



Minutes of the Overleg Vergadering (1) of the FSR FMG

Faculty Student Council of the Faculty of Social and behavioral sciences

Date: 3rd of October 2019

Location: C6.00A

Present executive board FMG:	Agneta Fischer, Sterre Minkes, Michel Telkamp, Richard van der Wurff, Jochem Derks
Present FSR FMG '19-'20:	Alexandra Rosca, Siddharth Jethwani, Ana Mar Kreutzenbeck Pérez, Tom Flipse, Artem Gryshchenko, Birgit Peters, Michael Sivolap, Minou De Rosa Silvera, Teun Prins, Marc Olsen, Viktoriia Akhankova, Nadya Manuputty
Technical chair:	Arend Habbema
Minutes:	Robin van den Hoek

1. Opening and setting the agenda

Arend Habbema opens the meeting at 10:32. The agenda has been set without changes.

2. Setting the draft minutes of the OV (6) of the 9th of July 2019

The FSR FMG has accepted most of the dean's changes to the minutes of the sixth OV of '18 - '19. The minutes of the OV of the 9th of July 2019 have been set. The action list was discussed and updated via email, prior to today's meeting.

3. Announcements

Dean

The CvB is in the process of writing a new strategic plan. One of the visions that the strategic plan encompasses is the vision on teaching and learning. On a university wide level, this plan will have consequences for the coming year. The dean will inform the FSR about the draft version of the document on the strategic plan. The FSR has no right to consent on the document, but the dean will send the draft version to the FSR, so the FSR can express its opinion about it.

4. Subject 1: Vision on Teaching and Learning

FSR

The FSR would like to discuss three points for consideration by the dean in preparation for the upcoming evaluation and renewal of the hypothetical vision on teaching and learning.

The first topic that the FSR would like to highlight is accessibility. The UvA should keep the focus on supporting students with mental health issues, for instance by providing sufficient support by student psychologists.

Furthermore, it should be a priority to ensure that the increase in the number of international students does not come at the cost of the quality of the education provided. For example, the FSR has seen cases in which lecture rooms were too full, forcing students to follow their lecture standing up. It is important to keep helping international students to integrate into the student environment and university life. Lastly, the FSR thinks the UvA should provide sufficient online materials to encourage students to be more involved in extracurricular activities or take courses outside of the University. Online materials such as web lectures for every programme/course in the faculty could help students in this matter.

Another topic that the FSR would like to bring to the dean's attention is student engagement and involvement. The university should focus on emphasizing students' influence on courses and shaping programs. This includes encouraging participation in focus groups, interviews and UvA-Q surveys. Focus groups should not only be held on the programme level, but also on a course level - since UvA-Q surveys are often ignored by students. Focus groups are anonymous (for the teacher) and are more engaging than surveys. In course evaluations, transparency is vital in order to show future students what changes have been made and to inspire future students to continue to voice their opinions.

Besides focus groups, the FSR thinks that the UvA should support students in promoting student organisations and in increasing inclusivity. The FSR agrees with the dean that student engagement is a responsibility of the FSR, but the resources to attain this goal are limited. Due to financial reasons, the idea of the 'Dinner with the dean' would not be feasible for the FSR.

The last topic that the FSR would like to emphasize is that the UvA should be constantly researching and providing solutions to global challenges. The FSR would like the next vision on teaching and learning to include an emphasis on sustainability in the curriculum as well as in reducing the ecological footprint of the UvA. The FSR would like to see that the UvA encourages its employees to travel by plane as little as possible, as part of its Sustainable Travel Policy. Furthermore, the FSR would like the dean to include social safety in the strategy document. Lastly, the FSR would like the dean to stress that the UvA should aim to constantly adapt its education to the technological developments that change the labour market and reshape our society.

Dean

The dean completely agrees that the UvA is an institution that has its doors open for all. The difficulty is: how can this be realised, how can we make sure that enough is being done to ensure our accessibility?

The matter of student psychologists and other student services for those with mental health problems has been a concern for the dean as well. Yet, this is not something that the dean can change much about (since it is a central service, not an FMG service). The dean has been discussing this frequently at the central level. The CvB also realises that there is a problem. The dean would not be in favour of financing student psychologists from the faculty budget. It could be the case that within the FMG, there are more students in need of help and respectively, the FMG would have higher costs. Student psychologists should be a central service, but it is not the duty of the UvA to provide general health care. The UvA should help when a student's problem is related to their studies. For other problems, one's own GP should be approached. Unfortunately, a large number of international students do not have their own GP.

Providing online materials: the OWI's make their own policies on publishing lectures online. That is why the FSR should discuss this with the OWI-directors instead of with the dean. However, the dean is in favour of FMG staff having face-to-face contact with students in order to build a sense of community. If the lectures could be found online, students probably would not come to the UvA as often. There is no empirical research on the probability of students attending lectures in this case. The dean would be in favour of conducting empirical research, she would like to discuss with the FSR how this should be researched.

Student numbers: the dean agrees that the quality of education should not be compromised by the increase in the number of (international) students. We cannot prohibit students from enrolling, the minister would have to agree on a numerus fixus. In the future (probably from 2021-2022), the Ministry of Education (OCW) will create the possibility to put a limitation on the number of international student enrolments. Currently, at the FMG level, the dean is not aiming to attract more international students. There are two programmes, Educational Sciences and Cultural Anthropology, where an increase in student numbers is desired. We do still have to advertise to keep the number of students at the same level (the FMG will not stop promotion).

Focus groups: the dean is very much in favour of using focus groups in addition to UvA-Q in increasing students' influence on course and program shaping. Focus groups do not have to be costly. Student factions could organise focus groups at the level of the programme. The dean can discuss the encouragement of focus groups with the College and Graduate School directors (OWIs), but she would like to receive a proposal from the FSR first.

Sustainability: the UvA has signed the climate letter and is now thinking of ways to implement the goals of the letter. In terms of organisational structure, the central level is important in terms of physical changes (energy in the buildings, waste). Not only physical changes, but also the behaviour of staff members and students are an influence on sustainability. Influencing travel behaviour (flying) and carbon footprint behaviour is a more complicated matter. The dean would like to look into the proposal of a new sustainable travel policy (including a map with red, orange and green zones indicating where to fly or where to go by train). The dean is in favour of making staff and students aware of more sustainable behaviour.

The budget does not allow extra resources for increasing student engagement. The dean supports student engagement improvement but thinks this can be pursued for free as well (for example by using the focus groups). Within courses, lecturers are responsible for student engagement. Outside of the programme it is up to the student associations and the FSR. The dean will always facilitate the improvement of student engagement, but not necessarily with more budget. The dean would be in favour of thinking along with the FSR on how to increase student engagement. In the future, if the FSR has a concrete and feasible proposal to attain this goal, the dean could consider to give some budget for the activity, but the FSR also has its own budget. An event like dinner with the dean is expensive, it's not necessary to have dinner, you can do something else.

Social safety is a topic that is very important to the deans and the CvB. An interim trust counsellor (ombudswoman) has been appointed. In May, the position of trust counsellor will be filled permanently. There are ombudspersons at the faculty levels. The ombudspersons could help once problems arise. In terms of prevention: the FMG makes sure that the chair persons and directors have the right knowledge/skills to deal with problems regarding social safety. An

academic leadership training and an academic teaching leadership training are offered. However, this is for staff, not for students. And at this moment, trainings are only offered to the directors, there is no training for teachers (social safety in the classroom). There does not seem to be a budget for trainings for teachers on social safety, the dean has to think about this. The dean is open to advices of the FSR on improving social safety.

Commitments

- The FMG is not aiming to attract more international students. The dean would prefer to keep the numbers at more or less the same level. Only for the new program in Cultural Anthropology an increase in international student numbers is aimed for.
- The dean would be in favour of thinking along with the FSR on how to increase student engagement.

Action points

191003-1: The FSR works out a proposal on how to implement the focus groups and submits this to the dean for approval, so the dean can take this to the OWI directors for consultation.

5. Subject 2: Bachelor Humans, Society and Technology (HST)

FSR

The FSR is excited about the opportunity to weigh in on a new bachelor programme and would love to help to implement it. Some concerns:

Budget: it was brought to the FSR's attention that the planning of the HST budget is currently being modified. The budget depends on the decision on whether the programme will get a nature label or not. A nature label will result in bigger incomes from the ministry of OCW. The FSR believes that there should be a concrete budget for both outcomes. The FSR does not want to consent with an unclear budget plan (in case HST does not get the nature label).

Possible future paths: the FSR is interested in being informed about the future prospects for students that will be enrolled in the new bachelor. Similar arrangements as the ones with the Social Science and Political Science Graduate Schools are expected to be made with the other Graduate Schools of the FMG. The FSR would like to see formal agreements with education directors rather than possible speculations.

Possible external partners: the FSR would like to see clear guidelines for possible external partners (social organizations, businesses) in order to guarantee the academic integrity of the program. The FSR wants to ensure that the external partners are facilitating the students' development and not the companies' profit. The FSR wonders how businesses are going to be selected. The FSR believes that selection should not be based on pre-existing relations between the UvA and the business, but on what company students are going to learn most from.

Staff: lastly, the FSR is concerned about the planned strategy of both hiring new staff and 'borrowing' teachers from different existing bachelors within the faculty. The working council (OR) informed the FSR that taking teachers from the existing bachelors might hurt the existing bachelors (could cause a staff shortage). How can the quality of the existing bachelors be guaranteed? Another concern of the OR is how much the teachers will be financially compensated. Of course, the HST board could compensate for the teaching, but money for research is also needed.

Practical: the FSR would like to postpone the request for consent on HST until the moment that the FSR receives all information they received in Dutch translated to English as well. This will ensure that all council members are properly informed.

Dean

For the current request for consent, it is assumed that HST will get the nature label. The decision on the label will be made six months after the TNO. It is only after the decision on the nature label that the budget for HST will be set. It has not been decided yet whether the program will be continued in the case that the nature label is not awarded to HST. The reason behind this is that the budget for the program will be lower without a nature label, and in this case the dean will probably not be able to guarantee the fulfilment of the aim of the program. This is why at this point it would not make sense to propose a budget plan for HST without a nature label budget. In the case that HST does not get the nature label (high funding), the dean will send the FSR a new request for approval for the intention to install the new bachelor HST.

Possible external partners: at some point, the dean is planning on formalizing some rules/guidelines. The students and companies will not get any financial compensation, there will be no transactions. The dean does not agree with the FSR's stance that there should be no pre-existing relations: existing relations provide an advantage because we know who we will be dealing with. Another factor in this is that we do not have a big number of companies that we can choose from. As soon as students will enter a company to work with for a project, guidelines for the companies (in order to guarantee the academic integrity) will be developed.

Staff: it is clear to the dean that creating a new bachelor programme requires hiring new staff. The CvB has made budget reservations in order to have a budget even before students have graduated. The dean indicates that it works both ways: there will be some new staff and some from the existing bachelor programmes. HST will not cause teachers to have a higher load of teaching than they already have.

The FMG receives more money for teaching than for conducting research. In order to have teachers that do an equal amount of teaching and researching, we need other teachers that only work on teaching. We will hire teachers to support the teaching at the level of the working groups. We will also hire (associate) professors to give lectures. This method is customary and it is not different with other programmes. We will make an effort to build a research community around the theme of HST as well. Sometime during the development of the TNO, an overview of which programmes teachers are needed to teach in HST will be shared with the FSR.

Richard van der Wurff

On the budget: HST is being created from the perspective of the program that the FMG would like to offer, and in this perspective, the budget is being planned. It is not the other way around (looking at the budget first and subsequently creating a program).

Decisions on possible future paths for HST-students are dependent on the examination boards, who can only make their decision once the HST-programme is finished. However, Richard stresses that the future paths for HST-students are very important to Richard as well, since this is a vital piece of information in drawing potential students. In the ASW (Interdisciplinary Social Sciences) program students can choose between different directions of education and still meet the requirements that they need in order to follow a (pre-)master's

programme. Richard would like to arrange these kinds of options for the HST students as well, within the FMG as well as outside of it (like a Master's program in Information Studies). Within the next two months, Richard will be looking into the requirements of different master programmes within the UvA and whether these requirements can be met within the curriculum of HST. The bachelor programme HST includes 30 EC of electives. A worst-case scenario would include students to still be able to follow a premaster programme within this planned 30 EC space to be able to register for a master in the domain. Also, Richard is planning on making sure that all HST-students will have the same level of knowledge on methods and statistics as within the other bachelors within the FMG.

Possible external partners: in the obligatory internship programmes within Communication Science, it is made clear to the companies that the student's educational objectives are the determining factor of the content of the internship. This is more important than whether the internship fits the needs of the companies. In the first three years of the HST bachelor programme, the HST directors will be responsible for providing external partners. Students will be supervised by staff members. The fact that the student's educational objectives are a priority is clear to the dean and to Richard, it is just not written down yet.

Staff: Richard sees HST as an opportunity to hire new staff, to give opportunities to teachers who work in this field.

Commitments

- In the case that HST does not get the nature label, the dean will send the FSR a new request for consent to install the HST bachelor.
- As soon as students will enter a company to work with, guidelines for the companies (in order to guarantee the academic integrity) will be developed.
- HST will not cause teachers to have a higher load of teaching than they currently have.
- Sometime during the development of the TNO, an overview of of which programmes teachers are needed to teach in HST will be shared with the FSR.

Action points

191003-2: On the 3rd of October, the dean will send the FSR a translation of the HST documents translated to English.

6. Subject 3: Language Policy

FSR

'19-'20 is the first year in which the FSR includes international council members. The FSR will no longer accept that most of the communication and a large portion of documents between the dean and the FSR is in Dutch. Council members have the right to be informed. A lack of information also comes in the form of not having requests which members of the FSR can fully read and comprehend. For this reason, members of the FSR will not fully consent to requests for which they lack full information.

Within the working agreements of the FSR, it is stated that in order for a vote to pass, an issue requires at least 5 out of 8 votes in favour. Currently, only 3 of the council members with legal voting rights speak Dutch. When presented with information and documents in the Dutch language, 5 council members would place an uninformed vote. Dutch council members

could translate documents for the international council members, but this would mean an increase in workload for the Dutch council members and this would lead to second-hand information, which is not always accurate. Furthermore, by changing the language policy, the FSR hopes to increase its accessibility to international students.

The FSR received a request for consent (HST) and for advice (budget 2020). Regarding HST, a lot of documents were sent to the FSR only in Dutch. This might affect the FSR in a negative way. This is why the FSR requests the dean's support in translating all documents concerning the implementation of the new bachelor.

Next, the FSR requests the dean's support in the translation of all supporting documents of all requests for consent submitted to the FSR.

Further, the FSR requests that all communication between the faculty office and the FSR will be in the English language from this point onwards.

Moreover, the FSR requests the dean's support in ensuring that the agenda and the minutes from the OWI meetings are sent to the council in the English language and that every topic that is discussed with the FSR is in the English language.

Lastly, the FSR requests that the dean encourages all faculty employees to facilitate exchanges with the council in English. The dean could also continue offering courses to those who are not comfortable in the English language. The FSR will take responsibility in reminding the faculty board members that English is the language of communication to be employed, and compromises are being made by the FSR in the process of discussing the draft budget of 2020.

Dean

It seems that the FSR is asking for everything to be provided by the dean, the dean feels like not only the faculty board, but also the FSR should make an effort to help with the challenges of communication. The dean uses translation programmes, the FSR can do so as well. At the OWI-meetings, all employees present are Dutch, it would not make sense to change the language of the meeting. When international students of the FSR are present during the meeting to discuss an (un)solicited advice, we can all speak English.

We will translate everything that you have a right to consent / to advice on. We are a Dutch university and the official language is Dutch. Of course, there are English programmes. There are many pieces of information that the FMG receives in Dutch as well. The faculty board can provide an English translation, but sometimes that might be insufficient. When there is any unclarity regarding the Dutch translation, council members can ask the dean for an extra explanation.

Commitments

- The dean will support the FSR in translating all documents concerning the implementation of HST and of all supporting documents of all requests for consent and advice submitted to the FSR.
- The dean will make sure all communication between the faculty office and the FSR will be done in the English language from this point onwards, unless Dutch council members are talking to Dutch staff members.

Action points

191003-3: This week, the dean will send the language policy of the FMG to the FSR.

7. Subject 4: OWI Meetings

[this subject was discussed before subject 3. The minutes follow the original order of the agenda]

FSR

During the agenda meeting, the Daily Board (DB) of the FSR was informed by the dean that the FSR will no longer be able to join the OWI meetings. The two prior FSR's have been able to join the entire meeting and to provide input during the last 10 minutes. The FSR finds it difficult to come to terms with the current situation. The FSR would first like to reflect on the process of the dean informing the FSR of its absence during the OWI-meetings. Secondly, the FSR would like to discuss why the FSR is excluded. The working agreements between the dean and the FSR state that two FSR-members can attend the last 10 minutes of the meeting.

For the future, the FSR requests support to ensure that the OWI-meetings are conducted in a transparent way. The FSR would like to receive the agenda and the minutes. And in case that there is a subject on the agenda that is relevant to the FSR, the FSR would like to have the possibility to attend. The FSR has already contacted the OWI-directors regarding this matter.

Dean

The reason why the last two FSR's could be present during OWI-meetings (as an observer and for the last 10 minutes as a speaker) was because in '17-'18 and '18-'19, the FSR did not have direct contact with the OWI-directors (in the subcommittees, ODC's). Because the contact between the FSR and the OWI-directors has changed, the dean does not consider the presence of the FSR a necessity anymore.

The dean does not see this change as exclusion, the dean indicates that this is her meeting with the OWI-directors. Some of the subjects are relevant for students as well (and the dean is welcoming the FSR to be there for those subjects), but not everything is relevant for the students. The compromise is that the dean will invite the FSR to be present (as an observer) at the OWI-meeting on subjects relevant to the FSR.

Commitments

- From now on, the dean will send the FSR the agenda of the OWI-meetings. The FSR can request the dean to be present for (a) certain subject(s) and subsequently, the dean will decide if and how many council members can be present.
- The minutes of the OWI-meetings will be provided to the FSR as soon as possible after the OWI-meeting. (The aim is to send the minutes within two weeks after the OWI-meetings, but this will not be a strict deadline.) The agenda and the minutes will be sent to the FSR in Dutch.

Action points

191003-4: This week, the dean will send the FSR a document regarding the new process for the OWI-meetings. This includes when the FSR will get the draft agenda and what deadlines the FSR has for requesting to be present during the OWI-meeting.

8. Subject 5: Budget FMG

[this subject was discussed before subject 3 and 4. The minutes follow the original order of the agenda]

FSR

On September 10th, the FSR received the draft budget for the FMG 2020. In consultation with the workers council (OR), the FSR concluded that the draft budget included fewer explanations than the draft budget of 2019. Furthermore, a meeting between the OR and the FSR was moved up until after this OV (and in this moment the OR has more experience in the medezeggenschap than the FSR). It is for these reasons that the FSR has difficulty forming a well-informed opinion on the draft budget at this time. The FSR is currently waiting for the additional information. The FSR would eventually need an extension of the deadline.

As a tip for next year, the FSR informs Michel and Jochem that when advice is requested, it is important to send the FSR all of the needed information and an explanation on the process. It was not clear to the FSR that it would receive the information on the draft budget in three phases.

Michel Telkamp:

The FMG provides the concept budget very early in the stages of working towards the definitive budget. The FSR receives the additional numbers at the same time that all of the other stakeholders receive them. Michel has agreed on an extension of the deadline for the FSR to respond: it will become 7,5 weeks (end of October) instead of 6 weeks. The FMG is bound to a certain date on which it has to provide our preliminary budget to the CvB, but this is feasible because we started early.

In 2 or 3 weeks, the FSR will receive a third version of the preliminary budget (the final figures). The FSR will also receive additional information today. Next year, the FMG will explicitly include the various versions / stages of the draft budget in the faculty budget calendar, so that there is no longer any uncertainty about the process at the FSR.

9. Any other businesses

None.

10. Questions and closing

Arend Habbema closes the meeting at 12:31.