

Proposals addressed by BOVA Coordination Committee to BOVA Rector Board for discussions and decisions on

Joint International Ph.D. courses in the BOVA University network

BOVA seminar "Planning of international BOVA Ph.D. courses",
December 5-6, 2006

In the frame of small project funded by NordForsk, BOVA and NOVA secretariats with a help of BOVA member universities and particularly Eda Tursk (PhD study coordinator in EMU) conducted a survey of current status of PhD study internationalization in Member universities. Outcomes were discussed in BOVA seminar "Planning of international BOVA Ph.D. courses" (Jelgava in December 5-6, 2006), where university administrators group and four teacher groups preparing for a joint international PhD course discussed survey results with aim to start international Ph.D. courses in the BOVA network. As an outcome of seminar following suggestions to BOVA Rector Board are formulated by BOVA CC.

All BOVA member universities foresee internationalisation of their Ph.D. study programs in the university' development plans. BOVA University strategy foresee joint Ph.D. activities as one of priority area in the network. Therefore Ph.D. courses should be given by high priority in the BOVA member universities. As an outcome for stakeholders they should:

- increase quality of doctoral studies;
- raise competences of doctoral students;
- increase awareness of professors;
- increase mobility rate of students (good point for study accreditation process);
- increase real scientific networking between teachers, builds network between current and future teachers.

Joint PhD course will fit very well to EU priorities in higher education policy. In the Nordi-Baltic region it may play a positive role in securing NOVA-BOVA cooperation and particularly continuing with NordForsk scholarships for Baltic students to attend NOVA Ph.D. courses.

BOVA Coordination Committee propose following actions in order to initiate joint international BOVA Ph.D. courses making attractive environment for teachers:

1. Funding policy of joint international BOVA Ph.D. courses:

- application to all possible donors, including NordForsk when relevant + great support from BOVA secretariat, coordinators, home international (development) departments suggesting list of potential donors, contributing application writing;
- in the case of failure – internal funds are allocated and guaranteed from home universities to run the course.

Division of work in application and course giving process (**Who does what?**):

Teacher	BOVA secretariat, coordinators
course topic, list of partners, course description and program, selected location and timing, communication with partners in other countries, pointing keynote speakers, giving the lectures.	list of available donors, when required help with partners in other countries, help with application filling/writing, design of course budget and, in the case of success, all practical support to the course, coaching course preparation process

2. BOVA CC suggests holding 4 specialized international Ph.D. courses and 1 in common subjects (Academic writing, Research methodology) every year.
3. To make the courses cost efficient, minimum number of Ph.D. students in specialized course should be fixed to 10 with possible exceptions for veterinary medicine where a number of participants may be lower if accepted by BOVA CC. Minimum number of participants for common courses (Academic writing, Research methodology) should be 15. Common courses should be open for teachers from member universities as well.
4. Deadline for applications should be approximately one year before the course period. February 1 is suggested as application deadline for courses to be held in 2007 and 2008. Further, deadline of February 1 may apply for next years.
5. Planning of Ph.D. courses is important stage therefore teacher networks (usually up to 5 people) must have basic small resources for 1-2 meetings (seminars) if they decide to plan a course. To make the process flexible BOVA Rector Board is suggested to allow the use of small part of BOVA administration budget for organizing such meetings.
6. As a rule, teachers should be paid for preparation of materials and teaching in the course. Each member university decides the amount on its own and pays for a teacher (does not matter in which country he gives the lectures). Among many other motivation means and tools, **appreciation** and **recognitions** of teachers work in creating Ph.D. course should not be forgotten. It is a task for university managers to create environment attractive for a teachers to work on joint international Ph.D. courses.
7. Socrates mobility grants are used for teacher mobility.
8. To guarantee the process, member universities are suggested to allocate internal money for groups that will fail with external donors. Estimated Ph.D. course cost is Euro 5.000-6.000 / course, which is suggested to fix as maximum amount using one of following options:

Suggested options for internal funding schemas

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
Reimbursement of expenses	Easy to proceed for accountancy	Difficult to plan expenses per student and unknown final course cost. Might be complicated management procedure.
Participation fee paid to cover course costs	Similar to reimbursement of expenses, just paid before. BOVA CC can control the setting of participation fee. Obligates student and sending university to plan precisely.	More complicated way to handle finances to coordinators and university accountants.
Joint pool	Technically easiest way for universities to manage; Increases motivation of decision makers at university to promote courses among teachers.	May be less efficient planning of resources - paying to pool and after reimbursing the same money.
Organizing university covers all expenses except travel	Easy way, no financial deals, just paying travel expenses for own students.	High risk to fail with international teacher team, high risk to fail serious inequality with numbers of arranged courses and financial contributions to activity

9. BOVA PhD course must be open and advertised to universities outside the BOVA or NOVA-BOVA network. External students must be charged by tuition fee.

10. If not going for joint pool, allocated funds must be publicized in a way that teacher or student (also partners in the BOVA cooperation) knows:

- how much has been allocated to current year
- to whom apply at university to get money for arranging or attending a certain course;

BOVA webpage and other information means are suggested as a place to manage funding information.

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