

Annual Report of the Doctoral Student Union at Malmö University 2018



**DOCTORAL
STUDENT
UNION** MALMÖ

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Foreword

It has been a very intense year for the Doctoral Student Union Malmö (DSU). During the year, the number of members of the Board has been limited, which has placed a strong focus on the main function of DSU, that is to actively and continuously partaking in conversations on all administrative levels of Malmö University.

This report describes the DSU's work during 2018 (18-01-27 to 19-01-28). The report is mainly concerned with the work in relation to the Activity Plan for the period (available at doktorandkaren.se). However, the DSU was also involved in several other activities in 2018 and these are also described briefly in this report. Local reports from the doctoral collegia are also included as well as the 2018 DSU board's suggestions for work ahead.

Malmö, January 2019

The DSU board:

Cecilia Cervin

Angelica Wågby

Per Gunnemyr

DSU representation 2018

The DSU Board

President:	Cecilia Cervin (HS)
Vice President:	Angelica Wågby (since june) (HS) Susanne Smithberger (jan-jun) (LS)
Treasurer and responsible for memberships:	Niklas Erhlin (jan-sept) (TS) Angelica Wågby (responsible for membership since aug)
Doctoral Collegia Coordinator:	Vacant
Communications Officer:	Vacant
Board member:	Per Gunnemyr (LS)

DSU Representation in Central Committees and Other Important Forums

University Board: (Högskolestyrelsen)	Angelica Wågby since aug/ Susanne Smithberger jan-jul
Central Research Board: (Forskningsberedningen)	Cecilia Cervin
Doctoral Education Committee: (Forskarutbildningsutskottet)	Cecilia Cervin
Meetings with vice chancellor: (Rektorsmöten)	Cecilia Cervin & Angelica Wågby
University board meeting: (Ledningsgruppsmöten)	Cecilia Cervin

Doctoral Collegia and Representation at the Faculty Level

Faculty of Culture and Society (KS)

Collegium President:	Zahra Hamidi
Faculty Board:	Beint Magnus Aamodt Bentsen
Research and Research Education Committee:	Maria Persdotter
Supervisor Collegium K3 NMOG:	Linda Hilfling
Supervisor Collegium Urban Studies:	Malin McGlenn
Supervisor Collegium GPS:	Vacant

Faculty of Health and Society (HS)

Collegium President:	Vacant
Faculty Board:	Magnus Weber
Board of Research:	Lotta Wendel

Faculty of Learning and Society (LS)

Collegium President: Sepandarmaz Mashreghi Blank
Faculty Board: Vacant
Research and Research Education
Committee: Elsa Andersson/Magnus Bergman
Strategy Group: Vacant
Supervisor Collegium (Ped.): Therese Lindgren
Supervisor Collegium (SMDI): Marie Thavenius
Supervisor Collegium (Historiska studier): Magnus Bergman
Supervisor Collegium (IDV): Anna Maria Hellborg
Supervisor Collegium (NMS): Camilla Safrankova

Faculty of Odontology (OD)

Collegium President: Vacant
Faculty Board: Vacant
Research and Research Education
Committee: Victoria Dawson

Faculty of Technology and Society (TS)

Collegium President: Alberto Enrique Alvarez Uribe
Faculty Board: Johan Salo
Research and Research Programs
Board: Lars Holmberg
Supervisor Collegium: Vacant

Other DSU representation at MaU

Council of Research Ethics

DSU representative: Alexander Engström (HS)

Council of Equality and equal terms

DSU representative: Ylva Grönvall (HS)

All compensation concerning prolonging because of work in the DSU board or other DSU representative can be reviewed in the supplement 1.

Activities

Every year, the DSU board decides which activities that are prioritized. In this annual report, the DSU board describes how they have worked with these activities as well as other activities during 2018.

Activity Plan

All activities pursued by the DSU board in 2018 were based on the overall aims of the organization, as stated in the Activity Plan (p. 1) that the board published on the DSU website at the beginning of 2018:

The main goal of the DSU is to remain actively engaged in creating a dynamic, reliable and creative research and work environment for all doctoral students at Malmö University (MaU). By actively and continuously partaking in conversations on all administrative levels of MaU, the DSU's ambition is to create and maintain influence in the decision-making process of areas that touch upon the education, research environment and employment of doctoral students. To this end, the DSU strives to ensure that all levels of representation and influence can be easily identified and proactively engaged with. It should also be mentioned that several of the prioritized activities this year [2018] focus on information and communication. Through this approach, the intention is to get in touch with more PhD students, which will hopefully increase the number of members. This is especially important now that we have transitioned into university status and are expecting an increased amount of PhD students this year, as following years.

Prioritized Activities and Actions Taken By the DSU Board

The specific activities in the Activity Plan are described in this section together with the actions taken by the DSU board.

Doctoral Student Ombudsman

The DSU will maintain the established contact with the Doctoral support and continuing investigating the possibility of a doctoral student ombudsman (DOMB).

- Actions taken

The DSU board and MaU have continued to discuss the possibility of employing a DOMB. During 2018 DSU has decided that the discussion to employ a DOMB is not a prioritized topic at the moment. The thorough evaluation in collaboration with DSU, of the Doctoral support held in October showed that the time given (20%) to the task as a Doctoral support is well dimensioned for the matters that have been in question during the year 2017 to 2018.

Since the Doctoral support started 1 September 2017, the DSU has established good communication with the responsible person Andreas Admasie. The Doctoral support is a part time position, 20 % of full time. Andreas Admasie is employed at the international office at MaU.

Information and Communication

The DSU will strive to improve the information that is relevant for PhD students through our website and other forms of media and through the doctoral collegia.

- **Actions taken**

This task was difficult given the lack of an updated system at MaU regarding the contact details to the PhD students. MaU has explained this difficulty as a matter of the lack of a digital individual study plan (ISP). The ISP will be digitalized in 2018, hopefully improving the possibility of having an up-to-date overview over all contact details to all PhD students at MaU (i.e. not only our members but all doctoral students). Since the Coordinator was established, he helped the DSU much through better and more recently updated contact lists.

The DSU board have earlier started a twitter account to reach out to other audiences. Yammer groups were also created. Although this has been difficult managing this year since only three persons are in the board. We have updated members regarding positions we need to fill, and upcoming events. A newsletter will be sent when calling for the annual meeting, and in the future newsletters should be sent more frequently. This year we have also been using the new DSU logo.

We have also got help from Keyperons at the University to spread information about the importance of the DSU and participation in different kinds of groups formed at University level.

Social Events

The DSU will continue to create meeting places for doctoral students from different faculties by arranging social events such as the lunches or guest lectures. Other forms of social events may also be arranged in order to bring PhD students together in an informal setting.

- **Actions taken**

A guest lecture was arranged in which Åsa Burman presented her research on 2018-11-05. The DSU has also arranged lunches to meet PhD students more informally. In dialogue with Andreas Admaise (Doctoral support) DSU has an ambition to make these lunches more permanent.

Improvement of the Introduction of New PhD Students

The DSU will be participating at the Introduction course for PhD students arranged by the Malmö university. The introduction issue is also being raised in Central Committees where all the faculties are represented

- **Actions taken**

The DSU has during 2018 participated at both introduction courses held in spring and autumn, towards new PhD students, arranged by Christina Lindh, the course administrator at AKL. There has been good communication between Christina Lindh and the DSU about the content presented

by DSU. There has also been positive feedback from the PhD students regarding the presentation from DSU (there is a course evaluation after each course).

During 2018 the DSU has also attended at the courses for (new) supervisors at Mau (held twice 2018). There has been discussion of the content presented by DSU with the course administrator Martin Stigmar at LS faculty, and so far, it has been relevant for the supervisors' knowledge. Everything can of course further develop depending of the need for knowledge. DSU sees it as an important opportunity to talk and contribute with knowledge to new supervisors, from a PhD student perspective.

Further has the DSU in a meeting with vice chancellor discussed the expectations in supervision. And a discussion is sought for further development in supervision regarding expectations and demands.

International PhD Students

The DSU will continue to work for improving the situation for international PhD students in terms of language issues

- Actions taken

The new language policy has been accepted in 2018 by MaU. This means that there will be better opportunities for international PhD students to engage in matters that is of their concern and also improve the work environment.

Doctoral Collegia

The DSU will support and collaborate with the doctoral collegia at the faculties.

- Actions taken

The DSU has during 2018 not been able to give the same support to the collegiums as wanted, mainly because there is no one responsible for the collegiums and that the members of DSU board already have a full schedule in the DSU tasks. It is still very challenging to engage PhD students in DSU locally (and in the DSU board). There is still no collegia at HS and OD, but this is strongly requested.

Website for all PhD courses in Sweden

This is a very complex question and cannot be handled by the DSU itself.

- Actions taken

This topic has not been a prioritized topic during 2018 and no actions has been taken.

Membership payments

The DSU will work on simplifying the administrations of membership and membership-payments

- Actions taken

The DSU has entered into an agreement with Membit who will handle the administrations of membership and membership-payments.

ISP – Individual Student Plan

The digital ISP will be implemented during 2018.

- Actions taken

The DSU has participated in the working group of the digital ISP.

DSU join The Swedish National Union of Students (SFS)

Examine the possibility to join SFS and how it will benefit the PhD students.

- Actions taken

This topic has not been a prioritized topic during 2018 and no actions has been taken.

The DSU statutes

The DSU statutes needs to be reviewed during the year.

- Actions taken

A proposition with changes in the DSU statutes has been conducted and will be voted for at the annual meeting 2019. The changes regard partly the name switch from Malmö Högskola to Malmö University (in the Swedish version of the statutes, the English already says University) and the other changes regards the unions closing as a union, and the possibilities to change the statutes. The former change is needed if there will be no nominees of PhD students, PhD students that will be able to engage themselves in the DSU. Then the current DSU board need to close down the DSU as a union for PhD students at MaU.

Other Activities

The DSU was involved in a wide range of activities not specified in the Activity Plan. These activities refer to new issues that arose during the year as well as more spontaneous initiatives to improve PhD education at MaU. In 2018, the DSU:

- Contributed to the equality of the "Doktorandryggsäcken" – the amount should be the same at all faculties at MaU (50 000sek).
- During the year the UKÄ has carried through an evaluation within the university's quality management system. The UKÄ has visit MaU twice during 2018 and the DSU and PhD students has contributed to the evaluation in interviews and also created a student submission together with Malmö Studentkår and Studentkåren på Odontologen (Käftis).
- There are new councils at the university – Ethical council and Equality council – and doctoral representatives are recruited by the DSU. The representatives get compensation from the DSU for their participation in the councils.

- A decision by vice chancellor concerning the possibility for PhD students employed by other employer (working 50% and studying 50%) than MaU, will be compensated in time if engaged in the DSU. There are although difficult for them to engage since the employer need to accept the prolongation.
- There has been an agreement between the universities at Lärosäte Syd concerning the fee for PhD courses held at the different universities at Lärosäte Syd – that there will be no fee for PhD students taking courses between the universities in Lärosäte Syd. Lärosäte Syd consist of following six universities: Blekinge Tekniska högskola, Högskolan i Halmstad, Högskolan i Halmstad, Lunds universitet, Malmö universitet och Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet (SLU).
- Participated in the revision of the Antagningsordningen (order of admission)
- Participated in the revision of the Anställningsordningen (order of employment)
- Participated at several quality dialogs during the year, occasions associated with the UKÄs evaluation of the university.
- Participated in the development of the supervision questionnaire carried through in May 2018
- Participated in the development of the doctoral student questionnaire carried through in September 2018
- The president of the DSU board attended as the conferencier at the annual doctoral graduation and professor inauguration at Malmö Live.
- Initiated dialog concerning future lunch seminars for PhD students and Post PhD with the Doctoral support and the International office at MaU, supposed to be held by the International office/Doctoral support and DSU.
- There has been continuous dialog with the university regarding the need for encouragement from the university's interest for doctoral students to engage themselves within the DSU and in collegiums at the faculty level. The importance to be able to influence and guard matters that concern for example the work environment, working conditions as well as opportunities as a doctoral student at the university. Furthermore, the importance to have influence within the research education and the development in supervision at the university.

Reports from the Doctoral Collegia

To the knowledge of the DSU board, three collegiums were active during 2017: (KS, LS, & TS). However, the Faculty of Health and Society is in the progress of restarting the collegium which will hopefully be in place during 2018. The active collegiums in 2018 have reported their activities briefly in this report. For further information, contact your local collegium president.

Faculty of Culture and Society

Zahra Hamidi, President:

The KS doctoral collegium had two meetings under the past term. The most important issues discussed at the collegium meetings revolved around reorganization of PhD education within the departments under the KS faculty and the future of the existing MUSA PhD programs, and restructuring of the current working spaces in Niagara and the career planning needs of the doctoral students. As the result of the discussions, two separate workshops arranged to provide

support for career interests within both academic and non-academic sectors. While the first workshop was held in December 2018, the second one is planned for spring 2019.

Faculty of Learning and Society (LS)

Sepand Mashreghi, Chair:

The collegium has been meeting twice each term regularly. The most important and recurring topic is the issue of PhD students relationship with their supervisors, such as lack of feedback, lack of structure, changing the supervisors, choosing supervisors from outside faculty and university etc. It seems that there is a lack of knowledge on both supervisors' and students' part on how to be an effective supervisor or what to expect from the supervisors. These issues have been brought up with FUN and FR committees as well as with the faculty board. Another recurring issue is lack of PhD students representation and lack of commitment to be involved in the organization of the university and programs. In our collegium we tried to address this issue by combining collegium meetings with PhD 'internat' events so we can reach a wider group of PhD students.

Faculty of Technology and Society (TS)

Alberto Alvarez Uribe, Chair:

The TS Doctoral Collegium met 6 times this semester. We tried to have constant and productive meetings every 2 weeks but for the next semester, we will change the scheduling to once a month. The most relevant topics discussed have been: (1) The working environment in the new PhD room assigned to us, (2) the research- and work-spaces for the new industrial PhDs (around 5 new industrial PhDs got accepted through funding for an industrial research school). Finally, (3) we recently discussed the quality of our research education, how to expand it and improve it (this was a discussion we had together with the Director of Doctoral studies at TS), which will be followed-up in our next meeting.

We have also used the space to discuss the coming DSU Board election, the different roles, responsibilities, and benefits after I had a productive discussion with Cecilia Cervin.

In general, the discussions and topics that we have handled in the Collegium have been quite broad, as we also try to use this medium as a place-and-time to promote further learning among us, our current

Suggestions for Work Ahead

The DSU board encourages the DSU board of 2019 to keep being involved in most of the abovementioned activities. Several of the activities presented are not finished. Suggestions for additional work include:

- Explore how the DSU can better communicate within the organization. How can we reach all PhD students with relevant information?
- Partake in the development of the new digital ISP.

- Examine and discuss how MaU values PhD students' previous experiences (e.g. teaching or work within the research area) in terms of salaries. This work has already started and involves the trade union (SULF).
- Examine if the DSU should join The Swedish National Union of Students (SFS).
- Work with the results from the doctoral questionnaire 2018. For example, the result shows that 50% (of the respondents) are experience negative stress related to the doctoral education. The workload is expressed as neither too high or too low by 71% of the respondents, but that also means that there are almost 30% of the respondents that experience the workload as too high or extremely high. Both these results effect the work environment and it is important to have a continuous discussion with MaU regarding solutions/create better prerequisites for the work environment during the doctoral education.