

Statutes DP ARMU 3 – Natural Hazards in Mountain Regions

Acronyms

DP	Doctoral program
ARMU	Research Focus Alpine Space – Man and Environment
LFUI	Leopold Franzens Universität Innsbruck
RS	Representative Student
CS	Coordinating Student
EB	Executive board

Preamble

DP ARMU 3 *Natural Hazards in Mountain Regions* is embedded in the Research Focus “Alpine Space – Man and Environment” (ARMU) of the University of Innsbruck. Research and education activities of ARMU focus on mountain regions worldwide. DP ARMU 3 *Natural Hazards in Mountain Regions* (NHMR) collaborates with the other DPs in the frame of ARMU.

1. Research Perspective

Since the beginning of humankind and with a continuous increase of experience and scientific knowledge, humans try to cope with natural hazards and mitigate their impacts. Unlike technological or human-made hazards, natural hazards are naturally occurring physical phenomena, threatening human lives and infrastructure. Facing the environmental conditions in mountain regions, different forms of geophysical natural hazards occur. They are classified in geological and meteorological (hydrological) processes.

The DP NHMR focuses on all relevant natural scientific, engineering, demographic, economic and management aspects in the context of analysing geophysical natural hazards in mountain regions as well as handling risks and developing solutions for protection.

2. Aims

As natural hazards in mountain regions cover biological, geographical, geological, geotechnical, hydraulic, hydrological, meteorological, and socio-economic issues, an interdisciplinary research approach for the hazards assessment, modelling, etc. is essential. The DP NHMR focuses on both, more general pressing questions as well as on research challenges. Thinking and acting in interdisciplinary cross-boundary domains, where knowledge and expertise is transferred over boundaries between classical natural and engineering science as well as between natural and social science disciplines, is of basic relevance.

The DP NHMR aims to provide a systematic, efficient and high-quality training of excellent PhD students within an interdisciplinary research environment. PhD students are pushed to extend their research interests, to recognize and develop correlations and interfaces with other research disciplines and foci, and to present their research in a broader context. Activities cover academic topics as well as the training of soft skills and career planning. The DP NHMR is further aimed to be a fruitful platform for the members to discuss, propose and work on common interdisciplinary research issues and thereby also cooperate with external national and international research institutions.

3. DP Panels

I. Scientist board

The scientist board consists of all senior researchers involved in the DP. Each habilitated member acts as main or co-supervisor for at least one PhD student of the DP, all other members are actively involved in the support of at least one PhD student. All scientist board members regularly contribute to and participate in DP activities.

The scientist board can make decisions in meetings or via circular resolutions. During meetings (including constituent assembly) and circular resolutions a quorum of at least 2/3 of the scientist board members based at LFUI must be represented. Vote delegation is permitted whereas one attendant member can represent maximum one prevented member. Decisions are taken with a 2/3 majority.

The scientist board elects the speaker and the deputy speaker (simple majority) for a four-year period (speaker and deputy speaker jointly referred to as “speakers”). The deputy speaker is the representative of the speaker in cases of holidays, absences, or delegations. The current speakers must announce a meeting for the election of the future speaker and deputy speaker at least one month in advance. Nominations for speaker and deputy speaker candidates have to be submitted to the speaker team at least one week before the meeting. Thereafter, the current speaker team informs the scientist board about the candidates. In yearly meetings, the speaker team reports on the progress of the doctoral program.

The scientist board decides on main issues concerning strategy, development, and execution of the DP. It decides on changes in DP statutes (confirmation of the rectorate and the ARMU DP board provided). It also decides on the admission and exclusion of scientist board members as well as exclusion of PhD students.

Constituent assembly

The preliminary speakers invite all members of the scientist board at least one month in advance and provide the foreseen DP statutes. They also assign one DP member, who will not apply for a speaker position, to handle the election of the speakers. The preliminary speakers are automatically nominated as speaker candidates unless they withdraw by own request. They have to ask for additional nominations of speaker candidates to be submitted (at least one week before the constituent assembly) to the person responsible for the speaker election. At the constituent assembly, (i) the speakers are elected (simple majority) and (ii) the DP statutes are approved. The voting on the statutes is handled by the elected speakers. If the statutes are not accepted, the speakers have to discuss and implement requested changes (confirmation of the rectorate provided) and repeat the election.

II. Student board

All PhD students of the DP are members of the student board, which meets at least twice a year (once together with the scientist board). The purpose of the student board is to discuss ideas for future DP events and suggestions for possible improvements of the education and research program and forwards them to the scientist board. Decisions within the student board are taken with 2/3 majority.

III. Representative student (RS) and Coordinating student (CS)

The student board nominates one representative student (RS), who manages the student board (organization of meetings, communication etc.) and represents the students in the executive board (see below).

The DP speaker and deputy speaker nominate one student of the DP who is willing to be engaged as the CS. In collaboration with available administrative staff, the CS supports the speakers in all aspects of DP work.

IV. Executive board (EB)

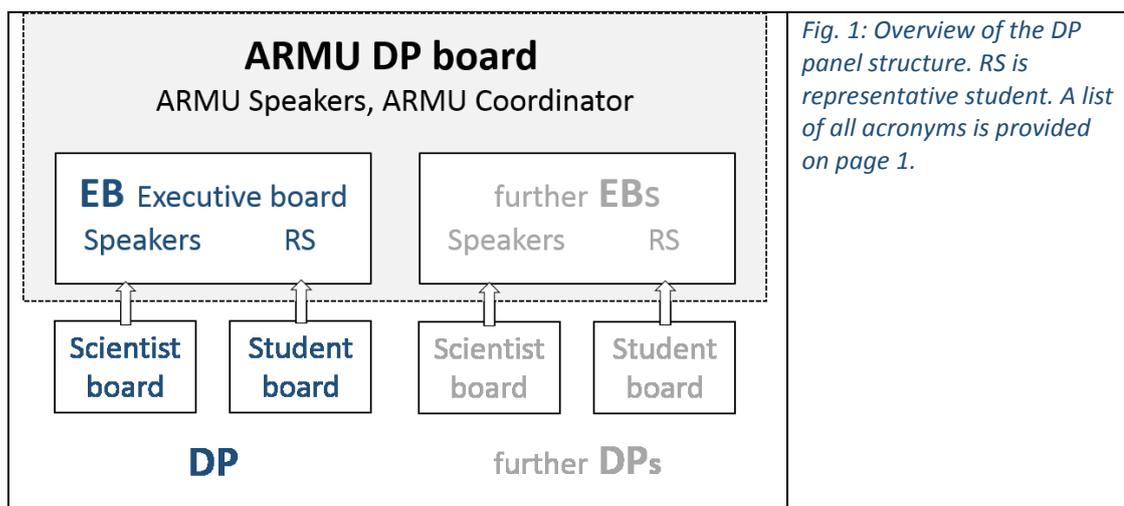
The EB is formed by the speaker, the deputy speaker, and the RS. The purpose of the EB is to lead the DP day-to-day business, the admission of new PhD students, the approval of PhD thesis supervision according to the criteria (Section 4, point II), and the utilization of DP budget. The EB takes into account the suggestions of the scientist board and the student board for possible improvements concerning the education and research program, and suggests changes of the statutes to the scientist board and ARMU DP board. Decisions are taken with simple majority.

The EB is member of the DP ARMU DP board (see point V).

V. ARMU DP board

The ARMU DP board is formed by the EBs of all ARMU-DPs and by representatives of the Research Focus (speaker and/or coordinator). Each EB has one vote. The ARMU DP board requires at least one speaker or deputy speaker of each EB (vote delegation to senior members possible; max. one delegated vote per attendant member) and one representative of the Research Focus to be present. The ARMU DP board takes decisions with a simple majority.

The ARMU DP board meets at least twice a year. It is entitled by the DPs to decide on all matters relevant for general research and education strategies of the ARMU-DPs, their efficient cooperation, and fruitful development.



4. Execution

I. Admission of new¹ scientist board members

New scientist board members are expected to be highly qualified scientists who complement the scientific program of the DP. They submit an informal application to the EB to be discussed and approved by the scientist board.

II. Exclusion of scientist board members

The scientist board members can resign by own request. Additional reasons for excluding members are (1) unethical behavior like mobbing and violation of rules for good scientific practice, (2) neglect of duties as PhD supervisor and mentor, (3) being permanently (> 1 year) without a PhD student to supervise or support (for non-habilitated members), and (4) non-contribution (not involved in any DP activities > 1 year; sick and maternity leave excluded) to DP activities. If one of the above reasons applies, a written statement has to be sent to or prepared by the speaker and deputy speaker, who in turn must ask the accused person for oral and written statements. Unless clarification occurs within three months, the exclusion of this member is proposed to the scientist board.

III. Admission of new² PhD students

The applicants have to be enrolled and registered at the University of Innsbruck or a university cooperating in the frame of the DP program. The main PhD supervisor and one co-supervisor are members of the DP and must have different research foci.

To apply for the DP, an expression of interest in the form of an exposé (contents, time, and finance plans) on the planned thesis topic has to be submitted to the EB by the main supervisor. If the EB has no concerns about the feasibility of the PhD project, the EB invites the PhD students to present their PhD concept and motivation for joining the DP in the frame of an “application-colloquium” (can be an independent event or part of another DP event) offered by the DP at least twice a year in case of pending applications. The final admission is decided by the EB.

IV. Confirmation of participation

After graduating, the PhD students automatically resign from the DP. Those who have successfully fulfilled the DP education program (Section 5), obtain a confirmation concerning their participation in the DP by the speakers of the DP, including a list of attended DP activities.

V. Exclusion of PhD students

Reasons for excluding PhD students from the DP are (1) at their own request, (2) removal from the register of PhD students at LFUI or the universities cooperating in the frame of the DP program, (3) unethical behavior like mobbing or a violation of rules for good scientific practice and (4) at the request of the supervisor. In case of point 3 or 4, the speakers (3) or the supervisor (4) have to issue a written statement. The EB must contact the PhD student and ask for oral and written feedback to the statement. Unless agreement between

¹ All DP members listed in the DP proposal are automatically members of the DP if they agree on the statutes.

² All PhD students that are namely listed in the DP proposal are automatically part of the DP.

speaker/supervisor and PhD student can be achieved within three months, the EB can propose the exclusion of the PhD student to the scientist board.

VI. Evaluation

In case of external evaluations, the DP is represented by the speaker and deputy speaker.

VII. Termination of DP

The DP ends if (1) the SB members do not continue the program (less than 5 habilitated members left for >1 year), (2) the number of PhD students in the program falls below 10 for > 2 years or (3) the rectorate formally terminates the program. In the case of termination the current PhD students are entitled to obtain a confirmation about their attendance of the DP, if they have joined the DP education program for at least 2 years (Section 5).

5. DP education program

Beyond the usual requirements and recommendations in the different PhD-curricula, PhD students in the DP have to fulfill the following tasks:

I. Participation in DP courses

Students regularly participate in the interdisciplinary courses organized in the frame of the DP.

II. Participation in summer/winter school

Students participate in at least one summer/winter school. Participation in and contribution to any summer/winter school offered by the DPs of ARMU is highly appreciated.

III. Presentation and discussion of research findings

PhD students have to present their research activities in the early and late phase of their PhD project in the frame of regularly organized meetings open for all DP members.

IV. Contribution to and participation in DP ARMU events

Students are encouraged to develop, organize, contribute to and participate in events involving several DPs within ARMU. Participation in at least one event is required.

The DP speakers and the respective supervisors decide on the possible credit of already completed educational activities for the DP education program.

6. Collaboration with other DPs in ARMU

This DP collaborates with the other DPs in ARMU to size the potential of the comprehensive scientific expertise on a wide range of mountain related topics. The collaboration is supervised in the ARMU DP board and explicitly based on three pillars:

I. Planning and organization

ARMU DP board meetings serve to exchange general experiences, to critically reflect collaborations, to detect potential new synergies, and to discuss further development. In order to uphold a uniform nature of admission criteria as well as criteria for the successful participation in all DPs of ARMU, required changes are to be discussed and confirmed among the ARMU DP board.

II. Intended joint teaching activities

DPs organize joint interdisciplinary teaching activities, such as common lectures, (modular) summer/winter schools, and training courses (soft skills, safety etc.).

III. Research and Socializing

Students of the DPs are encouraged to organize events (informal format, open for members all DPs) aiming at knowledge exchange and at strengthening collaboration between researchers of different ARMU-DPs.

7. Specific statutes

I. Compatibility of family and career, support of female researchers

In the university environment the compatibility of family and work has high priority. The DP promotes women in science and will consider gender aspects. To increase the fraction of female applicants, the program will provide sufficient flexibility to allow successful completion of the program (in case of maternity leave, filial leave etc.).

II. Upcoming project proposals related to the DP

Abstracts of any project proposals that refer to the DP should be sent to the speakers by any DP member before being submitted (for information only, no approval required).

III. Information and communication

Website: The DP maintains a website which includes (1) the research perspectives of the DP, (2) a list of the current members of all DP panels (as listed in Section 3), and (3) upcoming and past (archived) DP events. Optionally, an intranet may be included in the website for efficient data exchange. The basic structure of the website should be the same for all DPs of ARMU to promote readability.

E-mail: E-mail-lists are set up for the scientist board and the student board.