

Minutes from the PHD-programme council meeting

Time: Monday December 3, 2018, 14:15-16:00

Place: Seminar room 3, BV11

Present: Sunniva Engh, Julie Lund, Hanne Hagtvedt Vik, Henrik Olav Matheisen, Kaja Hannedatter Sontum, Ragnar Holst Larsen (sekretær)

Items:

1. Årsplantiltak

The programme council had a long discussion on the proposed budget for the phd-programme at the department. In 2019, the PhD seminars will likely be able to use more funds than in 2018, and this funding has been budgeted separately from expenses due to midway evaluations and doctoral trials. The programme council also agreed that funds for academic student activities should be requested for the next budget. The heads of the respective phd-programmes also asked for a separate hour count for the midway assessments, since the allotted 50 hours credit do not correlate with the work load of heading the phd-programmes and spending time organizing and carry out the midway assessments.

The council agreed that the proposal for more focus on internationalization was needed and Ragnar Holst Larsen informed the council that this work had started. Julie Lund focused on the opportunity for Erasmus+ internationalization for doctoral candidates doing a completion grant.

The council did not have the necessary time available to discuss an alumni panel in detail, but most members saw this suggestion as a welcome addition to show possible career opportunities and they agreed that both the faculty and the department could do more to help the doctoral candidate with their future career opportunities, and Vik also mentioned that this was one of the bullet points in the call for applications for national research schools from the Norwegian Research Council.

2. Update on items from the prior meeting

Larsen informed the council about his brief talk with the faculty regarding transferable skills courses and credits in the educational component. There will be an updated guideline from HF, but it does not seem like there will be any significant changes in their policy. The council agreed that courses that aim to give candidates transferable skills within the academic world could result in credits pending an application, but not courses in EndNote etc.

3. DialPast

Since Julianne and Lotte had to attend a different meeting, this item was not discussed.

4. The Norwegian Graduate School in History

Hanne Hagtvedt Vik informed the council about the activities relating to the research school and the two successful courses that the school already has offered to its students. She also spoke briefly about the prospective plan for an application to the The Research Council of Norway call for application announced for national research schools. The council discussed different ways to promote the courses better in the future.

5. Quality assurance of phd-supervision

Sunniva Engh outlined her thoughts regarding supervision and the role of the supervisor for our doctoral candidates. She talked about the supervisor seminar that was held earlier in the semester and the feedback and experiences she drew from that seminar. It worried her that the supervisors in the history programme didn't attend and the lack of quality assurance for the supervisor assignment. The programme council agreed that newly established supervisor seminar at the faculty level would be the basis of this quality assurance, but that further measures would be needed. One of these measures could be to involve the supervisor in the initial meeting with the candidate. She also spoke of the need of continuing the supervisor seminar at the department level. Prior to the seminar the department had sent out an informal survey to former phd-candidates about the supervision they had received. There were a lot of positive feedback, but it was clear that issues relating to progression, loneliness and contact with the supervisor was lacking for some. This was issues that we would need to address and make sure the supervision has proper quality assurance beyond the progress report.

6. Items from the doctoral candidates

Clarification of research seminar structure for new PhD candidates: The issue is at this time a question of different practice on the two programmes. For the time being this will not be changed, but the difference should be discussed further in the next programme to see if any changes should be made.

Vik had a suggestion for a new regime concerning attendance requirements for the dissertation seminars. All doctoral candidates must attend all the dissertation seminars in the first two years of their student period. If they miss any seminars in the first two years they will need to attend a similar number of seminars in the third year. If a doctoral candidate is abroad visiting another university and they can attend similar dissertation seminars there, these can replace our local seminars. This would need to be documented.

Discussion on final seminars: The Council agreed that the midway assessment should be carried on for the time being, but should be evaluated at a later date. The midway assessment is a mandatory assignment from the faculty and we would need to argue for a potential change if that would be relevant. The feedback from the midway assessments has been very positive and we do not have the resources to have a midway assessment and a final seminar. The council was also was worried about the exercise of a final seminar and if it really would be beneficial for the candidate.

Register of conferences: The council suggested looking into the possibility of using Canvas. Larsen will look into it. Update: The easiest platform for this is Microsoft Teams and Larsen has created a team for the Archaeology/Conservation doctoral candidates.