

**University Council**  
**First Plenary Meeting**  
**Erasmus University Rotterdam**

**Date and Time:** 10/10/2023, 15:00 – 17:00

**Location:** Polak 1-21

**Present in the Meeting:** Ivonne Cune-Noten (chair), Ernst Hulst, Katarzyna Lasak, Sebastiaan Kamp, Pedro van Gessel, Joseph Ayinla, Albert Wagelmans, Timo Zandvliet, Cagla Altin, Yasin Demir, Nawin Ramcharan, Linquendo van der Klooster, Emre Ulusoy, Linda Dekker, Natascha Kraal, Emese von Bone, Aleid Fokkema, Tom van Dijken, Achraf Taouil, Anthony van der Linden, Roxanne Austin (Clerk), Ellie Cercel (Minutes).

**Absent:** Rosita Boedhai-Jansen, Max Wagenaar.

**Waiver:** Esra Kahramanoglu.

## **01 Opening**

### **01.01 Setting of the agenda**

The agenda was set without any adjustments.

### **01.02 Minutes third plenary meeting**

A councilor remarked that the attendance list in the minutes was missing. The attendance list in the previous minutes will be updated according to the overview in Teams. No other remarks to the minutes or the action points of the third plenary meeting were made.

## **02 Agenda items plenary meeting UC**

### **02.01 BBR EUR 2024**

Due to some technical difficulties, only two out of the 10 documents tabled for this agenda point were visible to the UC members. The UC Clerk will rectify the issue. A temporary Task Force consisting of councillors Anthony (Lead), Sebastiaan, and Yasin was formed to work on this agenda point.

**Action point:** the TF BBR EUR 2024 will research the documents and prepare for the discussion tabled in the second Plenary meeting.

### **02.02 Starting and Incentive grants**

The documents that had been previously lacking with regard to this agenda point have been shared with the UC in full. The TF Finance was content with this development and shared their readiness to work on the action points. Several appointments with the policymakers have been scheduled in which the action points will be discussed.

**Action points:** the members of the TF Finance will meet with the CPC policymakers and address the concerns of the UC. The Clerk will table the discussion on *Starting and Incentive grants* at the second Plenary meeting.

### **02.03 Application for accreditation UNIC joint master's program RePIC (ESSB)**

The ESSB faculty council requested the advice of the UC on the application for accreditation of the UNIC joint MSc program, RePIC. However, during the discussion, the UC members found the request unclear and requested more information on how to proceed with this agenda point. Also, it was

unclear how the BBR policy would influence the decision to consent on this agenda point. The Clerk will contact the policymakers to get more information for the UC.

Also, a councillor shared their concern about how the European Union could influence the academic curriculum of this Master's program, such as through mandating courses on SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). However, the UC decided against pursuing this concern, as no external party, including the EU and the UC, is allowed, by law, to influence the curriculum of higher education programs.

**Action point:** the Clerk will request more clarity on the role of the UC regarding the *Application for accreditation UNIC joint master's programme RePIC (ESSB)*.

#### **02.04 NVAO-application for accreditation ('Toets Nieuwe Opleiding') E-Master**

The UC faced the same difficulties as with the previous agenda point and requested more clarity on the role of the UC on the current agenda point.

**Action point:** the Clerk will request more clarity on the role of the UC regarding *NVAO-application for accreditation ('Toets Nieuwe Opleiding') E-Master*.

#### **02.05 Employee survey (Engagement & Enablement Scan 2023)**

The Task Force Wellbeing and Social Safety will handle this agenda point during this cycle.

**Action points:** The TF Wellbeing and Social Safety will research the documentation tabled under this agenda point and will inform the Clerk of any potential questions arising from it. The UC Clerk will table the discussion on *the Employee survey* at the second Plenary meeting.

#### **02.05 Expanding educational offering EUR**

A councillor described the initiative of expanding the educational offering at EUR. According to their observations, EUR does not offer students the possibility of commencing MSc programs in February (i.e., also known as the spring semester), or taking evening or part-time classes. This educational offering is possible at other Dutch universities, such as Leiden University or Tilburg University. The goal of the initiative is to bring a long-term change in the variability of educational offering at EUR.

The UC agreed with this initiative and suggested collaborating with the Smarter Academic Year (SAY) policymaker, as there might be an overlap between the goals of these two initiatives. However, the TF was cautioned to approach the current topic concurrently with SAY, and not wait until the SAY plans become implemented, to avoid delays.

As the initiative proposal is yet to be completed, the agenda point *Expanding educational offering EUR* will not be tabled in the current cycle. Also, a Task Force was formed consisting of councillors Achraf (Lead), Linda, and Ernst. The TF members will work on consolidating the proposal of this initiative and will create a request to table this agenda point once it is finalized.

**Action points:** the TF *Expanding educational offering EUR* will finalize the initiative proposal. The TF will request the Presidium to table the agenda item in an upcoming cycle.

#### **02.07 Research on the Feasibility of Recorded Lectures**

The initiative will first focus on researching the feasibility of recorded lectures at EUR, depending on which an implementation plan might be developed. The councillors discussed the option of collaborating with CLI on this topic. On the one hand, CLI is working closely on the topic of online education, and they possess the funds and facilities to conduct research on this topic. On the other hand, the topic of recorded lectures is not the specific goal of CLI, and it has been a topic of discussion prior to the foundation of CLI. As a result, the councillors will be careful to inform and consult with CLI on the topic but will work independently of them.

A TF consisting of councillors Esra (Lead), Achraf (co-lead), Joseph, Timo, Emre, and Pedro will work on the initiative.

**Action points:** the TF will work on the agenda point *Research on the Feasibility of Recorded Lectures*. The HeQa TF members will consult CLI on this topic at the 24th of October meeting.

### **02.08 EUR policies**

The UC agreed to pursue the initiative on *EUR policies*. A TF was formed to work on this agenda point consisting of councillors Sebastiaan (Lead), Anthony, Achraf, Cagla, and Albert.

**Action points:** the TF will work on the proposal *EUR policies*.

### **02.09 Attendance registration and taskforces**

The members of the UC reflected on their taskforce and plenary meeting attendance. Councilor Cagla decided to withdraw from TF Sustainability. Councilor Esra will be noted as present (with waiver) on the attendance list on Teams.

### **03 Incoming documents**

#### **03.01 Altered record of the 2023 elections for the University Council student section**

Aki Negate will join the UC as a replacement for Maryam Mohamed. The members of the UC remarked that the activity period indicated by the Election Office is incorrect and requested the Clerk to have it adjusted. Also, the UC members discussed whether councilor Aki's absence from today's plenary meeting should be recorded; the UC decided against it, seeing as the invitation to join the UC was made very recently. Councilor Aki's attendance will be registered only from a future date, depending on the dates indicated by the Election Office.

**Action points:** the Clerk will request the Election Office the correct dates of councilor Aki's mandate in the UC.

#### **03.02 Comenius program assessment committee (in Dutch)**

If councilors are interested in joining the committee *Comenius program assessment*, they are invited to send an email to [comenius@nro.nl](mailto:comenius@nro.nl).

#### **03.03 Email Clean air on Campus?**

The UC received an email from a member of the EUR community with the request to discuss the matter of on-campus smoking. Although the EUR campus was declared "smoking free" several years ago, the policy is not always adhered to, with individuals often smoking near building entrances. The problem is further exacerbated by the limited number of "no smoking" signs and the absence of security control measures. Nonetheless, the UC is in favor of addressing this issue.

On the one hand, several UC members highlighted that the issue stems from inadequate communication of the "no smoking" policy. They suggested the need for more prominent "no smoking" signs in areas where smokers are frequently present, such as at all campus entrances and the campus bus and tram stations and outside building entrances, through posters and banners, as well as on the Plaza screen.

Conversely, other UC members believed the issue is related to the lack of security monitoring as well as the impossibility of enforcing fines for violations of the policy. Although the EB had, in the past, made the suggestion that all of us should approach smokers and request compliance, this is often met with resistance by smokers.

Several councilors expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of the "smoke-free campus" policy as people will continue to smoke and, in the absence of dedicated smoking areas as used to be the case in the past, they will gather where it is most convenient for them.

However, it was noted that the policy was decided at a national level and cannot be changed strictly at EUR.

To address this issue, several suggestions were made. These include seeking the support of the EB, although it was noted that previous requests did not materialize as we had hoped. Additionally, we can consult with social science experts specializing in behavior nudging from the ESSB faculty and gather more data on the problem such as identifying preferred smoking areas, in order to formulate a robust proposal. The UC also aims to involve the EMC campus in a collaborative effort to resolve this issue.

In conclusion, the topic will be discussed with the EB during the upcoming CM, in which we will request the EB's commitment to develop a comprehensive plan to tackle this issue. To prepare for the discussion, the councilors were requested to share their opinion in the Teams environment. The Clerk will reply to the email, providing information about the UC's previous action plans and the current plan. The Clerk will also request data on the smoking issue.

**Action point:** the UC members will share their input on *Clean air on Campus* in the Teams environment in preparation for the CM. The Clerk will reply to the email on *Clean air on Campus*. The Clerk will request data on smoking on campus, if available.

#### **03.04 Response EB Starter and Incentive Grants**

The UC received the response letter from the EB on our previous advice regarding the Starter and Incentive Grants policy. The letter was discussed in the meeting.

Firstly, the letter mentions that various stakeholders provided input on the policy document; the UC members expressed their wish to receive that input and compare it with the final decision. The members of the TF Finance supported this request, stating that oftentimes the opinions of the deans are not shared with us although it would be important for the UC to be aware of it. The UC members then discussed to what extent we, as a council, represent the opinions of the Deans. The Chair suggested that the UC is representing the Deans, as they are part of the community. She also suggested that we should ask for input through the EB, in keeping with the formal process.

Secondly, a councilor inquired why the budget allocation model is variable on the student number and the FTE of employees, yet it does not take academic output into account. The UC members who had worked on the policy document in the previous years shared that the grants are intended for educational purposes, and thus it was decided to not include academic output in the allocation decision.

**Action point:** the UC will request the input of the Deans on the Starter and Incentive Grants policy through the EB.

#### **04.01 Tomorrow's Campus**

*Tomorrow's Campus* is a project focused on the development of the EUR campus (i.e., buildings and renovations). The policymakers that work on *Tomorrow's Campus* asked to consult with a small group of councilors for the development and implementation of a future-proof way of working and housing. Councilors Sebastiaan, Achraf, Nawin, Linquendo, and Cagla indicated their preference to join the conversation with *Tomorrow's Campus* policymakers.

**Action points:** the Clerk will inform the *Tomorrow's Campus* policymakers of the councilors who will join the conversation.

#### **04.02 Draft letter Mindlab HR Awareness Campaign social safety 2023/2024**

The UC agreed to send the letter *Mindlab HR Awareness Campaign Social Safety 2023/2024* which was previously shared on Teams.

**Action points:** the UC Clerk will format the letter *Mindlab HR Awareness Campaign Social Safety 2023/2024* and share it with the EB.

#### 04.03 AOB

- Developments in Afghanistan. Last week, a natural disaster occurred in Afghanistan, and the UC discussed its impact on the Afghan students at EUR as well as the reaction of the EB towards these affected students. Particularly, the EB has not made a statement similar to the Morocco earthquake incident. The UC members speculated that, due to the limited number of Afghan students enrolled at EUR, the EB reached out individually to the affected students. The UC Chair was requested to informally consult the EB on this matter.

**Action point:** the UC Chair will contact the EB and discuss their response to the Afghanistan incident with regard to EUR Afghan students.

- Developments in Israel. Similarly, the UC members discussed the response of the EB to the affected student located in Israel. The Chair shared that help was offered in this situation.
- Compensation CMT student member. The CMT student member inquired as to why the CMT student position is not being compensated, seeing how the HeQa or Presidium positions are. The Chair shared that the EB had been reluctant to the idea of allowing a UC member in the CMT and asking for compensation for this favor would be tricky because it involves the risk of sparking the discussion of the necessity of a UC member in the CMT once more. The Chair advised against this request.
- Education on Student Loan Interests. A UC member shared their concern about students, especially those who are younger or less experienced financially, taking up the student loan without having a good grasp of the implications for the future. They asked the UC for support in improving the education of these students on the topic of student loans. The UC suggested asking Erasmus Magazine to report on this, and the HeQa TF members will discuss with the Wellbeing project leads the possibility of creating an information session for students.