

FACULTEIT DER RECHTSGELEERDHEID ONDERNEMINGSRAAD EN STUDENTENRAAD UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM

Gezamenlijke overlegvergadering OR – FSR – Decaan, Maandag 9 september 2023 11:00-12:30 uur in REC A7.23

Aanwezig van de zijde van het bestuur: Mireille van Eechoud, Myrthe van Amstel, Yvonne Donders en Radboud Winkels.

Aanwezig van de zijde van de OR: Candida Leone, Désirée Blessing, Heather Kurzbauer, Hege Elisabeth Kjos, Frank Tros, Otto van Tubergen, Pieter Lagerwaard, Mirthe Jiwa en Marjolein de Broekert-de Greeve.

Aanwezig van aan de zijde van de FSR: Zofia Rytel, Livni Beck, Len Holstein, Mihnea Loi, Friso Tjittens en Mirthe den Held (secretaris).

Opening

11:05

Van Eechoud welcomes the Works Council and Student Council and introduces the key topics for this year. She notes challenges due to recent government changes and the Gaza protests, emphasizing the importance of having difficult but constructive conversations. She expresses her hope that the councils will feel free to bring these issues forward. This year also sees significant internal changes within the board: Jan Dijk has retired and will be replaced by José Brugman-Augustijn as the new Director of Operations. Additionally, Arthur Salomons, Director of the College of Law, and Yvonne Donders, Director of the Graduate School, are both nearing the end of their terms.

Introduction round

Councilmember Rytel proposes that everyone introduces themselves with their name, pronouns, role and a fun-fact.

Working methods

Leone announces that it has been decided to hold these meetings in person rather than in a hybrid format, as hybrid meetings hinder effective discussions. English will be the primary language of the meetings. Participants may speak in Dutch, with translation available, and similarly, English contributions can be translated into Dutch, ensuring that language does not impede the conversation.

Van Eechoud adds that the primary language of university documents is Dutch, as the governing bodies of the university conduct their discussions in Dutch. However, important documents will be translated into English. The current five-year strategic plan of the faculty runs until 2026, a new plan will be developed for 2027 and beyond. Additionally, there is an annual planning cycle: the faculty follows a calendar year cycle, while colleges and programs adhere to an academic year cycle.

Priorities of the board

Van Eechoud highlights the priorities on the side of the board for the coming year: (1) The Bachelor of Law program has undergone a curriculum revision. The rollout for the second-year curriculum has commenced, and preparations for the third-year curriculum are underway. The minors will also be revised. (2) The PPLE program will undergo a reaccreditation visit at the end of March. (3) Due to new government plans, all English-language bachelor programs will need to be evaluated to determine if it is necessary to conduct them in English. It remains unclear how the government will organize this process. This reassessment only applies to bachelor's programs. (4) Generative Artificial Intelligence: Currently, working groups are addressing questions related to assessment and teaching in the context of AI. (5) UvA-wide developments: The University of Amsterdam is in the process of evaluating its current five-year strategic plan. While the government has announced budget cuts, it remains unclear which funding streams will be affected. On the educational side, no major funding changes are expected, though the impact of measures like the 'langstudeerboete' on students is uncertain. (6) There is a broader shift in academia away from prioritizing research publications in the context of academic acknowledgement. A new culture of recognition and rewarding is being established to reflect this change.

Priorities of the Student Council

Councilmember Rytel states that for the FSR-FdR, key topics this year will include the house rules and procedures surrounding student protests, with a focus on ensuring student safety while protecting the right to protest. Other important issues include improving accessibility, hybrid teaching, AI, quality of education, anonymous grading, the no-laptop policy and the budget cuts. Regarding the budget cuts, there is confusion among international students. Additionally, the FSR aims to bring the work of the student council closer to the student body.

Lagerwaard asks about the FSR's stance on the no-laptop policy. Councilmember Beck highlights the inconsistency across tutorials within the bachelors course Legal Philosophy regarding whether students are required to bring their work on paper or on their laptops. In some instances, failing to bring their work on paper results in students being marked absent, which can lead to exclusion from the course. The FSR emphasizes the importance of consistency within courses and clear communication.

Radboud asks whether the FSR is aware that some issues are broader, central matters. Van Eechoud responds that she believes central issues can still be raised at the faculty level to encourage a wider discussion. De Broekert-de Greeve adds that course evaluations are addressed within the program committees. Councilmember Beck notes that how these evaluations are published is also a faculty concern. Van Amstel clarifies that the program committees are able to give advice on the evaluations. Councilmember Rytel emphasizes that the key issue is whether lecturers engage with the course evaluations after they are published; in some cases, they share the results to students but fail to give a response to the evaluations.

Councilmember Loi states that he would like to work on the lack of trashcans in the PPLE building. Radboud states that he is open to discussing this topic. Leone remarks that some smaller issues don't have to be discussed during the GOV but can be resolved during informal meetings.

Councilmember Tjittens states that he would like to focus on harboring the interest of students that are not involved in the protests and want to study in a safe environment. Van Eechoud responds that this will be on the next agenda.

Priorities Works Council

Leone emphasizes that the issue of temporary staff contracts will be a key focus for the Works Council. Despite the budget cuts, employees need greater job security. Kjos adds that the Works Council aims to ensure that the UvA remains a good workplace, with a focus on well-being policies addressing life-cycle-related issues such as menopause and postpartum depression. Kurzbauer mentions that there is a job opening for a PhD confidentiality advisor. Leone also points out that the representation of PhD students within the university is not sufficient. Leone adds that the educational renewal and the budget cuts will also be priorities. Blessing states that the workplace of the future and hybrid work is another focus of the Works Council. Van Tubergen states that the Works Council is also waiting on the 'hoofdlijnen akkoord'. Leone adds that there will be more attention to the budget with more check-ins.

Closing

Eechoud states that she is looking forward to the separate and joined meetings with the Works Council and the FSR.

12:21