

MINUTES 137TH FC MEETING – 26 APRIL 2012

Attendees

FC Members	Guests	MT	Official Secretary
Juup Essers	Thomas Snuverink (STAR)		Joy Kearney
Jan-Joost Liebrecht			
Kerren Radvany			
Shiko Ben Menahem			
Jan Sirks			
Sharmayne Schneiderberg			
Eefke van der Meer			

1. Opening

Juup opens the 137th FC meeting at 10:30 am.

2. Agenda

Eefke would like to add 'double printing' to the agenda.

There are no questions or further points to be added to the agenda.

3. Minutes

The minutes are approved without further remarks or amendments.

4. Announcements

The FC makes four announcements:

1. Employee survey: there has been criticism on the methodology of the survey within various departments. A separate meeting should be convened to discuss this. The FC would like to receive the outcomes of the survey and the discussion;
2. There is no news from Peter Elsing (HR director) on earnings of academic staff;
3. Master thesis and PhDs; Juup sent out our standpoint on PhDs and is waiting for response;
4. Sharmayne, Kerren and Juup are working on curriculum investigation. Sharmayne has sent in her input, Kerren and Juup are still working on it. There are not as many changes as was initially expected.

5. Update N=N

Shiko thinks an integral letter should be sent to ask for clarification regarding N=N. Jan-Joost wonders who supports the N=N measures, referring to the documents saying that there is broad support for N=N measures. Sharmayne adds that the University Council asked on what criteria N=N is based. Shiko thinks that the Dean might try to get the University Board off his back regarding the University Council. Eefke says that it is maybe his way to get around it. Juup asks what the FC thinks of this ambiguity, because it is important to have clear what the FC wants to be implemented and what not. Jan-Joost agrees; it is good to have that clear.

Sharmayne doubts if they will give clear answer. Shiko says they are not clear on compensation issues, and they have to reply on our letters of advice. Juup says that as long as sixty ECTS is not on, then it is OK. Juup adds that René de Koster also says that as long as sixty ECTS is not in, then it is not N=N anymore. We simply stick to activation measures. We should add that to the mail to clarify – preferably today.

Shiko says that the Examination Board is not against N=N; 'there is broad support'. It is more semantics, empty words. Asking to clarify who agrees fully is an empty action he thinks. Sharmayne has a meeting this afternoon with the student representatives of the faculty councils, University Council, MBA, IBA etc. to discuss the implications of N=N.

6. Master thesis letter in preparation

Juup distributed a first draft on the redesign of Masters and he offers this for comments from the members of the Faculty Council. The Dean states in his letter that there will be no further adaptations to the compensation system. Officially, the sixty ECTS is not mentioned in the Dean's letter. If you don't say anything about it, then the sixty ECTS will not be implemented – but there is still ambiguity on this point. We now claim that we assume that the sixty ECTS is off for the coming year. This is a tactical implication for future changes. We could say next year: "yes, but we already have N=N, don't we?" Eefke thinks it is better to ask for clarification instead. Shiko agrees, he thinks we cannot assume anything here; what does the Examination Board think? Has there been a meeting between them and the Management Team to discuss this? Is the Dean trying to circumvent the procedure? Juup states that a critical remark about ensuring minimal knowledge level doesn't say anything (see letter of 11 April). Should we send a letter to the Dean to ask for clarification? Jan-Joost agrees on sending a letter to the Dean with a cc to the Examination Board.

Juup prepared a draft letter on the Master thesis and he asks for comments. All members give their approval for the letter. Juup states that we should not restrict ourselves to merits and demerits. Hans van Oosterhout dismissed a bad outcome in last meeting, the idea of reduction of quality due to the new system. Sharmayne says that students have to do something by themselves; you can either deal with it at the end or teach the methods of working independently.

Marlies states that the sixty ECTS is on in the communication to prospecting students. How to deal with this issue? A letter is not explicit enough, this is an ongoing issue. Juup thinks that there is all the more reason for a clarification. Everything is cramped. So to get people through, you have to chase them – this is the tendency of the Master redesign. Jan-Joost comments that students should be more independently earlier in programme. Juup agrees; we should challenge students earlier to work independently. Sharmayne thinks that a skills course is the answer. Juup replies that this research clinic will be overburdened as students need training in all kinds of skills. Jan-Joost thinks that a sentence about this in the correspondence will do. Shiko claims that academic proof also assumes that some of these things students are forced into doing. The Master thesis is a proof of ability to do this academic research.

Juup thinks that the central point being made is that RSM expects too much of students. There is need to reflect on the academic skills of students. Shiko thinks we should cite that in our letter, because that is exactly the point we want to make. Juup adds that it looks like it is no longer an academic programme. A critical literature review is needed, not a pre-compiled or readymade for students. Shiko says we agree it should be limited to a particular length of time, but we must incorporate a quality level.

Juup is in agreement with Dublin descriptors in Bologna regarding what a Master thesis should incorporate. Shiko replies that if your ambition is to be an international academic institution, we must incorporate this. Juup states that preconditions for organising this, requires coordination within the different departments. We can ask Programme Management about how many students some of the staff members coach during the year (some have more than twenty). Shiko thinks it is difficult to estimate, because some are hired for their coaching skills specifically to help

students through. Juup replies that this could cause a division in departments between first and second tier, 'real' research based staff and thesis coaching staff that have a secondary activity. It is possibly reward-based as well.

Jan-Joost asks if we can sum up concretely. The point of quality measures from Shiko should be included. Eefke asks what the condition is for the implementation of measures. Juup replies the competition from electives. The spring semester is full of study points; a total of 58 hours per week is suggested. Eefke asks if that is ninety ECTS and an internship. Marlies adds that the payment by government is restricted time wise. Juup says there is a structural political problem with this. The overloaded spring semester means delay is impossible to remedy/avoid. The study pressure per week of sixty hours is too much. The deadline of 1 July should move to October. Marlies is curious about the reaction of international students. Eefke thinks that if you do a one-year programme, you do not want to be submitting in November. Present deadline for thesis submission is 13 July. Juup thinks that bureaucracy should be set outside of that deadline. It has consequences for teachers as they need to be available to coach students even during summer. So teachers cannot go on holidays with their families. You can only judge a thesis when all the work has been done. Shiko says that both quality and organisation are points for the letter. We want to send it as soon as possible.

Marlies says that internships are now seen as almost for excellent students only. Eefke adds that if you want to go on exchange, you risk a delay in graduating. Part time thesis writing is not conducive to quality. Juup says that the competition between electives and thesis writing causes problems. Sharmayne says that the university gets paid for one Master year, not two years. Universities pay a particular amount per year and for the second year the university pays a particular amount. Delay means extra cost. Marlies thinks it is an administrative problem; where are the students and what are they doing? Juup says it costs money every time students have to follow extra courses. General coach hours equals thirty hours. Marlies asks if we are thinking about new solutions or questioning present solutions.

Jan thinks that the spring term is overloaded – both for students and staff. Juup thinks that three electives of six study points each is better, because the work load is more spread. Marlies thinks it won't get any more concrete. Sharmayne says we could ask a few things and if there is any further progress. Marlies states that this is set up by teachers so they realise that they give up their summer. The impact on students is more radical than teachers. Marlies adds that a one- year programme will not be changed, so there is a lot less flexibility. Eefke thinks a lot of people will graduate faster due to the measures. Juup claims that since 2003 the average Masters students graduating within one year equals 50%. All members are shocked, Marlies finds this unacceptable. Eefke says we want to keep the possibilities open.

Juup thinks there are conditions for progress; e.g. you may only proceed with the proposal if you follow research clinic etc. Under pressure to fulfil numbers we lose quality and are back to HBO thesis. When academic directors agree on measures there will be more of a push. We need to have strict guidelines and say we won't go further than this.

7. FC organisation: weblog and elections

Juup has got a list of tenure track staff. He approached some staff, but there is no agreement yet. All staff received an email from the Dean about the vacant seats within the FC. A candidate has submitted formally for Shiko's seat. The student candidates can be elected from 1 to 14 May.

Juup explains there is no progress with web pages yet. For the weblog, Juup says he wants to make sure opinion polls are not hijacked too much.

8. Any other business

No further topics for discussion.

9. Closure

The meeting is closed at 12:30 pm.

Next FC meeting 14 June 2012 10.00 am in T07-67.

To do before the next meeting

Topic	Task	Person Responsible
Master redesign	Request more information to the Dean	Juup
Master thesis	Invite parties to discuss this topic with	Joy