

27 September 2016

Guidelines for “institutionstjänstgöring” – Departmental Service

In a Swedish PhD training you have four years of research and training but can have, if available, another maximum fifth year of so called “institutionstjänstgöring”, departmental service.

With a growing division and internationalizing of our faculty and students there is a need to elaborate further on what is to be counted as “institutionstjänstgöring” and what belongs to research and training.

The basic bifurcation is that teaching is “institutionstjänstgöring” whereas everything else is research and training. Everything else is either part of your work as an employee or things that further your academic training in different ways. When you attend the Division’s Higher Seminar or go to seminars, workshops or conferences, it is part of research and training. When you attend departmental meetings or meetings with the doctoral students, that is part of being employed, as is the time when you administer your trips and write up reports. When you organise a workshop or a meeting in your topic, it is part of research and training. When you write a blog on a topic that interests you, it is part of your research and training. When you co-edit a special issue of a journal related to your topic, it is part of your research and training. When you do a film project on your topic, it is part of your research and training. When you serve on a committee deciding on a prize, that is part of your research and training.

At times we have (prominent) guests at the Division. You might be asked to host someone, meet her or him at the station, walk her or him from the hotel to the Division, take part in a lunch or a dinner, take him or her out on a walk or to a museum. For that you do not get hours, even though you will be reimbursed for your costs. You can always decline to do such things.

There are a few instances apart from teaching that may count as “institutionstjänstgöring” when earmarked as such. When you work with a larger conference or a film festival hosted by the Division this might count as “institutionstjänstgöring”. When you work with the archiving of the Division’s books this might count as “institutionstjänstgöring”.

There might also be occasions when organising a workshop or another activity which usually counts as part of your research and training also includes a fair amount of administration, the nature of which might be considered departmental service, “institutionstjänstgöring”. Examples are booking a large amount of plane tickets and rooms for a larger workshop or conference. Or producing a complex programme for dozens of participants.

The activities of the EHL Environmental Humanities Laboratory are, obviously, included among those which may qualify as institutionstjänster/departmental services. As for all departmental services, PhD students should discuss with their supervisors, the head of the Division and the director of the EHL in advance whether the specific tasks are institutionstjänster/departmental services and, if so, the amount of hours which will be allocated for them.

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If you are a union representative you get 40 hours a year for “samverkansmöten” and other things related. If you are a PhD representative you get 40 hours from core funding for attending LG meetings and convening the PhD group.

All these instances, whether teaching activities or administration on behalf of the Division, need to be agreed on as “institutionstjänstgöring” with your supervisors before you take on the task. There must also be a clear agreement beforehand on the number of hours you are expected to spend on the task. If the time spent on task turns out to be much higher than expected this needs to be discussed and the agreement, if necessary, adjusted.

In summary, the overall policy of “institutionstjänstgöring” is to maintain a sense of proportion and solidarity. The Division encourages you to become an independent researcher by gaining knowledge, building networks and acquiring skills for self-organization. In turn the Division acknowledges your additional services, the extra time you spend on teaching and administration. But the Division also counts on you as a colleague.

It might be difficult to know what to say yes and what to say no to. However, that is part of academic life and might thus also be part of training to become an academic.

If you want to have 20 % of “institutionstjänstgöring” during your PhD and extend it to five years you will have to add up hours to on average 350 hours a year. For how to count hours, please see the guidelines that can be retrieved at the Division’s website: https://www.kth.se/polopoly_fs/1.354298!/Menu/general/column-content/attachment/Att%204%20Departmental%20Service.pdf