

Date: 23 November 2022

Annual report of the PhD Council 2022

1. Council Members 2022

In 2022, the PhD Council consisted of the following people who represented the PhDs and PostDocs in the mentioned committees:

- Trygve Losnedahl (NIfS): Leader, representative on the Faculty Board
- Elsabe Boshoff (SMR): Secretary, Finance
- Dinie SM Arief (SMR): Secretary, social coordinator
- Laura Létourneau Tremblay (IOR): Representative in PFF
- Annichen Kongsvik Sæteren (NIfS): Representative in LiMU
- Tomas Midttun Tobiassen (IOR): Acting representative on the Faculty Board
- Rose Boyle (IKRS): Representative in IVA

There were 3 goals that guided the work of the PhD Council in 2022. These goals were adopted by consensus at the 2021 PhD Council Annual Meeting. These 3 goals are:

- a. Improve social arenas for PhDs;
- b. Improve on-boarding of new PhDs;
- c. Support candidates with Covid-related extensions.

2. PhD Council Activities 2022

2.1 Boards and Committees

The PhD Council's members have represented PhDs and PostDocs and voiced their interests inseveral boards, committees, and working groups throughout the year.

2.1.1 The Faculty Board

A member of the PhD Council has served as representative for the temporary academic staff (PhDs and Post-Docs) on the Faculty Board in 2022. The Faculty's long-term budget has been an important topic. The Faculty's budgetary situation is strongly improved and solid, mostly due to low levels of activities under and after Covid and increased external funding. The board has granted money for new permanent positions for associate professors.

The main takeaway from the Faculty Board for PhDs and post-docs is the continuous underachievement of reaching the goals for employment of PhDs and post-docs. According to the deanship, the main reasons are troubles getting good applicants, postponed start for many newly employed and troubles getting academic staff to carry out the thorough employment



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procedures. This last point reduces the realistic amount of employment procedures that can be carried out. The Faculty Board's unanimous view is that to counter the underachievement of the goals of employed phds and postdocs should be a priority for the deanship. If there is little sign of improvement, the incoming PhD-council and/or Faculty Board representative should consider to propose specific measures to improve employment rates.

The faculty board was supportive of the idea to have buddies for all new PhDs, other than the supervisor and potential mentor through the mentorship programme.

2.1.2 Likestillings- og mangfoldsutvalget (LiMU) / "The Equality and Diversity Board"

A member of the PhD Council has served as representative for the temporary staff (PhDs and Post-Docs) in LiMU. LiMU works to ensure that the composition of the law faculty's students and staff is to a greater extent a reflection of the general population, and that both students and staff are guaranteed equal opportunities for achievement regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, minority background, sexuality or other reasons. There have been five meetings, the first in April. A last meeting for 2022 is scheduled in December.

The work in LiMU started with discussing and revising the mandate. The PhD Council has been raising the issue of the lack of minority Norwegians in positions at the faculty. LiMU has started a cooperation with MinoJur, planning to host an event to show opportunities in academia. The issue of taking care of young female academic staff through offering professional support (coach or psychologist) has been raised by another member of LiMU. The issue was primarily raised with regards to staff members in permanent positions. The PhD Council is advocating for broadening the effort to include post docs. LiMU has also hosted an event for international scholars and plans to host another one next semester.

2.1.3 Programråd For Forskerutdanning (PFF)

The PhD Council is also represented in the Programme Committee for Research Training/ Programråd For Forskerutdanning (PFF). PFF has the overall responsibility for the PhD program at the Faculty of Law, including organizing the PhD courses. In 2022, the PhD Council has worked with PFF to improve the on-boarding period (the first 6 months of employment) of PhD candidates. A survey was conducted by the PhD Council and the results of that survey were shared with PFF. PFF was very positive to the suggestions proposed and a welcoming lunch meeting with new PhD candidates is already planned for every semester. The buddy Program was also welcomed. PFF proposed discussing such an initiative with departments' leaders. PFF, together with the PhD Council, has also reviewed the welcoming letter sent to all new PhDs at the start of their contract. This letter will soon be available in English as well. The PhD Council provided valuable feedbacks to the revision of the JUR9302 course description and to the discussions on the issues relating to the use of Norwegian and English in the PhD Courses. In its last meeting with PFF, the PhD Council raised the issue of teaching duties. More specifically, 'PhD candidates have experienced challenges in the fulfillment of their teaching duties. A first challenge is the mapping of PhD candidate teaching competences: 'faglærere' do not seem to always have the overview of the potential candidates that could teach their subject. It is not clear who PhD candidates should communicate to and when about their teaching competences? Who has the role



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of coordinating? Can we find a more systematic solution? A second challenge is access to teaching. Some candidates have experienced that external resources or others have priority over them when it comes to teaching. Could we ensure more equal access to teaching?'. This might be an issue for the next PhD Council to follow-up. PFF has continued to approve most applications for extensions relating to the Covid-situation.

2.1.4. Innstillings- og tilsettingsutvalet (IVA)

The nomination and appointment committee (Innstillings- og tilsettingsutvalet) has conducted all its tasks over e-mail the last year, and there have been no noteworthy cases or topics. The committee has come to an agreement with the assessment committees (bedømmelseskomiteer) in all cases.

2.1.5. Meetings with the Dean

A representative of the PhD-Council meets with the Deans once a semester. This year we met in March, and will meet in December. In the March meeting the topics were the coming onboarding survey, getting staff back to the office post covid and financing of PhD-council. It was decided to meet with the Deans in December so that the new leader of the Phd-council can take part in the meeting.

2.2 Implementation of PhD Council Goals

2.2.1. Improving Social Arena (Events)

a. Overview

PhDs have expressed a great need for socializing following the difficult Covid times. Especially new PhDs hired during the pandemic have had a hard time getting to know their colleagues and finding social support and advice from other PhDs. To meet this need, the PhD Council has hosted regular events during the spring and fall semesters. Two new event forms have been tried out.

b. Informal Friday Lunches

The council started weekly PhD-lunches in early spring that took place every Friday at Aulakjelleren, Domus Media. The format of this activity is a relaxed get together where PhDs bring their lunch packs and enjoy each other's company. It never became a routine and ended up falling apart due to low attendance. Even so, the council believes regular phd-lunches can be successful. As an evaluation of this activity in 2022, it is suggested for the following year to continue this activity, with improvements such as reducing the frequency to once or twice a month with also possibility for the PhD Council to provide light meal and beverages. For it to be successful, it might be necessary that some council members commit to attending for a long enough time that it becomes institutionalized routine.

c. Informal Shut-up-and-write events (February, April, & May 2022)



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The PhD Council organised three informal shut-up-and-write events for PhDs in February, April and May of 2022. These events not only provided a conducive space for progressing on writing, which is central to the success of any PhD project, but also provided an opportunity for PhDs to socialise and to get to know one another and each other's work. Lunch was served by the PhD Council. With limited space in meeting rooms at the faculty, the numbers had to be limited to usually around 15 participants, and there was high participation and enthusiastic feedback for these events every time. A less formal session only published on teams was held in March, with low participation.

d. Seminar on "After the Pandemic: How to do Research Stays" & Summer Party (22 June 2022)

As the final event in the spring semester, the PhD Council held a seminar with the topic "After the Pandemic: How to do Research Stays" held on 22 June 2022 at Domus Juridica 8113. The seminar aims to share experiences of PhDs which have participated in research stays. The seminar invited Nicola Claire Strain, Pluricourts, Faculty of Law, UiO and Dorina Damsa, Institute of Social Research (formerly IKRS). The event was attended by 26 participants which include PhD students and postdocs.

The seminar was then followed with a summer party, where PhDs gather and socialize before the summer holiday.

e. Welcoming Event (17 October 2022)

The council gave a presentation about the PhD Council in the Welcoming Event to new PhDs hosted by the PFF in Kjerka, Domus Media on Monday 17 October 2022. It was initially planned to invite to go out for a beer afterwards, but since another initiative was taken to gather the phds for Fredagspils the Friday before, the Council instead marketed the Friday event.

f. Getaway shut-up-and-write (17-18 November 2022)

Given the success of the one-day shut-up-and-write events, the PhD Council applied for funding from the Lovsamlingsfondet to organise a multi-day shut-up-and-write event where PhDs would get away from their normal routines and competing obligations, to focus only on writing. This event took place on 17-18 November 2022 at Voksenåsen Hotel. The event was attended by 23 people.

2.2.2 Improve on-boarding of PhDs

a. Aim

In implementing the focus on improving on-boarding of new PhDs, the PhD Council distributed an online questionnaire to all PhDs with the aim to:

- 1) Identify issues for improving the overall experience of the onboarding period, from admission to the program until six months after the first day of starting the program.
- 2) Identify the support needed by PhDs to feel fully onboarded with the program.



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The information gathered through the survey forms the basis of a proposal to the PFF of the specific improvements that are needed.

The survey was conducted from 1 April to 1 May 2022. It consists of 11 questions that are divided into three parts: general questions, onboarding experience, and satisfaction and feedback. A total of 20 persons participated in the survey.

b. Findings and suggestions for improvement

The result of the on-boarding survey was presented by the council to PFF in the form of a concept note and presentation. Some main findings were that the onboarding experience varies a lot, and for far too many PhDs, it is not especially good. Generally, there is a strong variation regarding the degree of satisfaction of the on-boarding experience. The findings and suggestions for improvement are described in the attached concept note.

Note: Survey questionnaire and concept note to the PFF, attached.

2.2.3 Support candidates with Covid-related extensions.

The council continues to highlight this issue in the PFF meetings. The PFF is generally supportive of extension applications, and continues to grant COVID-related extensions, in order to continue to be fair to students affected by the pandemic.

2.3 Other work

2.3.1. Improving means of Communication

In 2021, platforms that are available for communication amongst PhDs are limited to email, Facebook and the Council's website. There were proposals to also set up a Microsoft Teams group or using other suggested platforms for more informal communication.

To improve the current means of communication, the PhD Council since February and May 2022 respectively, has setup a Microsoft Teams Group and a new mailing list for PhDs (phds@jus.uio.no). The Microsoft teams group and the new mailing list provides a more informal and casual communication amongst PhDs especially for the purpose to share information and ask questions. It seems to be slightly more effective in use than the earlier attempt of using Facebook. Another initiative taken by the council is to update and refresh the PhD Council website (https://foreninger.uio.no/stipendiatradet/om/). The updates was conducted since October 2022, immediately after receiving permissions for editing the website from the Faculty.

2.4. Proposed projects for further development

In addition to the projects that the PhD Council was able to implement in the course of 2022, there are other areas of concern and interest which time constraints prevented the Council from developing in full, but which we would like to bring to the attention of the new Council, for follow-up, as necessary.



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- Initiated some work on the renumeration of PhDs, the use of driftsmidler by PhDs and the process for allocation of teaching obligations to PhDs, which could be important items on the agenda of the new PhD Council.
- Strengthening relationships with the UiODoc and trade unions (other partners which are also working for the improvement of the situation of PhDs at the university).
- Seminar on thesis supervision be made available for PhDs responsible for conducting Master's thesis supervision, as the available seminar by the Faculty is only available for Professors supervising theses.
- Possibility of initiating a regular PhD roundtable where PhDs from different "cohorts" can learn about each other's work.
- The possibility of a PhD blog where PhDs can make voluntary contributions regarding their ongoing research and have an opportunity to disseminate their work. The challenge here is who will run such a project.
- Ask PFF that more hours of PhD-representation on boards/committees gives compensation in teaching, as it is currently only PFF which is compensated.

3. Budget

The council received funding of NOK 75 000 from Lovsamlingsfondet for a shut up and write event. The council has also received commitment from the faculty of funding regular council events, but the funding is not formalized as a fixed yearly sum. This has not been deemed necessary since the faculty has been very positive to fund events by the council. However, it is advised to get it formalized in some way, for times when faculty budgets are tighter than today and for foreseeability. Expenditure of the faculty funding must be in line with UiO routines.

INCOMING FUNDS	
Source	Amount
Carry over from last year's budget (PhD Council personal funds)	9271.23
Event funding from the Faculty of Law	
(Event funding)	10 000
Lovsamlingsfondet	75 000
Total	94271.23



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OUTGOING EXPENSES			
Date	Purchase Type	Amou nt (NOK)	Funding Source
February 2022	Lunch for shut-up-and-write event	2701.3	PhD Council personal funds
April 2022	Lunch for shut-up-and-write event	2518	Event funding
May 2022	Lunch for shut-up-and-write event	1,593	Event funding
May 2022	Drinks and biscuits for shut-up-and- write event	221.4	PhD Council personal funds
June 2022	Food and drinks for Summer Party	2,303	Event funding
November 2022	Shut-up-and-write event all inclusive two days with one night at Voksenåsen hotel	75 000	Lovsamlingsfond et
November 2022	Food and drinks for Annual Meeting	TBC	Event funding
November 2022	Social activity following Annual Meeting	TBC	Event funding
	Total		

REMAINING FUNDS	
Carry over from last year's budget	
Event funding from the Faculty of Law	

Annual Meeting <u>4.</u>

The Council annually hosts a statutory meeting in line with the Statutes of the PhD Council, which may be found here: https://foreninger.uio.no/stipendiatradet/om/statutes-2020-phdcouncil.pdf. The PhD Council will host its Annual Meeting followed by a social event on 29 November 2022. The agenda can be found below.



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Agenda for the Annual Meeting 2022

- Presentation: Short presentation of the Council and its work in 2022
- Election to the PhD Council 2023: The PhD Council invites nominations for election to the PhD Council 2023. Candidates will be elected at the Annual Meeting by general vote.
- Nomination for the Faculty Board 2023: The PhD Council invites nominations of candidates to represent the PhDs and Post-Docs in the Faculty Board. Nomination shall be for one main candidate and two deputy candidates and shall be drawn from the newly elected PhD Council 2022.
- Nominations to be approved by general vote at the Annual Meeting.

The annual meeting will take place 29 November 2022 in Domus Juridica 8113 and will be followed by a social event.



6. Appendices

- The On-boarding survey form.
 The On-boarding survey concept note to PFF
 Statute of the PhD Council
- 4. Event photos



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Appendices

1. The On-boarding survey form.

Onboarding Survey for PhD Students at the Faculty of Law, UiO

Page 1

Mandatory fields are marked with a star

Dear Fellow PhD Students,

The PhD Council invites you to fill in a survey relating to your onboarding experience to the PhD Program.

The survey aims to evaluate PhD students' experience when starting their PhD program and the communication with the Faculty and Departments.

Aims of this survey include:

- · Identify issues for improving the overall experience of the onboarding period, from admission to the program until six months after the first day of starting the program.
- · Identify the support needed by PhDs to feel fully onboarded with the program.

The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.

The findings will be presented to the leadership and form a basis of the PhD Council's further work in advocating for the needs of PhDs. The system will anonymize your answers, and we will not be able to identify you.

Your views and opinions are very important for delivering an optimal experience for PhD Students in the Faculty of Law. Therefore, we hope you will take the time to answer it.

The period of the survey is from 1 April to 1 May 2022.

Thank you for participating!

The PhD Council

The Faculty of Law UiO/Stipendiatrådet ved Det juridiske fakultetet, UiO



Page 2

Mandatory fields are marked with a star Part I : General Questions 1. When did you start your PhD Program?



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< 2019
O
2020
0
2021
0
2022
Comments:
2. 2. Gender (optional):
3. Are you employed by the University of Oslo?
O
Yes
0
No
4. Is your main working environment at the University?
Yes
O The state of the
No 5. Were you comfortable reading and speaking Norwegian when you started?
Yes
0
No
If No, please share your experience or challenges:
If you have comments to (potentially) offered Norwegian courses, please provide them here:
6. How did you learn about the PhD program at the Faculty of Law, UiO?
Network (colleagues, professors, etc.)



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Other If you answer "Other", please specify (you may answer in Norwegian or English):
If you answer "Other", please specify (you may answer in Norwegian or English):
Part II: Onboarding Experience 8. Select the alternative that represents your view during the period between signing your contract and starting work:
I disagree completely I disagree to some extent I agree to some extent I agree completely Not applicable/ I don't know The information regarding the PhD education provided to me before admission (during the
recruitment and admission process) was satisfactory O O O O O
There was clear information about how I would proceed to starting my PhD education after signing the contract
After I started, I quickly got a clear picture of what was expected of me as a PhD student
I received sufficient information about my rights and obligations as a PhD student when I started the program



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The general information/introduction about the faculty and its social and academic meeting points provided to me as a newly-admitted PhD student was relevant and sufficient
O
I have had no problems in attaining information from or communicating with the Faculty
I have had no problems in attaining information from or communicating with my Department (or Center etc.)
O
Further comments on your admission experience (you may answer in Norwegian or English):
V
O Reflecting on the period from the start of your contract to the end of the first six months of the

9. Reflecting on the period from the start of your contract to the end of the first six months of the PhD program. Select the alternative that best represents your experience:

I disagree completely

I disagree to some extent

I agree to some extent

I agree completely

Not applicable/ I don't know

The Faculty provided sufficient and practical information on starting a PhD position (such as administrative information, information on roles, a guide to the facilities at the Faculty, information about student organizations, etc.)



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My department or center provided sufficient and practical information on starting a PhD position
(administrative information, information on roles, a guide to the facilities at the Faculty, student
organizations, etc.)
My supervisor(s) gave me a good introduction when I started my PhD studies
O Studies
My supervisor(s) are were easily accessible in the first six months
The head of the department has made me feel welcome and supported me
Members of administrative staff have made me feel welcome and supported me
My senior colleagues have made me feel welcome and supported me
my semor coneagues have made me reer wercome and supported me



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My PhD colleagues have made me feel welcome and supported me	
O	
I have an appointed mentor who has made me feel welcome and supported me	
0	
O	
O	
O	
During my starting period, there was a welcoming session for newly admitted PhD Students (information of facilities, a tour of the building, and other practical information)	
When I started, I received a practical information booklet or webpage explaining information on	
starting a PhD position (administrative information, a guide to the facilities at the Faculty, other	
miscellaneous information, student organizations, etc.)	
I have had no problems in attaining information from or communicating with my Department (or	
Center etc.)	
0	
O	
O	

During my starting period, I was regularly invited to informal social and/or academic events (eg. shut-up and write, weekly lunch gathering, sharing sessions, etc)



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During my starting period, I was regularly invited to formal social and/or academic events (e	eg.
seminars, conference etc.)	
When I started, I had satisfactory knowledge about the Faculty of Law PhD Council, (the	eir
members, work, and activities).	
There should be an informal platform for PhD Students at the Faculty level where I would be mo	re
inclined to use it (Whatsapp/Teams etc.)	
10. I had a supervisor from the first week of my PhD:	
Yes	
No	
Suggestions to improve the experience for newly admitted PhD Students (you may answer	in
Norwegian or English):	
→	
Frontless and the state of the	

Further comments on the welcoming and inclusion (you may answer in Norwegian or English):



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→
Part III: Satisfaction and Feedback 11. Overall Satisfaction of your onboarding experience. Select the alternative that represents your view:
T. Norman annual and a
I disagree completely I disagree to some extent
I agree to some extent
I agree completely
Not applicable/ I don't know
I am satisfied with the communication I have had with the Faculty
I am satisfied with the communication I have had with my department or center
I am satisfied with the communication between my supervisors and I
O
I am satisfied with the support offered by supervisors and senior colleagues
All in all, I felt supported during my onboarding period



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O
Further comments on satisfaction (you may answer in Norwegian or English):
Further comments about your PhD Studies or any other additional feedback you wish to conve
(you may answer in Norwegian or English):
▼

End of Survey.



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2. The On-boarding survey concept note to PFF

18 August 2022

Concept Note on the 'Onboarding Survey for PhD Students at the Faculty of Law (UiO)

Summary

The onboarding survey for PhD students gathered information on the experience of PhD students from admission to the program up to the first six months of the employment period focusing on the communication flow with the faculty and relevant departments. It aimed at identifying issues for improving the overall experience of the onboarding period and the support needed by PhDs. The survey was carried out during April and May 2022. A total of 20 persons participated in the survey, of those participants, 85 % were comfortable to communicate in Norwegian at the start of the program.

Findings

Generally there is a strong variation regarding the degree of satisfaction of the on-boarding experience. A positive finding is that most PhD candidates have felt welcomed during their first six months, either by their colleagues, departments or supervisor(s) (although 1/5 did not feel welcomed). On questions regarding the communication flow, the answers indicate that it is up to the PhD candidates to take the initiative to find out the information they need. One issue with this is that new PhD candidates are often not aware of the information they should know or be looking for, or where to find the relevant information and whom they should consult for help with specific issues. Overall, the survey shows that the faculty and departments are too passive during the onboarding period. PhD candidates do not have access to all the information they need but do usually get the information when they actively ask for it. These issues seem to particularly affect PhD candidates who do not speak Norwegian when starting the program.

Suggestions for improvement

- Create a welcoming package of information for new phds at the faculty (in English).
- Assign a buddy (not a member of the administrative staff nor the supervisor). A go-toperson for different questions, and someone who can have an extra responsibility to include new PhDs in social and academic events.
- Give all new PhDs introduction to key working tools (DFØ, EndNote/Zotero, the library, etc).

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- Give all new PhDs an introduction to "who does what" at the faculty/department.
- Walk presentation rounds with new PhDs the first week of the semester.
- Have welcoming meetings for new PhDs each semester.

Phd Council of the Law Faculty





3. Statute of the PhD Council

Statutter for Stipendiatrådet ved Det juridiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo

1. Formål

Stipendiatrådet skal fungere som et talerør for stipendiatene ved Det juridiske fakultet, Universitetet i Oslo.

Rådet skal fremme synspunkter og problemstillinger som er aktuelle for stipendiatene, gjennom ulike representantposisjoner i fakultetets og instituttenes organer. Rådet skal også formidle informasjon fra disse organene til stipendiatene.

Rådet skal slik fylle en tillitsvalgtfunksjon for stipendiatene på tvers av fagområder og institutter, og samtidig bidra til å forbedre kommunikasjonen mellom stipendiatene og fakultetsorganene.

2. Rådets sammensetning

Om mulig skal rådet bestå av fem medlemmer som representerer fakultetets institutter og senter, slik at hvert institutt og senter er representert med ett medlem.

Medlemmene velges ved allmøtet i oktober eller november hvert år, slik at det er tilpasset nominasjonsperioden til Fakultetstyret. Som valgt anses den som får flest stemmer. De valgte medlemmenes funksjonstid er ett år.

Rådet konstituerer seg selv på første rådsmøte etter valget men de sentrale funksjonene av én lederen og sekretæren skal velges under allmøtet. Det er et mål at Rådet har nært samarbeid med representanter som bekler verv for midlertidig ansatte i alle fakultetets råd og utvalg. Der representanten er stipendiat, er det et mål at representanten også er medlem av Rådet.

3. Rådets møter

Stipendiatrådet avholder møter etter behov. Som hovedregel avholdes møte én gang i måneden i vår- og høstsemesteret.

4. Allmøtet

Hvert år avholdes allmøte for fakultetets stipendiater, hvor Rådets arbeid presenteres. Allmøtet etterfølges av et sosialt arrangement.

For øvrig avholdes allmøte når dette kreves av minst tre av stipendiatrådets medlemmer eller minst 20 av stipendiatene. I begge tilfeller skal stipendiatrådet kalle inn til allmøte som avholdes i løpet av fire uker etter at krav om allmøte er fremsatt.

Senest tre uker før allmøtet skal stipendiatrådet sende innkalling til møtet. Innkallingen sendes stipendiatene per e-post med varsel om at saker som ønskes forelagt allmøtet til vedtagelse etter



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pkt. 4.2, må sendes inn til stipendiatrådet senest to uker før allmøtet. Dersom stipendiatrådet mottar saker som nevnt, skal Rådet sende ut en endret saksliste senest én uke før allmøtet.

5. Referat mv.

Rådets sekretær fører referat og sender referat fra rådets møter og allmøter til stipendiatene. Representanter som også sitter i fakultetets øvrige organer, skal i rådsmøtene informere om aktuelle saker.



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4. Event photos

Informal Friday Lunches	
Shut-up and write	
23 February	
28 April	
31 May 17-18 November	



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Summer Party





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