

Attending:

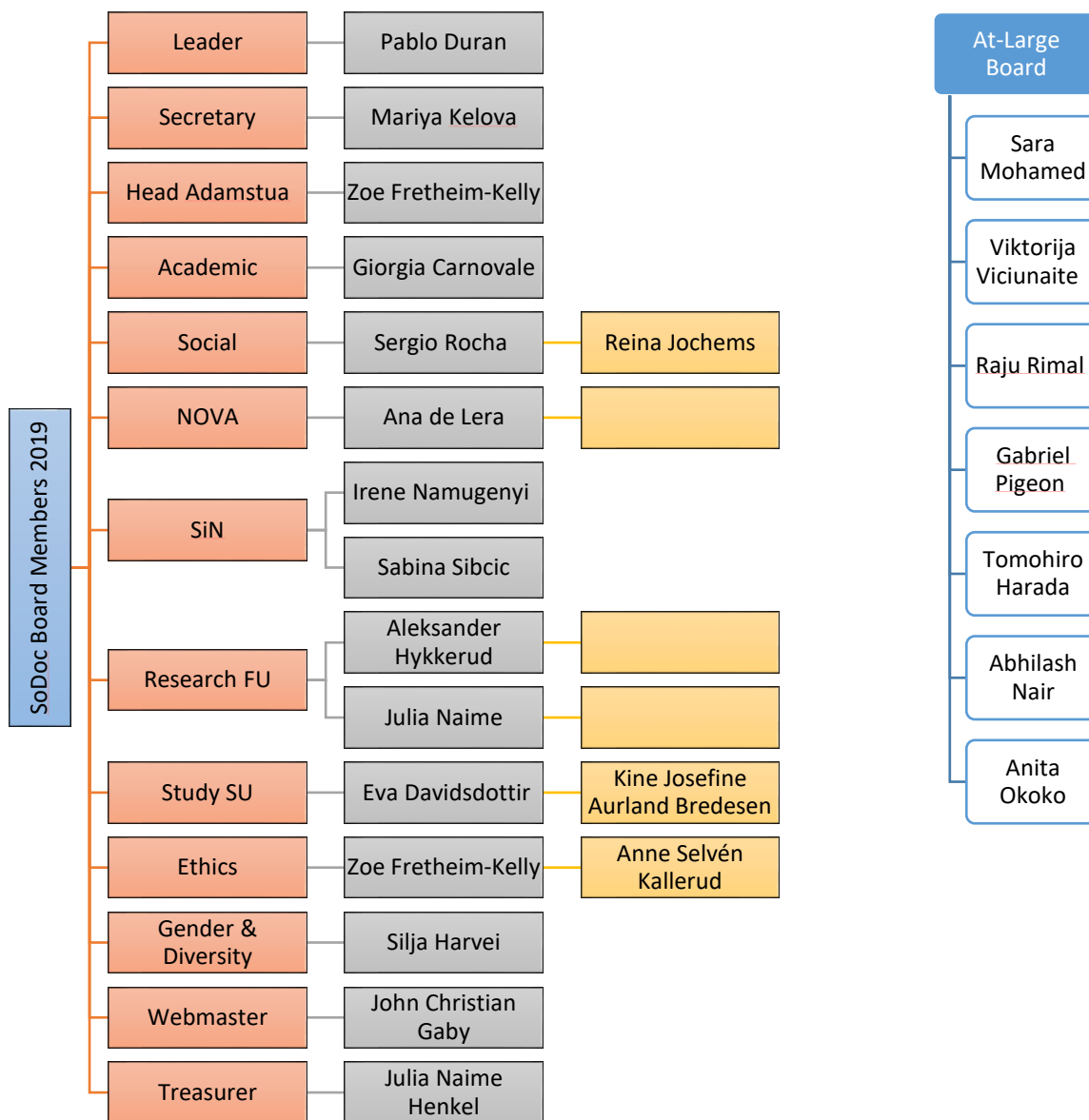
Sara Gaber; Giorgia Carnovale; Gabriel Pigeon; Ana Maria de Lera Garrido; Irene Namugenyi; Silje Harvei; Julia Del Carmen Naime Sanchez Henkel; John Christian Gaby; Pablo Ignacio Adolfo Duran Flores; Anita Okoko; Abhilash Muralidharan Nair; Mariya Kelova; Raju Rimal; Sabina Sibcic; Sergio Domingos Cardoso Da Rocha; Tomohiro Harada; Viktorija Viciunaite; Anne Selven Kallerud.

The meeting outline, prepared by Sara Mohammed, is given below in blue headings and black text, whereas the meeting minutes are in orange text.

The minutes were recorded by secretary Mariya Kelova and edited by webmaster John Christian Gaby.

SoDoC board meeting agenda

1. Introduction of Board



Minutes

- Short introductions and overview by Sara about routines during last year's meetings.

2. Social committee:

Generally we have a very active program for the social committee and we use most of the budget each year. We could introduce some smaller programming (pay-day drinks, etc.), but this would require a team effort.

- Board games
- Pay-days activities: bowling, etc.
- Ski trip: 8-10 March
- Family day (SoDoC really wants to see an activity organized for its members that have families, volunteers for this initiatives)

Minutes

- There was a lot of interest and many registrants for the board games event (08.02.2019).
- The next event is bowling on 12.02.2019, paid for by SoDoC.
- There were a few ideas about the monthly Pay-Day activities organized by SoDoC – These could be shifted more toward gatherings/discussions of general appeal in order to avoid an association the event as a drinking activity, which may not appeal to some SoDoC members; instead, these could be organized as informal discussions on a topic academic or general interest to SoDoC, and there could be an invited speaker. April's Pay-Day event could be held in Oslo. May's Pay-Day event could be combined with the Holmenkollstafetten, and perhaps SoDoC can organize a team to participate.
- An update was given on the ski trip – registration is open for 8-10 March and SoDoC is planning for this to be a fun and relaxing experience for members. The accommodation will be at Per Gynt Lodge, Feforvegen 124, 2640 Vinstra, Oppland, and it is still to be decided the means of transportation based upon the number of registrants and the number of registrants willing and able to drive their own vehicles.
- The introduction to skiing on 16.02.2019 can be considered as a family event.

3. PhD Orientation Day (March 7th)

- Pablo and Sergio going?

- Previously we talked about improvement of this day, e.g. Boot camp model, NMBU walking tour around the campus, etc. The R&I are trying to improve it yearly and are open for suggestions? Improvement will happen gradually so inputs are welcome.

Minutes

- It is usually the leader and the social committee board members that represent SoDoC on Orientation Day.
- The PhD Orientation Day is tightly packed with information, which makes it difficult to follow and assimilate everything. One idea is to organize the introduction in the form of a "bootcamp". This should take few weeks and it has to be done by the university. Another idea is to discuss with SiT about organizing a generic introduction day for foreigners. Other ideas are to look into possibilities for a buddy program or a PhD handbook. The handbook should also be prepared by the university, and this is timeconsuming and requires substantial effort and the university should ultimately be responsible for what information/rules are disseminated to the PhDs.
- We should take the issue to the Pro-Rector again and keep pressing for better provision of information to incoming PhD students.

4. Academic Committee

- Series of lectures/seminars on requested topics from the 2018 Survey – Could be linked with Payday drinks as Autumn semester 2018
- Some topics ideas from 2018:
 - Overcoming obstacles in the PhD; ½ day seminar for PhDs (and potentially open to masters students) to teach tips and tricks for overcoming common challenges in completing the PhD
 - Getting organized, getting started on writing, staying on top of emails/other work, managing research against teaching responsibilities, managing other opportunities (conferences, etc.) against research needs, maintaining life outside of the PhD
 - Could be part of a PhD health series (2-3 seminars over course of year?)
 - Peer review, tips, tricks, and shared experiences to help PhDs overcome the hurdles of publishing
 - Entrepreneurship, valorizing scientific research, how to turn your research into business, from an academic lecturer, hosting a successful example from NMBU or outside (a startup), visiting an incubator

(This could also turn into a workshop with experienced mentors to help PhD visualizing the possibilities of their work)

Minute

- We need to plan how to advertise SoDoC with posters and brochures.
- What can be done to reach out to Postdocs (some is relevant for reaching out PhD students as well):
 - Challenging, as they arrive at different times, not separated from the rest of the scientific staff as the PhD students (in e-mail lists or office spaces), and they do not have a main contact person (PhD adviser).
 - Posters and brochures can be a way to reach out.
 - Ways were discussed of bringing in broader participation in SoDoC's activities and greater awareness of the organization. One way could be to have a link for the SoDoC web page and email list in the initial e-mail sent by the university to new employees.
 - Or we could directly contact everyone in the faculty/university via email with info on SoDoC events and updates.
- Within each faculty, we could:
 - Appoint faculty representatives to go "door by door" to contact PhD students, postdocs, and temporary researchers.
 - Work with the Human Resources administrative official in each faculty who is responsible for first contact with new employees in order to provide them with a brochure, written by SoDoC, with information on the organization and how to become an active member, so that every newcomer to the university knows about SoDoC.
- It is not possible to look into the e-mail list with those that are subscribed to SoDoC, presumably because IT controls this and places restrictions on the data release due to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- Viktorija have presenters in mind for short talks/seminars on machine learning, co-authoring, work health and entrepreneurship.
- Landsam have experience in organizing seminars and discussions. Tim Richardson is often willing to participate in discussions and give presentations.
- Such events can also be considered part of the social committee work.
- An update was provided on the writing course and how it was organized previously. It is funded by the research and innovation office (R&I). We are not sure when it will be funded. The feedback from the R&I office has been very positive, as it has been from the PhD students as well. All sessions are booked very early. Zoe is working on initiating a similar service in Adamstua.

Improving the PHI401 course (ethics) (continuous request over the years...)

- Idea of having first week of course centralized, then second week held in each faculty to aim at individual student/department needs
- Allocate more time for lectures about ethics and Intellectual Properties (both were only for 2 hrs!)

Minutes

- The need for improvement/reform of the PHI401 course has been an ongoing discussion for the last few years.
- It also came up as an issue in the survey conducted by SoDoC last year.
- It is generally held to be a difficult and slow process to enact change through channels in the university administration, but we can provide constant reminders and bringing issues to the attention of the Pro-Rector through SoDoC's meetings with him/her, and eventually, as in the case of the offering of Norwegian language courses in the past, the administration has, in some cases, acted on SoDoC's insistence.

5. Adamstuen Activities plans

- Petcha Kucha: entertainment for students Feb 13
- Life science week 11-14 Feb – Young Talent with UiO
- Vet 400 into: all PhDs attend; promote SoDoC (week 8)
- Writing club initiative by Post-docs on Oslo Campus: Zoe is formulating a plan with the Post-docs who proposed it. Possible launch in spring. Question: Budget allocation? From where and how much? Guest lecture cost if proven popularity.

- a. Create a club for peer editing among PhD students, to facilitate peer editing.
- b. Allows for rapid feedback on writing in a non-judgmental sphere and provides practice for peer reviewing.
- c. Ideas for structuring this:

- i. Peer-editing: One day per week, students send us any writing that they would like peer reviewed that week (limited to one section of a traditional scientific paper: intro, method, results, discussion). We then swap around everyone's docs amongst those that made submissions (this helps to create a deadline to complete some piece of writing).
- ii. Staff writing advice: One afternoon per month, we (and potentially other staff that we recruit to volunteer if the program proves popular) make ourselves available to graduate students in the department for one on one editing and general scientific writing advice. They would bring a piece of writing or outline of a paper to us and we would talk it through with them to help teach them how to structure a paper, create a story around the data, etc.

Minutes

- Young Talents is a very popular event. We could consider organizing something only for NMBU. The academic committee should address this.
- The idea of a writing club, which reportedly is being organized by some postdoctoral researchers at Adamstuen, was shared. The idea is that it may serve as a type of writing exchange whereby students and researchers critique each others' writing. The writing club was held to be a very good idea, and hence we can think about organizing it at campus Ås as well. Postdocs, however, could be too busy to spare time for it. The idea could, however, better function as an exchange.
- Another idea could be to organize unsupervised silent writing workshops for students at Adamstuen in order to get together and motivate each other to write.

6. New business

- Stipend program- 20K nok – Develop a program plan, rules and regulation, operationalize the program and evaluate it.
- Post-Docs events
- Review proposal/requests about compensation for university committees and board member positions (developed by Tomohiro) - Develop policy on board hours compensation

Open discussion about what can be done with the extra money (ideas suggestion are open throughout the meeting with accordance to other committees activities needs)

Minutes

- Regarding the stipend program - other universities have similar programs that can be used as a template and are available on-line; for example, DION at NTNU. We would need to formulate guidelines for the program, and the program should be open to as many people as possible and widely advertised.
- The idea of organizing events of general appeal to postdocs was also discussed under point 4 of the agenda. There could be a welcome day for post docs, but it is hard to organize, as they come at different times. The welcome day for employees can be used point people to more on the information on the web. Postdoc meetings/get-togethers can be about sharing/providing information about platforms for funds, research institutions.
- A Postdoc lunch event was suggested by Gabriel, and he will look into organizing it.
- Compensation - the R&I office have their own rules and modus operandi, and thus we have very little flexibility in terms of the amount for compensation of the SoDoC board's work and how to allocate it. Therefore, if we put in the effort to develop something, then we should first be assured that it will be received and implemented by R&I, and then we should consider that we may not be fully compensated for full amount of time invested.

7. PhD community

- What do we know about the composition of the PhD/Postdoc community? How many Quota? Gender? Nationalities?
- Inclusivity
- English as official language across faculties
- Do we need another survey?

Minutes

- The composition of the PhD/Postdoc community – It would be helpful to know more about the diversity of the community we are charged with representing, but it is a challenge to acquire such information due to data sharing restrictions stemming from the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- The survey - last year the survey was done as a self-assessment, to look into what was the role of SoDoC according to the members.
- The other points were not discussed because we were running out of time and a few members have already needed to leave.

8. Political role of SoDoC

- Is there a need for this or this is covered by other organizations (Unions for instance)
- Topics SoDoC should stand for?
 - Posture about Quota system?
 - Research policies in Norway?
 - Other educational/research related topics

Minutes

- SoDoC is a non-political organization but this point was discussed as issues of social importance.
- Should SoDoC take a stance about the quota students? How fair is to have PhD students under different contracts and conditions performing the same work? Such questions need to be discussed by the whole PhD, postdoc, and temporary researcher community rather than only by the SoDoC Board. Discussions can be organized at the university level or at the national level, like for instance through our representatives in the organization SiN.
- SoDoC can organize discussions or debates (with a moderator) as events. We can invite the Pro-Rector to those events. The academic committee or a newly formed committee can be responsible for follow-up and organizing of these events.

9. Additional topics... ?

The date and time for the next meeting will be decided with a doodle poll in the coming weeks.