

The Nordic graduate school in mathematics education – a growing network

Let us know about you

When the Nordic Graduate School in Mathematics Education, NoGSME, started in January 2004 it included 37 research environments, about 45 supervisors and about 80 doctoral students in the Nordic and Baltic countries. Since then some of the students have graduated and will sooner or later belong to the group of supervisors instead. New doctoral students are being enrolled in research education programmes all the time. We ask you to remember to report to the Nordic Graduate School all such changes, so that we can update our sending lists. Sending information via email is one of our opportunities to inform about resources that are offered by NoGSME.

The summer school 2005

At the start of NoGSME the groups of students and of supervisors had limited knowledge about persons from environments in other countries. We can see now that networks are growing with students and supervisors. This summer NoGSME organised its first summer school at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Thirty doctoral students from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Norway, Sweden, one from Germany and one from Turkey worked together for a week and learnt to know each other. The working groups that took up most of the time allowed each participant to present her/his research questions, theoretical framework, methods, data, analysis and results. The serious and deep discussions were led by three group leaders, experienced researchers in mathematics education, Gilah Leder from Melbourne, Tommy Dreyfus from Tel Aviv and Roger Säljö from Göteborg. The intensity of the discussions was high and the personal engagement that was created will probably lead to future cooperation in research between the participants. Two themes were discussed in additional discussion groups chaired by members of the NoGSME board. The themes were: How to read a scientific paper productively and How to write a scientific paper. Participants related to literature on these themes and actual sample papers were investigated. Plenary lectures were given by the group leaders and also by some members of the NoGSME board. For those doctoral students who could not participate this year there will be another opportunity in 2006.

Activities for supervisors

On September 1-2 the third seminar for supervisors of doctoral students in mathematics education took place in Trondheim, just before the fourth Nordic conference in mathematics education, Norma05. Professor Uri

Leron from Haifa led the seminar and the focus was the actual supervision process, its joys and challenges. General issues related to supervision were treated, and discussions on specific cases took place as well. There will be a documentation based on the work during the seminar. Another seminar will take place later this year and focus on the process of reviewing papers for scientific journals. There is a need to provide competence development for future reviewers of, for example, NOMAD and other journals. Improving your ability to review a paper will probably also develop the ability to scrutinize your own papers and the papers of your doctoral students in a more constructive way.

Workshop on classroom research in mathematics education

One afternoon during the Norma05 conference was devoted to classroom research. This programme was initiated by NoGSME. Simon Goodchild led this workshop and used his own experience from a study where he followed a mathematics class during a whole year and investigated the students' goals. Participants in the workshop were invited to analyse transcriptions of student talk about their work during class and the goals of it. Simon indicated that what goes on in the classroom is mysterious and will never be fully uncovered as the activities are so complex. In the specific class studied by Simon there seemed to be little learning in mathematics taking place over the year. The workshop will be reported in the proceedings of the conference.

Use the offers of NoGSME

Students and supervisors are invited to use the offers of NoGMSE as much as possible. At the moment we offer travel support for doctoral students who take part in four different doctoral courses included in the NoGSME programme. For the spring 2006 a new set of courses will be available and every student taken up in a doctoral programme in mathematics education can apply for travel support to take part in them. NoGSME also offers five mobility stipends per year for students who want to go to another Nordic university to study or get supervision for a month. Expenses for travel and lodging will be covered by NoGSME. Instructions about how to apply are accessible on the web page. For further information see our web page www.hia.no/realfag/didaktikk/forsk-erskolen. For all kinds of questions about the Nordic Graduate School please contact the director.

Barbro Grevholm, Director
Agder University College
Mail: barbro.grevholm@hia.no