



minutes

Meeting Faculty Council (FC)

Date and time

31 October 2023, 13:30-15:00

Reference

final

Eliza van der Ploeg-Bout

T +31 (0)50 36 33898

e.s.van.der.ploeg-bout@rug.nl

Present

FC: Gwenda van der Vaart (chair), Dimitris Ballas, Gunnar Mallon, Saskia Enuma, Zeqiang Pan, 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

Absent with notice

Annet Kempenaar

Minutes taken by

Eliza van der Ploeg

Last minutes (19 September 2023) approved

Yes, with changes

Landleven 1

9747 AD Groningen

The Netherlands

1. Actions

Number	Who?	What?	Dead-line?	See point
20230919-2	Van der Ploeg	Invite new GS director and perhaps also PhD Council to brainstorm about the increase of teaching workload of the PhD employees in relation to the aim to reduce the PhD completion time and policy about extension due to personal circumstances.	12-12?	5/9
20231031-1	Bastiaans	Social safety should be taken up in the progress report Health Safety & Sustainability.		3c
20231031-2	Bastiaans	Is possible to give a more precise figure for the impact of lower travel costs?		5
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.		6
20231031-4	Van der Vaart	Contact HR about the next edition of the employee satisfaction survey, to not only conduct the analysis at the level of the basic units, but also to see whether there are interesting patterns, taking into account for example, position, age, gender.		7

2. Finished actions:

20230620-2: Pro Geo has not yet emailed the overview of late grading cases to the FB (for discussion in the FB meeting and with the departments). First, it will be discussed in the next premeeting of the FC to get a better sense of the cases. Furthermore, the Programme Committee members will also keep an eye on it and will monitor it this year.

20230919-1: Van der Vaart has sent a letter to the Executive Board, notifying them about the in essence positive opinion about the Budget 2024-2027, but -as discussed during the meeting- the FC would like to stay up-to-date and involved in coming discussions on how the Faculty can best deal with the evolving financial situation and future.

20230919-3: Bastiaans has checked whether it is possible to translate appendix 4 of the budget is in English. Sadly, this is not possible.

3. For information/received documents

a. Update PC's

All student PC members have been installed. Pro Geo organized an information meeting and provided them with the PC handbook.

b. Update Faculty Board

- The FB has decided a few months ago to limit funding of PhD positions by the faculty and instead has been looking for external funding. This is looking good.
- In the last period external funding on projects has increased. A series of projects with staff positions included have started.
- At central level the university is reevaluating the central university policy. The faculty is actively involved in this process.

c. Annual report 2022 Confidential Advisor: For information. The FB has spoken with the confidential advisor. There is a general rise in reports of undesirable behavior. The FB is working on a communication plan for introducing an informal contact person at the faculty for social safety. Bastiaans explains what measures and activities have been undertaken and what yet will be done. The FB has structural meetings with the confidential advisor and the ombudsperson to discuss and monitor social safety. Bastiaans and Van der Vaart agree that social safety should be taken up in the progress report Health Safety & Sustainability [action].

d. Update WIIB (Internationalization in Balance Bill): Van den Assem explains that the bill, which is not yet in place, is about the Bachelor higher education in Dutch. It is still in development. In December it will be sent to parliament. There are exceptions possible and the faculty is aiming to be one. A lot is going on. Also, students are very active with sending letters to regional and national policy makers. Tomorrow, students have a meeting with Minister Dijkgraaf. Woltjer emphasizes the five arguments for a programme in English (which would be good to mention/keep in mind):

1. International learning;
2. Regional reason for English programme (close to border);
3. There are other programmes in NL that are in Dutch (so there is a choice);
4. Labor market (international students end up working in NL after their Master);
5. Small programmes: for FSS, international students are necessary (small programmes arguments) to maintain small programmes.

Following the discussion, Ballas mentions that some staff is concerned because of the email inventory concerning Dutch language skills among international staff (the concern is that it will influence career perspectives etc.).

e. Concept minutes 19 September 2023:

Textual change: replace 'ProGeo' by 'Pro Geo' everywhere.

Page 2, point 4.a. add: 'During the pregnancy leave of Van der Vaart, Dimitris Ballas will be interim chair and Roselinde van der Wiel will replace Gwenda van der Vaart temporarily as FC member.'

Page 4, point 10: Add after 'Pro Geo ... meetings.': 'This is agreed upon. The minutes of the FC are public.'

Conditional the abovementioned changes the minutes are approved of.

4. Introduction Safety Prevention Coordinator - Zernike West

Rosanne Tegels (Prevention coordinator Arbo Zernike West) and Gerard Boersma (Prevention coordinator safety) have joined the meeting. They give a presentation to introduce the prevention coordinators and the risk assessment and evaluation.

In time, the FC needs to approve the new form of evaluation/report and also give opinion about the final report somewhere in May.

It is noted that more people are seen smoking on campus while there is a non-smoking policy for the whole campus. Tegels admits that it is a hard problem. Last week, people have been fined.

Tegels arranges with Van der Ploeg future presences in the FC meeting.

5. Budget and economizing measures

Woltjer summarizes the current financial situation. There are a few central processes in which the faculty participates:

- 1) Back in balance: the university aims to speed up the measures;
- 2) Central discussion on new policy priorities;
- 3) Faculty measures: discussed in FC, with department chairs and the economizing committee.

Following the discussion, Van der Vaart mentions that the FC has received a letter from a staff member about the economizing measures. The FB has received and discussed the letter also. The FB is not planning to organize general information sessions (as is done at some other faculties).

The FC discusses the confidential table with an overview of financial measures. Bastiaans will look into whether it is possible to give a more precise figure for the impact of lower travel costs [action].

6. Input from Pro Geo & Bursary PhD

Pro Geo has written a policy plan. Next time, it will probably be available. Important highlights:

- Pro Geo has made a student support structure, which will be published on the website.
- Portfolio design in SPD (this was also raised in the last meeting of last year). Van der Vaart mentions that this is also discussed in the design department. Contact person is Terry van Dijk.
- Requirements of assignments are not in time communicated to students. Improving digital skills in lectures so students have the required level of skill for a course.

Van den Assem suggests to take up the last bullet with the PC members in the programme SPD. Woltjer and Van der Vaart suggest that Pro Geo make a proposal/memo for the FC so a better discussion and brainstorm is possible [action].

Update PhD Council:

- The URSI conference has a limitation on participants this year.
- GS has organized a focus group TSP.

7. Input from staff

- The FC has received a letter about the decision of the FB to suspend the FSS participation to the Bachelor Honours College. Woltjer explains that this measure is a part of Back in Balance. Before the summer this was discussed with the department chairs and the university. The FB had a meeting with the coordinator to inform him that this might be going to happen. The FB agrees that is quick and still a bit unclear. The FB will again have a meeting with the coordinator about this. It has not yet been discussed in the PC Honours College. Probably after Christmas more information will be available.
- The FC received a question whether it would be possible for the next edition of the employee satisfaction survey not only to conduct the analysis at the level of the basic units, but also to see whether there are interesting patterns, taking into account for example, position, age, gender. Is the perceived workload among professors higher than in other positions? Or do women experience more cases of social insecurity than men, etc.? This is to get more out of the survey. Van der Vaart has to contact HR about this [action].
- Van den Assem answers a question about the central strategy/policy on AI. Hopefully next month a policy document will be available.

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- In the news there is an article about the rising pay gap between men and women. Bastiaans notes that HR is looking into it. The current impression is that at FSS there is not really any difference. Perhaps the pay gap is related to who is in what position? Next week there is a Councils meeting in which this will be discussed.

8. Any other subject

Another item that is mentioned is a comment about the affordable food in the Equator. Sometimes the Equator is closed due to illness etc. Bastiaans comments that the faculty is already in discussion with the caterer about it.

9. Closure and date next meeting

The next meeting is 12 December 2023.
The chair closes the meeting.