ISTITUTO DI SCIENZE DELLA VITA

Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna

PhD in Agrobiodiversity

REPORT OF THE PhD FACULTY BOARD MEETING #39

17 February 2017

	Present	Absent
1. Prof. Paolo Bàrberi (Coordinator)	X	
2. Dr Susanna Bartolini	X	
3. Prof. Enrico Bonari		X
4. Dr Simona Bosco		X
5. Prof. Laura Ercoli	X	
6. Dr Anna Mensuali	X	
7. Dr Erica Mica		X
8. Dr Anna-Camilla Moonen (Secretary)	X	
9. Prof. Enrico Pè	X	
10. Prof. Pierdomenico Perata		X
11. Dr Ruggero Petacchi		X
12. Prof. Enrico Porceddu		X
13. Dr Chiara Pucciariello	X	
14. Prof. Luca Sebastiani		X
15. Prof. Pietro Tonutti		X
16. Dr Andrea Zuccolo		X

AGENDA:

1. Presentation of newly enrolled student: Seyoum A. KASSAW
Appointment of new student's supervisor and co-supervisor(s).
2. PhD students' presentations for admission to 3rd year
Board evaluation.
3. PhD students' presentations for admission to 2nd year
Board evaluation.
4. PhD programme: transition towards a 4-yr duration: formalities and roadmap
5. Miscellanea (if any)

… OMISSIS…

5. PhD programme: transition towards a 4-year duration – formalities and roadmap

- The PhD faculty Board discusses the formal requirements needed for the transition to a 4-year duration of the PhD programme, which has recently been approved. The change of duration may require the reduction of the number of scholarships from 6 to 5, to avoid eroding the residual PhD budget to a great extent. In this respect, the Coordinator received an e-mail from the Rector, saying that:

(i) He agrees on the change from 3 to 4 years and wishes that all the PhD programmes of the School will do the same because this would improve the overall quality of PhD students' curricula, although this may reduce the Ministry budget for PhDs. In fact, this - for the time being - is partly based on the total number of PhD students of an institution;

(ii) He sees a potential problem in the reduction of foreign PhD students, an indicator linked to the amount of Ordinary Management Funding (FFO) received by the School from the Ministry. In this respect, he suggests to keep the number of scholarships stable at 6, at least in an initial phase.

- The PhD faculty Board understands the potential problem raised by the Rector but is of the opinion that keeping the number of scholarships at 6 (× 4 years) would require an increase in the overall PhD budget of at least 20,000 €/year, to be borne by the School. This should be no major problem, considering that keeping the number of foreign PhD students high would mean an increase of ca. 1 million € of FFO for the School. This discussion will be reprised in the next PhD faculty Board meeting.
- The PhD faculty Board is convinced that the passage to a 4-year programme will improve quality of tuition and courses, reduce the risk of project failure, allow completion of project in due time without major difficulties, increase research outputs like the number of publications generated within the time course of the PhD, and improve PhD students curricula and hence their chances of getting a post-doc or another suitable position in the aftermath. All these will eventually turn into positive quality indicators of the overall PhD Programme.

- From the point of view of formalities, no major requirements are needed so far. The rationale for the passage from 3 to 4 years will need to be duly justified at the time of the next accreditation round (spring 2018). This would be the appropriate time to make any substantial changes to the composition of the PhD faculty Board, e.g. including foreign experts.
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… OMISSIS …

With no further issues to be discussed, the Coordinator closes the meeting at 13.00.

THE COORDINATOR

Prof. Paolo Bàrberi