University Council
Third Plenary Meeting
Erasmus University Rotterdam

Date and Time: 03-06-2025, 14:00-16:00
Location: Polak 2.09
Present in the meeting: Luca Hellings (Chair), Floortje Dekker (Minutes), Jasper Klasen, Hugo Speelman, Sebastiaan Kamp, Achraf Taouil, Jaap Cornelese, Aleid Fokkema, Esra Kahramanoglu, Deniz Alican, Linda Dekker, Rosita Boedhai, Katarzyna Lasak, Jaron Buitelaar, Nawin Ramcharan, Reinier van Woerden, Federica Violi, Timo Zandvliet, Bachar Farousi

Waiver: Luna Becirspahic

Absent: Sara Ouljour, Max Wagenaar, Albert Wagelmans, Daan de Boer, Clara Egger

01 Opening

01.01 Setting of the agenda
There were no remarks, therefore the agenda was set.

01.02 Setting of the minutes
The minutes of the last meeting are not ready yet due to the absence of the Clerk. They will be discussed during the first plenary meeting.

01.03 Announcements
Absence UC member
Clara is sick due to covid and is therefore absent

02.01 Additional budget participatory bodies
A letter of positive advice was posted on Teams. One UC member mentioned that he had a conflict-of-interest regarding this agenda point, so he left the meeting during this point. There were no remarks from the UC members. Therefore, the letter will be sent to the EB.

Action point:
- The Clerk will send the letter regarding *'Additional budget participatory bodies'* to the EB

02.02 Student Charter 2025-2026
No letter has been posted on Teams. Therefore, a standard letter of consent will be sent out. The Chair inquired whether there were any objections to this. There were none.

Action point:
- The Clerk will send the letter regarding *'Student Charter 2025-2026'* to the EB

02.03 Revision Financial Support Fund Regulations
A UC member posted a letter on Teams and incorporated comments from other UC members. Another UC member suggested adding: "Are you willing to look into other measures to improve engagement among first-year students?" as they felt the letter was currently too general. A member of the taskforce will include this adjustment in the final paragraph. There were no objections, and the letter will be sent out with the adjustment.

Action point:

- The Clerk will send the letter regarding '*Revision Financial Support Fund Regulations'* to the EB

02.04 Revision of the recognition regulations for Student Organizations
A letter was posted on Teams. The taskforce lead remarked they tried to incorporate all comments from the UC members. Another UC member asked whether the extension from 5 to 6 years is also included. A sentence will be added to the letter with this suggestion. There were no objections to sending the letter with the adjustment.

Action point:
- The Clerk will send the letter regarding '*Revision of the recognition regulations for Student Organizations'* to the EB

02.05 Roadmap Planetary Health Diet
A letter was posted on Teams. A member from the taskforce that created the letter remarked they included the comments posted by UC members. One member remarked that they did not feel the letter accurately reflected the stance of the council and preferred a standard letter of advice.

A UC member from the taskforce responded that an earlier letter had already been sent in which concerns from the UC were raised. These concerns were not addressed by the EB. The current letter reflects both the unaddressed concerns and the content of the earlier advice. The EB had initially presented this initiative as an 80/20 option, but in practice this does not appear to be the case. On the last page of the letter, a table has been included outlining the differences in the dietary plans. The letter also emphasizes the importance of freedom of choice.

Another UC member noted that the EB has changed its stance since the UC's letter last year, shifting from a fully vegan approach to including more dietary options. They emphasized the importance of the UC taking a stance. Another member added that there are currently no KPIs in place and that food on campus is already very expensive. Vegan options are often more costly, and limiting other options could make it harder for students. They supported the letter and its call for more options.

One UC member expressed concern that caterers should not have influence over the university's food strategy. They also argued that a percentage stated in the letter appears to be incorrect, as it does not seem to include dairy products. Therefore, they did not support the letter. Another UC member pointed out that expensive food is a broader issue on campus. They argued that vegan food is not necessarily the most expensive, as the letter suggests, and that this claim should be removed. They proposed adding a sentence to ask the EB to explore this issue further and requested that a source be included for the table in the letter. Lastly, they emphasized that freedom of choice does not mean the university cannot take a stance.

Another UC member agreed that the university's stance has changed. They asked a technical question regarding affordability, which policy makers answered by stating that affordability is important, but competitive pricing requires subsidies. This is a point that concerns the UC member. They suggested the letter could be more nuanced and that participatory bodies should be involved more. One member proposed removing a paragraph they felt contained climate denial. They also noted that the UC has no formal say in this matter, and that sending a strong-worded letter could damage cooperation with the EB. They suggested creating a softer letter.

A UC member from the taskforce countered that the food strategy is not compatible with cheaper food. They also disagreed with the claim that the letter contains climate denial or incorrect statements. Moreover, the EB has not provided any data on the actual carbon footprint impact of the proposed food strategy. This member expressed a desire to vote on the current version of the letter.

The Chair stated they first wanted to discuss possible adjustments. A UC member proposed rewording a paragraph to include fewer value judgments. Another member reiterated their wish to vote on the original letter as posted on Teams. A discussion followed, after which the Chair proposed a break to allow members to make adjustments to the letter. A vote would then be held on the adjusted version. After the break, the Chair provided reading time for the updated letter. One UC member still had concerns and said they would review the letter further. Another member noted that both sides had made concessions during discussions and therefore did not want to make additional changes. Further discussion followed.

A vote was then held on the adjusted letter, resulting in:

- In favour: 13
- Against: 4
- Abstain: 0

Therefore, the letter will be sent to the EB.

Action point:
- The Clerk will send the letter regarding *'Roadmap Planetary Health Diet'* to the EB

02.06 Annual Report Confidential Counsellors' Network for Staff and Students 2024
A letter was posted on Teams. There were no remarks on the letter. Therefore, the letter will be sent.

Action point:
- The Clerk will send the letter regarding 'Annual Report Confidential Counsellors' Network for Staff and Students 2024' to the EB

02.07 EUR Doctoral Regulations
The Chair asked whether the UC feels sufficiently informed. There were no remarks, and the UC indicated that they felt adequately informed.

02.08 Brede Rotterdamse Studententraad – Closed meeting
The topic was discussed in a Closed Meeting.

02.09 Functioning of the EUR website
No letter was shared, and the taskforce was sufficiently informed.

02.10 Lof der Zotheid as Master graduation gift
No letter was shared, and the taskforce was sufficiently informed.

02.11 More direct participation by My Eur Polls
No letter was posted, and the taskforce was sufficiently informed

02.12 Online library resources: access after retirement
No letter was shared, and the taskforce was sufficiently informed.

02.13 Dutch Language Expansion for International Students
A letter was shared on Teams, although it was posted a bit late. The comments from other taskforce members have been incorporated into the letter. There were no remarks on the letter. Therefore, the letter will be sent out as posted on Teams.

Action point:
- The Clerk will send the letter regarding *'Dutch Language Expansion for International Students'* to the EB

02.15 Microwaves on campus
A letter was posted on Teams. Some technical questions have not yet been answered, which could potentially change the situation. Another UC member remarked they felt somewhat frustrated by the EB's stance, as they believed it would not have cost much money. The letter will be sent out including a comment from a UC member. There were no remarks.

Action point:
- The Clerk will send the letter regarding 'Microwaves on campus' to the EB

03 Incoming documents

03.01 Response to 38842 All Gender Toilettes
A UC member remarked that they felt disappointed by how the input from the UC has been treated, as the EB provides little reasoning for not incorporating the UC's suggestions. Therefore, they would like to escalate the matter to the supervisory board, as the EB does not seem willing to take the UC's arguments into account or collaborate with the UC. Another UC member expressed understanding of the frustration regarding the responses but believes that going to the supervisory board is not a good step at this point. A different UC member added that the unsatisfactory responses by the EB have already been discussed in the Good Conversation meeting, and the feedback from that meeting has not yet been addressed within the UC. They recommended waiting before taking any further steps.

Another UC member concurred that there should be a general discussion about the EB's responses, rather than focusing solely on this specific topic. Yet another UC member suggested that it should be discussed as an agenda item in the meeting with the supervisory board, but they opposed broadening the issue too much, as they believe this case also concerns the specific content involved.

The Chair proposed that the UC member could draft a response letter addressing the specific points they are unhappy with. Additionally, the UC will receive feedback on the Good Conversation meeting where unsatisfactory responses were discussed. There is also an upcoming meeting with the supervisory board where this issue could be raised as an "any other business" point.

03.02 Response to 38834 PhD Surveys
A UC member remarked that they felt satisfied with the way of working and were happy that the policy maker reached out.

04 Any other business

04.01 Any other AOB

UNL Statement Academic Freedom
A UC member remarked that a statement was released by UNL that discusses that academic

freedom is under pressure and that roundtable talks will be held. The UC member would like to discuss this with the EB in the next consultation meeting.

Chairs Meeting Update
The Chair remarked that this will be addressed in the first plenary meeting due to time constraints.

Falling of the Cabinet
A UC member remarked they would like to hear the EB’s perspective on the falling of the government.

05 Closing