

11-05-2015

AUPA

Present: Byron, Sylvia, Sanne, Helene, Morten, Mathias, Sabrina

## 1. Welcome

## 2. Formalities

Chairman: Helene

Minute taker: Sabrina

Minutes of the last meeting are approved

## 3. Introduction to AUPA. Helene shows some slides.

AUPA is an umbrella association representing PhD associations across the faculties. Many things related to PhD's are happening locally. AUPA is more of a forum for discussing what is happening locally and maybe bringing up things of relevance to all faculties. We seek influence: meetings with PhD school leaders, and previously administrative user panel.

### News from local associations:

PHAUST (ST): Working on stress handling workshops (held by psychiatrist). Should now be a regular offer for PhD students. Invites the local PhD programme committees to meeting. Working on guidelines for teaching exemption.

There is no teaching exemption at BSS anymore: You have an increased work load prior to/after your stay abroad. Furthermore, stays abroad are not optional at BSS. Sometimes, however, the stay could be in Aalborg. At HEALTH, the stay abroad (1 month) is being discussed - they are reading more into the rules. At ST, the stay abroad is merely 'strongly encouraged'. At ST, you also have half a year of teaching exemption in addition to any teaching exemption in connection with stays abroad. At BSS, the lack of teaching exemption seems to influence the wellbeing of PhD students (in relation to the stress levels). There are also differences across departments at BSS. At some departments, teaching is not very organized, and the PhD student has to find his or her own hours by asking around. Concern that PhD students generally teach too much. For now, it is nice to be able to discuss differences in teaching load and rules for exemption.

At ST, there is a problem with foreign PhD students sometimes not being offered teaching on the same terms as Danish speaking PhD students.

PHABUSS (BSS): Not much on the agenda. The biggest issue is department specific: lot of restructuring with temporary leaders etc. A big concern is what to do after the PhD studies: lots of PhD students and not many jobs. Lot of complaints over stress: people were moved away from basement offices. Stressing to find out which temporary leader handles what, especially with regards to deadlines. Politics are now ruining the atmosphere with people yelling at each other in the halls. Hopefully things will change as the new structure settles in. There might be better news from BSS at our next board meeting.

ARTS: Mainly talking about courses (via the PhD committee). Nothing too dramatic. Sick leave: only if you are away for more than 14 days. Problem for people with ailments causing them to be away for many days spread out over several weeks/months. Questioning about standards of certain courses that are self-evaluated.

HEALTH: Working on clearer guidelines for expectations in connection with 'stays abroad'. Active association with meetings every month and with a say in many things. PhD students generally seem to be involved in the decision making.

#### **4. Follow-up on ongoing projects in AUPA**

**Previous work.** PhD planner feedback: Suggestions were implemented (since January). Further comments are welcome.

**Project management course:** Inspired by Talent development course on HEALTH. AUPA wanted it for all PhD students. The pro-deans liked the idea, and the smaller course was implemented. Gives credit and is for all PhD students. AUPA is involved in the evaluation (course concludes in August). All spots for the course were filled up. Mathias' ambition was for the course to be mandatory, but for now, we have settled with a smaller course giving credit so that more people will find it relevant. At BSS, in some departments, 20 ECTS of the 30 in a PhD study are mandatory, and people complain about this a lot.

**MUS:** There has been a suggestion to a guide for MUS (employee development conversations).

**Administration user panel:** has been closed down. We are not sure whether it will be re-established. If so, we will seek influence.

#### **5. Follow-up on PhD conference: 'The future PhD education'**

The number of PhD students in Denmark has increased, but the number of positions/jobs has not. Conference on how to get PhD's jobs outside of academia. Jobs within academia were not discussed. More collaboration between companies and universities was suggested. Stays abroad might be with companies instead of universities. Recruitment of PhD students (Danish as well as foreign) was discussed.

#### **6. National PhD network (PAND)**

We have been contacted by people wanting to start a national network between all PhD associations. They have a LinkedIn page: The PhD Association Network of Denmark (PAND). Possibly for political discussions but also (and properly mainly) social events.

#### **7. Potential collaboration with Anna Rode**

Anna did her PhD at BSS and was unhappy with it. Now coaches and would like to coach at Aarhus University. Offers to prevent stress among PhD students. She would like to give a course on project management over several years as well as one-on-one coaching. We have tried to boil it down to smaller courses/workshops to make it better fit the different PhD programmes. Financial issues: Anna suggested starting up the courses where you or your department have to pay. We do not think the departments will pay for it. We could do a survey to have PhD students tell that they need an initiative like this.

Not many offers for PhD students experiencing stress and none across faculties. Is this something we want to take up on behalf of all faculties? Concern regarding Anna's qualifications. Is she the best for the job? How to convince management that she should be hired? The coaching initiative might be the most interesting since we already have the project control course. AUPA could try to raise money for the coaching. Worries about the budget: coaching is very expensive. What can she actually help with? Do we in fact need something else? Anna's ideas seem to overlap with the project management course, but she would like to also provide coaching in smaller groups. She could do an introduction seminar to see how relevant the offer is. Helene is meeting with Anna. We will push for an introduction. We will also point out this problem to the PhD school leaders: they have a meeting on 2nd of June [EDIT: moved to 16th June].

#### **8. Agenda for the next year in AUPA**

The work load should not be too big. Suggestions to topics:

- Teaching load / teaching exemption
- Stress handling
- Representation in university panels/boards
- Strengthening the bond between AUPA and the local PhD associations

We discuss whether some topics are better handled at the different faculties instead of by AUPA.

We will ask the local PhD associations what their rules for teaching load and teaching exemption are. Helene will work out a form through which questions should be answered. We can take it up at our next board meeting.

The current meetings between the heads of the PhD schools are not very official. We will ask whether they are forming an official association (again). The project management course should be brought up again. Even if evaluations suggest the course was not very good, we want to be able to keep providing it and adjust it accordingly.

**9. Economical bonus upon thesis hand-in**

At BSS, PhD students receive DKK 15,000 at thesis hand-in if you hand in on time. You get an additional DKK 5,000 for each publication (max. 3) you have had during your PhD study. The point is to keep people from handing in late which is possible at ARTS and BSS. The money comes from the government.

**10. PhD school grants for new PhD students -- funding**

We save it for another time

**11. AUPA homepage and Facebook page descriptions**

Handled by email

**12. Any other business**

Meeting after 26th August: discuss outcome of meeting with pro-deans and follow-up on topics from today. We will not have too many meetings. Many discussions can be handled by email.