

Report from the Board of Directors meeting 28.V.2015

The main topic of the meeting is of primary importance for the students, being about the modifications of the teaching regulations. This is the reaction of the Senate and of the Board for the number of delays in the defenses we had discussed in the previous two meetings.

Main topics of interests for the students

1. Modification of Teaching Regulation of PhD courses
2. II tranche of Areas' budget
3. Survey on the past years' postponement of PhD defenses (2012-2014)
4. Entrance exams – Spring session
5. Best PhD thesis award
6. News about the Master in Complex Actions
7. Bus disservices

1. Modification of the Teaching Regulation of PhD courses

Because of the recent list of postponements of PhD defenses (sometimes funded, sometimes not), the School (its Education Committee and the Senate, firstly) decided to change the Teaching Regulation, in order to avoid (if possible) and however control the final part of the PhD courses. As a rule, the thesis should be defended between three months before and three months after the scheduled end of the PhD course (September/October of the 4th year, generally). Moreover, the postponement after the end of the fourth year can be asked and granted **just once. For the time span between the end of the 4th year and the defense, the Area must provide the students with a fellowship on external funds.** This latter requirement will be in force starting from October 2015 for the postponements after the three months (the ones that must be approved by the Senate and Board), and from September 2016 for the postponements within three months.

Other modifications of the Regulation in force since now are

- a) A PhD student may enroll and/or attend a master course or a specialization school at SISSA or at other institution only after the approval of the Teaching Board.
- b) The suspension of the PhD fellowship (that used to last up to 5 months for each reason, namely maternity/paternity leave, illness or serious personal/family issues) in case of maternity can be granted up to 12 months, if the maternity prevents the student to access the laboratories and, hence, work on her research project.

It is worthy noticing that modification a) is justified by the fact that several postponements have been required for people who attended masters organized by the School during the PhD course. Modification b) replies to a critical situation the Students' Council had already reported about in the 2013-14 Report to the School Council.

A couple of proposals for new modifications will be addressed to the Education Committee in the next weeks: about the need for an internal supervisor when the external one is member of the Faculty of the PhD courses, at the moment in force but to be dropped, and about the list of external tutors that the School should provide and the students pick among, to be dropped as well since it has never been in force despite having been in the regulation for years.

2. II tranche Areas' budget

The Board has granted the II tranche of the Areas' budget for year 2015, since the financial situation is good and there are no problems with its sustainability.

3. Survey on the past years' postponement of PhD defenses (2012-2014)

During the meeting of March, 31st the Board asked to the Students' Secretariat to report about all the postponements granted in the previous years, to have a clearer picture of the situation. Since a.a 2011-12 there have been 13 postponements of more than three months, 1 by Physics, 1 by Mathematics and 11 by Neuroscience, 3 dating back to 2011-12, 2 to 2012-13 and 7 in 2013-14.

4. Entrance exams – Spring session

There have been the spring session of the entrance exams for AP, SP, CNS, and CM for the next academic year. Moreover there has been the preselection for not-EU candidates for all the courses but SP, CM and JUMBO. The results are summarized in the following table:

PhD courses	Spring session			Preselection of not EU	
	Positions	Applications	Admitted	Applications	Admitted
<i>AP</i>	5	22	1	43	1
<i>APP</i>				61	0
<i>CM</i>	5	48	5+2		
<i>SBP</i>				63	0
<i>SP</i>	5	42	5+1		
<i>TPP</i>				78	0
<i>GMP</i>				57	2
<i>MAMA</i>				87	1
<i>CNS</i>	7	32	4	58	0
<i>NB</i>				73	0
<i>SFG</i>				50	
Total	22	144	15+3	570	4

It should be noticed that some of the applicants to the selection for not EU candidates have been invited to sit for the exam during the ordinary session.

5. Best PhD thesis award

As usual we have approved the call for the best PhD thesis award, aimed to the people who defended between March 1st, 2014 and February 28th, 2015. There will be one award of 1000 EUR for the best thesis in each Area. The deadline is September, 8th. An analogue call has been issued for the best thesis of the Master in Science Communication.

6. News about the Master in Complex Action

A discussion has started among the Master board and the Director about the planning of next year's edition of the Master in Complex Action, due to some organizational issues and to some skepticism about the commitments.

7. Bus disservices

The Director has been asked for news about the bus line situation, because of the well-known overcrowding in the rush hour. The Director replied that the Provincia of Trieste assured that from the next term of the bus tender the buses of line 4 should have stopped in front of SISSA (and run down/uphill through Strada Nuova per Opicina). Nevertheless, the tender was sentenced irregular by the Administrative Court and everything is stopped.