

# Report from the Board of Directors meeting 29.IV.2014

## **Main topics of interest for the students**

1. General communications
2. Establishment and appointment of Ombudsperson
3. Old and new professor position, and professor salary issues.
4. Allotment of funding for IV year students
5. Master in High Performance Computing, Science Communication and Complex Action. Rules for PhD students.
6. Establishment of Joint International PhD Course in Molecular Biology, together with ICGEB, University of Trieste, and University of Udine.
7. Yearly report from CUG (Comitato Unico di Garanzia/Central Committee for the workplace well-being and against discrimination)

### **1. General communications**

On May, 6<sup>th</sup> the Main Lecture Hall (Aula Magna) will be entitled to prof. Paolo Budinich, the main founder of SISSA recently passed away. The ceremony will be held at noon.

On September, 24<sup>th</sup> the HPC cluster should be officially inaugurated. Actually, the work will be completed in June, so the machine is going to be used starting from the summer.

The aggregated results for the Evaluation of the PhD courses has been briefly presented; in general there is an improvement of the results, but there are some strange phenomena that do not seem to be merely statistical (more details from NUV representative) and that will be addressed in a future meeting between the Director and the students/students' representatives

### **2. Establishment and appointment of Ombudsperson**

After the approval by the Senate a couple of weeks earlier, the establishment of the Ombudsperson Office is finally approved in the form the Students' Council proposed. The Director appointed as Ombudsperson prof. Alessandro Laio (SBP) and, as deputy ombudsperson, prof. Daniele Amati (TPP).

### **3. Old and new professor position, and professor salary issue**

Starting from April, 1<sup>st</sup> the Area of Mathematics (Group of Mathematical Physics) has hired as an Assistant Professor (fixed term) dr. Alessandro Michelangeli, winner of a FIR Grant "Mathematical Physics for Condensed Matter". The term will expire in March, 2017

Dr. Capone (CM), Dr. Gambassi (SP) and Dr. Bussi (SBP) are now Prof. Capone, Prof. Gambassi, and Prof. Bussi, having been appointed as Associate Professors.

A new position for a Full Professor in Theoretical Physics (02/A2) has been opened for an internal promotion, according to the triennial plan of hiring.

It has been briefly presented a regulation for an increase of salary to some professors, as a partial compensation for the block of the automatic salary advancement; the topic of interest for us is that in order to grant it the professors have to be evaluated, partly on the didactic point of view. For this single call (it should be an *una tantum*) we have decided to rely on the general satisfaction of the PhD course, since we do not have a record of personal evaluation (and we have not it yet), but the Director started to foretell that a form of personal, classified evaluation should (and it is going to) be implemented.

### **4. Allotment of funding for IV year students**

Despite we haven't had all the Progress reports yet, the funding for the IV years according to the

request by the students have been allotted – the actual promotion will be consequent to the examination by the different PhD committees. All the three years student but 3 in Geometry (who cannot extend the PhD because of the Master degree fellowship they have enjoyed) have presented request for the IV year.

## **5. Master in HPC and rules for PhD students**

Starting from November the classes for the Joint ICTP-SISSA Master in HPC will be held (some preliminary experimental classes have started this year). We approved regulations for the PhD students wanting to enroll the master; before applying a student must have the authorization from his/her PhD course committee, even if he/she does not want to attend all the master but only some courses. For the ones who apply for the master, SISSA will grant 6k out of 7k euros of fee, awarding the difference only after the successful graduation. Also the call for students to the master in Science Communication and in Complex Actions (next year topic: neuroscience of ageing) have been announced.

## **6. Joint International Phd in Molecular Biology**

After a long discussion, the governing bodies of SISSA have approved the proposal by Neuroscience Area for the establishment, starting from the academic year 2014/15, of an International PhD Course in Molecular Biology, in cooperation with the ICGEB and the University of Trieste and Udine. In the first year there will be offered six fellowships (among which, 2 paid by SISSA). The faculty of the course is very renowned and has a keen interest in different fields of the research in molecular biology (ranging from our Genomics group to the research on cancer by Del Sal, or stem cells...). Consequently, for the next academic year the number of fellowships in Genomics will be decreased by 1.

This decision, despite being approved unanimously by both the Senate and the Board, actually has met the fierce opposition by the professors in the Physics Area, who deem that it is too similar (and, practically, a copy) of our Genomics curriculum. Since the networking with other Italian universities and foreign research centers (for the practical scope, ICGEB, but possibly Aachen in the near future) is mostly welcomed and supported by the Regional and Italian Government, and because of the indubitable major value that a faculty consisting in our scientist and some other top-value colleagues (Giacca from ICGEB, Del Sal from UniTS, Morgante from UniUD) endow, the School decided to go on with the project. After the end of the first cycle, anyway, the question whether to discontinue one of the two courses (Molecular Biology or Genomics) will be asked again and possibly (imperatively, according to the Physics professors) answered once for all.

## **7. Yearly report from the CUG**

The acronym CUG stands for Comitato Unico di Garanzia (Central Committee against discrimination and for the workers' well-being), it is composed by representatives of the SISSA employees, of the professors and of the students. Once a year it releases a report about the internal discrimination and gender equality, together with a list of recommendations to improve the situation. The female/male ratio in SISSA is bad (it means, less than 1:2); the most equal category are postdocs and other fellowships, ~2:3; the worst are professors, 1:9. It must be said that such a situation is common not only in Italy, but in general in all the Academia around Europe. The list of proactive proposals for the next three years has been notified. It is divided in three parts: the first one is about gender and linguistic equality, in which a remark about English translation of all the regulation and documents of interest of the personal has been raised. As students, we highlighted the fact that even if such regulations are translated – and it does not always happen – the translations are done much later: as an example, the new general Didactic regulation has been approved more than six months ago, but the English version is still to update. The remaining parts of the proposals are about private life/working life facilitation (basically, strengthening of what we already do and a remark about meetings at an earlier time), and general and organizational well-being (extension of the psychological support to all the personal and not only to students,

ombudsperson and confidential counselor, more transparency in the acts and the decrees of the administration). It is worthy to recall that this is a (albeit influential) mere list of proposals.