

Preparation Group, 24th of April, 2010, 10:15, FCE, St. Cyril & Methodius, Skopje

Participants: G. Schmid, D. Arangelovic, M. Cvetkovska, R. Höffer, E. Dumova, P. Cvetanovski, N. Bokan, G. Vuksanovic, M. Petronijevic

Agenda:

1. Welcome and organizational remarks
 2. Confirmation of the proposed agenda
 3. Results of the previous meeting
 4. Status of doctoral programs at the faculties at Belgrade, Nis, Skopje
 5. Suggestions about program elements for implementation
 6. Next steps and definition of milestones
 7. List of members of the preparation group
 8. Information
 9. Any other business
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1. Welcome and organizational remarks (P. Cvetanovski, E. Dumova)
Welcome words from the Dean of the faculty
Organizational remarks from E. Dumova including remarks on the reimbursements of travel and accommodation costs
 2. Confirmation of the proposed agenda, amendments and proposals for changes (all s. agenda)
 3. Results of the previous meeting (R. Hoeffler)
 - Visit to the International Office, Monika Sprung, rectorate staff of doctoral and post-doctoral candidates – offers assistance through her department for the implementation of international candidates like future members of SEEFORM
 - Explanation by Dr. Christiane Wüllner about the possibilities for the implementation of SEEFORM's candidates into the Research School at Bochum via the official guest program of RUB, remarks on the questions of transfer of ECTS, remarks on the financing of the guest program
 - Allowance for international lecturers in the SEEFORM program, open point: formal way of conducting the examinations under the guidance of external lecturers, probably through the invitation by the faculty meetings in order to charge external lecturers, probably Framework Agreements are required, U Skopje has not a framework agreement with RU Bochum, also not Belgrade, U Nis has a framework agreement (matter of the university)
 - Bilateral program elements from the SEE region and Germany are forming the SEEFORM program, it consists of certain elements which shall be specified during the preparation phase and which shall be financed through a budget from DAAD; probably no sur-place scholarships shall be granted in future
 - Is it possible to acknowledge ECTS earned at one of the partner university to fulfill the requirement of the own faculty program; obviously there is requirement to sign a memorandum of understanding: it is the recommendable to produce additional agreements between the universities in order to have program elements of SEEFORM implemented as integrated elements of the own doctoral programs at the three faculties

4. Status of doctoral programs at the faculties at Belgrade, Nis, Skopje (all)

St. Cyrill & Methodius University Skopje: “book of rules” is in power, FCE (Faculty of Civil Engineering) has prepared a doctoral program, which shall be accepted by the committee of education. In September there will be the first announcement for the new program (PhD school comparable to RU Research School):

30 ECTS for 5 subjects (selectable and specifically dedicated for the doctoral education) with examinations related to the area of investigation;

12 ECTS for a training program for research methodology, ethics in research, tools as software, experimental tools, generic skills; identical for all;

12 ECTS for progress seminars,

6 ECTS for workshops reports about own research,

(60 ECTS in total for 3 years,)

all elements above organized through the PhD school,

120 for the research on the thesis

The quality assurance shall be given through a list of requirements defined by the faculties for the lecturers and advisors; advisors: expert in the field (publications, not exclusively in the SCI list, but serious international conferences etc.), doing research in the field international research projects and research groups), experiences in the advisement of master and doctoral students (certain (low) number of theses). The doctoral candidates must have 2 papers in a serious int. journal at the end of the program. A team of advisors can be composed of one advisor from the faculty, plus as an option other advisors from the university or from external universities. A written agreement with other universities is not required but the allowance is given from the faculty. Three directions are possible at this moment: Civil Engineering, Geodesy and Earthquake Engineering (IZIIS).

Belgrade, Nis (only acc. for 5 students, study program exclusively in Civil Engineering): accreditation procedure acc. to standards of the “commission of accreditation and external evaluation of Serbia” (15 members), elected by the national council for higher education whose members are elected by the parliament, all lecturers involved in the program: 5 papers in the area from which 1 paper is published in an int. journal (SCI-list); a commission checks such requirements, eg. FCE: 120 subjects for master studies (2 years course), lecturers for PhD study at the FCE ca. 20 professors, this covers only the field of Computational Engineering and Geodesy; the board for PhD studies review the wish of the PhD candidates and the possibilities with respect to the resources of lecturers; eg. Seismology is restricted due to the number of possible lecturers. As a consequence the number of possible lecturers shall be enlarged retaining the quality. Advisors need 5 papers in the SCI list. PhD studies of 1½ year lectures, 8 elective subjects from different fields (eg. maths, physics, i.e. basic subjects) to pass, work on the thesis after this period; requirements: for access to the defense each candidate must have 1 paper on the SCI list. ECTS are granted, 180 in total for three years (60 for the subjects and 120 for the research work). Problems are the number of possible advisors and the wrong impression of some candidates about a somewhat reduced work load to receive the degree. The team advisors can be composed of professors from different faculties and also from abroad. All advisors have to fulfill the given requirements. A doctoral program lasts 3 years, the thesis must be presented after 6 years in total on application, scholarships – if available – are granted for 3 years in general.

In Serbia the law for higher education is about to change. The discussions are going into the direction to change slightly the existing rules. E.g. a doctoral program could also be conducted without the proof of workload through ECTS.

German universities have not defined completely their structure of doctoral programs, the discussions are ongoing.

5. Suggestions about program elements to be implemented into a future joint doctoral program at the faculties of Civil Engineering of the universities of Belgrade, Nis, Skopje (joint SEE program) and SEEFORM (adapted bilateral SEE-German program)

The main idea is that the mentioned faculties and SEEFORM share the resources on international level for the sake of all doctoral candidates.

The faculties in SEE raise fees (Belgrade: 2000 EUR / year, Nis: 1200 EUR / year, Skopje 3000 EUR / 3 years). A part of this budget shall be used to finance the activities of the candidates regarding the program requirements (eg. accommodation / travel costs of the candidates in the region can be financed); this point shall be quoted as the financial contribution of the universities in the region to the program.

General new structure: every faculty builds up its own program, probably the three SEE universities open their programs for all their doctoral candidates and recognize vice-versa their achievements; the candidates can apply to be member of the extended (bilateral SEE-German) SEEFORM program, a part of these students (after selections through SEEFORM and afterward through DAAD) will be equipped with reimbursements of costs and with scholarships during a stay in Germany).

In addition a membership to this extended program requires the choice of a German co-advisor and an obligatory research stay at the institute of the German co-advisor in general.

Proposal: lecturers of courses must be recognized after the procedures of their respective university, eg. lecturers or advisors (!) from Germany must not be certified through the University of Belgrade eg. with respect to the required number of publications of papers in the SCI list.

Procedures of acceptance: it has to be investigated in what extent an agreement between the involved universities (SEE and Bochum) is needed to allow for the access of the doctoral candidates of all involved universities to the offered program elements.

Teaching in bachelor and master courses incl. ERASMUS External Window cooperation:

Skopje: some learning agreements have been signed eg. with Slovenia, Austria

Belgrade: visiting professors as international teaching staff has all rights concerning teaching questions as faculty professors, language problems can occur with the teaching off students, no problems are expected with doctoral candidates

The following doctoral directions shall be part of the extended doctoral program (incl. SEEFORM): Civil Engineering, Earthquake Engineering and Computational Engineering.

6. Next steps and definition of milestones (all)

Intended meeting at Belgrade at Sunday, 9th of May, 2010, in the morning with Mr. Zettler, Dr. Roerig and a part of the preparation group:

R. Hoeffler to check the availability of the DAAD partners and to inform/invite all members of the preparation group.

R. Hoeffler to get in contact with the International Office at Bochum, to ask for the necessity of additional university agreements with respect to the implementation of SEE candidates at the research school; target: to extent an agreement to the SEEFORM group if required;

Agreements between the SEE partners do already exist, the coordinator shall distribute the existing agreement between the partners.

Important milestone: application for the extended SEEFORM as described above: September 2010

7. List of members of the preparation group (all)

As a representative for Earthquake Engineering Prof. Golubka Necevska-Cvetanovska, IZIS, shall be invited to be member of the preparation group. In addition she is integrated as a member of the PhD Board of St. Cyril & Methodius University Skopje. The vice dean Snezana Djoric and Meri Cvetkovska are new members of the committee. R. Hoeffler is charged to ask

Dr. Christiane Wüllner from the RU Research School or Monika Sprung as the head of the International Office at Bochum if they agree to be a member of the preparation group. A representative of the Faculty of Civil Engineering of Podgorica, favourably the new elected dean, and the University of Sarajevo, favourably B. Verbic, shall be invited as guests of the preparation group.

List of members:

1. Prof. Dr. Frau Elena Dumova Jovanoska, Vice Rector " Ss.Cyril and Methodius" Universität, Skopje
2. Prof. Dr. Petar Cvetanovski, Dean of FCE, St.Cyrill and Methodius University Skopje
3. Prof. Dr. Meri Cvetkovska, vice-dean of FCE, St.Cyrill and Methodius University Skopje
4. Prof. Dr. Mira Petronijevic, study dean of the master course „CompEng“ at FCE, University of Belgrad
5. Prof. Dr. Djordje Vuksanovic, Dean of FCE, University of Belgrad
6. Prof. Dr. Neda Bokan, Vice Rector of the University of Belgrad
7. Prof. Dr. Dragan Arandjelovic, Dean of FCEA (Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture), University of Nis
8. Snezana Djoric Veljkovic, vice-dean Lehre, Fakultät für Architektur und Bauingenieurwesen, FCEA (Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture), University of Nis
9. Univ.- Prof. Dr.-Ing. Rüdiger Höffer, Faculty of Civil and Environmental Engineering Sciences, Ruhr-University of Bochum
10. em. Prof. Dr. Günther Schmid, visiting professor at FCEA, University of Nis

This list is not limiting the participation to the future extended SEEFORM program to further DYNET-partners.

8. Information

Information about the actual status (progress) seminar:

14 candidates, forming the 2nd and the 3rd cycle, participated to both, the lectures and the progress seminar. The impression was that the candidates did serious research work in general, although various candidates have always problems to define precisely their scope of work, specifications were missing in case of some candidates, 3 candidates did not have German co-advisors, 2 candidates left the program. The minutes of the "Status Seminar" will be sent to the advisors and co-advisors of the candidates.

Information about a round table meeting at Nis organized from the International Office for Science, Education and Culture of the City of Nis on invitation of the mayor of Nis (s. appendices to these minutes).

Prof. Djordjevic, Physics & Mathematics, has created a network with 16 institutions worldwide in his field, basic partners are from the SEE region, cooperation in research and teaching; 60 people from SEE, Greece and Germany were invited for the meeting. They have been informed about the network DYNET. G. Schmid attended as a substitute of the German embassy at Belgrade, Dr. Stoeckel of DAAD attended also. A contact to DYNET shall be build up. G. Schmid and Djordjevic will meet again during May.

9. Any other business

After discussions with doctoral candidates G. Schmid proposes to publish the SEEFORM dissertations in a special series of reports. The faculties in the region do not have similar series of publications. The preparation group shall discuss that topic again. An advice for all candidates to implement a paragraph with an acknowledgement of the support of DAAD and SEEFORM shall be sent via the Steering Committee of SEEFORM, this will be addressed during the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

The next meeting shall take place, if possible, at the 9th of May, 2010, in the morning, at Belgrade. If that cannot be organized, the date and location of the next meeting will be agreed by e-mail.

The meeting closes at 14:16h. The group thanks the Faculty of CE for hosting the meeting.

Skopje, 24th of April, 2010 / Bochum, 9th of June, 2010

Prof. Dr.-Ing. R. Höffer
Central Coordination of DYNET/SEEFORM