# ROTTERDAM SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT ERASMUS UNIVERSITY

## MINUTES MSc PC – 26 APRIL 2018

Mandeville, T03-42, 14.00 – 16.00 hours

| Present | Absent |
|---|---|
| MS: Maciej Szymanowski (chair, MM) | MSh: Meir Shemla (HRM) |
| RE: Reinoud van Eerden (SM, minutes) | DD: Dirk Deichmann (MI) |
| GH: Gabi Helfert (PM) | AC: Ata Choudhry (AFM) |
| FW: Frank Wijen (SM) | FD: Felix Dressel (MM) |
| DT: Dimitrios Tsekouras (BIM) | IB: Isabel Bienert (BIM) |
| BT: Ben Tims (FI) | SZ: Solomon Zori (AFM) |
| LS: Lisa Schulze Egberding (SCM) | BK: Bas Koene (OCC) |
| GB: Guido Berens (GBS) | MK: Myles Kuhns (MI) |
| DA: Denise Althaus (HRM) | WH: Wim Hulsink (SE) |
| MSp: Marijke Speelberg (GBS) | GN: Gerald Nuha (FI) |
| ML: Marc Liebermeister (OCC) | CK: Chyntia Kong (SCM) |
| AR: Anatole Reboul (SE) | SB: Sigrid Batenburg-Mudde (PM, minutes) |
| AS: Ad Scheepers | |

### 1. Opening and announcements
The chair welcomed everybody present.

BT mentions that it would be practical if meetings will be scheduled in such a way that SB is available.

MS reflects that we would benefit from someone that would take admin and writing work away from us, especially within the subcommittees. A student assistant could support and extract the admin tasks from the PC members, so that the members can fully focus their energy on improving the quality of education. MS will talk to other EUR committees to see how they arrange it and see if we can cooperate. This subject will be added to today's agenda.

### 2. Approval of minutes from MSc PC Meeting 27 March 2018
There are no comments on the minutes and herewith the minutes are approved.

### 3. Admissions requirements MSc
Arnoud Monster could not be present today due to illness. Therefore, this subject is postponed to next meeting.

### 4. Replacing subject: external law assistant support
- LS asks why we should hire such assistant.
- SM proposes to involve someone with a legal background (a legal secretary) who can bring in knowledge about the Dutch (education) law and who could support us with writing the recommendations in a law-proof way.
- RE asks whether this should be a law professional.
- GH explains that an assistant with a law background could be of great value, as this person could bring in the knowledge regarding the Dutch law and writing letters. This could improve the quality of the advices of the PC according to her.
- AS bring up the point that this person should have legal background and English skills.

- LS asks whether any other committees have reached out to MS to initiate this.
- MS answers that he has reached out to other committees and the other committees (e.g. faculty council)
- FW mentions that other PCs have also noted the need for a secretary and who can take some load of the current secretaries. MS and GH support the point that the current secretaries are not able to handle the current workload.
- GH mentions that we can request a budget for this from the faculty.
- MS concludes that we can go ahead with the letter of recommendation.
- LS offers to write the draft letter of recommendation and agrees with MS that this letter will be drafted in two weeks and finalised in four weeks, during the next meeting.

## 5. Monthly update on progress subcommittees
- Quality of education
    - o FW says that so far a decent job has been done on outlining the attention points.
    - o MS has the notes of last meeting and this will be shared with the subcommittee.
    - o MS emphasises that next meeting a final letter needs to be ready and FW agrees.
    - o MS clarifies that there is no way to tackle 'nasty behaviour' of students in the evaluations and this is something serious to take into account for the sake of the quality of the evaluations and proper evaluation.
    - o MSp mentions that anonymity does not exist, because the software tracks whether an individual student has completed surveys throughout the year or not. The answer is that an external partner tracks student responds based on email (student number).
- Communication
    - o MS and FD are waiting to visit the Academic Directors' meeting in May, because they want to consult all different stakeholders. Based on the feedback loop of all stakeholders a letter will be set up
    - o The mission could be linked to the ILOs of different MSc programmes.
- Thesis trajectory
    - o IB introduces overview slide of this subcommittee. A thesis knowledge platform is proposed. Next a better alignment of the thesis process and expectations across programs, because this can be much improved. Besides the two proposed initiatives, two core issues, namely the co-reader issue and quality of thesis supervision & grading issue, are emphasised.
    - o MSp adds that the EB noticed that students who strongly disagree with their thesis grading increasingly seek legal advice.
    - o GB explains that RISBO indeed noticed ambiguities in the grading matrix.
    - o GN indicates that besides the grading, the evaluation part by the student is unclear. He notices that strange differences between coaches could be recognised through the evaluation.
    - o *Fairness of grading*
        - ▪ MS asks whether there is any idea to solve the grading issue.
        - ▪ DT mentions that we need to take it step by step per programme. For example, within BIM they are aiming to normalise the grading. MS asks how they go about it. DT answers that they are training both the new and more experienced faculty members by defining the different levels.

- MS sees that this is comparable to revising the grading matrix at programme level.
- AS adds that average grades differ across programmes, but that the causes of this are complicated to state.
- GN agrees on MS note that new faculty members need to be coached.
- ML says that the matrix does not link to any specific grading, so this obviously results in grade variation. This directly relates to fairness.
- AS clarifies that the matrix has two purposes. Firstly, it makes the coaches accountable for the grade they give. Secondly, it also provides feedback to the student on improvement points.
- MS mentions that there are two ways to consider it. Firstly, the coaches are scientists with a lot of knowledge and experience, which makes the execution of change very difficult. Secondly, not all grading can be standardised. It's not McDonalds at which every burger looks the same, but an institute at which you need to use your intellectual to succeed.
- MS concludes that there should be two parts of the grade: objective evaluation (have you done what is required) and subjective (room for subjectivity). This should be included in the quality of grading recommendation.
- FW says that a matrix is actually the maximum of objectivity you can include, but the range of grading should be clear to all supervisors and students.
- GH argues that less support and coaching could actually lead to a higher mark and not everything can be standardised.
- SM proposes to recommend that the dean to ask all departments to come up with grading criteria.
  - o *Amount of guidance*
    - GB mentions that this is a subjective issue again.
    - DT says that there is a number of hours assigned to thesis supervision.
    - MS says that the extent of independence is related to the grading of the thesis.
    - GN indicates that not all supervisors properly evaluate. LS asks to whom this applies and this needs to be really generalizable.
  - o *Fast conclusion*
    - AS suggests that the letter needs to be shared with the dean and dean of education before June.
    - MS advices the subcommittee to share the link to the Google Doc.
    - IB will share the link with the committee, so that everyone can deliver input.
- PAC
  - o MSp highlights that only one PAC is properly implemented, which is the GBS one. According to her, the findings of the survey says that the PACs are taken very 'freely' and the purposes are not really reached.
  - o MSp suggests that the advices of last year need to be evaluated and re-communicated.
  - o MSp also mentions that the PACs became active far too late during the academic year, so this communication needs to be improved as well.
  - o The committee recommends to improve the communication around the PAC and make sure the communication about the composition of the PAC takes place earlier in the academic year.

- o Another recommendation is to involve the PACs in course evaluation.
- o Another question: what should be the role of the Pac in the evaluation process?
- o PAC handover: there should be an end-of-year report & e-mail address for each PAC.
- o GH mentions that the PC support assistant could be of help with regard to the communication.
- o RE mentions that simplification of the PAC requirements could help the feasibility of the PAC goals.
- o AR voices out about the communication problem regarding the PC. He mentions that the DSR could support on the communication regarding the PC.
- o GH again emphasises professional support as essential for the functioning of the (student representation within) PC.
- o LS mentions that new students could be recruited through STAR as well. She proposes to outline the PAC connections to STAR to the dean, so that he is clear on what is happening.
- o MSp summarises that the advice wants to get across that last year's advice was never really implemented properly.
- o GH is concerned that a survey to further investigate the PAC situation over the coming years does not provide further relevant information.
- o GH informs us that the PAC is supposed to be formed by the students actually, not programme management.
- o MSp asks whether the PAC subcommittee can join the Academic Director's meeting to ask questions.
- o MSp will also share the link to the PAC letter, so that everyone can add her or his comments to the advice.

## 6. Action points and closing
- MS introduces the PC dropbox. It includes a document for relevant links. Also there is a subfolder in which subcommittees can share their files. There are supposed to be memos in there which have not been added yet. The minutes will be added later.
- *To-do points*
  - o LS writes draft letter of recommendation regarding external law assistant.
  - o Thesis trajectory and PAC share links to Google Docs so that people can send their comments and the letters can be finalised for next meeting. MS: please everyone comment.
  - o Subcommittees need to have letters ready on …..

**Next meetings:**
22-05-2018, 13.00 hrs
21-06-2018, 10.00 hrs