

New initiatives to promote quality

Dear all

Welcome to the second issue of PhD News. It is an inspiration to all of us involved in this publication to receive so much positive feedback on the first issue. Hopefully this second issue will also stimulate your interest (or pique your curiosity).

As this issue of PhD News illustrates, wide-ranging efforts are being made to improve the quality of doctoral studies.

You can read about local, national and international meetings and activities aimed at improving doctoral education. EURODOC is an interesting initiative. It should also motivate our own doctoral candidates to get together and discuss matters relevant to their studies, research and future careers.

As you will also read in this issue of PhD News, there has been an increase in the total number of doctoral candidates in Norway during the past five to six years. The number currently stands at around 8,000.

Naturally, this high number also means an increase in the number of completed doctoral degrees. At UiB we have anticipated 250 new PhDs in 2009. It appears that this may have been slightly optimistic, but we will find out at the end of the year.

A high number of doctoral degrees is important for a research institution such as UiB. However, we must also look beyond the completion of doctoral studies. We must be engaged in the future careers of all these new PhDs. UiB has therefore appointed a committee to develop a comprehensive recruitment and careers strategy for people who have completed their doctorates.



Berit Rokne
Deputy Rector

Get to know EURODOC!

EURODOC is the European Council of doctoral candidates and young researchers. It is a federation of national associations of PhD candidates and young researchers.

EURODOC's [objectives](#) are:

- To represent doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level in matters relating to education and research, and professional development of their careers
- To advance the quality of doctoral programmes and standards of research activity in Europe.
- To promote the circulation of information about issues concerning young researchers, organise events, take part in debates and assist in elaborating policies for higher education and research in Europe.
- To establish and promote cooperation between national associations representing doctoral candidates and junior researchers in Europe.

Visit [EURODOC's website](#) to find out more. Here you can also find their [newsletter](#).

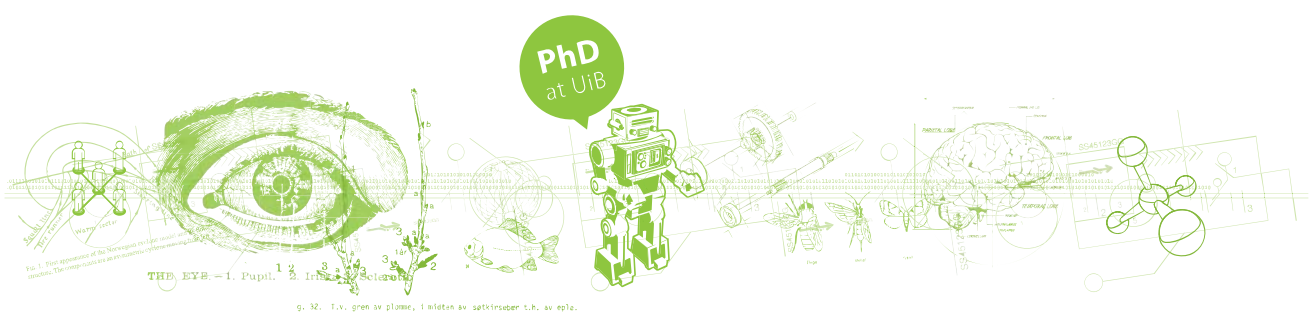
First time at UiB:

Defence of a doctoral thesis podcasted

José Fonseca's defence of his doctoral thesis 'Narrative Tendencies in Latin American Fiction Cinema' was videotaped.

This is the first time UiB has ever recorded and published a doctoral thesis defence. The podcast is available online and can be found [here!](#)

You can also [read more](#) about this in 'På høyden' (in Norwegian).



PhD supervisor's course; training the trainers

A PhD supervisor training course is to be organised in Umeå, Sweden from 8-11 February 2010. It will be financed by NordForskAmong.

How do we train PhD supervisors? How do we develop courses? Is it possible to learn from each other and work together instead of reinventing the wheel every time? What do we know about each other's training methods? Is it possible to standardise training, or should it vary?

PhD supervisors will probably switch universities several times during their academic careers. Establishing best practice for supervisors and ensuring that PhD supervisor training has a common core, it make it easier and more transparent for all parties, including doctoral students.

All costs are covered by [NordForsk](#).

Date: 8-11 February 2010

Place: Umeå, Sweden

Final date for applications: 20 November 2009.

Click [here](#) to read more.

Worldwide Universities Network (WUN)

The Research Development Fund offers grants of up to £ 15,000 (average £ 10,000) to support research collaborations in a number of [WUN Global Challenges](#).

This is seed money to be used in exploratory research initiatives such as targeted workshops, faculty exchanges and the formation of collaboration networks. The fund does not cover salaries or salary supplementation, instruments etc.

Awarded funds generate matching funds from the researcher's organisation. See application [guidelines](#) and [form](#). See [here](#) for WUN members. Applications must be sent to the WUN coordinator at UiB: [Bjørn Erik Andersen](#), Department of Research Management, by 13 November.

Increase in the number of doctoral candidates

There are now nearly 8,000 doctoral candidates in Norway, and there has been a formidable increase over the past five years.

There were 5,033 doctoral candidates in 2004. This has now risen to 7,914. The Trondheim-based newspaper *Adressa* reports that it is natural sciences and technology that account for most of the increase.

Click [here](#) to read the whole article (in Norwegian.)

... however:

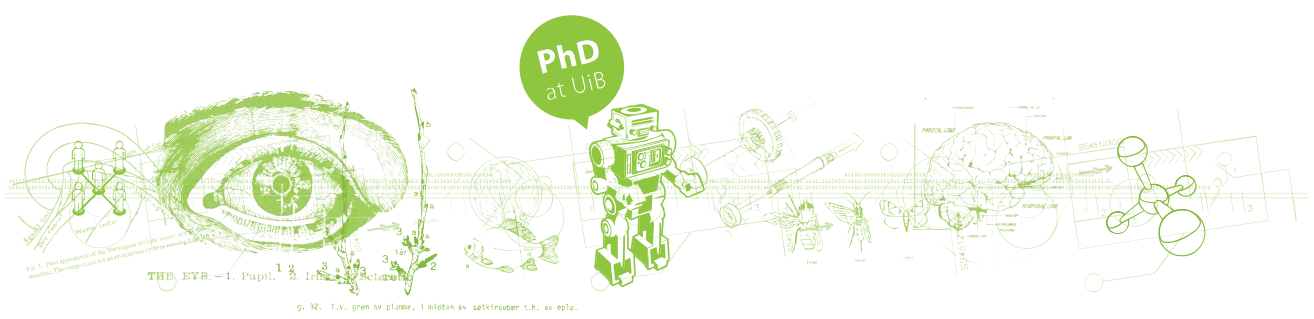
Decline expected in the number of completed doctoral degrees in Norway in 2009

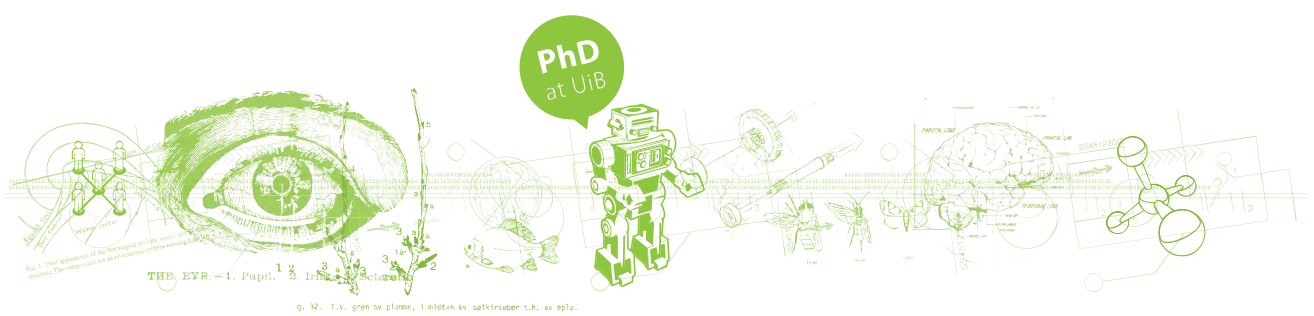
***The Norwegian Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU Step)* predicts that there will be a major decline in the number of completed doctoral degrees in 2009.**

During the spring of 2009, 161 fewer doctorates were completed than in 2008. According to NIFU Step, this is partly due to the fact that the old doctoral degrees were discontinued in 2008. To read more about this topic [click here!](#)

Status at UiB:

The University of Bergen's goal is to produce 250 PhDs in 2009, but it seems unlikely that this target will be reached this year. Estimates from the faculties indicate that the total number of new doctors will be around 237. PhD-news will of course follow developments and include an update in the next issue.





PhD registration

From January 2010, all PhD candidates must register online twice a year - at the beginning of each semester.

This will enable the faculties to keep track of your educational progress and to have an updated register of your personal data such as address, completed courses, leaves of absence and other relevant information. All PhD candidates will receive a letter in December with detailed information about the PhD registration procedure.

Joint PhD degrees and cotutelle agreements

A working group led by the Vice Rector for Internationalisation Astri Andresen has just submitted its report and recommendations for UiB in the field of joint PhD degree programmes and cotutelle arrangements.

The working group recommends UiB to adopt a joint degree policy. Templates for cotutelle agreements and joint doctoral programme outlines have been drawn up and are accessible at the Research Department.

Research schools on the UiB web

The new internet pages for the research schools will be launched on the internet on 1 December. The old web pages will be removed from the web on the same date.

Employment and admission in one process

There is an ongoing administrative project looking into the possibilities of combining the employment process and the PhD admission process into one process.

This is in order to reduce the amount of application processes the PhD candidates need to undergo before starting on their research project and thesis work.

Action plan follow-up

The Faculty of Psychology has now adopted its own action plan to follow up the university's action plan for doctoral education.

Following adoption of the university's action plan, the Faculty of Psychology established its own committee to follow it up. The committee has presented proposals on how to improve doctoral education and the steps required to implement the action plan.

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<p>the colon Can't decide what to title your thesis? Use a colon!</p>	<p>a preposition A good preposition tells your readers "hey, this is not just a futile exercise"</p>
<p>"Witty catchphrase" : Length-enhanced superlative verbiage with prolixity in/of/for Obscure topic few people care about.</p>	
<p>witty catchphrase Makes people think you're hip and culturally relevant. Only marginally related to the actual thesis? No problem.</p>	<p>the boring stuff Nothing says "academic rigor" like a long string of dry scientific-sounding terminology and fancy buzzwords.</p>
	<p>obscure topic few people care about Sad, but true.</p>