

REFERAT PhD Committee for the Doctoral School of Social Sciences and Business d. 31-05-2023

Mødedato Onsdag d. 31. maj 2023 kl. 13:00

Mødested 04.2-037

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Punkt 1: Approval of agenda

Agenda approved beforehand by e-mail

Cancellations:

Johan Fischer

Mirel Tatomir

Sergei Mozheiko

Hanne Warming

Lars Buur

Alternates attending:

Lukas Bogner, PhD

Maybe Jonas Videbæk Jørgensen, PhD

Punkt 2: Minutes from last meeting - approved

1. Minutes from last meeting – approved beforehand

Punkt 3: Update from the Head of the Doctoral School - and news from RDS (10 min)

3. Update from the Head of the Doctoral School - and news from RDS (10 min)

- Enrolled PhD's and defenses held
- Update on the PhD day – Uncertain whether we have the financial resources to have a PhD day in the current economic situation for RU. We will know shortly. If we have a PhD day we are considering several themes e.g. Available reference systems.
- Updates on two courses: qualitative methods and how to write an article:
 1. Writing an article: from abstract to finished draft in three/four independent modules. We have experienced more external PhD students and less from our own department. Eva and I are rethinking that course. More info later as we have invited Eva to discuss the new format.
 2. QRMSS: Catharina Juul Kristensen has resigned as the coordinator and simultaneously we will rethink the course portfolio on qualitative course We will split it up, and instead offer more, shorter courses in various specialized methods. We already have institutional ethnography and interviews. We will have a meeting in the fall with the current and potential course responsible
- Work load in admin:
 1. Ida is planning to write an email to the PhD's just a brief notice on how things are.
- News from RDS:
 1. We can take measures to make the PhD day cheaper, inhouse and such.
 2. Cuts in 2024 and 2025.
 3. We will look at how to react on the budget cuts continuously, which means we don't have a co-financed round of application this fall.
 4. Been asked to cut down in PhD expenses: 300-400.000 a year.

Strategy plan and the themes of this year: interdisciplinarity, evaluation frequency and continuously work with issues of well-being among PhD students.

Punkt 4: Course evaluations from spring 2023 (5 min)

4. Course evaluations from spring 2023 (5 min)

1. QRMSS:
 - I general a very low responserat. The PhD students have experienced technical issues trying to save their questionnaire. Not everyone received a link.
 - approved
2. Ethnography: The coordinators had updated the questionnaire to fit their course but the sent out questionnaire was the old one. Technical problems or human mistake?
 - Approved
3. Research Design
 - Approved

Bilag

Evaluation of courses Spring 2023.pdf

Punkt 5: Future courses (30 min)

5. Future courses

Introduction to quantitative methods

- One of the PhD students asked if food will be available, which was responded with yes.
- Approved.

Writing a kappe/frame

- Course coordinator Olivier addressed that there is cap on number of participants. If there is an increased number of participants, this will affect the course programme. Members agreed to discuss this if relevant in the future. For now, the course is expanded with the 6 students on the waiting list and the course programme will be extended to 5 hours.

Qualitative research interviews

- PhD students asked whether the course dates will be the same as the Quantitative course, which was responded with no.

Challenges to Academic Freedom

- Course coordinators have a meeting in start June and will get back to the Executive committee after that. Response on agenda for our next meeting.

Research Design (1 dag)

- Several PhD students addressed the 1 and 5 ECTS version of the course 'Research Design'. The students expressed it is unclear which of the course versions are mandatory. The PhD students requested the course versions will be addressed clearly different from each other in the future - for instance 'Mandatory' or 'Big / short course'.
- Approved
- NB: This has been implemented in the course portfolio for Fall 2023

How to write an article (change in course design; Eva Sørensen was present)

- Course coordinator Eva Sørensen explained how the course has evolved from one intense course to 4 divided modules you could take separately or in combination. Now course coordinators have adjusted the course again, so it's one course over three days.
- Eva explained that first time is a test run but hopefully the courses could run twice a year. She also said, the coordinator team will do anything to avoid hybrid/online.
- A PhD student member asked if hybrid attendance is impossible, and Eva Sørensen replied that it depends on the amount of students requesting a hybrid solution. HMD added that the general policy post-covid is to have regular, physical attendance, and only if there are very special circumstances e.g. sickness there will possibilities to attend online.
- Eva explained that the output will focus on a stringer sense on how to write an article and get proficiency in publishing, and that the draft is central on the first day of discussion.
- From questions Eva answered, that the cap could be 20 students.

PDS: Teaching, Weird and wonderful work in progress; how to publish your thesis as a book; doing a phd while the house is on fire; The good defense

- In general all PDS are approved, but here was a discussion about The Good Defense. The last two times it ran, it was cancelled due to lack of participants. It was originally developed for the sake of the PhDs, but maybe there is no need for it?
- the PhDs agree that it's a good PDS to have, but that timing is a problem (not everyone need to prepare for a defense at the same time), it was also suggested it could be coordinated by demand.
- Otherwise approved.

Writing retreat?

- There was talk about where to place the retreats when Söminen is sold.

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Future course Fall 2023.pdf

How to write an article new course description.pdf

Punkt 6: Interdisciplinary work (10 min)

6. Interdisciplinary work

Interdisciplinary work – How do we support it? Can we do more? Attached: RDS strategy/evaluation

1. Are we doing enough, could we do more? The department internally is also quite different. Interdisciplinarity is experienced in different ways and not all PhD projects are interdisciplinary.
2. Should we have a interdisciplinary on the next PhD day, or into the supervisory meeting?
 1. At the last institute seminar there was one workshop that focused on interdisciplinarity.

HM: the international panel wanted to have a clear impression how we as a university and doctoral school viewed and worked with interdisciplinary.

1. There was agreement, that interdisciplinarity is found many places on ISE, in the WIP seminars where PhDs exchange papers and comments, in the supervisory room, social interactions because of the different backgrounds for all levels of researchers, the courses because of the different types of students.
2. Also there was a general agreement, that we shouldn't invent problems if there aren't any. Interdisciplinarity is a tool, not an end in itself. We should keep on having a focus on how to facilitate interdisciplinarity.

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Handleplan for ph.d.-området på RUC 2022-2024.xlsx

Punkt 7: Mid way evaluation (10 min)

7. Midway evaluation

Mid way evaluation. Special Guest Lars Fuglsang.

The reason: The strategy plan states we should discuss the frequency of the evaluations. It was mentioned as a problem by some phd students at RU and some members of the international evaluation board, that there are two evaluations each year. However, according to the law on PhD education BEK §10, its obligatory to have evaluations. The frequency at ISE is 5 and there is also the internal evaluation., altogether six evaluations

Lars has been involved in Norwegian doctoral school education and he could brief us on what he thinks is important in a mid-termevaluation. In some places in Norway the mid-term evaluation is mandatory. Lars explained the format and how the focus is on the craft of writing the thesis, not the outcome. He explains it's a friendly and open atmosphere and there's an external opponent who reads and comments on the work, the evaluation is app. 2 hours. After the open evaluation there's a meeting between student, supervisor, and opponent about direct problems to address.

What could be the advantages?

1. more focus on the written work.
2. It's difficult to write in academic English.
3. How do you outline and write articles.
4. It creates a deadline.
5. After the seminar they feel they have accomplished something.
6. A way to get input from an external part. A way to address challenges in the work.
7. It creates knowledge between the faculty about what everyone is doing in their work.
8. Some students feel alone and this could counterbalance this experience

Disadvantages?

1. Cost
2. Hours
3. Comments
4. Students may feel it takes time out of writing their thesis and submit.
5. Does it pay back in the end?
6. It could take the student out of the creative process.

Be clear about the opponent's role that they are not too critical

Discussion points after Lars' explanation:

It could be costly but very valuable experience.

It would replace one of the written ones.

It should be very flexible because of the different phases our PhDs find themselves in and maybe optional to do instead of the written one.

It could draw attention if an external opponent was used, but also we could have problems with attendance.

It's important to discuss, because some types of data are missing from our half yearly written evaluations. The evaluations are not flexible and do not take the substance of the project into account.

It could be very good practice and a good idea to focus on getting to write your thesis.

The discussion will be taken with the programme leaders as well and you'll hear about the outcome.

Punkt 8: Future activities for PhD fellows (5 min)

8. Future activities

PhD day: 23rd of august

1. The PhDs concur that it's important to have PhD days, but that this date is inexpedient as many PhD students are away on a seminar in Sweden.
2. The PhDs suggest different items for the programme: Maybe an hour without faculty members, questions about funding.

PhD lunches:

1. The PhDs are asked if they still uphold the tradition with PhD lunches, but they do not. They have lunches together more occasionally.

Punkt 9: Misc (5 min)

9. Miscellaneous

1. Worries raised about the PhD admin:
 1. Some issues especially with communication. Please try to ensure that communication from admin is as good and sharp as possible.