



Centrale
Studentenraad

Annual Report

Centrale Studentenraad

Universiteit van Amsterdam

2017 ~ 2018

Preface

The past year was a year of internal change for the Central Student Council (CSR) 17|18, by having the first central student council with several non-Dutch speaking council members, as well as a change in the internal structure. Together with the declaration of the College van Bestuur (CvB) to be a bilingual university this year, for us, a central theme was the accessibility of documents in the English language. While a declaration to be a bilingual university is an inclusive decision, if none of the documents are made accessible, this necessitates a lot of additional internal facilitation and translation. This is something we ran into often in our term, asking for translated documents and translators at every turn. We appreciate that the CvB, as well as policy workers mostly tried to assist us in that mission, and we think good steps have been taken to make sure non-Dutch speaking students can also participate in the (central) student council. We as a council can be proud of the fact that it will be easier for future international students to participate in (central) student councils.

In terms of content this year the new allocation model finally arrived, which was voted in by the GV, and the process of the *kwaliteitsafspraken* (quality agreements) was started up. We also took a critical look at the structure of the *medezeggenschap* with the advice of the working group strong *medezeggenschap*, as well as the position of the central student assessor. We had to deal with two major law changes; the first one elevated programme committees (OC's) to official *medezeggenschap* organs, and we were able to facilitate elections for the ones that wanted it, as well as write other advices regarding the facilitation of OC's. The second legal change was the new European law for privacy that demanded a change in the UvA's privacy policy. We were also intimately involved in the round table discussions of the Strategic Plan 2015-2020 and the further advisory trajectory. Besides that, the foundations were laid for the visitations for the *Instellingstoets Kwaliteitszorg* (ITK), the division of the quality agreement funds, and the actual implementation of the international classroom and language policies.

We would like to thank the CvB and other policy workers for their cooperation this year, and hope they have a fruitful working relationship with the CSR 2018-2019.

On behalf of the CSR,



Pim van Helvoirt
Chair of the CSR 17|18

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Composition of the CSR

The following people were members of the central student council 2017-2018:

- Pim van Helvoirt *Chair / Taskforce head Finance and Facilities (F&F)*
- Sasha Borovitskaja *Vice-chair*
- Mees van Rees *General DB member*
- Jern Ken Chew *General DB member*
- Teo Todercan *General DB member*
- Sofie ten Brink *Delegate FSR-FdG*
- Atma Jyoti Mahapatra *Delegate FSR-FEB*
- Michele Murgia *Delegate FSR-FGw / Taskforce head Education and Accessibility (E&A)*
- Loraine Smith *Delegate FSR-FMG / Taskforce head Democratisation and Policy (D&P)*
- Bram Jaarsma *Delegate FSR-FdR*
- Kjeld Oostra *Delegate FSR-FNWI / Taskforce head Public Relations (PR)*
- Guido Bakker *General council member*
- Sebastian Proos *General council member*
- David Nelck *Council assistant*
- Quinta Dijk *Council assistant*

Functioning of the CSR

Internal functioning

The CSR's primary goal is to promote the interests of students. In what way we did that in the year 2017-2018 is described in the following chapter, as well as the cooperation with other groups. Here we will explain how the CSR is internally organized to carry out its objectives, in a strictly bureaucratic sense, and a reflection on what has transpired during the year.

It goes without saying that the CSR must decide on a (large) number of topics throughout the year. These topics are, when they present themselves or during the transfer between two council years, converted into files. Each council member has a number of files for which he or she is responsible. This still deserves the note that sometimes files have several council members, which leads to one member being appointed the 'main file holder'. However, the precise division of responsibilities within a file is not always predetermined.

As was stated in the preface, the CSR this year had a change in internal structure. While previous CSR's worked in committees, due to a lack of council members being able to put in hours, we switched to a taskforce system. Each file was divided into one of seven taskforces: 1) *Finance and Collaboration*; 2) *Facilities and Housing*; 3) *Democratisation and Policy*; 4) *Programmes and Accessibility*; 5) *Digitalisation and Study Support*; 6) *Education and Vision*; 7) *PR and Public Involvement*. This meant more islands of responsibility, with the hope to spread out the work pressure better. The name of the taskforce indicates what the files in the relevant taskforce relate to, such as the CSR regulations and D&D in Democratisation and Policy. The Finance taskforce focused on the budget and the quality agreements, for example. These taskforces met every week, from which taskforce decisions followed. All council members are in principle in two out of three taskforces. The full-time delegates and general council

members were made taskforce heads. Unfortunately, after a few evaluations it became apparent that this system was not working as well as it should, and the workload was still too heavy on both the delegates and the chair and vice-chair. After this realization, the CSR started to gradually move back to a committee structure, by merging several taskforces. After this decision we were left with 4 taskforces, these being the following: 1) *Finance and Facilities*; 2) *Education and Accessibility*; 3) *PR and 4) Democratization and Policy*. In addition to the files that are inside the taskforces, it turns out each year that some subjects are too broad for one taskforce. Also this year this has happened, with the result that they are more frequent in the DB meetings and the PV (these terms will be explained in more detail below).

The final decisions of the CSR, usually based on those of the taskforces, are taken in the public Plenary Meeting (PV), a weekly meeting where all members of the CSR should be present. This one meeting is prepared by drawing up an agenda and submitting meeting documents about specific files. The decision to draw up meeting documents usually lies with the taskforces, but can also be done by the PV itself. During the meeting, the council members are informed about files, with council positions being taken on subjects, and the CSR thus makes decisions. The minutes will be, after their approval, published on the [website](#). The agenda for the PV is drawn up in a weekly consultation of the Daily Board (DB) of the CSR. The DB consists of five people who are responsible for the organization of the council and the Official Secretary. The chair, the vice-chair and the three general DB members (who report on the happenings in the taskforces) are members of the DB. The CSR is supported by the Official Secretary to the CSR, Tamara van den Berg.

In the year 2018-2018 carrying out the above structure did not succeed very well, as information was not or could not be transferred effectively. Because the work was spread out over many separate islands, the information became dispersed if members were not present, and meetings did not always happen if members were absent. This placed an additional workload on the chair and vice-chair. Furthermore, it appeared that the work pressure was not evenly divided between the taskforces and throughout the year. This, and the aforementioned information gap, were what led to a merging of taskforces, to get more oversight and more members in each taskforce.

Furthermore, it may be mentioned that almost every council year is confronted with a faculty student council that is unable to deliver a delegate to the CSR. This necessitated the hiring of council assistants as the relevant parties did not fill the seat either. This year the CSR also had to work with several switches of delegates and thus, council members, while having delegates as taskforce heads. This made contact with the councils, and thus that faculty, more difficult for the CSR, and caused a higher work-load for the delegates as well.

The CSR has put an extra effort into the preparation of the consultation meeting (OV) with the CvB, by preparing the agenda in a timely fashion, and by adding documents and (read-along) memos to the convocation. For topics where collaboration took place with a specific staff member, sometimes they were invited to speak at the OV for more clarity and information. This has occasionally led to a smoother and more effective meeting in the eyes of the CSR.

As mentioned earlier, the CSR 2017-2018 unfortunately had a relatively high number of council members dropping out or becoming ill. This resulted in some council members having a lot of extra work pressure and responsibility. It also occurred that the chair was the most invested in some of the larger (GV) files, which meant that the workload and responsibility of those files mainly came to lie with him. Feedback and involvement of the council was sometimes neglected, also due to the absence of the vice-chair for a period of time.

External functioning

During this year the council went to the national organisation *Interstedelijk Studenten Overleg* (ISO), which is a general representational body of student organisations and *medezeggenschap* across the Netherlands, next to the *Landelijke Studenten Vakbond* (LSVb), of which the CSR is not an official member. The CSR criticized ISO for the way they treat the *Algemene Vergadering* (General Assembly), their internal meeting, and to which height member organisations are informed. The CSR put the internal voting regulations on the agenda of the AV and took part in a committee which worked on resolving this issue. There were also points where the CSR (strongly) disagreed with the board of ISO, mostly in the press statements ISO sent to the media. Every time this happened the CSR complained via phone or email, and put it on the agenda of the next AV.

Next to that the CSR had some contact with LOF, an independent organisation that supports *medezeggenschap* across the Netherlands. We informed them on quality agreements for example, but they also provided trainings for our international members.

Additionally the CSR together with the *Universitaire Studentenraad Vrije Universiteit* (USR VU VU), *Algemene Studentenvakbond Amsterdam* (ASVA) and the *Amsterdamse Kamer van Verenigingen* (AKVV) set up the *Amsterdamse StudentenOverleg* (ASO). The CSR thinks that this can be an asset in the future to create a platform to discuss student interests and to safeguard them better on a city level. For example we discussed sending a letter on the topic of the pressure that is on the shoulders of students and that we should do something about that.

Furthermore the CSR tried to make the contact with our *Facultaire Studentenraden* (FSR's) as close as possible, and to assist them where necessary from a central level. The DB's came together every month or so to trade information and to talk about possibly shared issues in the *Voorzittersoverleg* (VZO). This chair meeting was also arranged a couple of times with the CvB present. The goal of this meeting was to give the FSRs a podium to talk to the rector as well and to express their sentiments with regards to specific issues that they had at that moment, mostly concerned with the reaction of the dean to one of their proposals or concerns.

Besides these things the CSR did their best to be accessible for the students of the UvA and to help them as best as we could.

Taskforce Finance & Facilities

At the start of this year this committee was divided in two parts, namely Finance & Collaboration and Facilities & Housing. For the sake of simplicity this year report will list the activities of files under both taskforces.

During this year the UvA went through a budget cycle with the GV as per usual, with members of the CSR participating. This year the GV consented to the budget, with short remarks, and to the *Kaderbrief* with a long elaborate letter. Both financial documents concern a lot of topics, which would be too in depth for this general year report. The letters the GV sent are openly accessible on the [website of the GV](#). One of the big things that was pointed out is the lack of good email services of BC, which leads to emails to students or teachers not arriving or ending up in spam filters. Another big thing was the setup of a centre on Artificial Intelligence on science park, which will be discussed further by the CSR 2018-2019.

Next to the normal budget cycle, the GV also made an important decision by consenting to the new allocation model, which is the model that divides the incoming funds from the government in the university. The full reasoning and arguments that were brought up can be found in the letter of the GV. One of the important things the CSR raised in the GV is that we feel the CvB should fight for more funding from OCW for the humanities.

This year, the CSR took up part of the responsibility to put student housing on the agenda of the municipality, because the shortage of student housing was appalling and it sadly still is. The CSR sent a joint statement with fellow student representative organs in Amsterdam.

Next to this, the lack of affordable food and lack of enough dietary options was brought to the attention of the CSR, via complaints of students and FSR's. This is something we brought up with the responsible service within the UvA. Additionally, this taskforce made contact with the AUC to see whether the CSR could be of value of them and to exchange information.

Furthermore, we put the topic of sustainable finances in collaboration with the FSR FMG - and sustainability in general - on the agenda of the CvB. This led to an elaborate response of the UvA and great willingness to do something about the reputation of the UvA as well as moving to more sustainable (banking) partners. In the upcoming year, a new sustainability policy will also be worked out with the CSR 2018-2019.

Additionally, as the Profiling Fund was revised last year, the calculation per student association had to be revised. This was done in a committee with mainly UvA employees. With regards to the Profiling Fund, we tried to put the tuition free board year on the agenda, to support less financially able students to also be active in the UvA; this was however not adopted by the CvB. Additionally the CSR suggested to give a financial compensation for first year OC members in retrospect, to reward them for their work in the OC, but to also try to safeguard them from failing their BSA. This was sadly also not taken up by the CvB.

During this year we tried to monitor the collaboration that was being set up at the VU with ACASA. On multiple occasions we contacted the FSR FGw to see whether they were in need of our service.

Finally, the CSR worked together with the UvA on the quality agreements and to create a process plan to come to the eventual agreements. During this year there was a discussion on the spending of the means and whether this has to be done with factors per programs or without factors, which has impact on how the means are distributed over the different faculties. This discussion will be finished by the CSR 2018-2019.

Taskforce Education & Accessibility

Education and Accessibility has been a taskforce for the last few months of our term, the taskforce was split in multiple taskforces prior, these being Education and Vision and Programs and Accessibility.

In the beginning of the year we were confronted with some administrative hassle around the ILO, concerning new CROHO labels for reforming the educational tracks in the ILO programmes. Consent from the GV was needed and granted. A group called Institutional Research chaired by Geert ten Dam was started this year. This group aims to analyse and improve the institution-wide processes within the UvA. No concrete plans have come from it so far, but it has been of a great informative value, and might prove itself useful in the future. Also, the CSR tried to address the 8-8-4 system twice last year. Once in the fall via the OV, where the CvB proposed to wait until after the ITK. The CSR decided to concede to this answer, but does hope that the discussion will be started again after the ITK. Later in the year, while discussing a student survey concerning the spending of the quality-agreement funds, the council brought up this issue again, this time to the department of Academic Affairs. This did not get through in the end, as the COR disagreed with including it in the survey. It was promised that another survey would be set up for testing the option but this did not happen so far. The taskforce also spent a lot of their work to prepare and attend the UCO meetings, causing a lot of working pressure of the CSR members in the UCO, while clear results were not always visible. The status of the UCO, not being a decision making organ but an organ to pre-discuss policy before being worked out further by the staff or send to the CvB, made it difficult for the CSR to prepare for these meetings.

BSA: After the evaluation of the BSA passed through the UCO and the CSR had posed its critique, a new working group was started. The CSR made sure to get a seat in the working group and a member of Education and Accessibility joined the group.

Privacy: From the 15th of April 2018 onwards, all public institutions in the Netherlands had to comply with new European laws on privacy. The UvA was late in getting its policy up to date, and the CSR had very little time to consent to the policy. The new updated policy was vague, and in the end the CSR only consented with the legal frameworks that will have yet to be expanded on and sent to the CSR.

Model-OER: Setting the new M-OER was a long project, starting in the working group in which a council member of the CSR took place. The CSR advised to make changes in different articles about mandatory lectures, round off grading, retakes for exams, practice exams, digital exams, and more. The negotiations about this advice went on for a long time, resulting for example in the OC having to consent when lectures are made mandatory.

Diversity: Although diversity has been a prominent issue since the Maagdenhuis occupations at the UvA, progress was slow in this file. The file holders started working together with the new central diversity officer (CDO) Anne de Graaf in the midst of the spring. The CDO needed time to get settled and get started, but communication and cooperation was often vague and slow. In the end, the file holder managed to negotiate some working agreements, of which we left the concrete agreements on to the CSR 2018-2019. For this file, a CSR member is also present at the diversity forum meetings, although our council was not regularly updated on the functioning and working of this forum.

ITK: The critical self-reflection for the Quality Assurance Audit has been constructed over the past two years, and the CSR was heavily involved this year. This document was the primary point of influence the CSR had on the ITK process. The CSR was involved with the working group led by Alexander Babeliowsky and was generally cooperating and posed critical questions in the working group. When asked for a formal advice, the CSR still had a lot of comments on the document despite bringing possible comments and critiques early in the process, if possible. This came unexpected for the UvA policy employees working on the project, and caused a bit of a stir. However, the CSR found it important to use their formal right to give input for the final version of the critical self-reflection.

Taskforce Democratisation & Policy

This taskforce was the only original taskforce to remain after the merging of several taskforces. A lot of the files were initiative based, and this was done throughout the year. Furthermore, the taskforce dealt with the requests for consent on both the Complaints Regulations, and the CSR regulations. Democratisation and Policy mainly discussed the reforms within the UvA, and the functioning of the internal governing bodies of the university. Democratisation and decentralisation have been important themes within the student councils of the UvA, and this taskforce made sure that the progress on these topics was well monitored.

Together with Legal Affairs (JZ) we worked on the Student Statute, the CSR regulations, and the Complaints Regulations. The Student Charter and the Complaints Regulations were voted in, and the council hopes that JZ and the CSR 2018-2019 will work together closely on the content of the Student Charter in the coming year. While the CSR regulations discussion has not officially finished yet, the CSR hopes that this document can be updated soon. Furthermore, the CSR and COR have agendaized several topics in the GV with regards to the University Regulations, including the appointments of deans, CvB, and RvT, and the council hopes that the amended University Regulations will be put up for consent soon.

Furthermore, a big discussion that was held with the CSR was the one concerning the central student assessor. We appreciate the fact that the CvB was very forthcoming on this file and allowed us to evaluate the function. Hopefully the discussion on the central student assessor can be finished with the CSR 2018-2019.

Taskforce Public Relations

This year the taskforce PR started slow. Though regular tasks such as updating the Facebook page and creating toilet papers were taken care of, the broader responsibilities of involving students in the working of the councils were lost out of sight. When trying to organise events around the topic of the elections, not many people showed up. We did manage to cooperate in the Teacher of the Year award, although not doing as much work as previous councils. Bureau Communications (BC) did the biggest share of the work on that file.

For the election week itself, we started a working group with several CSR members, members from the FSR's and Bart Manders from BC. The goal was to set up a neutral campaign, informing people that there are elections for the student councils that represent them. Also a lot of practical stuff had to be arranged, like the booking of campaigning halls and letting parties know what they can, or cannot hand out. The FSR members in the working group were handy when it came to coordination, although not every member was as committed as we had hoped. In total we ordered neutral flyers for each faculty, ordered posters saying "vote for your student council" and printed infographics. We asked the FSR's to spread the posters and hand the neutral flyers in the election week

What the CSR did for the neutral campaign:

- Developed a neutral flyer for the faculties, containing general information and short introductions of the different parties.
- Ordered small compasses with the student council logo on them for the parties to hand out.
- Ordered and handed out markers for promotion purposes.
- Handed out coffee in the halls where people were campaigning. This was done by Cormet.
- Development of a neutral website (*uvaverkiezingen.nl*)
- Organized debates between the parties. In the elections we had 3 different debates, one for the FNWI, one for the FGw and one for the faculties at REC.
- Made an infographic and an informative video made that can be used every year. This cost us a lot of time while we thought this was something the UvA itself should arrange.
- Changed from developer of the *Stemwijzer* from *kieskompas.nl* to Joran van Apeldoorn.
- Used voting-laptops

In the end of the year we opened up a discussion with the board through various OV's about the responsibilities in the elections. The position of the council was that more work should be done by employees of the UvA, and less work should be done by council members. These talks were as of yet inconclusive and were transferred to the next council.

Outgoing mail

The CSR's (unsolicited) advices and responses to requests for consent during 2017-2018:

170929 uit CvB	Wervingsprocedure Studentassessor-CvB
171016 uit CvB	Intern taalbeleid CvB-CSR
171030 uit CvB	Lunch met de Rector
171030 uit CvB	BAC Studentassessor-CvB
171030 uit CvB	CBO agenda's en verslagen
171101 uit CvB	Regeling Experiment Flexstuderen
171107 uit CvB	Informatieverzoek Reorganisatie StS
171110 uit CvB	Regeling Studiekeuzeadvies
171120 uit CvB	Regeling Selectie en Plaatsing Fixusopleidingen
171207 uit CvB	<i>Use of empty tutorial rooms</i>
171211 uit CvB	Format Jaarverslag ITK
171220 uit CvB	Organisatie OC-verkiezingen
180208 uit CvB	Modellen OER BA MA
180411 uit CvB	Kiesreglement opleidingscommissies 2018
180423 uit CvB	Financiële compensatie eerstejaars in medezeggenschap
180424 uit CvB	Modellen OER BA MA – hernieuwde adviesaanvraag
180430 uit CvB	Methode Instellingscollegegelden
180521 uit CvB	Privacybeleid en beleid verwerking persoonsgegevens
180521 uit CvB	Instemmingsverzoek Reglement cameratoezicht
180524 uit CvB	Deutsche Bank CSR, FEB, FdG, FdR, FGw, FMG, FNWI
180524 uit CvB	Privacybeleid en beleid verwerking persoonsgegevens
180528 uit CvB	Numerus Fixus <i>BSc Business Administration</i> en de <i>BSc Economics & Business Economics</i>
180618 uit CvB	Brief over protest 08-06-2018
180619 uit CvB	Modellen-OER BA MA
180628 uit CvB	<i>Internationalisation</i>
180702 uit CvB	Collegegeldvrij besturen
180705 uit CvB	<i>Acceptable Use Policy</i>
180705 uit CvB	Informatiebeveiligingsbeleid
180705 uit CvB	OC-handreiking
180705 uit CvB	Proces Kwaliteitsafspraken
180706 uit CvB	Kritische zelfreflectie ITK
180830 uit CvB	Facultaire regelingen en selectiecriteria en -procedures 2019-2020
180830 uit CvB	Numerus Fixus <i>BSc Business Administration</i> en de <i>BSc Economics & Business Economics</i> + decentrale selectiecriteria FEB
180831 uit CvB	Klachtenregeling

Other advices to external parties during 2017-2018:

171211 uit ISO	Structurele problemen
180214 uit GALOP	Onderwijsbalies
180220 uit LOF	Kwaliteitsafspraken en facilitering medezeggenschap
180315 uit Amsterdam	Studentenhuisvesting