

Meeting 13/10/2016

Agenda:

1. Unhappiness amongst fellow PhD students about TA point system
2. Discussion with Thomas
3. Conclude about TA point system
4. Preparation for the meeting with MT
5. Diversity report
6. AOB + Secretary

Meeting minutes:

Present are: Arnold, Chenwei, Dieuwke, Iris, Joost, Marco, Sara. Thomas joins for the 2nd point

1. Unhappiness amongst fellow PhD students about TA points system
 - a. We discussed the Q&A at PhD day, where there was criticism about the way the PhD council is compensated and how we handled the TA points system discussion.
 - b. Some PhDs thought that the PhD council was getting teaching points for being in the council. They correctly pointed out that this was mentioned in the intermediate document that was sent to the PhD community in preparation for the information and discussion meeting that was held in May 2016 with Sonja (as director of the PhD program at the time) and the PhD candidates. Furthermore, no new or final document has been sent to the PhDs afterwards. The PhD council was actually not aware that this was written in this version of the document. In the council's meetings with the MT, the MT was against the option of giving points for organisational duties such as the PhD council, the ILLC magazine, or organising seminars or workshops. So it is not the case that the PhD council members receive some kind of compensation. However, we do believe that it would be fair if we received some compensation and we should make this more clear.
 - c. Related to this point is that we, and we believe the ILLC PhD community in general, are unhappy about how organizational tasks are handled in the current system for quantifying the 20% of our contract which is meant to be devoted to non-research activities. Organizational tasks are right now **not** part of the points system. They are also very non-uniform.
 - d. We would like to propose to the MT that this document contains that organizational tasks count for the 20% of non-research activities that are required from us, even if they do not give teaching points.
 - e. We conclude this point while not yet fully agreeing on the specifics of a solution.

2. Visit Thomas

We asked Thomas if he has ideas about how the TA points system was put in place, what the role of the council was, how our communication was, and if he had ideas for future improvements.

- a. Thomas mentions that during the most recent PhD day (October 5) there was not a lot of time for discussion. On earlier occasions there was much more time, e.g. an hour.
We acknowledged this, and we would like there to be more time on future occasions.
- b. In general, there is good communication. Bad communication seems a specific issue regarding the teaching duties.
- c. Thomas has been told that fulfilling organizational duties would reduce the amount of required teaching under the guidelines of the so called "gentlemen's agreement" that was in place before the TA points system. That agreement was (as good as we know), that teaching 1 course per semester, except the first and last semester of the PhD, would be enough to fulfill the teaching duties of a (Science) PhD.
- d. It is still not clear what the MT expects of PhDs in terms of the 20%. We would like a specific statement in the newsletter about teaching duties and organisational tasks. The newsletter will be sent somewhere in December.

3. Conclude from TA point system

- a. Communication. This could have been better. Because it took very long for the MT to come with a concrete proposal, it took a while for the PhD council to communicate anything about this to the PhD council. In retrospect we could have communicated sooner the intermediate plans of the the MT (or at least the lack of a concrete proposal by them) and the stance of the PhD council on this to the PhD community.
- b. Is there still an agreement regarding that the organizational duties count? We need a clarification from MT.

4. MT meeting preparation

- a. MT item 2 (PVC 2016)
 - i. We received a question about the PVC report phrase "We have observed that channels to give feedback about the courses [...] tend to under-represent PhD candidates with positive or constructive opinions." We would like a clarification on this.
 - ii. When will the management send out a response to the ILLC community about the PVC report (like last time)?
- b. MT item 3 (FGw representative)
 - i. Chenwei represents Humanities ILLC PhDs within the council.

- ii. He is not a member of the FGw PhD council at this point.
 - c. MT item 4 (Skills courses):
 - i. We received a comment/suggestion that people do not want these courses to be mandatory, but rather optional.
 - ii. Can the MT give a statement on why it should be these courses and why they are mandatory?
 - d. MT item 5 (TA allocation):
 - i. We need the ILLC to provide a digital platform for TA allocation, that can be maintained by the ILLC and for which they can offer technical support. Right now we are using a system that runs on a PhD's personal web server, which is not sustainable. We need this to be set up soon, because the current situation is not workable for much longer.
 - e. Other input to MT meeting:
 - i. We would like the MT meeting agenda earlier, and more information about the items. This is so that we can send out the agenda of this meeting to the PhD community beforehand, and ask for their input and opinion on these matters.
 - ii. We propose the MT meeting minutes to be arranged by the MT itself, not by PhD candidates.
- 5. Diversity.
 - a. We skipped this item due to time constraints.
- 6. AOB
 - a. Sara is meeting with people that are interested in organizing *Life after ILLC*. MT made a budget available for this event. If more is needed, the committee needs to ask Jenny together with an argumentation as to why more is needed.
 - b. Joost is stepping down as the secretary.
 - i. We clarified the role of the secretary. The secretary schedules the PhD council meetings, and announces each meeting to the PhD council, together with the place and the agenda. The chair creates the agenda and sends it to the secretary beforehand. The secretary takes minutes during the meeting and afterwards asks the members for feedback and approval of the minutes, and makes sure they are put online after being approved.
 - ii. There was not a volunteer yet during this meeting to take over the role of secretary.