Minutes MSc PC – 29 February 2024

Online meeting via Teams and T3-42; 09:30–11:30 hours

Present	Absent
AL: Annelie van der Leelie (Minutes)	MS: Maciej Szymanowski (Chair, MM, BAM)
MC: Marta Cazzamalli (POC)	AN: Anna Nikulina (SCM)
PBC: Philipp Cornelius (BIM)	SZ: Solomon Zori (MScBA AFM)
SET: Shinouk Ettema (MScBA P-MIM)	AS: Ad Scheepers (PM)
NZ: Nadine Ziegengeist (FI)	KB: Kathrin Borner (MI, MBI)
IH: Ian Hermes (MScBA MiM)	CS: Claus Schmitt (FI)
YL: Yu Liu (SE)	GH: Gabi Helfert (PM)
NN: Nargiz Najaf (BIM)	(MScBA pMiM)
KR: Kristupas Radzvila (SCM)	
EB: Emanuel Ubert (SM)	
MK: Michelle Kossoi (MM)	
TC: Teodora Comanescu (GBS)	
BS: Bianca Stoiciu (MI)	
GB: Guido Berens (Chair GBS)	
LL: Larissa de Liedekerke (MSc MBI)	
BB: Bas Bogers (MScBA BAM)	
FM: Felix Mayer (SE)	
DB: Daiana Botezatu (MScBA AFM)	
MAS: Maartje Schouten (POC)	
FH: Felicitas Huffer (SM)	Guests
KK: Korcan Kavusan (MscBA MIM)	JR: Drs Julia Roos (Team Lead Roosterteam)

1. Opening and announcements
1) The chair welcomes everybody present.
2) GB was chair during the meeting as MS was unable to attend.

2. Approval of minutes from MSc PC meeting 25 January 2024—see attachment.
GB: *The International Office* should change to *the Learning Innovation Team.*

3. Discussion about class scheduling RSM —Julia Roos
JR answered the Committee's questions:
1) **Is it possible to schedule courses twice per academic year instead of once? Because scheduling the entire year in advance leads to problems when teachers would like to change the setup of a course later in the academic year.**
   JR: RSM schedulers are also in favour of scheduling courses twice per academic year. However, scheduling is a EUR-wide process and RSM is the only faculty which would like to schedule more than once a year, but people from RSM repeatedly raised this issue but it's always outvoted by the other faculties. The main reasons why the other faculties would like to schedule once a year are that a) Students would like to know their entire schedule a year in advance and b) The schedulers would have a shorter peak period.
   GH suggested that if the PC would like to change the scheduling process from once to twice year, they should contact the University Council and/ or the EUR Executive Board.

2) **The scheduling of lectures/lessons causes for inconsistency/ large gaps between the sessions within the same day. Could something be done about that?**
JR: The schedulers always try to avoid inconsistency and gaps in students' schedules. However, the room allocation process is also EUR-wide. Therefore, schedule stands are consistent but due to no room availability the schedulers are forced to use different days and time slots during the week which causes inconstancy in students schedules. In addition, during the scheduling process, the schedulers try to align individual teacher preferences to minimise gaps in students' schedules. Moreover, teachers could only indicate their preferences for working days and not their preferred time slots (with exceptions if necessary).

3) **Would it be possible to give students a week off in the Spring which could be used for e.g., a) A study trip because currently, in the MSc POC programme a study trip is being organised and therefore it's asked whether the course attendance policy can be changed and b) To improve student well-being because there is no break for students between January and July.**
JR: Four, five years ago, in the master programmes, there was a week off in the Spring semester called 'The White week'. This week was reserved for student organisations to organise the study trips but many student organisations planned the trips outside the White Week. Therefore, it was decided to delete the week. Currently, there are no plans to reintroduce a free week. The main reason is that due to the long academic year (compared to other universities worldwide) resits are very late at the end and adding an extra week to the academic year will push resits to a point where there might not be any support from the EB to organise resits. However, there is the smarter academic year project. The project group is investigating how to shorten the number of weeks of the academic year to reduce the workload of students and teachers.

4) **What are the basic variables or constraints that should be considered when scheduling a session?**
JR: For scheduling, the teachers are asked to provide the following information a) Course information such as course code, title teaching block and when a course starts, b) Instructor names and whether teachers have other teaching commitments during the same block, c) In which weeks will the take activity take place, what kind of activity it is, for example a lecture or workshop, the duration of the session and whether it's an on or off campus activity, d) What kind of exam it will be and the duration and e) What kind of room the teachers need for the course and exam. The main constraints during the scheduling process are that a) Students follow more courses in one block and these courses can't overlap and b) The room availability. The schedulers don't have influences on the room availability as it's an EUR-wide process.

5) **To what extent are teachers' preferences about when they are available to teach considered?**
JR: The schedulers consider the teachers preferences as much as possible. However, often it's difficult because a) Many teachers want the same thing, for example to teach on the same day and timeslot and b) There are problems with room availability (especially in the Fall semester) During the scheduling process, to avoid classes being packed on a few days, the schedulers try to spread things out but try to avoid students having classes of six consecutive hours of classes without a lunch break. However, they have also asked to cluster classes thus students have time for an internship or a jobs.

6) **Could the university use off-campus facilities?**
JR: RSM doesn't rent facilities off-campus because these fees are on top of the costs the school already pays for using the on-campus facilities. In addition, last year EUR made a statement that due to budgeting reasons, they don't want to rent external locations so the faculties should work with the facilities on-campus.

7) **When scheduling, it would be better to consider the quality of the room, because some rooms have air and sound equipment problems and if facilities aren't working, it costs teachers time.**
JR agrees with the Committee that all facilities in the room should work during teaching on campus. Therefore, during the summer break, the rooms will be checked so that the rooms are in a proper working condition for the new academic year. Unfortunately, the schedulers can't guarantee that all facilities will continue to work throughout the year. The advice is that if there are facility problems, teachers could call the service desk or the RSM's facility team to help them. If the problems can't be solved, the scheduling team will

RSM
Erasmus

try to move the course to another room as soon as possible.

Comments of the Committee:
Would it be possible to give students a week off in the Spring which could be used for e.g., a) A study trip because currently, in the MSc POC programme a study trip is being organised and therefore it's asked whether the course attendance policy can be changed and b) To improve student well-being because there is no break for students between January and July.
1) MAS: A study trip will be organised for the MSc POC programme. Therefore, it would be better if the elective exams are held at the beginning of the exam week as there will be space to plan a study trip later in that week.

4. Response from the Dean to the MSc PC annual report and questions letter
Gb discussed the Dean's response letter with the Committee.
1) The Dean and the Dean of Education take the MSc PC seriously because they took the time to respond to the MSc PC annual report. They indicated with some explanation that some topics will be implemented and others don't.

Comments of the Committee:
1) TC: The letter shows which topics the Dean and Dean of Education focus on, as some subcommittees were specifically mentioned and others weren't.
2) GB: If current MSc PC members think if issues arising from last years subcommittees have been ignored in the letter, please inform AL so the PC can discuss the topics.

5. Update from the PC subcommittees
1) The AI in Education Subcommittee met last week and is working on the final document which they would like to present during the next PC meeting.
2) The Course Evaluation Subcommittee discussed with LIT what the obstacles are in the course evaluations. in addition, the subcommittee is creating a document about their course evaluations ideas and what the next steps will be. The main concerns about the course evaluations are a) For students there is no incentive to complete the course evaluations because the improvements are for the next cohort and b) Teachers are concerned that course evaluations would affect their careers in a negative way.
3) Like last academic year, The Diversity and Social Safety Subcommittee would like to focus on the topic of internationalisation and making the class experience more inclusive, as it seems that international students are pitted against Dutch students. In addition, the subcommittee had a meeting with IDEA's project manager with whom they will collaborate because they are working on the same topics and with the same information sources.
4) the Open Education subcommittee conducted interviews with all ADs to create an overview of what each programme is doing on the topic of open education, including guests lectures and the use of the Career Centre. Currently the subcommittee is combining all the insights and the aim is to have a recommendation letter ready by March. In addition, the subcommittee implemented interviews with the Career Centre employees. They explained that a) If companies would like to collaborate with RSM, they must pay a fee because according to Dutch law students aren't allowed to give free advice on the industry and b) There isn't much collaboration between the Career Centre and the ADs, because the ADs find the Career Centre too commercial with less scientific focus. However, the Career Centre is the link between students and the industry but they don't have the recourses to show what kind of work the Career Centre employees do.
5) The Career Preparation Subcommittee is looking at the Your Future Career course and the Mentor Me platform issues. The subcommittee would like the improve the Mentor me platform because a) There is a large under-representation of master programmes and b) It should be more user-friendly and better known among students. On the platform, the subcommittee would like to create an internal Facebook page to create an

accessible network between students and alumni. In addition, the subcommittee would like to improve the Your Future Career course by adding soft skill training and more modules, for example but before the changes are implemented, they would like to have feedback from students through questionnaires on these plans.

Comments of the Committee
Course Evaluation Subcommittee
1) MAS: In the course evaluations, it would be better to use a feedback tool in the middle of the course and present the feedback to the students as this increases the student participation in course evaluations.
2) MAS: The current course evaluations don't show how teachers' instructions are. Therefore, it would be better to separate the course evaluations from the teachers' performance decision.

6. Closing remarks

7. Action points

What	When	Who

Next meetings:
21-Mar-24, 10.00h
18-Apr-24, 09.30h
16-May-24, 09.30h
13-Jun-24, 09.30h