



## Agenda – Science Faculty Council

2023 March 27th, kl.16:30

Attending: Ellen Nein (EN) (BÄR), Erik Schwarz (ES) (NatGeo PhD student council), Alexandra Hamm (AH) (CRS student rep. & Geo student rep. at the Section Board), Natasha Mayeem (MSR suppleant), Laveena Kansara (MBW PhD student council), Gandharva Appagere (GA) (Fysikum PhD student council), Desponia Kouvousi (SCEG), Lucas McMaster (LM) (SCEG), Hanna Dort (HD) (Zootis, CDR rep.), Ellen Riefel (ER) (ON rep.), Raluca Tifrea (Vicechair NFR), Dominic Heslin-Rees (ACES PhD council), Melissa Barton (Stockholm Resilience Centre PhD student council), Leonard Kersting (Organic Chemistry), Bart van Baal (Astronomy PhD student council), Robin Stoll (Math PhD student council), Rober Dunst (IGV PhD student council), Samyuktha Rajan (SR) (Vicechair NFR), Jenny Wirén (JW) (SUS)

### 1. Opening of the meeting

- a. Round of presentation
- b. Election of chairperson  
SR has been elected as chairperson
- c. Election of secretary  
ES has been elected as secretary
- d. Election of adjuster  
HD has been elected as adjuster
- e. Approval of the agenda  
Agenda has been approved
- f. Approval of last two meeting's minutes  
Minutes of the last two meetings have been approved
- g. Coadjuration  
None at this meeting

### 2. Concerning NFR's leadership

Open election:

- 1) Chairperson of NFR  
SR was nominated for the position  
SR has been elected as chairperson of NFR
- 2) Vice chairperson of NFR (third alternative)  
Two positions now open for NFR vice chairperson

Stockholm University Student Union

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The role of vice chairperson was briefly elaborated on

GA was nominated as vice chairperson

GA has been elected as vice chairperson

3) Treasurer of NFR

Election was skipped

### **3. Reports from boards and committee and by-elections of NFR representatives**

*Brief reports from those bodies which have convened since last meeting, and by-election of representatives*

a) SUS

JW reported:

- Meeting with PhD student council chairs on 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle rule document review
- Review for rule document on 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle is still in progress
- Student council at Science faculty have received invitation for communications meeting in Student Union office – Will take a look at Logos, Posters, Athena...

b) Central PhD-Council

HD reported:

- Advocacy questions are being decided:
  - Top two from NFR will be brought forward and CDR will vote on two questions and bring them forward
- PhD student salary concerns were discussed and a letter drafted to be forwarded to the employment unions

c) Area Board/Områdesnämnden (ON)

ER reported:

- No updates as of now, a meeting later this week
- Voted on opposition in PhD defense: if the opponent is of the underrepresented gender there is no need for another member of underrepresented genders in the committee
- There are open representative positions at ON (Swedish is required):

No one nominated themselves for the position(s)

d) Arbetsutskottet (AU)

SR presented report from AU website:

Information from **AU**: (Nadia Flodgren)

- Suggestion for a new master program in biostatistics in collaboration with SU, KTH and KI was discussed. A new education plan for the bachelor program in mathematics and machine learning was discussed. Suggestions for improvements to the advanced program in biology due to external review. The program is not wide enough, the students need more width and less narrow focus in the education.
- Finding a course leader for the course "After the PhD" was discussed. Biology has had a similar course for many years.

- There are open representative positions at AU (Swedish is required and membership in ON):

ER was nominated for the position

ER has been elected

e) Grundutbildningsberedningen (GB)

Elected suppliant EN was not called to the meeting – JW will confirm that Swedish understanding/ English speaking representatives can attend the meeting

Information was filled in by SR:

Information from **GB**: (Linnea Andersson)

- There is a need for a student representative for a working group about the educational profile of SU at the ground and advanced levels. This position will be in Swedish and should probably be elected through NFR.

- The guidelines for teachers concerning ChatGPT and AI in teaching have been posted on the university website. In

Swedish <https://www.su.se/medarbetare/r%C3%A5d-st%C3%B6d/undervisning/v%C3%A4gledning-om-anv%C3%A4ndning-av-ai-drivna-chattbotar-vid-utbildning-och-forskning-1.648977> and

English <https://www.su.se/staff/services/teaching/guidelines-on-using-ai-powered-chatbots-in-education-and-research-1.649009>

Information points from other boards/councils:

- **UKÄ**: In 2022 there was a decrease in students at SU compared to 2021.

However, there's still an increase in students since 2019.

- **IT-beredningen**: The switch to PLUP is going according to plan, most concerns raised by the teaching staff have been listened to, as I understood it.

- **Infoberedningen**: The faculty of Science will advertise a position for a communicator with a focus on student recruitment.



- **Rebus:** A clarification needs to be done according to which partial courses can be included in a university degree. If a student has failed a course but passed a partial course (delkurs) in that course, those passed credits can be included in a degree. This only applies to non-obligatory courses, since obligatory courses need to be included as a whole in a specific degree.

There are open representative positions at GB (Swedish is required):

No one nominated themselves for the position(s)

f) Central student council

LM reported:

NFR representative was not called to the meeting

JW filled in report:

Advocacy issues were discussed, AI/ChatGPT and its consequences for education were discussed

g) Department & Section Committees

AH reported from Section Committee:

- Action plan of science faculty was discussed: e.g. internationalization
- Employment profile for assistant lecturers were discussed: was discussed for an ACES position
- Unclear about the role of the (PhD) student representative in this board

JW proposed to give an introduction of organization of the Science faculty at next NFR meeting

All vacant positions for ordinary groups and committees are found at the NFR site at sus.su.se (<https://sus.su.se/rad-och-natverk/nfr>). The language requirement is also mentioned on this website.

- 10 minutes break -

#### 4. Joint discussion

Update from Fysikum by GA:

- Half time review policy for PhD students has been changed: previously licentiate was mandatory - last week the option to chose between half-time seminar or licentiate has been implemented. PhD students do now no longer have to do a licentiate at half-time
- Discuss two issues that NFR would like to submit to the central councils as negotiation of SUS's impact issues

JW reported:

- SUS has elections of board/presidium – different parties are elected that then run SUS -> after elections, parties will negotiate which issues SUS will focus on
- Last year CDR and CSR had opportunity to submit 2 questions they felt were important for students -> were submitted to negotiations -> parties could chose to include these issues in their focus
- Each of faculty council can bring forward 2 issues for PhD students and students each – will be sent up through CDR and CSR representatives -> central councils will discuss and decide on 2 issues that will be given forward
- Suggestions do not have to be selected by parties; but last year all issues brought forward by CDR and CSR were selected by the parties
- Esp. for PhD students: be aware of responsibilities of student vs. workers' unions! -> suggest only issues that student unions have a mandate for.
- Applying for funding and planning of any activities for this year
  - What funding should NFR apply for?
    - Make students more aware of what NFR is/does and the university's organizational structure in general
    - Do a student council fair where all student councils can present themselves

- Could join student association presentation – but it is hosted at Södra huset on other side of campus from natural science buildings
  - Alternatively, host it at Geohuset/ Arrhenius laboratory/ in front of Gröna Villan?
  - Apply e.g. for SUS activity grant (1500 SEK)
  
- SR was given authority to apply for organizational grant for NFR

## 5. Split discussion:

### 1. Information from student councils (Notes taken by EN):

Important issues (advocacy questions) of Bachelor & Master students (ideally bring up 2 at CSR):

- hard to find information on student jobs, both within & outside the university, especially for international students
  - > suggestion: offer database for internal jobs & inform about external job websites during introduction week
  - > bring up at CSR: more transparency on student jobs
- some non-EU internationals which pay study fees have issues to apply for courses outside of SU because they might be additionally charged for that / issues with refunding?
- expensive course literature is an occasional but no prevalent problem at the science faculty
- buses from/to Albano can be very full sometimes -> ask for increased frequency?
  - > last time SL didn't see the problem
- update course syllabi & course description websites regularly
  - > communicate on a departmental level (study directors?)
- SL-ticket prices too high
  - > student representatives at Stockholm/Sweden level negotiate with SL (not very successful)
  - > maybe bring up at CSR: student financial problems in general, keeping in mind that most international students don't receive CSN

### 2. Information from PhD councils

Advocacy questions that could be brought forward to CDR:

- SUS should have a focus to help students that face bullying/ harassment
- Clear and working protocols on how to deal with harassment/ bullying should be established and included in introductory courses – make it easier to report these issues!
  - o Establish guidelines for changing supervisors with regard to bullying/ harassment; also clear guideline's for how data is handled
  - o Make clear/aware of what is bullying, what is harassment
  - o There should be an external person (outside of Dept.) that can be approached by PhD students to reported cases of bullying/ harassment
  - o Inclusion of this information in PhD student introduction
- What is the system to accommodate students with disabilities? What are guidelines for recovery after sick leave? Make this clearer
  - o Might be under responsibility of work environment boards (RALV)
  - o But student unions could help guide people to what their rights are and where they can find guidelines – increase awareness for the available resources!
- At national level: best practices are being discussed for ISP (but might be more an issue at the national level that locally)

These suggestions will be further formulated by HD.

Further suggestions can be mailed to HD at [hanna.dort@zoologi.su.se](mailto:hanna.dort@zoologi.su.se).

Other discussion points:

- Widely different policies with regards to PhD student mentors are implemented at different departments – supposed to be a person not directly involved with the supervision, supposed to be approachable for PhD students in issues with e.g. supervisor arise; Issue of mentors being from the same department: might be personally/ professionally related with supervisor

- PhD student salary increase issue was brought forward by NatGeo PhD student council:

Rules remain to be unclear and a lot of confusion around it

HD reported on exchanges with workers' unions in previous years: e.g. tying 50%-raise to licentiate is not in agreement with central agreement. Requirements should be clearly stated in ASP. ON cannot decide on changing the policy. The issue is being raised by the unions in the salary negotiations and then put into legally binding text.

Information from SACO: clear statements of what constitutes 50(80)% of requirements are required in ISP and ASP.

To resolve current state of affairs:

- 1) SR will contact Nora Bergfeldt Broms to see how process has been resolved at Zoology.
- 2) ON will be asked to clarify this matter and have a consensus about this unofficial agreement on their next meeting this week. Has ON gotten into contact about this with workers' unions?
- 3) CDR can approach workers' unions about salary raise issue as well.
- 4) The NFR board will request a meeting with the dean.

## **6. Other**

## **7. Summary of issues to discuss at next meeting**

## **8. Meeting closed**

The meeting has been closed at 18:28.