



minutes

Meeting Faculty Council (FC)

Date and time

5 March 2024, 13:30-15:00

final

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Present

FC: Dimitris Ballas (chair), Annet Kempenaar, Saskia Enuma, Gunnar Mallon, Roseline van der Wiel, Diana Velea, Timothy Laukens, Jovan van den Berk, Paulo Cigarro

FB: Johan Woltjer, Nienke Bastiaans, Arjan van den Assem, Julia van Wijk

Others: Ibn Battuta, Erik Meijles (Director of Education, point 9)

Absent with notice

Gwenda van der Vaart, Zeqiang Pan

Landleven 1

9747 AD Groningen

The Netherlands

Minutes taken by

Eliza van der Ploeg

Last minutes (23 January 2024) approved

Yes, with addition.

1. Actions

Number	Who?	What?	Dead-line?	See point
20231031-3	Pro Geo	Make a proposal/memo about improving digital skills (so students have the required level for a course) for the FC so a better discussion and brainstorm is possible. 5-3: Pro Geo had a meeting with Erik Meijles about this. To be continued.	Ongoing	
20231031-4	Ballas	Reaction from HR about employee satisfaction survey?	Waiting for response.	
20240123-2	Mallon	Take up with GS Director: there is no monitoring system (like a TVM) for teaching time of PhD's. 5-3: to be continued.		3f
20240503-1	Ballas	Inform Executive Board about positive opinion of FC about Quality Agreements.		7

2. Finished actions:

20240123-1: Pro Geo has contacted the Central Electoral Committee about the University Elections 2024 student section and is listed as contact person.

3. For information/received documents

- a. **Update PCs:** In general, everything is ok. Pro Geo is still keeping track of any delays in the release of grades; for next time the report will be discussed in the FC.
- b. **Update Faculty Board:**
 - 1) Internationalization: Possibility of English track system in Dutch programme has been accepted by parliament. For the quality of education, labor market and diversity in class room -> internationalization is crucial.
Van den Assem comments that all Bachelor programmes with more than 160 students should be in Dutch. Furthermore, the university is developing a language policy. The Faculty is working out several plans for the Bachelor programmes. According to the Ministry, Dutch courses are courses with the exam or assessment in Dutch. The dean is also, together with other universities,

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- looking at national arguments and agreements on language offers for Bachelor programmes in the Netherlands. To be continued.
- 2) The Faculty Board is working on the strengthening of the national position/organization of human and social geographies. For example in accreditation, panel members etc.
 - c. **Update Councils meeting 15-2:** The Council is organizing a separate meeting on Internationalization. Van der Ploeg checks the data of the Council meetings so always one staff member is able to join, as there are subjects specifically for staff.
 - d. **Financial annual report FSS 2023:** Accepted for notification.
 - e. **FSS Planning letter 2024:** Accepted for notification.
 - f. **Education Monitor 2023:** Kempenaar has a question about the SPD Bachelor influx (page 5, 2nd paragraph). The contracts of the three lecturers appointed with Ruggesteun have ended; is the FB expecting issues with regard to teaching capacity in the design and water related courses and if so, what will be the approach for next year? Van den Assem explains that the FB is paying attention to this. For upcoming year, the first calculations are already made and it seems to be ok. Particularly for next years, another calculation has to be done for the design track to see if we can do it. One solution could be to economize on the programme. Ballas comments that as he has already mentioned previously there is the possibility for attracting US students with financing.
 - g. **Educational Budget 2024-2025:** Accepted for notification.
4. **Concept minutes of 23 January 2024**
The minutes are approved of with textual changes.
 5. **FSS Memo on GenAI use**
Text errors can be emailed to the authors.
Mallon comments that he found the overall tone of the document a bit negative. The focus should be on how to teach students how to use AI instead of trying to keep them away from it.
Kempenaar misses information on the use of AI in research/ethical guidelines for PhDs and researchers. Secondly, it is very much about text-based AI, but there are also other AI for images and video.
Van den Assem explains that this document focusses on education. The University will also develop a policy on AI in research.
Woltjer notes that the consequence of this policy is that there have to be done intermediate checks. If there is only the end product with nothing else, it doesn't count. Another possibility could be to have an oral exam, but then it should be mentioned in the course manual.
Woltjer comments that it therefore should be part of a broader discussion on assessment. The coordinators will discuss this with the lecturers.
 6. **Educational Programmes FSS 2024-2025**
After a question about the ongoing 'discussions about the (re)design of the pre-master programs' has been answered by Van den Assem, the Faculty Council approves of the educational programmes.
 7. **Quality Agreements**
The students would like to know why no pass rates were given by point 3.1. Van den Assem explains that a standard evaluation has been used, in which the pass

rate was not asked. Furthermore, the groups differ in size, some students fall out or there are no grades at all.

The Faculty Council would like to know how the Faculty Board reflects on the results. Van den Assem comments that every year an overview of implementations is made. This overview is almost the same as in previous years. Only in the Bachelor project a clear improvement of satisfaction of students has been seen. IAR and MER stayed the same, despite going from NL to English, followed by Corona. Now, it has stabilized. Internships were implemented and that is also appreciated. At the moment, it is thought that the funding will be continued, although perhaps not in the same name.

Ballas will inform the Executive Board of the positive opinion of the FC.

8. Input from Pro Geo & Bursary PhD

- The report on late grading will be on the agenda of next meeting.
- Premaster student participation/representation: The students from the pre-master had some organizational problems as they are not represented in the Programme Committees. Pro Geo discussed this with the Director of Education. He will discuss with chairs of Master PCs to make it a fixed agenda item. However, Pro Geo advises to install a Programme Committee for the premaster.

9. Input from staff

a. **Course evaluation form:** The Director of Education joins the meeting to discuss with the Faculty Council the change in the course evaluation form to not evaluate lecturers individually but as a team. It has been brought up by Pro Geo before and despite the procedure not having been followed correctly, the change has been accepted by the Programme Committees. However, it was also quite a surprise for the lecturers and not all staff agrees/is happy with the change. Especially new lecturers (could) use the feedback on the lecturer evaluation as a way to improve themselves. Furthermore, good lecturer evaluations can be used in R&D interviews or job interviews.

Meijles is of the opinion that a course evaluation should focus on the course rather than the lecturer and that a course evaluation should not be a lecturer evaluation. The educational management would like to use the course evaluation as a sort of thermometer to see how a course is doing. In the first instance, the Programme Committee takes up any concerns. Also, research shows that lecturer evaluations often show an unconscious bias towards females and minority groups. Therefore, in the current social climate, one should be hesitant to use it for R&D interviews. Furthermore, for some staff members it is also a stress factor. And the Faculty Board is working on relieving work pressure and therefore taking steps to bringing back monitoring.

The Faculty should however be thinking about how to evaluate and assess lecturers, but not in the context of course evaluations. For example, implementing that once a year lecturers visit other lecturers or implementing something like the 360 in STQ (one senior/one junior who comment on how one performs as colleague).

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At the end of this month, Meijles will attend a meeting about Recognition and Rewards and he will look at how other faculties are evaluating lecturers.
To be continued.

10. Any other subject

No other subjects were raised.

11. Closure and date next meeting

The next meeting is 16 April 2024. The chair closes the meeting at 15:00 hrs.