

*Protocol, Organism Biology Steering committee meeting
24 April 2020, 10.00-12.00
BioC conference room A-338 / zoom*

Agend

Attending:

Petra Fransson (chair)
Peter Bozhkov
Christina Dixelius
Magnus Karlsson
Panagiotis Nikolaou Moschou (Zoom)
Mariana Kluge (Zoom)
Charles Melnyk (Zoom)
Dimitrios Kokoretsis (Zoom; student-substitute without right to take part in decisions)
Mattias Thelander (Zoom; coordinator without right to take part in decisions)
Eddy Véléz (coordinator without right to take part in decisions)

Not attending:

Anis Meschichi
Pernilla Elander

§ 1 Meeting was opened

- a) Eddy Véléz was appointment secretary
- b) Christina Dixelius was appointment adjustor
- c) Last meeting protocol was approved.
- d) No additional questions were brought up

§ 2 FUN approval of Eddy as coordinator during spring 2020

Petra reported that Eddy received formal approval from the FUN to substitute as coordinator for Lea, who is on parental leave until September 2020.

§ 3 New student representatives in the steering committee

Petra reported that Anis Meschichi has requested to step down as student representative and a new student, Dimitrios Kokoretsis, has been suggested as a replacement. In addition, Pernilla Elander will be do military service and Sanjana Holla was suggested as replacement starting from the 1st of May until September 2021. No objections were raised for either of the students suggested. Petra will send an email with the suggestion to Petra Sieber regarding the new student-representatives to be appointed by the PhD student council.

§ 4 Corona / COVID-19

Petra discussed the guidelines from FUN. She said that FUN had asked how we were dealing with "Covid-19", and how her reply-email explained that some courses were changed to be given on-line while others were postponed until the autumn 2020. FUN was OK with postponement of the courses but indicated that we should also be prepared to offer them as on-line courses in the autumn as well, should Covid-19 continue. Lab courses would be OK as long as "social distance" is maintained in the

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classroom. Since not all the money that was budgeted for the spring 2020 semester has been spent, a surplus exists that could be used in the autumn 2020 to cover the courses that have been postponed.

§ 5 Final reports from concluded activities

- a) *Course, Practical skills in sequence analysis, 2 ECTS (PNS0191), spring 2020*: Mattias reported that the course was organized by Tomas Linder from the department of Molecular Sciences on behalf of the SLU Organism Biology graduate school. A total of 10 students signed up for the course (eight passed and two dropped). The course received good evaluations, with the general opinion about the course as 4.4. The budget spent was 55000 kr (planned: 55000 kr). The report was approved by the steering group.
- b) *Course, Multivariate Methods For Ecologists (PNS0074; 4,5 hp), autumn 2019*: Eddy reported that the PhD course was given during the autumn of 2019, and was organised by the Focus on Soils & Water research school (in cooperation with Ecology and Organism Biology). The course was led by Ulf Grandin. There were 28 participants (17 SLU; 2 UU; 2 Karlstad University; 2 Linné University; 2 Umeå University; 1 Linköping University; 1 Stockholm University; 1 University of South-Eastern Norway). All the participants passed the course and the course received good evaluations, with the general opinion about the course as 4.4 (good to excellent). The budget spent, 188441 kr, is being divided amongst the research schools. The original amount planned was 180000kr. The report was approved by the steering group.
- c) *Workshop, Career Outside University for PhDs, was a one day seminar given in November 2019*: Eddy reported that the workshop was organized by Magdalena Bieroza & Lea Wittorf and hosted by the NJ-faculty research schools (Focus on Soils & Water, Organism Biology, Ecology –basics and applications, Focus on Food and Biomaterials, Social Science Perspective on Sustainable Development, Society and Landscape, Sustainable Biomass Systems). Thirty-two students registered (from BioCentre, MVM, Ecology, Economics and Uppsala University) but only 20 participated during the day. There were also a number of other events at SLU around and on the date which resulted in a poorer than usual student turn up. Six students filled in the evaluation and the average score for the general opinion of the workshop was 4.2 (maximum 5). The budget spent, 54595 kr (planned: 10000 kr), was paid by the Focus on Soils & Water research school and divided amongst the research schools. The report was approved by the steering group.
- d) *Course, Forest Pathology in the 21st Century (3 ETCS), autumn 2019*: Eddy reported that the course was given in November 18-22 and was organized and lead by Jan Stenlid. The summary of the course is not ready yet and the report is postponed.
- e) *Course, Basics of metagenomics analysis (3 ETCS), autumn 2019*: Eddy reported that the course was organized by the Organism Biology research school and led by Sari Peura. Teachers from several departments at SLU and from SLUBI were also involved in the lectures. The course ran in November 11th to the 15th and consisted of a week of intensive lectures, as well as a home assignment. There were 19 people participating from all career stages (i.e., 10 students, 3 researchers, 2 professors,

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and 4 postdocs). All the participants passed the course. The course received good evaluations, with the general opinion about course as 4.4 (good to excellent). The budget spent was 100506 kr (planned: 100000 kr). The report was approved by the steering group.

- f) *Course, Plant ploidy Brassica, autumn 2019/spring 20*: Christina reported that seven students had registered for the course and one had dropped. The examination was due to take place in March 2020, but due to Covid-19, it was delayed until May 2020. The course is on-going, thus the summary of the course is not ready yet and the report is postponed. Christina asked whether some of the leftover funding that was supposed to be used for invited speakers during the course could be used to invite those speakers to give seminars in the autumn 2020. Petra was OK with the idea, with Charles and Mattias suggesting to have a contingency plan in case Covid-19 continues.

§ 6 Progress reports from planned and ongoing activities

- a) *Course, Visualize your science, spring 2020*: Mattias reported that there are 12 students registered, with one student from previous instance that did not complete the course. The course is being given online because of Covid-19. Otherwise, no problems so far.
- b) *Course, "Thesis summary writing workshop" (Kappa Workshop), spring 2020*: Eddy reported that the course took place on March 5th, 2020, in room Framtiden, MVM-building, Ultuna, SLU and was organised by the research school Focus on Soils and Water (in cooperation with Ecology, Organism Biology, and Sustainable biomass systems). The workshop was led by Torun Hammar and Kajsa Henryson from the Department of Energy and Technology. In total, 42 PhD students signed up for the workshop, out of which 13 joined by video link. Additionally three PhD students saw the recording of the workshop since they were unable to attend. Most of the students were from SLU, with nine students from KTH and one student from Uppsala University. The general opinion about the workshop was 4.4 (good to excellent). The budget spent was 37671 kr (planned: 30000 kr) and it will be divided amongst the four research schools. This was viewed as a complete report and thus, approved by the steering group.
- c) *Course, Reviewing and Summarizing Science - Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Science* (*But Were Afraid to Ask), 2hp spring 2020*: Eddy reported that the course was organized by Focus on Soil & Water, with the cooperation of Ecology & Organism Biology research schools. The course is being led by Antonia Liess from Halmstad University. The course started on 16 Mar, was actually cut after one-day because of Covid-19, and has continued after that in digital form, somewhat "ad hoc". Eight students, all from SLU, are registered and are now doing their assignments (the review), so there is no course evaluation or final report yet.
- d) *Workshop, How to become a post doc!, March 12th*: Eddy reported that the one-day seminar was organized and hosted by the research schools (Focus on Soils and Water, Organism Biology, Ecology –basics and applications, Focus on Food and Biomaterials, Social Science Perspectives on Sustainable Development, Society and Landscape, Sustainable Biomass Systems), with Ali Moazzami and Helena Bylund organizing the event. During the seminar, the students met representatives from the Swedish research councils (i.e., Formas and VR), the union (SULF), and several post docs. They also had the chance to hear two invited researchers that discussed and gave their perspectives on writing applications and evaluating applications. Twelve students from SLU attended the seminar. The seminar evaluation and the final budget reports are in progress, so final report yet. However, the oral feedback in connection to the workshop was very positive.

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- e) *Course, To communicate science, spring 2020*: Eddy reported that this course is a collaboration between the research schools and Division of Planning. The course is still going on. There are 17 students participating. According to Lotta Hansson: "The course has normally been in-real-life (IRL). However, the last part of the course this year will be given 'online' because of Covid-19. Unfortunately, Lotta Jäderlund has been at home taking care of a sick child". Mattias mentioned that it has been difficult to communicate with Division of Planning, that is, we had not heard from them at all.
- f) *Course, Understanding and coding the R language (2hp), spring 2020*: Eddy reported that this course is mainly organized by the Ecology-basics and applications research school, in cooperation with Focus on Soils & Water and Organism Biology. The course was "converted" to an online course and will begin as planned, on May 11, but it will run longer than a week. According to Helena Bylund: "Some of the applicants will wait for the ordinary IRL-course that Matt hopes they can give during the autumn if the covid-19 situation has ceased. Two courses will of course mean additional costs but we have not discussed how to solve that yet."
- g) qPCR course (postponed due to corona)
- h) Root-Soil-Microbe interactions, spring 2020 (postponed due to corona)
- i) Annual workshop (postponed due to corona)

§ 7 Economy status – funding available for activities autumn 2020

Mattias shared a document outlining the budget (5 Million) that is granted for a cycle consisting of four years. From this, 30% (or 1.5M) is supposed to be spent on coordination and 70% (3.4 Million) on course activities. That would be about 428,000 kr per semester. Invoices usually come a few months after the course activities have ended, so it was hard to give an actual amount at the moment. Unspent funds for the spring, will be used during the autumn 2020. Mattias will give a more accurate update next meeting when spring costs have been reported. Nevertheless, there is a surplus, so no problems are expected.

§ 8 Program and budget for autumn 2020

Petra mentioned that an earlier email had been sent by Mattias to the students and supervisors asking for suggestions regarding possible courses. The following list of activities was put together based on previous and new suggestions after discussions with Mattias, Petra and Eddy:

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Suggested activity range for autumn 2020

1. Course: Root-soil-microbe interactions	100,000
2. Course: Hands-on qPCR	100,000
3. Course: In-depth RNAseq course	80,000
4. Course: How to write and publish a scientific paper	80,000
5. Course: Visualize Your Science	100,000
6. Course: Multivariate statistics	65,000
7. Course: Plant epidemiology	70,000
8. Workshop/seminar: career outside academia	10,000
9. Workshop/seminar: on stress handling	30,000
10. <u>Workshop/seminar: on academic productivity</u>	<u>15,000</u>
Sum:	650,000

Decision: to approve the proposed course list and budget for autumn 2020.

§ 9 Additional questions


N/A


§ 10 Next meeting

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be in the 2nd of June, 2020, 10-12.

Attachments:

The protocol from meeting 191204 was attached. No new attachments are included.

 _____ Heriberto Véléz (Eddy), secretary	<i>29-Apr. 2020, Uppsala</i> _____ Date & Place
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 _____ Christina Dixelius, adjutor	<i>Uppsala 29/4 2020</i> _____ Date & Place
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