

University Council
First Plenary Meeting
Erasmus University Rotterdam

Date and Time: 11/01/2021, 15:00-17:00

Location: Teams (online meeting)

Present in the Meeting: Hans van den Berg (Chair), Simo Azzarhouni, Zohra Hayat, Pi Cheng Hu, Ernst Hulst, Patryk Jarmakowicz, Sandra Constantinou Juhasz, Sebastiaan Kamp, Bram Heesen, Cagla Altin, Friso Roos, Nikita Schoenmaker, Albert Wagelmans, Irena Boskovic, Timo Zandvliet, John van Wel, Max Wagenaar, Daemon Kregting, Natascha Kraal, Emese von Bóné, Aleid Fokkema, Jasper Klasen, Hamza Erdogan, Onka Sarwari, Lobke van Steenberg (clerk), Oriana Morales Hernández (minutes).

Absent in the Meeting: Bianca Jadoenath, Robbert Rog, Georgiana Carp.

01 Opening

01.01 Setting of the agenda

The agenda has been set.

01.02 Setting of the minutes of the previous meeting

A small remark was sent to the minute-taker for the clarification of the minutes. These remarks will be incorporated in the final version.

01.03 Announcements

- UC new member and interns

The UC has a new student member, who will replace Bram Heesen: Yusufhan Balci. Additionally, the Council has two interns from the program of Public Administration: Hamza Erdogan and Onka Sarwari. They will work on the working methods of the UC and on the onboarding processing respectively.

- Study spaces and unofficial letters

The Chair contacted the EB to open more study spaces and have a more strategic discussion on this on the long term. This was noted by the EB. To follow-up on the topic, Patryk will get in touch with the Chair and arrange a strategy to find more study spaces.

Furthermore, the Chair emphasized the importance of task forces including the Secretariat in any form communication. In this way, the Secretariat can provide more support, and overlapping information can be avoided.

- Supervisory Board-Presidium meeting

Before the Christmas holidays, there was a meeting between the Presidium and the Supervisory Board of the university. These meetings happen once every six months. In previous meetings, there used to be a one-way communication, where the UC would bring issues to the SB without a rich discussion. This improved in the last meeting, and complex topics such as the student/staff ratio were tackled. The SB stated how there are no one-sided solutions for topics as complex as this one, and that various strategies need to be taken by the university to deal with them.

- Christmas activity UC-EB

Before the Christmas vacation, there was a bonding activity planned between the UC and the EB. The activity was very fun. However, the Chair expressed disappointment by the low rate of attendance. Less than half of the council was there, and only three students attended the meeting. These meetings are designed to improve working relations between the UC and the EB. Other activities take place for the personal development of the Council members. Thus, it is very important for the Council to attend and to take these meetings very seriously.

- Sharing of minutes of Presidium meeting

The Clerk wanted to ask if the current procedure for sharing the minutes of the Presidium is working well. A member of the Council explained that the minutes are not of much use, as they are shared after the Plenary Meetings. One of the main purposes of the Presidium Meetings is to plan for the future Plenary Meetings. Therefore, the information is most relevant for UC members before the next Plenary. Thus, the Clerk will revise if there is any way of making this process more adapted to the dynamics of the Council. However, this will take some work.

Action Point: The Clerk will revise if there is any way of making the sharing of the Presidium Meetings more adapted to the dynamics of the Council.

- Wearing a mask on Campus

A member of the Council pointed out before the Christmas holiday that it would be ideal for the EB to ask students to wear masks during lectures. Since then, the circumstances related to COVID have changed. However, it is still relevant to make a comment about this. Albert will make information available on Teams regarding this subject, and it will be treated as an agenda point in the next meeting.

Action Point: Albert will share some information regarding the use of masks in Lecture Halls on Teams before the next Plenary Meeting.

- HoKa Workgroup membership

Daemon will replace Bram in the HoKa Workgroup for the rest of the academic year.

02 Agenda items plenary meeting UC

02.01 HeQa - budgets latC and Wellbeing TF

Lead: Albert; Presidium lead: Zohra

The budgets of both Impact at the Core and Student Wellbeing will become available for the UC soon. However, there is some unclarity on when they will arrive, and whether these budgets should be postponed for the next UC Cycle. The HoKa Secretary and the Clerk will clarify the status of these documents.

Action Point: The HoKa Secretary and the Clerk will clarify the status of the Impact at the Core and Student Wellbeing budgets.

02.02 CLI budget

Presidium lead: John

The UC had consent on part of the budget, namely the budget reserved for HeQa. The CLI works centrally for the university and receives its budget from different streams of money. The CLI budget will be tackled by the entire UC, instead of delegating it to a task force. It is essential for the Council to be critical of the CLI plans, as they have a large budget, and they relate to a lot of departments of the EUR. The policymaker will be invited for the next plenary meeting

for a Q&A session. All council members are invited to send questions on the topic to the Clerk by Friday the 14th of January.

02.03 EUR Sustainable Mobility in business travel policy

Presidium lead: John

The Finance department will soon share documents about this point with the Council. The Sustainability task force will take a close look at the policy.

02.04 Master Societal Transitions

Task force: Zohra, Yusufhan, Cagla, Patryk, Max.

The UC gave advice for the Master on Societal Transitions in July. The documentation provided is only concerned with final drafts; therefore, is only being shared with the members of the Council and not posted in public. The summary of the Master is in English, but the documentation is in Dutch. The Clerk discussed this with the policymakers, who explained that this is the situation because the Master will be taught in Dutch and there is a lot of information that would have to be translated. The task force will revise the documents, and if a translation is needed, they will notify the Secretariat.

02.05 Main elements of the budget

TF Lead: Natascha

Presidium lead: John

The finance task force is reviewing information about what is considered as the main elements of the budget in other universities. This is related to the powers of consent that a University Council can have when reviewing the yearly proposal of the main elements of the budget. The task force highlighted that the information provided by the other universities was very interesting, and they will meet with the policymakers in the field of finance to discuss their observations. This topic is going to be started, but not finalized, during this cycle.

02.06 HOVO

Lead: John

During the last cycle, a letter about HOVO was sent to the EB. For now, there are no immediate actions to take on this topic. Yet, it will continue being a part of the agenda so it can be discussed with the EB at the consultation meeting.

02.07 Compensation Participatory Bodies

Lead: Zohra

The task force had a meeting to discuss this topic this afternoon. They realized that on September 27th, the EB sent a letter to the UC explaining that they would review the compensation scheme of FCs and PCs. The Chair will check with the EB what the status of this review is. Additionally, the task force compared the compensation of the UC with information from other universities (this information was gathered through Lovum).

From their preliminary discussions, it seems that there is less difference of compensation for the employee members of the UC than for the student members. In the case of the employees, the conversation of the compensation could be discussed within the theme of recognition and reward. When it comes to the students, the compensation appears inferior to the one in other universities. Additionally, the scheme of payment is different from being paid in the form of a grant.

It is important to notice that although comparing with the compensation of other universities is relevant, this information does not tell the whole story. It is possible that other Councils have a different workload than the one at EUR. Thus, making a critical overview of this topic is important.

To continue tackling this topic, the task force will contact Hamza, who is studying the way of working of the UC during his internship in the Council. Ideally, a rough estimation of the work time that UC members put per week would be valuable to calculate what would be a fair compensation.

Action point: The Chair will ask the EB about the status of the review they would make on the compensation of FCs and PCs.

02.08 Ecosia as standard browser

Two months ago, there was a publication from an English university which integrated Ecosia as its main search engine on different IT devices. Some reports claim that Ecosia is a very sustainable alternative search engine; it donates a large percentage of its funds to green initiatives, and it is based on the idea of supporting sustainability. Thus, the Sustainability Task Force has been discussing whether it would be a good idea to endorse Ecosia as the main search engine of the university.

There are disagreements in the sustainability task force on whether this is a good idea or not. Furthermore, there is not an agreement on the information concerning Ecosia. As Ecosia uses Bing for its searches, it is not clear whether it has a larger environmental footprint than google. Additionally, there is no clarity on the privacy aspects that would come with changing to this search engine.

To follow-up on this topic, Robbert will be asked to initiate a discussion on Teams displaying the research and advantages related to the use of Ecosia, so the different members of the Council can react to it.

Action point: Robbert will provide information on Ecosia so that the Council can get some clarity on the discussion of whether it is advantageous to set it as the default search engine of the university.

02.09 Students with a disability

Task force: Zohra & Cagla

Before the Christmas vacation, there was an article at Erasmus Magazine telling the story of a student with physical impairment that has been struggling to use the facilities on campus because they are not well adapted to a wheelchair. In the past years, there has been systematic complaints about the adaptability of the university for people with both physical and psychological impairment. It is essential for the UC to re-initiate a discussion on the topic, as the entire academic experience of some students can be affected by this. It should be a focus point of the UC, just as sustainability. It is highly disappointing that the university has not properly accommodated the campus to be inclusive to all students.

There is unclarity on the past efforts to deal with this topic. Various bodies and departments in the university seem to have worked on it, but it is difficult to see who the main agent is which is responsible for acting on accommodating the campus to students with impairments. For now, the main strategy of the UC should be how to move forward. The Secretariat will identify the departments in charge and communicate with them. Zohra & Cagla will be in contact with the Chair and with the D&I task force to proceed with the topic.

02.10 Way of working UC Follow-up Good Conversation

A meeting was planned for today for a follow-up of the good conversation. However, it was cancelled as the main speaker is ill. Thus, the meeting will be rescheduled for next Monday. It is very important for UC members to attend this meeting, as it will be key in discussing what is needed for the Council to take its decisions.

02.11 Annual Report UC 2020-2021

The UC is legally required to make an annual report, which broadly summarizes the agenda points, task forces, and way of working of the Council in the past year. This document is now available, and contains an introductory letter by the Chair, which is the most qualitative part of the document. The report is for consent. It was highlighted that the document has two typos: some names are inconsistently written with bold letters, and there is a discrepancy in the use of academic titles for employee members of the UC. The Clerk will fix these minor mistakes. The Council unanimously consented to this document, and it will become an official part of the documentation after the two typos are fixed.

Action Point: The Clerk will fix the two minor typos that were found in the Annual Report UC 2020-2021

03 Incoming documents

- 384510 Response to Integral letter Code of Integrity and Regulations on Personal Relationships and Gifts

There was no discussion regarding this point.

- 384511 Response to Annual Social Report (including 2 appendices)

There was no discussion regarding this point.

- Online education ESHCC

There appears to be some missing information related to this point. Albert will email the Clerk highlighting what is missing, so that the information can be retrieved. Additionally, a member of the Council asked what the UC should do after the EB responds to a topic (such as the online education at ESHCC). This point was brought forward before the Christmas vacation, and although the circumstances surrounding COVID have changed, the fact that the faculty took a unilateral decision on the topic has not. It is important to critically reflect on how to carry on with discussions with the EB, so that their replies are not the final word of each inquiry. Ideally, there should be a way to follow-up on letters from the EB.

- Budget of the Erasmus MC Faculty budget

There appears to be some missing information related to this point. Albert will email the Clerk highlighting what is missing, so that the information can be retrieved.

Action Point: Albert will email the Clerk regarding the missing information on the response on the Erasmus MC Budget.

- Response to question regarding Tenders

There was no discussion regarding this point.

- Transition HR ESL to HR PRO

There is an additional document that was provided to the Chair and is now available to the whole Council. This point related to a reorganization process. Thus, the UC will be asked for advice on the matter as soon as all the documentation is available.

04 Any other business

- Assignments interns

As it was mentioned during the announcements, two new interns will be working for the Council in the upcoming weeks. The Chair invites all members of the Council to get the interns involved in different activities, and to ask them for help in tasks if necessary.

- *Student Civil Servant*

The Broad Meeting team explained to the student representatives that in various universities, there is a student that serves as a link between the university and the municipality. The students of the UC would like to support this initiative. The EB was already approached by the Broad meeting to give a student this position in the University. The EB said that they would consider this idea if it were endorsed by the UC. The UC agrees on this being a good idea, and Friso will share what procedure is needed in order to give an official green light to the initiative. There is a question on who would fund the link between the municipality and the student, as it is a paid position. However, there are high chances that the EUR would not have to be responsible for the funding of the position.

Action Point: Friso will share the procedure needed in order to give an official green light to the Student Civil Servant.

- *Renting on Campus*

A member of the Council pointed out that they had contact with the person that rents the bike shop on campus. It appears that they have had to pay for the last 20 months of rent at the university, without any income coming from the shop due to COVID. Additionally, the bookstore is being removed from the Campus as it has been unsustainable. Thus, it is important to revise the conditions of renting on Campus, as well as the use of spaces.

It was mentioned that these spaces that are rented are private. Thus, the department of Real State and Facilities should be contacted to learn more about the issue. Emese will gather information about it to send questions to Real State and Facilities through the Clerk.

Action Point: Emese will gather information about it to send questions to Real State and Facilities through the Clerk.

- *Cultural Associations*

A member of the Council highlighted that they have been contacted by different Cultural Associations from EUR. These associations have not had a proper fixed place to practice their arts in the last 25 years. Some associations had informal agreements with the university, where they were allowed to practice for certain timeslots in different areas of the Campus. However, these agreements have been cancelled due to COVID, and the associations are worried that they will not have a suitable location when the pandemic is over. Therefore, a list of the requirements from the cultural associations will be drafted in order to see if it is possible to help them to find space for their activities.

Action Point: Daemon will draft a list of the requirements from the cultural associations will be drafted in order to see if it is possible to help them to find space for their activities.