University Council
First Plenary Meeting
Erasmus University Rotterdam

Date and Time: 07/05/2024, 14:00 – 16:00
Location: Polak 2-04
Present in the Meeting: Ivonne Cune-Noten (chair), Ernst Hulst, Sebastiaan Kamp, Pedro van Gessel, Joseph Ayinla, Cagla Altin, Yasin Demir, Nawin Ramcharan, Aki Negate, Linquendo van der Klooster, Emre Ulusoy, Linda Dekker, Emese von Bone, Aleid Fokkema, Achraf Taouil, Anthony van der Linden, Wesley Hennep, Max Wagenaar, Roxanne Austin (Clerk), Ellie Cercel (Minutes).
Absent: Rosita Boedhai-Jansen, Timo Zandvliet, Katarzyna Lasak, Natascha Kraal, Albert Wagelmans, Tom van Dijken, Esra Kahramanoglu.

01 Opening

01.01 Setting of the agenda
The agenda was set without any adjustments.

01.02 Minutes third plenary meeting
The minutes of the third plenary meeting were set without adjustments.
Several remarks were made concerning the action points of previous meetings.

- *Update UNL meeting from the Executive Board*. A councillor inquired whether the UC received an update about the UNL meeting the Executive Board attended a few weeks prior, as agreed to in the previous Consultation Meeting. As no updates were shared, we expect them to be announced at the upcoming Consultation Meeting.
- *Sanitation issues in the Polak restrooms*. In the previous plenary meeting, two UCouncillors agreed to draft a letter that would address our concerns regarding the poor sanitation in the Polak restrooms. In the meantime, a response was shared in Teams, thus it is not advised to share the letter at this time. The UC will monitor this action point and revisit it if necessary, in the future.

1.03 Announcements
- *Available UC staff seat*

Another seat is available in the UC for EMC employee position. The procedure for filling the seat has been started by the Election Office.

- *Draft agenda Good Conversation*

The draft agenda for the upcoming Good Conversation meeting has been shared with the UC. In addition to the agenda items, the Chair is planning to get more clarity on how the UC will participate in the division of the funds once the HeQa investments are terminated. Furthermore, a UCouncillor suggested adding an agenda item relating to the position of financial controllers within faculties; seeing as the topic is not related to the Good Conversation, it will instead be added to the agenda of the final Consultation Meeting, in the context of the discussion of Erasmus Perspectives.

- *Recognition and rewards meeting*

The UC was reminded that the Recognition and rewards meeting is scheduled for May 14th, with mandatory attendance.

- *Handover document for UC 2024-2025*

The clerk will share a working document on Teams and tag the taskforce Leads to share input. The goal is to finalize the handover document by July 12, after the third plenary meeting.

- *Sleeping pods*

Instead of a letter, the information regarding the sleeping pods will be included in the handover document to be handled by the next UC.

- *Interview UC members*

A few UC members were approached by journalists to give a short interview.

- *ISS meeting*

Last week a meeting took place with ISS students. Unfortunately, despite the mandatory status of the meeting, it had low attendance from the side of the UC.

02 Agenda items plenary meeting UC
02.01 Student Charter 2024-2025

A taskforce was formed consisting of council members Joseph (TF lead), Nawin, Achraf, and Wesley was formed. The TF will handle the topic and any additional remarks from the side of the UC in preparation for the second plenary meeting.

Action point: the UC Clerk will table the topic *Student Charter 2024-2025* at the second plenary meeting. The TF *Student Charter 2024-2025* will prepare the topic before the second plenary meeting.

02.02 Programme Plan for Strengthening EUR Educational Quality Assurance 2024-2027: 'Quality dialogues: Connecting and Improving'

A taskforce was formed consisting of council members Nawin, Achraf, and Ernst. The TF will handle the topic and any additional remarks from the side of the UC in preparation for the second plenary meeting.

Action point: the UC Clerk will table the topic *02.02 Strengthening EUR Educational Quality Assurance 2024-2027* at the second plenary meeting. The TF *Strengthening EUR Educational Quality Assurance 2024-2027* will prepare the topic before the second plenary meeting.

02.03 Institutional tuition fees policy 2025-2026

A taskforce consisting of councillors Aleid (TF lead), Achraf, Cagla, and Ernst was formed. The TF will handle the topic and any additional remarks from the side of the UC in preparation for the second plenary meeting, including those shared in the plenary meeting. In particular, a UC member would have liked more input clarifying how the total financial impact of the plans on the influx of students.

Action point: the UC Clerk will table to topic *Institutional tuition fees policy 2025-2026* at the second plenary meeting.

02.04 Proposal to Develop EUR Guidelines

A taskforce consisting of councillors Linquendo (lead), Joseph, and Pedro was formed. A UC member suggested using the input from the *Sustainability* meeting in discussing the proposal.

Action point: the UC Clerk will table the topic *Proposal to Develop EUR Guidelines* at the second plenary meeting. The UC Clerk will request the Sustainability meeting slidedoc and share it with the TF *EUR Guidelines.*

02.05 Increase parking fees EUR

A taskforce was formed consisting of councillors Anthony (lead), Cagla, Joseph, Pedro, Achraf, and Linda. The TF will handle the topic and any additional remarks from the side of the UC in preparation for the second plenary meeting, including those shared in the plenary meeting. Specifically, there were concerns that the proposal is not motivated by the claims for nudging sustainable behaviour, also considering that many of the EUR students prefer biking or the public transportation system over driving unless there is a good reason to drive. Other councillors were not in favour of charging employees higher prices for parking at work. However, there were some opinions in favour of the proposal, seeing its benefits for discouraging an unsustainable practice.

Action point: the Clerk will table the topic *Increase parking fees EUR* at the second plenary meeting. The taskforce *Parking fees EUR* will prepare the topic before the second plenary meeting.

02.06 Highlight report December 2023

Action point: the Clerk will table the topic *Highlight report December 2023* at the second plenary meeting.

02.07 Strengthening diversity and inclusivity in our food strategy

A taskforce was formed consisting of councillors Nawin (lead), Cagla, Emre, Linda, Joseph, Linquendo, Pedro, Wesley, and Ernst. The TF will handle the initiative concerned with diversity and inclusivity in the EUR food strategy, including any additional remarks shared by the UC. In particular, several UC members were critical of the proposed 50-50 division ratio of vegan to non-vegan food, also considering that the goal of having a full vegan campus by 2030 might bring this proposal to a halt. However, the initiative lead argued that the initiative can be helpful to policymakers when creating the roadmap or considering alternatives. Also, the UC was critical that the proposal was shared in Dutch, and the initiative leads were requested to re-submit an English version.

Action point: the UC Clerk will table the topic *Strengthening diversity and inclusivity in our food strategy* at the second plenary meeting. The taskforce *Strengthening diversity and inclusivity in our food strategy* will prepare the topic before the second plenary meeting.

02.08 Strengthening academic freedom and freedom of expression

A taskforce was formed consisting of councillors Wesley (lead), Linda, Nawin, Linquendo, and Ernst. The TF will handle the initiative concerned with academic freedom and freedom of expression, including any additional remarks shared by the UC.

Specifically, the proposal asks for an investigation into which measures could be implemented at EUR to promote and protect academic freedom, based on discussions between the Deans and the Rector in November. The UC members made several remarks. Firstly, the members disagreed on the problem definition brought forth by the initiative leads, namely, to combat the rise in the cancel culture and *wokeness*, but still agreed on the need to strengthen academic freedom by tackling other problems. Secondly, a few wording improvements were made, such as not using the terms "academic freedom" and "freedom of expression" interchangeably throughout the proposal and instead clarifying their distinction better, as well as changing the title from "Strengthening" to the more neutral "researching the status". Thirdly, some members were concerned that the proposed research would necessitate a long process and would therefore concern the next UC.

Action points: the UC Clerk will table the topic *Strengthening academic freedom and freedom of expression* at the second plenary meeting. The taskforce *Strengthening academic freedom and freedom of expression* will prepare the topic before the second plenary meeting.

03 Incoming documents

03.01 Invitation EdUconnect May 30

The UC received an invitation to participate in EdUconnect on May 30th.

04 Any other business

04.01 Overview of attendance and taskforces

No remarks were made regarding the overview of attendance and taskforces.

04.02 LDE draft strategy

It was noted that the draft might be confidential, however, this was not communicated with the UC. As a precaution, the UC Clerk will follow up on this concern.

In addition, councillor Achraf decided to organize a UC brainstorming meeting before the LDE meeting, to prepare; the UC members interested in joining were invited to reach out to him.

Action point: the UC Clerk will check if the LDE draft is confidential. UC members will contact councillor Achraf to participate in the LDE brainstorming session.

04.03 UC media communication

Following the media communication developments in the previous week, the UC discussed the UC's guidelines and rules when it comes to communicating with the media. The UC Chair clarified that, according to the guidelines, only the Chair, and not UC members, can make public statements on behalf of the council. In addition, a general agreement between the council members was that councillors could address the media personally after informing the Chair, in order to avoid surprising each other. The UC members were in favour of this latter agreement, however, some members argued that in certain situations when the media interview is time sensitive, they could inform the Chair and the UC after the fact.

In addition, the UC also discussed how to proceed when a statement is falsely put in the media, negatively impacting the image of the UC. Some members proposed that in this context, the Chair would be tasked with writing an open letter, for instance. Other members remarked that the UC cannot influence on the information written in the media, and it is important to recognize that the media has its own autonomy, and the UC has no scope in dealing with that. Finally, the UC Chair will look into ways to deal with such instances.

Action point: the UC Chair will look into ways to deal with situations when a statement is falsely put in the media, negatively impacting the image of the UC.

04.04 Any other business

- *Controversy about protests and campus safety*. A UC member proposed addressing a letter to the Executive Board regarding campus safety. The UC Presidium will discuss if this topic will be tabled.
- *Farewell drinks for councillors Pedro and Natascha*. A UC member proposed organizing farewell drinks for the two councillors leaving the UC. The UC Presidium will discuss the details of these events.

Action points: the Presidium will discuss if the proposed topic *Controversy about protests and campus safety* will be tabled. The Presidium will discuss the organization of *farewell drinks for councillors Pedro and Natascha.*