

Protocol, Organism Biology steering committee meeting

December 04, 2019, 10-12.00

BioC conference room A-436

Attending: Petra Fransson (chair)
Peter Bozhkov
Magnus Karlsson
Pernilla Elander
Mariana Kluge
Mattias Thelander (coordinator without right to take part in decisions)
Lea Wittorf (coordinator without right to take part in decisions)

Not attending: Christina Dixelius
Charles Melnyk
Panagiotis Nikolaou Moschou
Anis Meschichi

§1 Meeting was opened by Petra Fransson

- a) Lea Wittorf was appointed secretary.
- b) Pernilla Elander was appointed adjutor.
- c) Last meeting protocol was approved.
- d) Additional questions: Report from the joint research school coordinator meeting.

§2 Substitution for Lea as coordinator spring 2020

Lea will be on parental leave from Jan-Sept 2020. An email was sent out to the Forest Mycology and Plant Pathology department by Petra Fransson. The steering group decided to suggest Heriberto (Eddie) Véléz to FUN, who will take a decision at their upcoming meeting mid-December. Petra will write a letter of recommendation to FUN stating the suggestion from the steering group and explaining the recruitment process. The substitute will be in charge of organizing the annual workshop and planning for autumn activities.

§3 Status of changes in the steering group: Anis as student representative

Anis has been approved as a student representative by the PhD student council and is now officially a member of the steering group.

§4 Final reports from concluded activities

- a) *Course, Understanding and coding the R programming language, spring 2019 (2 ECTS)*: Lea reported that the course was organized by Matt Low from the department of Ecology in collaboration with the research schools Ecology and Focus on Soils and Water. The course took place April 1-5 at Akademihotellet in Uppsala and had 21 participants, of which 19 were PhD students and 2 research

assistants. One of the PhD students was from Uppsala University and the rest from SLU. The average score on the evaluation about the general impression of the course was 4.9 out of 5. The total costs of the course were 118 830 SEK, of which we pay ~40 000 SEK. The report was approved by the steering group.

b) *Course, Visualize your science, autumn 2019 (4 ECTS)*: Mattias reported that the course was filled. There were 21 admitted participants, all of which passed the course. Of these were 16 PhD students and 5 postdocs, all from SLU and 13 from the Biocentre. The evaluation had a score of 4.2 on the question about the general impression of the course. This is lower than previous times and many of the comments were regarding the premises. It was difficult to find good rooms for PhD student courses in general this term and for the poster session at the last day the area was a little bit dark. The costs of the course were 95 000 SEK so far and there will be a few more invoices for poster printings. The budget was 100 000 SEK and it will not be more than that. The report was approved by the steering group.

c) *Course, Multivariate statistics, autumn 2019*: Lea reported that the course was given October 14-18 by Ulf Grandin. The course was filled but no final report regarding participants, evaluation and economy has been sent out. The report was postponed.

d) *Workshop, Career outside academia, autumn 2019*: Lea reported that the workshop took place 27th of November. This is a collaboration with all research schools from NJ and has this year been organized mainly by Magda Bieroza from Focus on Soils and Water, with support from Lea. The final report regarding evaluation and economy is not ready yet and the report was postponed.

e) *Course, Forest Pathology in the 21st century, autumn 2019 (3 ECTS)*: Lea reported that the course was given November 18-22 with Jan Stenlid as the course leader. The summary of the course is not ready yet and the report has been postponed.

§5 Progress reports from planned and ongoing activities

a) *Course, Plant ploidy with Brassica species as learning models, autumn 2019, 3 ECTS*: This course is given by Christina Dixelius and is running at the moment with 7 participating PhD students. The course will finish after Christmas.

b) *Course, Basics of metagenomics analysis, autumn 2019, 3 ECTS*: The course is organized by Sari Peura at Forest Mycology and Plant Pathology and consisted of one week of intensive lectures November 11-15, as well as a home assignment that the students are still working on. The course will be finished mid-December. There were 19 participants (of 20 possible) from all career stages. Teachers came from several departments at SLU and from SLUBI.

c) *Course, Practical skills in sequence analysis, spring 2020, 2 ECTS*: This course is organized by Tomas Linder and will run Jan-Feb 2020. There will be 5 teaching days in total. The course has been advertised already and the syllabus was recently approved by a *per capsulam* decision (see point 6 below).

d) *Course, To communicate science, spring 2020, 2 ECTS*: This course is given in collaboration with other NJ research schools and the Division of Planning. It will be given March 10-12 and April 28-29. The course has a syllabus from previous years and has been announced to the PhD students. This course was not within our budget from October but on the list of potential courses for next year. It will cost us ~20 000 SEK. This has been approved by the steering group.

e) *Course, Visualize your science, spring 2020, 4 ECTS*: This course will be given again in spring. It will start in March and run until May. It is not announced yet, mainly because the booking process for the rooms is in process and better rooms than this term would be beneficial.

f) *Workshop, Kappa writing, spring 2020*: This workshop will be given March 5 in collaboration with other research school. Maria Kahlert from FoSW will be one of the course leaders, together with Torun Hammar and Kajsa Henryson. It will be similar to a previous workshop organized by FoSW in 2017. More information and announcement will follow in December.

g) *Course, Reviewing and summarizing science, spring 2020, 2 ECTS*: The course will be given March 2020 with one week of lectures 16-20/03. The course is organized jointly with FoSW. The teacher is Antonia Liess, lecturer at Högskolan i Halmstad. Syllabus exists from previous years. It has not been announced yet but planning is almost finished and announcement will be sent soon.

h) *Course, Root-Soil-Microbe interactions, spring 2020, 3.5 ECTS*: This course will be organized by Petra Fransson and is planned for end of April. The plan is to invite some speakers from abroad (Denmark and UK) and other places in Sweden, as well as have some local teachers from the department Forest Mycology and Plant Pathology. Planning will be finalized soon and the course announced during Dec-Jan.

i) *Workshop, Stress management, spring 2020*: This workshop was requested by the PhD students within our research school and we have gotten into contact with Kerstin Larm, a psychologist working within the Forum of Career Development at SLU (FOCUS) at Länshälsan. Kerstin suggested a half day workshop with lectures and exercises.

j) *Course, Advanced RNA-seq, spring/autumn 2020*: This was a request from Plant Science students and we will start discussing options with Domenico Simone from SLUBI. The course will most likely be given in autumn.

§6 Course syllabus for Practical skills in sequence analysis

Mattias reported that the course syllabus for the course “Practical skills in sequence analysis” was approved by *per capsulam* decision. The decision is attached to this protocol.

§7 Annual workshop 2020, set date and discuss place and format

Next years' workshop will be held in a similar way as in previous years, including 2 days at a conference site close to Uppsala in June. This time there will be no credits given out to the students for the workshop.

The person substituting Lea will be main responsible for the organization together with a small group including Mattias, Petra and maybe some of our student representatives or other interested students from the research school.

The topic was previously decided to be “Figures, illustrations and posters” but this seems a bit redundant with the course “Visualize your science”. Other ideas for a theme could be “Oral presentations” (planned theme for 2021), “Being prepared for a postdoc career”, or “Creativity in Science” (this was the topic of a workshop a few years ago).

The last few years supervisors were not invited but depending on the theme we could consider inviting them this year. Preliminary dates could be 16-17th June. The dates 5th, 9th, or 11th should be avoided.

§8 *Per capsulam* decision budget Confocal microscopy course, spring 2019

Petra reminded the steering group about the *per capsulam* decision regarding the budget increase for the “Confocal microscopy” course in spring. It was approved and the decision is attached to this protocol.

§9 Additional questions

Lea reported briefly from the joint coordinator meeting with the research school from all SLU. The meeting was organized by Lotta Hansson and Lotta Jäderlund and coordinators from all four faculties were present.

There was discussion about joint courses over faculty borders and especially the coordinators from the VHC faculty were interested in common basic courses with biology-oriented research schools from NJ.

Lotta H informed about an upcoming workshop on how to include distance learning tools into PhD courses. This will be a half-day workshop January 28.

The mid-term report that was sent to SLU from all research schools gave good figures for our faculty, and the work from the research school is highly appreciated by SLU.

Lotta H posed the idea to encourage research schools to organize courses that have NOVA quality, meaning that they would be given in collaboration with Universities internationally. Many questions came up and it will probably be discussed further in the future.

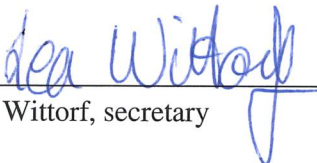
Lotta J reported that there will be a new search tool for PhD courses relatively soon.

§10 Meetings 2020

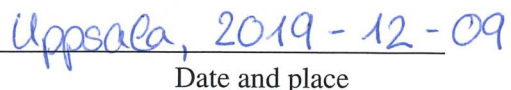
Mattias will send a doodle with possible dates. Four meetings should be scheduled for the whole year, in April, June, October, and December.

Attachments:

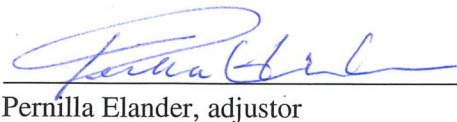
- a) *Per capsulam* protocol "Practical skills in sequence analysis"
- b) *Per capsulam* protocol "Confocal microscopy" course



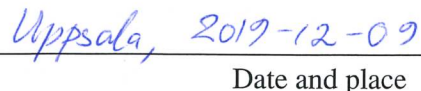
Lea Wittorf, secretary



Date and place



Pernilla Elander, adjutor



Date and place

*Per capsulam approval of syllabus and budget for the
PhD course 'Practical skills in sequence analysis'*

Decision

The steering committee for the Organism Biology research schools decides:
to approve the proposed budget (SEK 55.000) and proposed syllabus for the PhD
course 'Practical skills in sequence analysis', 2 HEC.

Background

The proposed budget and course syllabus was worked out by Tomas Linder, Dept.
of Molecular Sciences, with assistance from the Organism Biology coordinator
(Mattias Thelander).

This decision has been taken by the following board members: Mariana Kluge,
Peter Bozhkov, Magnus Karlsson, Charles Melnyk, Panagiotis Moschou, Anis
Meschichi, Christina Dixelius, Pernilla Elander and Petra Fransson via e-mail
correspondence.



Mattias Thelander

Distribution list

Tomas Linder

Copy for information

Lea Wittorf

Per capsulam decision about costs for the course 'Confocal Microscopy'

Decision

The steering committee for Organism Biology research schools decides:
to approve the increased cost for the Confocal microscopy course, 5 HEC.

Background

The course budget did not cover all costs for the teaching time for Adrian Dauphinee, Plant Biology, who was course responsible. This was due to Adrian's unusual employment situation (not 100% employed at SLU), together with miscommunication about the course budget with the Organism Biology coordinator Mattias Thelander. Mattias and Petra Fransson (chair person of steering committee) suggested that we adjust the budget to cover Adrian's salary, meaning that an additional 50000 SEK will be added to the course budget. For more detailed information see attachment.

This decision has been taken by the following board members: Mariana Kluge, Peter Bozhkov, Magnus Karlsson, Charles Melnyk, Panagiotis Moschou, Anis Meschichi, Christina Dixelius, Pernilla Elander and Petra Fransson via e-mail correspondence.

A blue ink signature of Petra Fransson, consisting of a stylized first name and a surname that starts with 'Fr'.

Petra Fransson

Distribution list

Adrian Dauphinee

Copy for information

Lea Wittorf

Mattias Thelander

As responsible for the course, Adrian and Stefanie were informed well before the course that they had a total budget of SEK 100.000 at their disposal. They were also informed that this amount should cover all course costs including their own compensation for organizing and teaching the course. In practice, they decided to divide the SEK 79.500 that remained after costs for external teachers and instrument rent had been covered, equally between them (meaning that SEK 39.750 were allotted to each). This is by no means controversial and was also approved by Mattias.

The default routine when an organizer/teacher hired by SLU is compensated by the research school is that the agreed sum is simply transferred to a project account specified by the person. This is also how Stefanie was compensated. Adrian, on the other hand, has an unusual employment situation where he is only hired 25% by SLU (through the confocal platform). He therefore asked at an early point whether he could be compensated by personal salary instead. Mattias brought this question to Lotta Olsson (economy administrator at Plant Biology) who said that it should indeed be possible since he is not already hired to 100% by SLU. Adrian was informed about this. A critical consequence of this alternative solution though, is that the compensation will now be subject to both LKP and OH. This means that the original SEK 39.750 would shrink to roughly SEK 16.000. The mistake from Mattias side was that this was not clearly communicated to Adrian at an early time point. Adrian therefore expected a transfer of SEK 39.750 to his personal account rather than SEK 16.000.

In an effort to resolve this, the compensation to Adrian was bumped up somewhat to about SEK 20.000 (about SEK 50.000 with LKP and OH). Based on oral communication, Mattias was under the impression that this solution was acceptable to Adrian (which was also reported at the steering committee meeting on Oct 22). But, in a mail sent on Oct 24, Adrian made clear that he was not happy with the solution and that he is considering to take the "issue to the next level".

If we decide to meet Adrian's request to get the full SEK 39.750 transferred to his personal account, another ca SEK 20.000 must be transferred to him. With LKP and OH this means an additional cost of roughly SEK 50.000 for the research school. The total cost for the confocal course 2019 would then become roughly SEK 163.000 instead of the SEK 113.667 approved by the steering committee on Oct 22.