

Newsletter 2, 2018/2019

Words from the chair

My name is Malin Podlevskikh Carlström and I am a PhD student in Slavic languages (Russian literature) at the Faculty of Arts. I started my PhD studies in 2012, and I plan to defend my thesis during 2019. I am the chairman of GUDK 2018/2019.

In this newsletter you can find information about GUDK and also about what we and the different faculty PhD councils have been up to during this year.

Do not hesitate to contact me or any of the faculty representatives if you have questions or want to get engaged in our work!

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This year

This coming year, GUDK will work with an overview of the scientific practices at different faculties and departments. Even though we all follow the same basic rules and regulations, our everyday work differs a great deal depending on the scientific tradition we are part of. Other focus questions are 1) the reasons for stress among PhD students and possible solutions to this problem 2) the decreasing number of PhD students and the impact of such a development on the overall research in Sweden 3) the development of more formalized career guidance for PhD students (writing research applications etc.)

Finally, GUDK works with an international perspective and all of our meetings are held in English. We also strive towards convincing the university to have a more inclusive language policy, in which English is emphasized as a natural meeting language when international staff is present.

What is GUDK?

The doctoral committee is an association of PhD students from each faculty. GUDK is a part of the University of Gothenburg Student Unions (GUS), which gathers three out of four student unions at GU. Each PhD council at faculty level elects two representatives (a regular and an alternate) for GUDK. GUDK's purpose is to provide a platform for collaboration between PhD students and to increase PhD students' control over their learning and work situation. GUDK focuses on the central level and on matters that are relevant for all PhD students at the University of Gothenburg.

Please visit www.gus.gu.se/om_gus/gudk/ for more information.

Did you know that...

... our right to influence our education and represent our fellow students when decisions are taken or prepared is regulated in the higher education act (HEA chapter 1, 4§) and further specified in the higher education ordinance (HEO chapter 2, 7§ and 8§). This is a right we have as students, and therefore the student unions are responsible for appointing representatives. Since the compulsory students' union membership was abolished in Sweden in 2010, it has become increasingly difficult for the student unions to engage students in their work. One problematic aspect is that the student unions represent all students, no matter if they are members or not, which makes it difficult for some to see the purpose of being a student union member.

As GUDK chairman I am well aware of the important and impressive work done by GUS, the GUS student/PhD ombudsmen and the different student unions at GU. They keep themselves updated on PhD student issues and represent us in central boards and committees. As a PhD student you do not have to be a member of a student union (unless you take on representative duties) but it is something I strongly encourage. Join the student union as an act of support! It is a small price to pay for showing that you appreciate the hard work done by student and PhD student representatives at GU.

Reports from the faculty representatives

The School of Business, Economics and Law

In the past year, our PhD council has promoted introducing employee dialogue meetings for PhD students. Moreover, we have engaged in discussions on how to manage teaching obligations better in relation to e.g. teaching load and how teaching is assigned and planned. We participate in discussions on the psychosocial environment at the faculty on an ongoing basis.

Ville Inkinen

The Faculty of Science

The Faculty of Science PhD council had PhD student representatives in the faculty board as well as in other councils and committees at faculty level, making sure that we can influence and affect the decisions that are being taken towards the quality of our education. We have also been working towards equal salary for all PhD students at the faculty of Science.

Alex Cravcenco

The Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts

The doctoral committee's main commitment this academic year has been the bettering of supervision relationships. We have encouraged collective reflection and sharing of different experiences. This has resulted in a student-led symposium from which a document "Supervision – a list of potentially productive practices" was produced. The document has been shared with the supervisors with the aim to better the educational quality of such processes, and to further a dialogue about supervision/supervised expectations.

André Alves

The IT faculty

In the IT faculty the CSE department has a PhD council which represents the PhD students on various levels and raises relevant issues. To create an active student representation in AIT is an important issue that has to be followed up on.

Herbert Lange

The Faculty of Humanities

The final departments will move into the rebuilt Humanisten in the end of 2019. Sadly, the overall number of doctoral students is slowly decreasing on the Faculty level: though as of autumn 2019 there will be c. ten new PhD students, only one department will be financing their doctorals internally.

Denis Sukhino-Khomenko

The Faculty of Social Sciences

During spring semester the council has focused on developing a survey in order to see what are the PhD students' preferences in relation to the Social Science Faculty career seminars. Once we receive the results we will continue working on improving the career seminars with the aim of covering the needs of the PhD students. Moreover, we received funding to organise a social event in the early autumn.

Alexandra Bousiou

The Sahlgrenska Academy

The council worked towards getting full representation in all councils and committees at the faculty and departmental level where we have the right to be represented, as well as having PhD committees at all departments. Furthermore, we arranged social activities such as the PhD day, and tried to improve communication with all PhD students, including clinically active ones.

Cristiana Rîmniceanu

The Faculty of Education

The PhD-council has recently developed a checklist that guide concrete support for students during the final phase of the doctoral journey. The council is also working on changing the cover of the dissertation so that it can be customized as per the needs of individual students. This permits the inclusion of visual representations to the front page and change the color of the spine.

Kassahun Weldemariam