

# PhD student council

The PhD students of  
the Department for Astronomy and Theoretical Physics

November 8, 2012

**The PhD student council** The PhD student council is a regular meeting, started 1 year ago, of all PhD students at the Department of Astronomy and Theoretical Physics. We come together at least before every departmental board meeting, and whenever else necessary. Minutes are written down after every meeting, to preserve information for later generations of PhD students. The minutes are made available online<sup>1</sup>.

**Activities** One important task of the PhD student council is the organisation of PhD student representation for example in the Departmental board, but also towards the PhD student union of the faculty (Naturvetenskapliga Doktorandrådet, NDR). While the NDR formally elects PhD students for the departmental boards, it is important that representatives are selected democratically by the PhD students themselves at the departmental level. Therefore, the NDR specifically recommends all departments to have a PhD council and many of them do already (Biology, Chemistry, Physical Geography and Ecosystem Science, etc).

Regular PhD student meetings have other advantages:

1. The department and the PhD representatives at the board have a body to turn to when PhD-related matters need to be discussed amongst all PhD students. This allows decisions or recommendations to be based on the majority opinion.
2. In the past the PhD student meetings have proven to be an important platform for supporting PhD-organised activities (Journal Club, Källén seminars for breakthrough discoveries, stargazing activities, PhD students seminars, ...).

**Prolongation** Organisation of the PhD council costs time. We therefore ask the department<sup>2</sup> to allow for a prolongation of the PhD studies for two persons doing the practical work, i.e., the organisation of meetings, the writing of minutes, the follow up of decisions, etc. Prolongation payment is good way for the department to show they recognise the importance of a PhD student council and value an active PhD community.

Michiel Lambrechts, Daniel Michalik,  
on behalf of The PhD students of ATP

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<sup>1</sup>They are available at the local pages of Lund Observatory <http://www.astro.lu.se/Localinform/PhDreports/>.

<sup>2</sup>According to the NDR it is the department that pays for prolongation for PhD councils and not the faculty, although this might change in the future.