**PhD Council Meeting**

28 February 2022, EU law library Domus Media

**Present:** Trygve Losnedahl, Laura Letourneau-Tremblay, Tomas Tobiassen, Dinie Arief, Elsabé Boshoff. Rose Boyle absent with excuse.

**Agenda**

1. PFF Meeting
* For the upcoming PFF meeting on 30 March, some items discussed are as follows:

a. Review of PhD courses was postponed from the last meeting to the upcoming meeting, but is again at the end of the agenda.

b. Application criteria for PhD Position

- PFF is considering whether Master's Degree students waiting for completion approval can apply for PhD Positions.

- The PhD Council suggests that there should not be an absolute prohibition against applying by people who have almost finalized their master’s degrees, and will complete it before the PhD position evaluations. Hence, it is suggested that PFF could consider applications by students waiting for the approval of their Master's Degree. The timing of when PhD positions are advertised should also be considered, for example so that it coincides with the time when Masters Degrees have been completed. Once students leave academia and go into the private sector it is often unlikely that they will return to do a PhD, based on salary, etc, so it would also be in the interest of the university to get the best students as soon as they complete their Master’s Degree. Also, important to take account of the long process between when positions are advertised and when PhDs actually start, during which they would be able to finalise Masters studies.

- Question to raise to PFF: Have they looked at the practices from other universities?

1. Meeting with the Dean
* There is a tradition where the PhD Council meets with the Dean to raise PhD candidates' issues. The deans requested a meeting with the PhD Council on short notice, for Wednesday 20 March. Trygve will represent the Council in the meeting.
* Stocktaking of issues to raise in the meeting:
1. **On-boarding of new PhDs**

To inform the deanship that the Council will conduct an on-boarding survey. Since many positions are opening up (especially after Covid), the survey would be timely for providing inputs to improve the on-boarding of PhD Candidates.

1. **Covid related issues**
* Application for extension: To seek information on whether there are any updated requirements in place.
* The PhD Council to express concern about the lack of actual physical presence from academic staff in the office. The Faculty should signal that everything is back in business, with flexibility of home office, but stress the importance for academic staff to be physically present.
1. **Funding of Council Activities**
* To raise the need for an annual budget for the PhD Council from the faculty, potentially on par with that received by research groups.
* With most of Covid restrictions lifted, there are ample possibilities to conduct academic and social events hosted by the Council to improve social and good working environments, and therefore an increased need for funding compared to previous years.
* Also to raise the specific activities for which we may require funding in the short term, see below.
1. **Equality and Diversity**
* NIMU report highlighted that minority groups in Norway are a demographic not represented in the PhD program.
* Trygve noted that the Dean had a strategy to specify such issues last year. However, no information on whether it has been followed up.
* Suggested to express this to the Dean as a preliminary issue that the PhD Council intends to engage further on.
1. Finalize on-boarding survey
* After the last meeting, the draft survey was sent to Vibeke and Gørill for their input, which has now been received, reviewed during the meeting, and amendments incorporated, where necessary.
* Dinie will circulate the final draft to all for final input.
* The survey will be released at the earliest (1 April 2022).
1. Upcoming PhD Council Events
* **Welcoming Session (tbd)**
* Trygve will seek information on whether the Faculty will hold such a session. If yes, the Council suggests having a joint welcoming session with the Faculty. If not, the Council will hold an Introduction Session of the PhD Council, inviting all PhD students.
* **Shut-up and Write** **(28 April 2022)**
* Laura to book the room, Dinie will send a poster and invitation.
* There are some fruit juice from the last shut-up and write to be served in the next session.
* To request funding from the faculty for lunch.
* **Seminar on How to Survive PhD & Summer Party (June 2022)**
* These two events will be jointly convened.
* Some issues to discuss (from previous minutes): how and on what grounds to apply for extensions, how to apply for sick leave, how and when to plan research stays during your PhD, introduction to teaching and supervision for PhDs, etc
* **Shut-up and Write (Fall Semester)**
* The Council have received funding from *Lovsamlingsfondet* in the amount of Nok 75k to hold this event in Fall.
* The Council needs to decide the event dates, open registration, and make reservations with the venue.
* Tomas will send Doodle for input on date suggestions. To increase participation, the dates should also consider the teaching calendar of PhDs.
* It is suggested to hold this event on a Thursday and Friday.
* **Supervision training for PhDs**
* Following up on the suggestion that a seminar on thesis supervision be made available for PhDs responsible for conducting Master's thesis supervision: Laura informed that the available seminar by the Faculty is only available for Professors supervising thesis.
* No final conclusion reached on how to take this forward.
1. Budget Status
* Currently, the Council has NOK 6,500.
* Expenses for the shut-up and write in February is NOK 2,700.
* There is a need to get more funding from the Dean or PFF to support the Council's events.
1. AoB
* Dialogue with the law library: They want to start a discussion with the Council. Tomas will update when there is more information from the library.
* Means of communication: Gørill has agreed for the Council to create a new e-mail for communication amongst PhDs. Annichen proposed the new e-mail to be used based on a subscription. The new e-mail will be introduced via stipendiater@jus.uio.no, with an option to subscribe to the new e-mail address. The proposed new e-mail address is phdstudents@jus.uio.no
* Tomas/Trygve to set up the new e-mail address.

Minutes submitted by: Dinie Arief and Elsabé Boshoff