



Facultaire
Studentenraad

GEESTESWETENSCHAPPEN

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Contactpersoon	Gabriel Sojo Perez	Uw kenmerk	fgw20u0321
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Dear Dean, dear Fred,

By means of this letter the Facultaire Studentenraad Geesteswetenschappen would like to respond to your advice request regarding the budget of the Faculty of Humanities for the year 2021, as well as the *meerjarenbegroting 2022-2024*.

Budget 2021

In this letter, the FSR-FGw responds to the advice request of the year 2021, received on the 6th of October 2020 (fgw20u0321). The FSR had the opportunity to have a conversation with Gerard Nijsten and Youssef Achahbar. Additionally, we discussed the advice request with the faculty Daily Board on the OV of the 29th of October 2020. **The FSR-FGw advises negatively** on the budget for two main reasons. Firstly, because the fDB has not adequately addressed the challenges the Corona crisis poses for our education. Secondly, because the fDB has not responded to the enquiries posed in last year's budget advice.

While we are happy that the board has looked into the problems that the corona crisis poses to some degree, we do not think this shift in education has been addressed in the budget sufficiently. Considering that it is highly likely that the current situation, where part or most of the education takes place online will likely remain throughout 2021, possibly even longer, the FSR-FGw would like to stress that that it is of utmost importance that there are funds readily available to maintain a high quality of education and improve where necessary.

Due to corona, students are forced to study at home instead of receiving their education in the lecture hall or classroom, but the budget only accounts for physical education. The budget does not designate money to ensure that students have adequate equipment or the right study environment.

Moreover, in our decision to advise negatively we have taken into account that most of last year's enquiries about the budget of 2020 remain unanswered until now. Since the FSR-FGw 2019-2020 made the decision to advise positively on the condition that the subjects they took issue with would be addressed and clarified, we have this year decided to advise negatively.

At-home study spaces

In the last couple of months, nothing less than a complete paradigm shift has occurred in the way we view higher education due to corona. Most education takes place at home making the student's facilities vital to pass or fail one's classes. To our dismay, this problem is not addressed on the budget at all, and in the OV the board was unwilling to present us with a more complete and more comprehensive plan on how to tackle this issue. In the most recent research done (*College in tijden van corona: een tussenbalans*) 6 percent of Humanities students state that they do not have the right equipment to follow online education and 17 percent stated they did not have an adequate study space. Unfortunately, this research had a low turnout. On the aforementioned OV, the fDB committed to do more thorough research with the study advisors to assess students' needs and designate an adequate amount of money to tackle these issues. We would like to thank the fDB for this commitment, since the FSR-FGW finds accessibility one of the most important values in our education. No student should be unable to follow education due to a lack of resources.

Corona Knelpunten

We appreciate the effort the board has gone through to free up money from the reserves to relieve work pressure that has risen due to corona. More specifically, the board has freed up €500.000 under the header *corona knelpunten*, which they designate to hire 5 FTE more and the fund will in the years after being present for caution ('voorzichtigheid'). Firstly, the FSR-FGW would like to see a breakdown of this fund to have a better idea on how the resources are being allocated: a written list of issues to make more explicit which '*corona knelpunten*' we are talking about. Secondly, the FSR-FGW would like to ask the board to broaden this fund to also include student welfare. This means that when we see sudden changes in the welfare of students, this fund can be used to quickly respond with measures.

Updates from last year's advice

Humanities in Context

This year once more €250.000 has been budgeted for the development of the Humanities in Context programme, as well as an additional €200.000 from the CoH budget. Even though we did request a clear vision on how this money is and or will be spent in last year's budget advice, we have not received a written plan for this yet. In relation to HiC we would also like to have more information of the Onderzoekgebouw inhabiting Bushuis. As stated in the OR budget advice, we also believe that the layout for this project needs to be detailed in the budget plan. We would like to receive a detailed breakdown of this plan before the end of 2020. Moreover, we also stand by the OR's critique of the board not asking them for consent in this project.

Diversity officer

The budget plan advice given by FSR 2019-2020 demanded more clarity on the purpose and transparency of these funds. The board has given verbal account of some of the projects supported by the diversity budget. While the FSR-FGw understands that these funds function as a working budget, we still notice a problem in the lack of spending. For this reason, the FSR-FGw asks the Diversity Officer to give a written account on how this money has been spent this year in order to advice and add to suggestions for the future spendings of this fund. One suggestion that FSR-FGw would like to propose is the re-installment of the course *Afro-Nederlandse Studies* with the help of these funds.

Distribution key 60:40

In its advice regarding the 2019 budget (reference 18fgw005), the FSR-FGw expressed its request to link research more closely to education. The FSR-FGw would like to see a plan detailing how the Faculty Board is willing and able to make this link. The FSR expects to have the DB report on how the link between the two are developing once this is implemented.

Study advisors

The FSR-FGw 2019-2020 agreed to spend some of the funds from the *kwaliteitsafspraken* (so-called *kwaliteitsgelden*) on extra study advisors on the condition that after 2026 this would be financed from the regular faculty budget. The FSR-FGw would like to know whether the financial space for this has been created yet, and if not, we would like this to be considered in the budget plan from next year onwards.

Sustainable Humanities

The FSR-FGw was happy to hear that it would receive a detailed plan for 'sustainable humanities' before the end of the year, as was requested in last year's budget advice.

Dependence on internationalization

The 2020 budget highlights our growing dependence on international students and the decreasing number of Dutch students. The FSR-FGw has been informed about various projects that are undertaken at the faculty in response to growing internationalization. Nevertheless, the FSR-FGw would like to request a detailed plan that clearly illustrates the Faculty's vision on the increasing dependence on internationalization. In order to have more clarity on how the board is tackling this issue the FSR-FGw requests the fDB to highlight and give an overview of the items stated in the budget plan that are designated to tackle this issue.

SLA-cycle redesign

The model for the SLA cycle was redesigned in 2020 but is not yet applied as such. The Executive Board intends to implement some of the new principles from 2022, so we would like to stress that the financial space that these costs occupy within the faculty budget should not exert pressure on the primary process or happen at the expense of faculty policy. Apart from that, we acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of the faculty in this issue.

Conclusion

The FSR-FGw considers first and foremost that the COVID-19 crisis this year should be reflected in the budget in a more comprehensive plan. Though attention to the crisis exists in the budget, a breakdown of the future and/or current expenses for the so-called *corona knelpunten* is needed. The FSR-FGw is of the opinion that in this way we can have a better view of how we can incorporate more solutions to the problems posed by the corona crisis. Moreover, following the FSR-FGw's previous advice we think that the points listed are also very important to carry out in order to have a clearer understanding on how to better our faculty.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the FSR FGw,



Zazie van Dorp

Chair FSR FGw