

# Meeting of the PhD Council on 08.07.2021

**Starting time at 4:14 pm**

## **Agenda:**

1) Vote on moderation language

German was unanimously chosen as the moderation language.

2) Confirmation/determination of chair (Daniel Seelbach) and minutes (Jonathan Vogt)

Chosen people were confirmed.

3) Determination of those present and establishment of the quorum

Luca von Bogdandy (FB 01)

Robert Beyer (FB 01) – until 5 pm

Lia Musitz (FB 03) Jonathan Vogt (FB 03)

Laura Weidlich (FB 06) – until 5 pm

Sabine Ahmadzai (FB 07)

Christina Engelmann (FB 08)

Daniel Seelbach (FB 08)

Maike Melles (FB 08)

Michael Jekel (FB 09)

Iris Arndt (FB 11)

Melanie Lauffenburger (FB 11) – until 5 pm

Jan Zimmermann (FB 13)

Marina Dajka (FB 13)

Julia Ratke (FB 15)

4) Possible amendments and approval of the agenda

No amendments proposed and no votes against the agenda.

5) Possible amendments and approval of the minutes of the meeting of April 15, 2021.

No amendments proposed and no votes against the agenda.

6) Scheduling next meetings

Julia Ratke is creating Doodle polls for the next two meetings.

7) Clarification of responsibilities for next meeting

Minutes: Marina Dajka

Invitation: Julia Ratke (as member of the board)

Chair: Iris Arndt

8) Rules of Procedure

**a) Gender sensitive language (Julia Ratke, Lia Musitz)**

Julia has inquired information at the Equal Opportunities Office, according to their information there is an official recommendation which recommends the asterisk spelling and use of the plural.

Michael asks whether this is also available in English, which Julia confirms.

Since the rules of procedure would have to be adopted in a plenary meeting, the question arises as to how we organize this in order to be able to conduct a correct election. Christina remarks that according to decisions of the presidium there should be face-to-face teaching and face-to-face events in the coming winter semester again, so we could also hold a plenary meeting in person. In addition, there are tools for anonymous and secure voting if necessary (namely: Straw Poll).

Daniel therefore pleads for a planning of the plenary meeting in presence and suggests to start a working group for this. Melanie, Luca, Maïke and Jonathan would like to participate in the working group, and Christina is available as a contact person for questions regarding the room.

#### 9) Report from the committee meetings (Julia Ratke, Christina Engelmann).

Christina reports from the last two Senate meetings in May and June:

- There is a new person in the university council, Mr. Udo Corts, who introduced himself and his motivation in the senate meeting. The representatives of the AStA asked Mr. Corts about his statements in favor of tuition fees during his time in the Koch government. Mr. Corts answered that his position at that time is no longer his current position.
- There is a new guideline on appointment procedures, which was criticized by students for not taking teaching into account enough. Several senators also criticized the lack of consideration given to self-administration. However, there was agreement that the problem of the lack of young scientists is a recognized problem. There is now a new sentence on interdisciplinary competencies, which states that not only research, but also teaching is an essential part of the work.
- The report on the activities of GRADE was received positively.
- The vaccination modalities at the university were discussed, which, however, were no longer current at the time of this meeting. There was a complaint that many groups were left out of the prioritization, with many of those who have to be present at the university being among them.
- The organization of the coming winter semester was discussed. This is to be planned in person, even if it is not entirely predictable whether this can be realized in the end. Rooms should again be 100% bookable and at least 50% of the events should take place in attendance. It is recommended to get vaccinated, also there should be testing possibilities at the university. There were no statements on the additional workload for lecturers due to hybrid planning, and the technical equipment would probably not be available everywhere at the start of the semester.

Jan asks whether there is also news about the provision of materials and to what extent there are offers for lecturers to learn how to use them. Christina answers that it has been reported that there is a new video software (BigBlueButton) that is supposed to do hybrid teaching better and that in the next senate meeting it will be discussed to what extent lecturers can receive further training. to what extent teachers can receive training in order to be able to use the software.

Luca asks who would decide which events should ultimately take place in hybrid, presence or in a digital manner. Christina answers that this is up to the departments, which are required to have at least 50% of the events take place in person. In detail, the planning should be performed in consultation with the teachers and lecturers. However, it still needs to be clarified how a transition from face-to-face to following digital events can be achieved. Julia asks whether there is also news about internships. The current problem is that there is only limited lab capacity for employees, but there are more interns to supervise, which leaves less time and space for the employees' own work. Christina answers that it was only announced that the university wants to reopen as much as possible. Jan adds that the problem is not the same for all departments; in the physics rooms, for example, there is currently no serious space problem.

- Now that a second bookstall has also burned down, (the investigation is ongoing) the senate is looking at the extent to which the university can help affected individuals.
- The AStA chairwoman Kyra Beninga reported hate messages after rallies against anti-semitism. In addition, there are also increasing reports from Jewish students.
- The WG Sustainability presented its report and pleaded for a reduction of air travel. This was controversially discussed in the senate, some senators see this as an interference in their freedom of research.

#### 10) Reports from the working groups

##### **a) Working group „Online Umlauf“ (Mami Odoom)**

Not present, therefore no report.

##### **b) Working group “Flyer” (Sören Tholen)**

Not present, therefore no report.

##### **c) Working group “Fun” (Iris Arndt)**

An (at least informal) meeting will be put to discussion via doodle, which will take place by the end of August or beginning of September on the Riedberg Campus. Sabine and Marina are joining the working group.

A “Fun”-event in combination with the plenary meeting this year will not take place, as it seems irresponsible due to the higher number of attending people.

##### **d) Working group “Academic self-administration and working conditions at the university” (Michael Jekel, Lia Musitz, Christina Engelmann, Jonathan Vogt)**

The position paper which was sent by the working group prior to the meeting was discussed.

Christina first explains the background of the position paper - it was preceded by discussion in a senate meeting as a result of the dispute between the presidium and the AStA, which it was argued about who decides or should decide what topics fall under university politics and what is general politics. In particular, several senators criticized the quick resort to court instead of a discussion in proven bodies such as the Senate or the Jour Fixe, in which an exchange between the AStA and the Presidium already exists and is established. In addition, several senate members expressed concern that, as a result of such a separation of university and general policy on the part of the presidium, they would soon no longer be allowed to express themselves on certain topics.

The subsequent discussion of the position paper revealed that there is dissent within the PhD Council on some points, but broad agreement on others. Iris sees a basic agreement within the PhD Council at least in the fact that the legal process is wrong and therefore proposes to shorten the position paper to those areas where there is consensus.

After a further discussion on the extent to which this could be done in time for the next Senate meeting and the discussion of further differences of opinion, all participants agreed to meet again after the official meeting and to work out a compromise proposal on the basis of the position paper sent out in advance. A decision on this would then be taken by circulation procedure. First, the original position paper would be voted on, and then - if this did not achieve a majority - the jointly developed compromise proposal. Jan and Marina will take care of the organization of the vote.

**Addendum (12.07.2021):** During the circulation procedure, the jointly developed proposal was approved.

11) Clarification of our concerns for next Senate meeting on 07/14/2021  
This depends on the voting result under item 10 d)

12) Free exchange about (new) topics in the PhD students' convention  
No new topics.

13) Others  
No other topics

**Closing of the meeting at 6:29 pm**