked for the flexibility in the programmes which makes it possible to get through the long period with corona restrictions. The current status of defence and qualifying exams are that they are being held online throughout January.

At last there was a discussion on whether or not there will be a possibility to use the hybrid solution in connection with defences and qualifying exams in the future post Corona. Brian Vinter confirmed that they will still be a good solution also when the reduction of CO2 is taking into consideration, however it is as a rule preferred to be arranged with physical attendance.

## **Item 14: For your information (5 minutes, Brian Vinter)**

1. PhD programme of Engineering has officially been split into the four new programmes of 01.01.2022
2. Head of Graduate School Brian Vinter will share the outcome of the general discussion on "how to consider PhD students" from the Faculty management seminar in December 2021.
3. Minutes from the course committee meeting.

Appendix item 14: Course committee meeting\_minutes\_16.12.2021

### **Decision for item 14: For your information (5 minutes, Brian Vinter)**

1. Nothing further information
2. Brian Vinter made a power point presentation on the discussion across the departments on how they are see being a PhD student. The PhD students fall under the departments as junior researchers.

There was further a discussion on SDDs (Staff Development Dialogue) and career development dialogues.

3. Nothing further information

### **Item 15: Any other business (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)**

### **Decision for item 15: Any other business (2 minutes, Chair of PhD committee)**

No further businesses.