

**University Council
Third Plenary Meeting
Erasmus University Rotterdam**

Date and Time: 04/07/2023, 14:00 – 16:00

Location: Langeveld 1.16

Present in the Meeting: **Ivonne Cune-Noten (chair)**, Sandra Constantinou Juhasz, Sebastiaan Kamp, Max Wagenaar, Nikita Schoenmaker, Jaap Cornelese, Natascha Kraal, Patryk Jarmakowicz, Ernst Hulst, Albert Wagelmans, Irena Boskovic, Emese von Bóné, Erin van Gestel, Luuk van Tol, Nawin Ramcharan, Wesley Hennep, Wincey Randoe, Veerle Bakker, Friso Roos, Cagla Altin, Lobke van Steenberg (Clerk), Ellie Cercel (Minutes).

Absent: Aleid Fokkema.

Waiver: Georgiana Carp, Simo Azzarhouni.

01 Opening

01.01 Setting of the agenda

The agenda was set without adjustments.

01.02 Minutes second plenary meeting

The minutes of the first plenary meeting and the action points were set without adjustments.

01.03 Announcements

- *Reply letters final cycle*

The Clerk and Chair will work on receiving all the responses from the EB before the final plenary meeting on September 5th. Also, the annual report will be discussed during this meeting.

- *Onboarding 28 August – 31 August*

The meeting on the 5th of September will be the final meeting for the UC of the 2022-2023 academic year and will be joined by the new council as well. The new council will have its first plenary meeting after our final meeting. The departing councillors will have a moment to meet the new councillors and hand in their equipment and there will be a diner for all UC-members together with the EB.

During the week of 28th August – 31st August, the onboarding of the new members of the council will take place, and the programme will be shared in Outlook during this coming week. The councillors are requested to inform the Clerk as soon as possible if they are unable to attend. We hope all council members can join to have a good start in the new academic year.

02 Agenda items plenary meeting UC

02.01 Tender process Arbo Dienstverlening

The TF has spoken to the policymakers and received a broader explanation of their plans for the medical support team and services on campus. The TF is satisfied with the answers and advises the UC to give consent to the documents. The letter has been made available in Teams. The UC agreed on sending the shared letter.

Action point: The UC Clerk will format the letter of consent on *Tender process Arbo Dienstverlening* and send it to the EB.

02.02 Extra Projects HeQa EUR-central

The TF has shared the concept letter of partial consent to the Extra Projects HeQa EUR-central on Teams.

During the meeting, a councillor shared his concern about the sustainability project which has the goal of providing mandatory sustainability courses to all EUR students, and shared his opinion that these courses should be voluntary and not mandatory.

Also, the UC revised the discussion with the EB from the CM. The UC regarded the explanation of the EB regarding the different allocation process for the CLI project as unsatisfactory. The discussion on the content of the CLI online education project recapitulated the points of the UC that were shared in the previous cycle. Following that, the UC informed the EB that we will consent to all project plans except for the CLI plan, and we agreed on setting up meetings with the CLI and the HeQa TF to revise our expectations and the options regarding the CLI budget requests. Following that dialogue, the CLI budget will be tabled once more for UC consent.

The UC agreed on sending the shared version of the letter.

Action point: The UC Clerk will format the letter of consent on *Extra Projects HeQa EUR-central*.

02.03 Concept advice Starting and Incentive grants EUR

The concept letter of advice to the *Starting and Incentive grants EUR* was shared in Teams.

The council agreed on sending the letter with an adjustment about phrasing clarity. The EB requested to receive the letter on the evening of the third plenary meeting. Also, the policymakers requested access to the information in the letter.

Action point: The UC Clerk will share the unsigned final version of the advice letter on *Starting and Incentive grants EUR* with the EB and policymakers today; the formal letter will be shared with the EB as well at the end of the cycle.

02.04 Numerus fixus bachelor programmes and selection master programmes 24-25

The UC agreed to the TF suggestion of sending the standard letter of positive advice without any additional points.

Action point: The UC Clerk will format the standard letter of positive advice on *Numerus fixus bachelor programmes and selection master programmes 24-25* and send it to the EB.

02.05 Ties with the fossil fuel industry

The TF is satisfied with the response of the EB that was shared during the CM regarding the proposal *Ties with the fossil fuel industry*. Furthermore, the TF was already approached by the policymakers with the goal of arranging a meeting with the DIT. Thus, the TF believes that the concept letter of initiative has served its purpose and, given that the response of the EB is reflected in the minutes of the CM, the TF advises the UC not to send the final version of the letter to the EB. The UC debated whether the minutes are sufficient to officially represent the discussion, and agreed that, during the meeting on the 5th of September, we will revise the minutes to ensure that they reflect the response of the EB regarding this agenda point. Also, there may be a former follow-up in a future cycle regarding this agenda point.

Also, the UC reflected on the response given by the Rector with regards to the actions taken by VU. The UC understands that the EB wishes to tackle the issue of ties with the fossil fuel industry directly and then make a statement, as opposed to proclaiming a statement that cannot be yet backed up by policies. However, the UC believes that the process of resolving the ties is similar to VU's approach.

A temporary TF formed by Tom, Max, Simo, Sebastiaan, Natascha will work on this agenda point and plan the DIT meeting.

Action point: the temporary TF will meet with DIT to discuss the process of resolving the ties with the fossil fuel industry. The minutes of the CM discussion will be revised during the meeting on the 5th of September.

02.06 Traffic around Woudestein

The topic was discussed during the CM and the EB requested the UC to draft a letter and send it to the municipality. Also, the EB informed the UC that the tramline seven will be discontinued.

The UC discussed the discontinuation of the tramline, as it will affect the commute of EUR staff and students, as well as going against the sustainability goals of our campus. Although some councillors were not sure whether to include the comment regarding this topic in the same letter with the traffic safety issues, the council finally agreed to incorporating both topics in the same letter.

Regarding the process, the letter will be drafted and revised in Teams; the council will be able to share their input until Friday 14th July at 9:00 am. Also, the EB VP will share the statistical information the UC requested during the CM; this will also be incorporated in the letter as soon as possible.

Action point: The UC will create and work on the letter to the municipality of Rotterdam on *Traffic around Woudestein* until Friday 14th July at 9:00 am. The Clerk will share the final version with the municipality of Rotterdam.

02.07 Sustainability proposal

The letter was shared in Teams and the UC were requested to add their input. Regarding the previous suggestion of including an overview, the TF decided it would not be necessary at this time, as there already is sufficient referencing throughout the documents, but will use this suggestion in the future if the reply from the EB is negative.

Furthermore, two more opinions were shared in the meeting with regard to the vegan campus 2030 and mandatory sustainability education.

Firstly, several councillors expressed their disagreement with the EB statement of making the EUR campus vegan by 2030; some reasons shared in the meeting were that removing meat products makes it difficult for people with allergies to soy, for example, as well as vegan food tends to be more expensive than non-vegan alternatives, which will impact students from low SES backgrounds. Also, removing the option to choose your food preferences goes against the diversity and inclusivity mission of EUR. These councillors wished to include in the *Sustainability proposal* letter that the UC is opposed to the vegan campus. Another suggestion was to show support for the vegan campus with the mention that low SES students will be accounted for. However, other members of the council were opposed to the request, as the document is not a proposal of the vegan campus, but a reference to the EB decision, therefore the opinions against that decision should be mentioned in a different way. Adding additional comments from the UC on how to conduct these plans will diverge from the message we are trying to send to the EB, which is to keep them accountable for the decisions they made in the past. Furthermore, during the vegan food pilot, it will be investigated how to make vegan

food accessible to all students; the councillors who are worried about inaccessible food can share this advice during this pilot. Another suggestion was made of adding the request for more research into vegan food options for low SES students in the handover document.

Secondly, a councillor opposed the decision of making sustainability education mandatory for all EUR students. Several reasons for this opposition were stated, such as students reacting in a negative way to being forced to study topics they had not signed up for. However, other members of the council opposed this request, as the decision had been made four years ago by the EB and is in the EV. Also, the decision will give the Deans of education the space to relate the topics they are teaching to sustainability, which is a broad topic. For example, in the Criminology program, the topic was included as part of a course on Environment Crimes. Furthermore, it was argued that the issue of the climate crisis is relevant to all people, however not everyone takes an interest in educating themselves about this topic; making sustainability education mandatory will entail that all students get more information on how to tackle current societal issues. Also, similar to the first point of criticism, we are using this letter to remind the EB of plans they had already made, not introducing new ideas, therefore it would not be the place to voice this opinion.

As the opinions of the UC were divided, a voting procedure took place. The majority decided against adding these two opinions in the draft letter. As a result, the UC decided on sending the letter on *Sustainability proposal* in the current format.

Additionally, the Chair wished to inform the UC that we had agreed on the process of adding input to the shared document in Teams, which was followed through by most members of the council, and the comments were resolved in time for the Third plenary meeting. However, the points shared in the current meeting were not expected in the process and, although we took the time to resolve them now, it will benefit the time of the council if, in the future, the process agreed upon is respected.

Action point: The UC Clerk will format the concept letter *Sustainability proposal* shared in Teams and send it to the EB.

02.08 Access to offices

The TF received a reply from the EB. The details of this agenda point will be included in the Handover document for the new UC to work on.

Action point: The TF will include the information on the agenda point *Access to offices* in the Handover document. The agenda point will be tabled in the first cycle of the next academic year.

02.09 Handover UC

The Clerk will share the Handover document with the members of the new UC on Friday 7th July at 12 o'clock. The UC members were requested to add the information regarding their TFs and ongoing agenda points before then. The Clerk created an overview of all action points which will be added to the document. Also, councillor Natascha will be given access to the document as it had not been there before.

Action point: the UC members will add their input in the Handover document by Friday 7th July at 12 o'clock. The UC Clerk will share the final version of the Handover document with the new UC members.

02.10 HOVO

In the previous CM, the UC discussed with the EB the reasons for discontinuing HOVO education, seeing as many Dutch Universities continue to offer this option. According to the EB, it is not possible due to tax and financial reasons, and do not understand how it would be legally possible to fund this education. The Ministry has become stricter with the way Universities share their resources with private companies, however HOVO is paying for the services they are requesting from universities. During the CM, the EB shared that they are willing to work out a plan as soon as the measures from the Ministry become less strict.

The UC wishes to know if the EB has any other plans for delivering lifelong education. Furthermore, the UC believes that the same law should be applied to the activities of RSM and RSM B.V. Councillors Jaap, Ernst, Albert, and Sebastiaan will draft a letter in preparation for the UC plenary meeting on September 5th that will highlight the opinions shared in the CM and plenary meetings. The members of the UC are requested to share their input on the letter via Teams for the voting procedure to take place during the final plenary meeting.

Action point: the discussion on the letter on *HOVO* is tabled for the plenary meeting on September 5th.

02.11 Evaluation CM

- *Absence EB from social events*

The UC was critical of the frequent absence of the EB from social events organised with the UC, such as the drinks or SDG game. Also, the EB did not attend the farewell drinks last Thursday due to an overlapping event. The UC found this gesture upsetting and wished the EB had made an effort to attend our event as well. Furthermore, we would like to see more social events being planned with the EB in the upcoming year.

The secretariat is already planning more social events with the EB and the UC, as well as meetings at the locations of EUC, EMC, and ISS, for the upcoming year.

- *English and Dutch language requirements in Dutch universities*

The UC believes the topic discussed at the last CM regarding the mandatory Dutch-taught education is important and wishes to ensure it will be tackled by the next council. This point will be added to the Handover document.

- *Advice UC strategy 2024-2028*

The EB requested the advice of the UC on the strategy 2024-2028. The Strategy TF will draft a letter regarding the involvement of the UC in this process.

Action point: The concept letter will be drafted by the Strategy TF and discussed in the final plenary on September 5th.

03 Incoming documents

03.01 38564 Starter Grants policy document

The Finance TF decided against replying to this document. The information will be used during the next cycle with regard to the *Starter and Incentive grants*.

03.02 38570 EUR Whistleblower Regulations

The TF Social Safety & Wellbeing will review the letter and decide if a reply is needed. The reply will be drafted in preparation for the final plenary on the 5th of September.

03.03 38573 Opening Hours Buildings

The TF Opening Hours Buildings reviewed the letter. Several arguments were introduced anew which the TF found contradictory, such as the EB not being allowed to offer unheated spaces, although in the previous announcement, they urge employees to bring warm clothes as their offices will be cold outside normal opening hours.

The TF suggests waiting for more developments on this agenda point from the FCs and not replying to the letter yet.

04 Any other business

- SDG for next Academic Year

If the UC is interested in organising the SDG again, they could get in touch with councillor Georgiana.

- Scarcity study places EUR campus

A councillor remarked that, at the end of the academic year, there is a scarcity of available study spaces on the EUR campus, especially because many highschool students choose to study in the available spots. Also, there are only two buildings open on the weekends, Polak and the Library, which limits the space available for EUR students even more. This issue appears to be relevant for the end of the year when many students have their final assignments and exams. Several councillors recognized the problem as well. Also, as the EUC building is closed on Sundays, there is an influx of EUC students at the EUR campus that contributes to this issue.

The UC discussed how to tackle this point, such as by preparing a letter for the final plenary session on September 5th or tabling the agenda point for the first cycle of the next academic year. If a letter will be prepared, we should take into account quantitative information as well as suggest solutions to the problem. The UC decided to table the agenda point for the next academic year and it will be added to the Handover document.

- Farewell UC 2023-2024

The Chair would like to thank the current members of the UC for their participation in the 2022-2023 council meetings and activities and for their patience with the onboarding of the Chair. An official farewell is planned for September 5th which consists of drinks and dinner with the old UC, new UC, and the EB.