The Student council: The what and the how

As Faculty Student Council (FSR) we often are asked who we are and what we do. Because the faculty is trying this new way of communicating, we figured this would be a pretty great moment to introduce ourselves to those who do not know us yet, and even for the ones that already do know us it’s a nice reminder of what kind of machinations go on in room A1.26.

The student council takes part in the forming and execution of faculty policy. After the Maagdenhuisbezetting (a kind of “occupy maagdenhuis” if you will) in 1969 actions followed because of it, leading to students getting more of a right of say in the governing of the University. Before this moment, only the dean and staff had the power to govern the university and students weren’t happy at all. This ultimately led to the aforementioned occupation. Nowadays, when the dean wants to change something about the faculty which has something to do with education, she has to ask the student council for advice. There are even several cases, for example the OER, in which the student council has to approve of these cases before the changes can be accepted and implemented.

Because the student council has to effectively represent the students we are elected in May, this gives us time to learn the ropes of the student council. During the year, starting in September, we do not only advise the dean on the files she asks us about, but we also advise her on cases and events we see or hear from the students. Because we represent all the student of the Faculty of Science, and we would like to know all the problems and best practices they encounter, it is important that each of them knows who to turn to.

More information? Please visit room A1.26, send an email to fnwi@studentenraad.nl or see studentenraad.nl/fnwi

Teaching and learning objectives for joint science programmes

The UvA/VU vision on teaching and learning is due to be presented shortly. This vision sets out the objectives for science programmes at the University of Amsterdam (UvA) and VU University Amsterdam (VU).

The UvA/VU vision on teaching and learning was drawn up by the directors of Education of the science faculties of both the UvA and VU. 'Both faculties already had their own vision on teaching and learning. There was little difference between them,' says Michel Haring, director of Education at the UvA Faculty of Science. However, we wanted to create a shared vision for our collaboration.'

The new vision sets out the objectives for the joint science programmes. 'For example, the vision on teaching and learning will offer guidance when lecturers redesign the curricula in the future. 'One of the six key points in the vision is to enable students to develop academic skills. 'We want to prepare students for various roles in society,' according to Haring.

Another key point is the smaller scale of education. Besides larger groups of students attending lectures, students will also be taught in small groups. Quality is more important than quantity. 'We have no desire to expand merely for the sake of expansion. This means that we must closely monitor the capacity of a programme. Our programmes will be internationally orientated. In the future, all Master's programmes will be taught in English as well as a number of Bachelor's programmes.'

Lecturers, programme directors and students have meanwhile provided their comments on the plan during various feedback sessions. Feedback from the final session will be collected this month. The shared vision on teaching and learning will be available from our websites by the end of this year.

Interested in learning more about the UvA/VU vision on teaching and learning? Join the Student's colloquium of the UvA Faculty of Science in the Brainwave on Tuesday, 11 November at 17:00.

Student present at Faculty of Science’s management meetings

On 4 November 2014, Aniek van Onzenoort (3rd year Beta-gamma programme) attended her first meeting of the Faculty of Science’s management team. Aniek was nominated by the Faculty Student Council (FSR) to regularly attend these meetings and provide the management team with relevant input from the student body for setting the organisational agenda.

Suggestions? You can reach her at dstudentfnwi@gmail.com.