



## SLUSS – SLU Samlade Studentkårer

### Minutes SLUSS DN meeting 2017-04-03

**Time:** 13-15

**Location:**

Ultuna: Grupprum 11, VHC

Alnarp: Spiltan, Articum

#### **Present members**

Maria Karlsson	Chairperson SLUSS DN
Mattias Engman	SHS
Christina Rochus	VMF
Kristina Tattersdill	ULS

#### **Other present**

Monika Appel	Secretary and Doctoral student ombudsman/counsellor (DO)
Isabella Hallberg Sramek	Chairperson SLUSS
Lotta Hansson	Division of planning, SLU
Sophia Renes	NOVA and FOMAR )
Johannes Pohl	Biostokastikum

**1. Opening of the meeting**

*Maria* opened the meeting.

**2. Approval of the agenda**

The agenda was approved.

**3. Election of chairperson, secretary and person to approve the minutes**

*Maria* was elected as chairperson, *Monika* as secretary and *Mattias* was elected to approve the minutes.

**4. Approval of notice to attend**

It was approved that the notice to attend was sent well in advance.

**5. Minutes from SLUSS DN meeting 2017-02-17**

The protocol from last meeting was approved. *Maria* summarized the main points from last meeting.

**6. Reports from PhD-student councils**

**Skogshögskolans studentkår (SHS)**

*Mattias* gave a report from SHS:

The activity plan for the student council has been approved. Several seminars are planned during spring, for example seminars about scientific writing and stress managing.

Co-authorship has previously been discussed in the council, but during the last meeting it wasn't on the agenda.

A report about working environment for PhD students, performed by psychology students in Umeå, was recently released (see also protocol from 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2016 about a previous report from the psychology students.)

**Ultuna studentkår (ULS)**

*Kristina* informed us about recent news from ULS:

ULS had a council meeting last week. At the meeting Marnie Hancke, project leader at SLU, was invited. She gave information about Researchers' Grand Prix 2017.



Researchers' Grand Prix is a Swedish competition where researchers present their research in just a few minutes. It's a national competition, and the presentations are held in Swedish. Last year Marlene Andersson, researcher at SLU, was second best in the entire competition.

In the last council meeting Sebastian Remvig, chair of Ultuna student union, was invited as a step to build a relation between the bodies.

The employee dialog (medarbetarsamtal) was discussed. (See also notes from last DN protocol from 17<sup>th</sup> of February!)

The introductory program for new PhD students was also on the agenda. Lately it's been held only once a year, and there is a wish to have it arranged once a semester. *Kristina* has been in touch with Elisabet Lewan (Director of Postgraduate Studies) about having the introductory course twice a year again.

SLU's common courses were also discussed. Some courses are not given via video link due to pedagogical reasons. Should the courses be available for everybody via video link? It's a tricky balance between keeping it open for everybody on the one hand and the pedagogical side on the other. There are ongoing discussions about this matter in FUR.

During next meeting, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May, a new board will be elected. Two people will remain in the new board.

### **Veterinärmedicinska föreningen (VMF)**

*Christina* gave a report from VMF:

Last meeting was held in February. VMF has different activities going on such as monthly seminars and weekly PhD student coffee.

During the council meeting prolongation for sick leave and parental leave was discussed. There seems to be a difference how departments count the time, and there is a need for improved common guidelines. According to *Lotta*, SLU is working on that. A first version is put together that will be discussed with faculty representatives later this month. The chair in VMF PhD council Torun Wallgren, has offered to be a contact person. Torun and Lotta will stay in touch.

### **Alnarp studentkår (ASK)**

No representative participated in the meeting but Anna-Lovisa reported via email:

The situation of doctoral students on scholarship has been discussed, especially their funding situation. A petition to the vice-chancellor is in progress. In the petition the vice-chancellor is requested to revise and improve SLU's routines and regulations.

ASK has received 60 000 SEK from FUN to be invested in activities in order to promote social health and companionship for PhD students.

Last Friday an after work at the Laser dome in Malmö was arranged. Thirteen persons participated.

### **7. Information from NOVA**

*Sophia* gave a report from NOVA:

NOVA had a meeting last week. There has been a change of members in Norway. A deputy was needed for the new student member from the Norwegian university where the secretary board is, so *Sophia* is now a substitute.

In June there will be a strategy meeting with the NOVA board in Finland.

There are some financial issues for the university in eastern Finland, and the PhD students have difficulties to participate since they can't apply for mobility grants.

There are continuously discussions about how to advertise courses. Different universities have different strategies. Many of the members in the student board didn't see the advertising unless they went into the NOVA website. This will be further discussed in an upcoming NOVA board meeting.

### **8. Information from FOMAR**

*Sophia* attended a FOMAR meeting last week. During the meeting much focus was on career path for environmental analysts (miljöanalytiker). There was a discussion about how to make it equivalent to a "docent" and what kind of criteria that could be reasonable. What is important and what is realistic? If we ask for some extra competence, we also need to take away some demands.



There were also a lot of discussions about how to prioritize now when the budget has been cut. For the coming year no major changes will be needed, but if no more funding will come for next year, cutting and merging will be necessary.

Another issue discussed was KON (Kvalitet och Nytt) that is going to be repeated. An evaluation was done ten years ago, and will now be followed up in 2018.

#### **9. Information from Biostokastikum**

*Johannes* was present at a telephone meeting with the student committee that took place a couple of weeks ago. The name of Biostokastikum is now officially changed to "Centre for statistics" (Centrum för statistik). At Centre for statistics they encourage people to come up with suggestions for workshops.

Decision: Johannes will send out an e-mail to all PhD students in order to spread information about what services are offered by Centre for Statistics and may get suggestions on workshops.

Next meeting is scheduled to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May.

#### **10. Information from DO**

DO participated in a work shop in Liverpool on 6<sup>th</sup> of March about mental health issues in PhD education. In UK as well as in several other countries, student mental health issues are more reported, and also more discussed. It can be various kinds of issues, such as stress related health issues, depression and other conditions. A special challenge in the UK, as well as in Sweden is the international students who have left their home countries and sometimes also their families. DO could recognize many of the problems reported from the contacts with international students such as loneliness, homesickness, language barriers etc. In UK as well as in Sweden workshops seminars in mindfulness, stress and how to handle stress etc. are ongoing. In the UK one university have dogs to cuddle with as stress reducing activities. At another university an online course has started. In the work shop the role of the supervisor was also discussed.

DO has held a seminar for PhD students at the department of economics.

On Thursday DO will give a seminar on employment conditions for PhD students at three departments at Ultuna.



In June DO will give a seminar for PhD students in Alnarp about rights and obligations in PhD education.

DO has also been contacted by several individual PhD students with more or less complex problematic situations.

## **11. Information from SLUSS**

*Isabella* gave a report from SLUSS:

There was a meeting in March. During the meeting SLUSS' economy was discussed, especially the fact that SLUSS has a buffer on 180 000 SEK on saving accounts. A question is what to do with it in the future.

The list of student representatives in various boards and councils at SLU was approved.

The Mecenat and membership system were also discussed. Today there is no agreement between the student unions and Mecenat. SLUSS will try to collect all agreements from the student unions and compare them in order to make sure that all have similar agreements.

It's now open to apply for the position as SLUSS chairperson. Last day to apply is the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April. On 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of May a new chair will be elected.

In the management group the future platforms were discussed. Isabella emphasized that the students want to be invited to all of the platforms. The vice chancellor also said that the deans should invite them.

There is a new pro vice chancellor for international relations, Ylva Hillbur. (See also protocol from last SLUSS DN meeting!)

There is also a new assistant head of University Administration, Birgitta Wikman-Carlsson.

## **12. Information from SLU and FUR**

*Lotta* gave us information:

Last FUR meeting was on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February, and next will be on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April.

There are ongoing discussions about pre evaluation of thesis. How to do it? When to do it? Who will do it? The peer review quality differs if there is a peer review. A few years ago it was clear that the article was ok when it was published. Now it's not so clear anymore.

General basic courses were also discussed, especially the course in Philosophy of Science. Philosophy of Science and Research ethics will be merged to a 4 credit course given at all four campuses.

### **13. Update PhD student survey**

*Lotta* reported the following:

The survey is now closed. The response rate was 53 %. A preliminary report is planned to be presented in FUR at the meeting in June. The preliminary results indicate that support for supervisor is desired. Next step will possibly be a survey to supervisors to find out what needs they have. A suggestion is that the results will be presented during a PhD day in autumn. The focus of that day will be quality of PhD education in general.

### **14. Report from SLU board meeting**

*Maria* gave a report from the SLU board meeting in February:

- The annual revision for 2016 was presented. In 2016 there were 95 PhD students admitted and 131 graduated, around 10 licentiate graduates every year. In 2016 SLU had in total 604 active PhD students, which are 100 students less than in 2010. 69 % of the students are employed, around 57 % are women, and around 40 % are non-Swedish. On average it takes 8,5 semesters (net study time) to complete the PhD education (5,4 for licentiate). The quality assurance system was mentioned as well as SLU common courses and the research schools.
- Budget proposal for 2018-2020, is a kind of "wish list" to be sent to the government. It focuses on more money for research education within bio based materials, sustainable food production, economy, the importance of nature and animals for human wellbeing, and one health.
- The internal audit presented a report on how issues are handled and decisions are made in the faculty boards. Overall the internal audit found no major concerns. A

main issue was how to handle conflict of interest (jäv). Open positions sometimes have a very specific profile, as if the position is written for a specific person, which is problematic and we may not recruit the best researchers.

- Results from the staff survey, conducted in spring 2016, were presented. The response rate was 75%. In general the employees are satisfied (68 %). Most satisfied are young employees (< 30 years) and old employees (> 68 years), and staff working for the administration and the library. An interesting result was that employees who had “medarbetarsamtal”, or at least had been given the opportunity to have “medarbetarsamtal” were more satisfied. Main concerns were that we work too much, we feel that we have unclear tasks, and a lack of balance between our professional and private life. It was concluded that male PhD students in general were more satisfied than female.
- The board of SLU approved to initiate the process of building a new greenhouse in Umeå.

## 15. SLU 40 years

SLU turns 40 this year, and this will be celebrated in different ways. *Maria* informed about the event, and told us that Lena-Andersson Eklund, project leader for the celebration, is calling for ideas. Some funding is also provided for contributions. During the SLUSS DN meeting ideas for the celebration were discussed. One idea, that *Sophia* came up with, was to arrange a mobile poster session.

*Maria* encouraged the representatives in SLUSS to discuss ideas for SLU 40 years further with colleagues.

## 16. Collaboration with the trade unions

In the activity plan one part is about collaboration with the trade unions. *Maria* has been in touch with Naturvetarna and AEA (Akademikernas a-kassa). A seminar on unemployment was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March in collaboration with Anna Sonesson from Naturvetarna and Annika Stenberg from AEA (Akademikernas a-kassa). 15 PhD students, most of them non-Swedish, attended the seminar.

Naturvetarna would also like to arrange seminars on career opportunities either during spring or early autumn.

Decision: Maria will stay in touch with Naturvetarna.



### 17. Seminar with Ajibola (Jib) Omokanye

*Kristina* has been in contact with Jib, founder of Explain artist, about giving a seminar on how to communicate science in other ways. (See also last protocol!) Jib has agreed to give a seminar and a following workshop in Alnarp, Uppsala, and Umeå. It was suggested that this could be arranged as a part of SLU's 40 years celebration. *Kristina* is waiting for more specific information from Jib in order to apply for funding.

Decision: *Kristina* will stay in touch with Jib for further arrangements.

### 18. Other issues

*Maria* had an information point about the ongoing evaluation by the Swedish Higher Education Authority (UKÄ) of the research subject veterinary medicine. As a part of the evaluation four PhD students will be interviewed in April

### 19. Next meeting

Next meeting will be held 13-15 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May. *Mattias* will chair that meeting.

### 20. End of the meeting

*Maria* wished everyone a nice summer and closed the meeting.

Monika Appel

Secretary

Maria Karlsson

Chairperson

Mattias Engman

Member to approve the minutes