In Praise of Celebrations

Dear Ph.D. students,

When pondering over important ingredients in one’s journey towards the Ph.D., I was struck by the quasi-absence of celebrations from that list. Hard work, conceptual clarity, expertise in a well-defined domain, flawless methods, networking within the profession, all figure prominently. Less so treating yourself to a scrumptious dinner, spending a day in a park or a museum, a party with friends, or a night of dancing. While we do know of the positive effects of praise, we are less prone to recognize the role of one’s own celebrations of – however small – victories along the arduous road toward the Ph.D.

Celebrations of what, you may ask; very few students have publications, which is academics’ typical notable accomplishment. You may even sometimes feel like little Tom Thumb - the youngest, weakest family member by all appearances – as your former university or work colleagues get promoted, buy houses, start families. While you are still to start considering any of these. Yes, mother, I am still a student I hear you say on skype, trying to sound confident and reassuring.

Of whatever deserves to be celebrated, I answer. A promising exchange with a faculty member, and her decision to take you on as a mentee. A term paper that gets the comment ‘Excellent idea, develop further’. An acceptance to a conference. The addition of a renowned expert to your committee.

Such celebrations are key to fueling the energy needed to push through a hard project, teach yourself a new software package, get up the courage to call on your contacts who may give you access to a field study, rewrite your paper using a new theoretical framing. Of course, an advisor’s encouragement and friends’ support are also important in boosting your motivation. Still, celebrations give us pause and perspective, and help us go on with our struggles.

I think of these self-generated celebrations as the crumbs left behind by little resourceful Tom Thumb, who knew the way to safety had to be peppered with tiny markers of the road accomplished. Like Tom, you know there is a road that leads to a desired place, albeit a road you build yourself, pebble by pebble. Like Tom, you can find your way by staying alert, by taking initiatives, and by spreading little pebbles on your road.

Of course there’s a limit to this analogy. While Tom’s pebbles helped him find his way back to his well-known home, yours are meant to help you find your way to the desired, as yet only vaguely perceived destination. The rewards and celebrations you give yourselves are meant to show you that there is a way, and that you’re building it yourselves, little victory by little victory. The large victory will thus become all the more yours.

So go ahead, have a picnic, go rowing, buy yourself a bunch of flowers, make a dinner for your friends, dance the night away – every time you feel you deserve it; every time you feel a friend deserves it.
Since 2015, two cohorts joined the Program

### 2015-2016

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>AGGARWAL Sakshi</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
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<td>ZIANI-FRANCLLET Zoe</td>
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*August 2016 Welcome meeting for the new PhD cohort

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<td>LIU Jungi</td>
<td>Accounting &amp; Auditing</td>
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*Presentation of ESSEC PhD Program by Professor Anca Metiu*
Some key moments in the PhD Program

Since the merger of French universities and private academic institutions in the COMUE http://www.universiteparisseine.fr by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, ESSEC Doctorat is now: Doctorat de l’Université Paris-Seine prepared in ESSEC Business School.

ESSEC PhD degree stays unchanged.

December 2016: Celebration of ESSEC PhD Program 10th anniversary with the Poster session 4th edition and the intervention of Professor Roberto M. Fernandez, professor of Organization Studies at the MIT Sloan School of Management.

Visited institutions by ESSEC PhD students this year are Tippie College of Business at University of Iowa, Kelley School of Business at Indiana University, Warwick Business School UK...

"Visiting at Indiana University – Kelley School of Business (Alessandro Ghio, PhD 4th year)

I arrived in Bloomington on a cold, very cold (-16°) day in early January. The first question I asked myself was: what am I doing here?

It turned out to be one of the best experiences I have ever had, both professionally and personally: great faculty, interesting courses, and seminars. I had the chance to assist to the recruitment seminars – really impressed by the vita of the rookies, most of them with one or two 0+ publications.

The atmosphere in the department is really informal, and the relationship between faculty and PhD students is amazing. After the seminars, they all hang out together for dinner and then for a beer!

I received some really useful feedback to improve my dissertation. Finally, the life in Bloomington: good vibes, great people to hang out with (it’s true that people from Mid-West are extremely nice!), and plenty of activities to do. Indeed time flies when you have so much fun!

Or staying at ESSEC Asia-Pacific

"Visiting at ESSEC Singapore campus (Amit Kumar, PhD 4th year)

I visited ESSEC Singapore Campus to do a Research Apprenticeship Module with Prof. Srividya Jandhyala. Professors at the Campus were warm and open to share and discuss research ideas. Some were working on fairly ambitious and cutting edge projects. I found the overall academic environment in Singapore very vibrant. Our professors were very well integrated into the regional academic network and interacted and collaborated seamlessly with those from other institutions such as Insead, NUS, SMU and NTU.

ESSEC PhD Program also hosted Visiting PhD students from Stockholm School of Economics, Universita di Pisa, Universita de Bari, VU University Amsterdam, School of Business and Technology Management, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology...

This year, the 5th BPF PhD Camp took place at ESSEC. It was attended by 50 participants from 14 institutions (HEC, EM Lyon, Kellog School of Management, University Paris Est, ESCP Europe, McGill University...).

A few conferences attended by our PhD students:

PhD Graduates

10 PhD defenses between September 2015 and August 2016. Since September 2016, 10 defenses took place and a few more are scheduled.

Our Alumni – Where do they go?

2015-2016

- Bo Chen
  Assistant Professor, Sungkyunkwan University

- Anatoli Colicev
  Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Business, Nazarbayev University

- Dmitry Golubkov
  Assistant Professor of Finance and Accounting
  National Research University Higher School of Economics, Moscow

- Tania El Kallab
  Adjunct Lecturer
  Lebanese American University

- Marion Ligonie
  Assistant Professor
  IESEG Paris

- Melissa Moraes
  Researcher
  Central Bank of Brazil

- Shantanu Mullick
  Assistant Professor
  Technical University Eindhoven

- Davide Romelli
  Assistant Professor
  Trinity College Dublin

- Hyemi Shin
  Assistant Professor
  Newcastle Business School

- Yun Wu
  Associate Fellow
  CBN Research Institute, Shanghai

Defenses since September 2016

- Helen Etchanchu Schneider (Sept. 2016)
- Oana Peia (Oct. 2016)
- Aakanksha Gaur (Nov. 2016)
- Kushal Sharma (Jan. 2017)
- Marie Kerveillant (April 2017)

More to come

- Joanne Sopt (May 18)
- Damien Lambert (June 14)
- Victoire Denoyel (June 30)

* PhD and MS in Business Administration Research Graduation Ceremony on March 20, 2016.