

MC2 PhD council minutes - 2024/04/18

Time: 12h

Place: C511

Present: Ariadna Soro Álvarez, Joey Frey, Patrik Blomberg, Nermin Trnjanin, Achintya Paradkar, Erik Strandberg, Ragnar Ferrand-Drake Del Castillo, Núria Alcalde Herraiz

Election of meeting officials

- Chair: Ariadna Soro Álvarez
- Secretary: Achintya Paradkar
- Adopt the minutes: Núria Alcalde Herraiz

2. **Approval of the agenda:** Yes.

3. **Meeting notice in due order:** Yes.

4. **Updates from boards and committees**

- The executive board (Ledningsgruppen, LG) – Hanna Linn
 - *Courses at MC2*
 - * Chemical engineering and Chemistry with Physics are replaced by Engineering chemistry.
 - * MC2 has 2 courses in those programs: Basic Physics and Mechanics (Thomas L and Elsebeth). The department will apply to have them in the next program. There is also the possibility to get a Python course, there are enough PhD students to be teacher assistants, but are there examiners? Lab courses in the embedded program were also mentioned.
 - * The bottom line is that there might be teaching opportunities coming up regarding this.
 - *Showing the clean room*
 - * when there are high school students or when there are many visitors at the same time (roughly two visits per year). It is good if those showing are of a closer age to the high school students. Peter Modh wants all divisions that are active in the cleanroom to have two PhD students who are prepared to show the cleanroom. Those responsible for these departments are urged to find the two PhD students.
 - *Wallenberg's physics prize*, none of the doctoral students responded to an email sent out.
 - *Chalmers should have a real visitor center*, everyone agrees. No decision was taken.
 - *New alcohol policy for Chalmers*. No consumption is permitted during study or working hours, except at events. The party "must always be characterized by moderation".
 - *Reconstructions*

- * Kollektorn will get a screen instead of a projector. Easier for online decertations. Finished Aug-Sep.
 - * Open landscape in B4 will be rebuilt like B5. Also, divide the large professor room (Åsa and Viktor's). Starting construction in 2 weeks.
 - * Putting glass around the balconies. What will it be used for? Large meeting room perhaps. Building permission has been granted. Our suggestion regarding this is to have such balcony spaces for offices as it has lighter and then use other closed spaces for meeting rooms instead.
 - *Open science*
 - * Open Science is important, and Chalmers should ensure that it is followed. Code availability, data availability, etc.
 - * However, IP rights appeared as a counterargument. There should be a system where researchers can receive support in what they are allowed to publish.
 - *How to report an abusive discrimination?* If one is a student (unclear if that meant doctoral students as well). Trygg (Safe) at Chalmers does not work as it should.
- The department's advisory board (Institutionsrådet) –Nermin Trnjanin
 - On Head of the Department recruitment.
 - * Next week there will be a selection meeting with at least three candidates.
 - * The recruitment group and HR partner along with an external firm will conduct the selection process.
 - * Interviews for the head of department are scheduled for May.
 - * As of now there are four candidates (one of them is female).
 - * The interviews will be conducted either in English or Swedish depending on the candidates.
 - Chalmers PhD student Guild (Doktorandsektionen, DS) – Ariadna
 - Sherry (EMSL) will be our new MC2 representative. She will also join the council. She will be in the gender task force of the DS.
 - There was a Departmental Duty Workshop with members from all the departments. Different systems were compared, and all have different trade-offs. What we all agree on is that we would benefit from more efficient and transparent systems (except MV, who already has it).
 - The mathematics department has a great system for logging department duties. They have software from GU that makes things transparent. It would be great to get this software here at MC2, although could imply less flexibility in how many hours of departmental duties we declare.
 - The association of graduate students in Physics (Föreningen för Forskarstuderande i Fysik, FFF) – Ariadna
 - FFF's general assembly is tomorrow, Friday April 19th at 16h. It will be followed by an afterwork.

- The lunch seminar with presentations from Maria Saline and Rebecka Rilemark will take place on Monday April 22nd at 12h. Registration for lunch is now closed but people can still attend. The invitation was sent via email from Ariadna, email from FFF, Facebook post, and MC2 Newsletter.
- Equality group (Jämställdhetsgruppen, Jägr) – Erik Strandberg
 - Gender balance workshop session 1 was completed.
 - The next workshop is planned for training for managers. This training was planned for Fall but now pushed for Summer.
 - Frida is leaving and we are looking for a new representative. The position will be announced in the email list for all PhDs.
 - Jägr is now meeting with GPC (Gothenburg's Physics Centre) once a month.
 - Planning to conduct culture survey at Physics and MC2 like the one already conducted at E2.
 - Instead of Safe at Chalmers now there will be a IA tool for reporting safety issues. If unclear, one can always approach Sara who is our HR partner.
 - Erik is preparing a flowchart for reporting along with Sara. He will share it with everyone, and we will give feedback before we circulate it to everyone.
- Dr Genie – Achintya Paradkar
 - Ariadna suggested the idea of conducting a Menti for collecting stories of “experiences that surprised me” to create a safe space for people to share their harassment or discrimination experiences.
 - VP Maria Elmquist plans to create an Equality office to coordinate all DEI activities at Chalmers and create goals and action plans for DEI work.
 - She also plans to assign an Equality representative at each department with 10% funding for Equality work who will support the Head of the Department in DEI work.
 - Future of GENIE:
 - * Remove the structural and cultural obstacles that hamper women's careers
 - * Create a working environment that is diverse, inclusive and supportive of excellence in research and teaching.
 - Need to talk to Johan about the selection of speakers for WACQT events concerning EDI-related issues.

5. Other issues

- School evaluation – Patrik Blomberg
 - The deadline for the self-evaluation report is the 17th of May and we are currently writing it. Before the deadline it will be shared within the council for comments.
- Department Day – Everyone
 - Achintya and Ariadna met with Johan Veiga Benesch, scientific coordinator of WACQT, to discuss the lack of trust, openness and communication identified during the AQP and QT follow-ups. This issue seems to also arise

in the WACQT survey, although mostly from the junior side – seniors don't seem as concerned. The meeting ended with a reflection on what we can do better, and some ideas may be implemented.

- There will be a Teams or OneDrive for sharing all the WACQT documents and for sharing publications, etc. for transparency and awareness.
 - We suggested creating a Who's who page with a short bio of who is working on what.
- Employee survey – Ariadna
 - Deadline is tomorrow. Please answer the survey and encourage everyone in your division to do the same.
 - The survey is much better than the one from last year. The questions are better phrased, clear, and more relevant for PhDs.
 - Open access publishing – Ariadna
 - Ariadna identified the following issue (copy paste from an email):
I am writing you regarding Chalmers' Open Access agreement with the American Physical Society (APS) Journals.
It has come to my attention that Chalmers is the only large university in Sweden that doesn't have an agreement for its researchers to be able to publish Open Access in *all* APS journals (see [here](#)).
Let me explain: APS journals are divided in 2 categories:
 - Hybrid journals, which include specific and low-impact journals (PRA, PRB, etc.) as well as one high-impact letter (4-page article) journal (PRL). Chalmers, and most other universities in Sweden who have physics research have an agreement to publish open access in these.
 - Gold journals, which include high-impact journals (PRX, PRX Quantum, PRX Energy, PRX Life) and one mid-impact journal (PRR). Chalmers does not have an agreement for these journals, where [open access fees range \\$2755-\\$4415 per article](#). However, most other universities (GU, KTH, SU, Nordita, LU, Luleå, etc.) have agreements for these journals too, which makes sense, because the goal would almost always be to try to publish in the Gold journals over the Hybrid ones.

This is definitely an issue for some PhD students at MC2 who need to pay these fees from their grant. I heard from some who couldn't afford it and others who were forced to choose between attending a conference or publishing in one of these high-impact journals. And because APS is one of the largest families of journals, in many of our fields, there is no alternatives for high-impact journals. For instance, quantum theorists like me, we can at most aspire to publish in PRX or PRX Quantum (both Gold journals), since Nature and Science are almost exclusively reserved for experiments.

With all this, I want to say that I don't think this arrangement aligns with 2 out of 5 of the Chalmers core values: *quality* and *openness*. I would even say it doesn't align with a 3rd value of *inclusion*, since it may exclude PhD students with more humble grants from high-impact publications. Now,

the current APS agreement is set until 31st December 2024 (see the first [link](#) again), but I wondered if we could get a better deal from 2025 on.

- * The Physics Department didn't seem to consider this much of an issue.
 - * The DS suggested this is more of a Department problem, but would like to be kept on the loop.
 - * Magnus talked to Ann-Sofie Axelsson at the library and she said this agreement was purely cost-related. They will try to renegotiate the budget for next year.
 - * To follow-up on the renegotiations, Ariadna will reach out to Ann-Sofie to get a timeline.
- Teaching duties table – Isak
 - Isak did not attend the meeting, postponed to next.
 - Social media updates
 - Ragnar posted about the DS PhD alumni event on both LinkedIn and Facebook.
 - Ariadna posted on Facebook about research stays, unemployment benefits, TSN services after the PhD, Chalmers Reuse, and the FFF lunch seminar.
 - We should do personal interviews and post it on LinkedIn.
 - Teaching duties allocation
 - Remember to update it with new PhD students, as well as updating the plans that are probably more definite now.
 - Inclusive products – Núria
 - At the cleanroom entrance, there are beard covers but no hair bands. Can we have some? Núria will talk to Peter Modh.
 - Can we also have menstrual products and ibuprofene somewhere? Maybe a locker like in the Student Union?

6. **Actions to take by next meeting.**

- Ariadna: 1) upload TA hours table to website and Facebook. 2) Pitch FFF seminar idea. 3) Follow-up on the renegotiations with the APS journals.
- All: update the Teaching Duties Allocation spreadsheet.
- Ragnar: Elaborate a draft for the interview to the Alumni.
- Núria: Talk to Peter Modh about hair bands at the cleanroom entrance. Talk to Ximena about menstrual products.

7. **Next meeting:** 17th of May at 12h00

8. **Closing of the meeting:** 14h00

