



Full Term Review

Student Representatives 2019/20



Foreword

The Student Representatives of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences are FASoS internal student representation body of the faculty. We are a team of 29 elected and appointed students of the Bachelor and Master programmes who are representing their fellow students in various faculty bodies and in all levels of the faculty.

Among others, students are represented in the faculty board, faculty council and the programme committees. The FASoS Student Representatives connect the different student members, create collaboration between them and function as a decision-making body. Our role is to assist and inform students and provide broader student input to faculty staff.

The objective of this review is to create an opportunity to reflect on the past academic year and report on the progress of our aims which we outlined in the beginning of the academic year. This academic year has been particularly challenging. Still, our team remained active and represented the rights of the students in the management of the Cyberattack and the COVID-19 pandemic in close collaboration with the Faculty Board.

Danai Petropoulou Ionescu

President 2019/2020



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TEAM OVERVIEW

Programme Committees

Arts & Culture

Pragya Jhingran
Valerie Wüstinger
Melisa Delphia

European Studies

Michele dalla Rosa
Agatha Bourdarias
Dan Edwards

Digital Society

Anne-Sophie Oppor
Amelie Soares

Graduate Programme Committees (GPC)

Alexander Giesekeing, MA ES
Simon Schouren, MA EPA
Costanza Marcellino, MA RMES
Orjona Koka, MA GDS
Kristina Korshunova, MA ESST
Anna Bashuk, MA MC
Cassy Juhasz, MA CAST
Zoë Zanello, MA AH
Lily Niemi, MA ALS
Stephanie Ifill, MA PS

OMT

San Cicalo Ikeda, European Studies
Fee-Marie von der Brelie, Arts & Culture
Lara Greczko, Digital Society

Faculty Council

Maria Petrescu, MA ES
Stella Theocharidou, MA PS
Xander Creed, BA AC
Ziggy Birker, BA ES
Gerrit Bernard Praasterink, BA ES

Complaints Committee

Danai Petropoulou Ionescu, MA RMES

Library Committee

Stephanos Kantor, BA ES

Faculty Board

Dora Christodoulou, BA ES

Steering Board

Danai Petropoulou Ionescu | President
Agatha Bourdarias | Vice-President BA
Cassy Juhasz | Vice-President MA
Melisa Delphia | Secretary
Sen Cicalo Ikeda | Treasurer

WORKING GROUPS

In order to deal with the workload of the Student Representatives, our team is divided into three working groups (WG) and one project: **Education, DIAS, Marketing & Communications, and the Career Day Planning Team**. Below you can find individual overviews of the work that each working group has done throughout the 2019-2020 academic year.

Working Group Overview

Education

Fee-Marie von der Brelie (Chair)
Michele dalla Rosa
Dan Edwards
Gerrit Bernard Praasterink
Kristina Korshunova
Maria Petrescu
Lara Greczko

DIAS

Pragya Jhingran (Chair)
Sen Cicalo Ikeda
Stephanos Kantor
Stella Theocharidou
Melisa Delphia
Stephanie Ifill
Lily Niemi
Zoë Zanello

Marketing & Communications

Xander Creed (Chair)
Dora Christodoulou
Anne-Sophie Oppor
Agatha Bourdarias
Anna Bashuk

Career Day Planning Team

Danai Petropoulou Ionescu (Chair)
Melisa Delphia (Chair)
Ziggy Birker
Valerie Wüstinger
Alexander Giesecking
Simon Schouren
Costanza Marcellino
Orjona Koka
Cassy Juhasz

EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

The Education Working-Group of the Student Representatives is dedicated to the evaluation and improvement of the quality and administration of education within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The committee considers issues, and points for improvement in this area by identifying the general opinion and/or stance of the FASoS student population and working together with the Faculty staff to ensure a positive academic experience for all students and staff.

With the beginning of the academic year 2019/2020 it was decided to divide the respective content or administrative upcoming issues among the team members.

Implementing an IWIO feedback form for the thesis period

At the beginning of this academic year members of ES Programme Committee noticed that there was no IWIO evaluation form for the BA thesis period available. The IWIO evaluations are of great importance for all the programs at FASoS. In December 2019 the Programme Committee members of BA Arts and Culture reported that an IWIO feedback form for the BA thesis period have been made available.

Remark: Through the revision by the Programme Committees, the IWIO evaluations indicate what aspects of courses need to be improved. They ensure that the student voices are heard and reviewed and thus contribute to a great amount to the progression of the programs. However, through the last year the Student Representatives noticed some remaining problems that occurred in relation to the IWIO feedback forms:

- First, an ongoing problem to the IWIO feedback forms is that response rate to them remains very low.
- Second, the accessibility and/or the availability of IWIO feedback forms has been partially disturbed or delayed since the cyberattack. Constructive approaches are needed that make it able to detect the reasons for that and ideas on how to get the response rates up that go beyond advertisement as well as a revision of their accessibility/availability.

Professional Skills

Students across all BA programmes have repeatedly voiced their dissatisfaction with the insufficient range of courses that offer a training of skills that are valuable and important for future employability and/or give an insight into career options and opportunities.

Progress: Throughout the last year the Student Representatives tried to compensate especially the latter point through the organization of an annual Career Orientation Day; which we are planning to do so. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the event this year due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Nonetheless, FASoS organized an Online UM Alumni Week. However, the insufficient range of courses that offer a training of skills that are valuable and important for professional life remains as a problem. During a meeting with the incoming Dean of Education a proposal has been made to potentially solve this

problem by designing a course which combines academic skills elements with professional training and available across the BA programmes.

In the upcoming academic year, this point will be a big part of our Annual agenda. We will seek to continue this discussion with the Faculty Board and the Programme Directors of all the FASoS BA programmes.

Cum Laude

The reform of the Cum Laude regulation of FASoS have been part of the Student Representatives agenda for the last three years. This year, the programme directors proposed a change in the cum laude regulations, as specified in the Rules & Regulations for all BA programmes.

Currently, the regulations stipulate that a student graduates cum laude if:

- all exams are passed without any resit, and
- the unrounded and weighted average mark achieved is eight or higher, in addition to which no mark is lower than six, and
- the bachelor or master thesis is graded with eight or higher.

Progress: The programme directors suggested dropping the first of these criteria (requirement to pass all exams without any resits), as it places unreasonably hard consequences on a student missing out on a single exam chance early on in their studies, without any possibility of compensation, regardless of how excellently a student is performing throughout their studies. Without this clause, the criteria for gaining a 'cum laude' would still be high, especially compared to many international universities, but the designation might be attainable to more of our graduates, which would potentially improve their academic and professional chances.

All members of the OMT agreed with this proposal thus it is currently revised by the FASoS Board of Examiners.

Remark: While the Student Representatives highly agree with the programme directors to change to the current model of zero resits we suggest furthermore that an alternative model of Cum Laude should be considered. During an OMT meeting in the upcoming academic year (2020/2021) we will present a proposal that suggests a model of two forms of Cum Laude, Magna and Summa.

his would be a new addition to the faculty. It would be for students who fail courses multiple times but still achieve a GPA of 8 or higher. This way students who still achieve an 8 or higher but have more resits than allowed are still rewarded. Thus, making their C.V. more attractive to future employers or master's Programme's. This dual system of Cum Laude is evidently not a new one but one that could make FASoS students who have demonstrated academic excellence more employable in the future, which would benefit both the students and the faculty.

Course Registration Procedure

The course registration process has caused several problems for many students over the past years. This has been brought to the attention of the faculty at numerous points during the last three years. Unfortunately, no solution has been found. The issue is twofold. First, the approachability of the course registration process: Even though there were taken several steps to allow a general guidance (e.g

instructions, information of registration deadlines via e-mail), the process, especially for first year students still caused insecurity (e.g people register but are somehow not on the course list) mostly because of its guise. Thus, requests for an improvement of the processes approachability and accessibility were raised.

However, secondly, a much deeper problem are the consequences that result out of this confusing process. For example, recently students find out that they are not registered for a course at the publication date of the timetable – to register for a course then is impossible. In most cases this results in a study delay.

Progress: This year, the issues were raised during an OMT meeting within a wider discussion regarding the digitalization policy. As there is going to be a transition from ELEUM to CANVAS the Student Representatives stressed the importance of a simplification and moderation of the process and its consequences. They moreover suggested that issues like the latter should be considered in the creation of a digitalization policy.

Multiple suggestions have been made regarding possible simplifications of the course registration procedure design. (e.g within the possibilities of a University/Faculty App). The MarCom-team of the Student Representatives has further been of great help in rising awareness of deadlines regarding registration through social media posts and the distribution of flyers and the set-up of signs throughout tutorial rooms.

However, the consequence of a potential study delay, which results out of a hardly visible and confusing registration process and the token process, remains an issue. Throughout the last academic year (2019/2020) the Education Working Group of the SR, has addressed this matter several times in different meetings.

Furthermore, in the Education Working Group of the SR FASoS conducted a short survey among students and contacted all UM faculties to obtain a sense on how the courses registration procedure is organized at different faculties. The Education Working Group wanted to find out which *difficulties experience the students the most across faculties when registering for a course; and what are the consequences and options for those who missed the deadline for registration or cancellation.* The results of the survey confirmed that students mostly experience difficulties in relation to the outdated and not user-friendly interface and criticized the lack of possibility to register using smartphones.

With regards to the consequences of missing the registration deadline the majority of the students mentioned the possibility of asking the education helpdesk to register them through the use of one of the two tokens. While students on the one hand signaled awareness of a delayed graduation as a consequence in the event of missing a deadline and having no further option to register, on the other hand some mentioned that they are not aware or suggested that the course is automatically failed without other available options. This might signal about lack of available and unified information on course registration procedure.

Remark: As we see this as a significant issue in the faculty, and a major source of stress for students, this point will remain as a high priority working point in our agenda for the upcoming academic year. We will:

- Continue the evaluation of the other course registration procedures of the other faculties.
- Set up a meeting or use OMT with all responsible stakeholders to discuss the ideas of the Student Representatives: design of the course registration procedure in a way that would allow students to (de)register for courses even after the publication of the timetable, availability of more tokens,

The overall aim thereby should be to come up with ideas on how to improve the current course registration model or design an alternative model which avoids the consequences that result out of the strict set deadlines of course (de)registration.

Digitalization at FASoS

Lecture Recordings

In an age of digitalization and transforming learning and teaching methods, e-learning creates possibilities to strengthen the education at FASoS. Throughout the last years specifically the demand for lecture recordings has not subsided. In a changing study environment, students from all FASoS programs emphasized that the ability to re-listen/re-watch a lecture could aid them greatly in preparation for a course as well as studying in general.

We believe that there are also significant "Diversity & Inclusivity" issues attached to the digitalization of education at FASoS. We recommend that these are taken into consideration as many students (e.g. students with physical mobility restrictions, students who work, students with caring responsibilities) may greatly benefit from the online availability of FASoS lectures.

Progress: In October 2019 the Student Representatives presented multiple arguments in favor of the implementation of lecture recordings at FASoS to the Faculty Council. Counter arguments/responses mainly regarded possible negative effects on study behavior (e.g lack of attendance) or privacy violations. During the meeting a proposal for a (voluntary) pilot project was made. It suggested small-scale video or audio recordings within one course per program to gather reliable data regarding perception, additional costs, attendance etc. Such a pilot project would not only help to become familiar with the technology that is needed but it would also contribute to manage and minimize risks and make adjustments to prevent and implementation from failure. Even though an implementation of lecture recordings has been rejected for this year, the proposal for a pilot project was received positively by the Faculty Council members and promised to be taken into consideration with a note towards the planned implementation of a comprehensive digitalization policy.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a large number of digital learning possibilities have been made available. We recommend that these are critically evaluated before returning to the "offline normal" format of FASoS education.

Remark: The aim is to maintain a continuous communication between Student Representatives and Faculty Council regarding the comprehensive digitalization policy as it maintains broad consequences for other issues that are included in this evaluation as well.

E-Learning at FASoS

As stated in previous years the Student Representatives consider it as not useful to focus solely on the recording lectures but to examine the possibility of web-based learning at FASoS in a holistic way.

The Student Representatives achieved an increase of the Budget for E-learning and the renewal of a Faculty working group in the 2017/2018 academic year, thereby setting an emphasis on the possibility for bottom up approaches to web-based learning. While these are important steps towards rethinking the education at FASoS and pose possible ways to improve the education at FASoS by deploying web-based activities, concrete results have yet to be achieved.

With the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic web-based education and related activities are no longer an aspiration but became a necessity. Especially throughout the last month students and staff have experienced the weaknesses and strengths of purely web-based education.

Progress: The Student Representatives will support the *FASoS Support Team Online Teaching & Learning* which recently has been established to guarantee the quality and administration of education also throughout the upcoming academic year. It will not only assist staff's upcoming teaching preparations in times of COVID-19 but will also look at the best ways in which to support students' online learning.

Remark: A cornerstone still seems to be to connect web-based education to the core principles of PBL: Self-directed, contextual, constructive, collaborative. Questions like how tutors should teach in an online setting or how to engage and actively let students take more control in an online setting demand that specific goals are set up and an overall strategy is being created, and specific responsibilities are assigned.

Evaluation of PBL/Teaching at FASoS

Within the last year the education working group has set itself the task, to make sure that the quality of PBL not only maintains but also increases. At the heart of our education and an important factor for the satisfaction of students, a continuous monitoring and rethinking of PBL is important if we want to live by our slogan 'leading in learning'.

Progress: In this academic year the Student Representatives were invited to take part in the PBL training for new tutors at FASoS to provide input from the side of the students on best practice examples, the role of the tutor in tutorial meetings, as well as advice regarding group dynamics, among others. In light of the PBL training, the Student Representatives have compiled a report indicating key-points that have been identified as critical in enhancing quality of the PBL training experience and proposed a few recommendations regarding possible improvements in the fields of structure, organization and content. The report has been sent to the Associate Dean of Education and the Mirko Reithler. A number of our recommendations have been put to use for the upcoming tutor trainings.

In the recent turn of events however, it was felt that PBL as a teaching instrument and method is sometimes difficult to implement in an 'online setting.' Discussions with staff members and personal experience from the last months reportedly showed that online teaching requires a lot from tutors. It is felt that students tend to rely on the tutor and engagement in a topic is limited much more than in usual tutorial settings, as participation often is based on content in the form of key concepts. It has been argued that current conversations around online education circulates mainly around course design (how a course is set up in terms of the outline, material, etc.). As been stated under the point "E-learning at FASoS" it is now the question on how to best connect the ongoing web-based education to the core principles of PBL: Self-directed, contextual, constructive, collaborative.

Follow-up:

Together with the *FASoS Support Team Online Teaching & Learning*, which includes two of our members, it is necessary to link the evaluation of PBL-tutor trainings to the web-based teaching and

learning in the upcoming academic year and examine future possibilities for the application and improvement of PBL.

Resit Procedure

The current resit procedure (that coincides with regular exam weeks) a great point of dissatisfaction within the student population; a sentiment that was very clear in last year's NSE results. Currently the resits are taken at the same time with regular exams. This planning can not only lead to students ending up in a downward spiral failing the exam of the next period due to the time spent on the resit of the previous period it also creates more work for tutors having to correct more exams.

Progress: The initial idea was to reduce the stress of exam time, through the implementation of two separate resit weeks per year outside of established exam periods. For example, in mid-February, after period three and June after period five. Unfortunately, after a discussion within an OMT meeting, it was concluded that such a plan is not feasible. Within the current semester, we considered possible alternatives for the resit planning. The Student Representatives agreed with the Programme Directors to schedule the resits for Period 1, in the academic year 2020/21, in the first week of January (except closed MECC exams) and in shortly before Christmas (closed exams only). The Student Representatives further suggested to place Period 3 resits in the fifth-sixth week of Period 4 instead of the first. However, this remains an open issue.

Remark: This point will remain on our agenda for the upcoming academic year. We will

- Set up meeting with all responsible stakeholders (Dean of Education and Programme Directors) or use OMT to discuss resit planning again in September as well as once more format of the implementation of anticipation/reflection weeks.
- Monitor if students are more satisfied with the new scheduling.

Feedback to students

One of the greatest points of dissatisfaction amongst the student population at FASoS is the quality, quantity, consistency and accessibility of feedback given by tutors regarding the students work. The feedback that students receive, is very dependent on the tutor. While some assessors provide sufficient feedback and/or justification for the given grade, others provide minimal or no feedback. Further the form of the feedback is inconsistent (e.g handwritten, then scanned, which makes feedback hardly readable; J-drive, Student Portal). Students value feedback highly as it plays a vital role in their learning process and can act as a valuable basis for their academic improvement.

Progress: The issue was raised in several OMT meetings over the last three years. However, a proposal created by the Student Representative to standardize the feedback process (including the implementation of standard feedback and assessment forms which can be adapted to each course) with the goal to guarantee at least a minimum feedback for each student, was not adopted with the argument that each course is unique. Nevertheless, it was proposed by the Programme Directors of ES to design a form that students could use to react to given feedback, requiring them to argue where and why they disagree with given feedback and/or a justification for the given grade. The implementation of such form is reviewed by the different Programme Directors.

In a recent meeting with the Dean of Education the Student Representatives were informed that with a transition to CANVAS, in the future only the CANVAS grade center is to be used by tutors to grade and to give feedback. This way would guarantee standardization and a consistent format of feedback to students work.

Remark: We will continue working on the implementation of this solution in the upcoming academic year.

DIAS WORKING GROUP

The working group Diversity, Integration, Accessibility and Sustainability (DIAS) is responsible for a broad spectrum of issues that occur within the faculty working to increase capability. Issues we deal with range from the facilities available in our faculty -such as the common room- or the accessibility for people with disabilities to the buildings to the ratio of domestic/foreign students and the practice of an overall sustainable environment. We are closely connected to and often meet with the Facilities Manager of the faculty as well as the diversity manager, and it is our job to form a link between the students and the staff that deal with these subjects. It is our goal to create the best facilities possible by improving the inclusivity and sustainability of the faculty, ensuring accessibility to all students, and enhancing diversity of our faculty.

Enhancing and implementation of sanitary products

After having successfully installed boxes of sanitary products in the bathrooms during the previous academic year, we are continuing and enhancing this implementation of accessible menstrual products in bathrooms for men and women. We have an ongoing process of the 'Take one, Leave one' policy, in which we encourage students to replace the sanitary products that they use, hence creating the environment of helping the community of FASoS and working together to achieve it. The students and staff members of FASoS have shown great appreciation for our initiative. In fact, it has been used as a best practice example by the UM Diversity & Inclusivity Office and Student Organisations in the Netherlands and beyond.

However, there seem to be issues of these boxes being removed, as well as getting wet and moldy. Additionally, we face the problem of lack of replacements by students, possibly due to forgetfulness or the boxes not being as easily accessible, as the students would have to go out of their way to remember the bathroom where they used the sanitary product simply to replace it.

Proposals: To solve the above issues, we have proposed the idea to put up semi-permanent holders with boxes onto the bathroom walls to prevent certain issues (such as moldy boxes) from occurring in the future. This can either be through using screws to attach the boxes to the walls, or by attaching suction cups to secure them to the wall. Additionally, command strips could be a cheap and simple option. This is being discussed with the FASoS facilities manager.

Progress: The proposals, after having been sent to the facilities manager, had some changes that needed to be made. Further implementation of the advice and changes shall take place once the university physically re-opens.

Study Spaces

There is a high demand for an increase in the number of study spaces or common rooms for students to mingle and study, similar to Banditos - which continuously reaches its full capacity - or the common room in 76 - which is shared along with SBE students. However, we have experienced problems in finding a free room with enough space and easy accessibility.

Proposals: Our initial proposal was to use the attic in GG80-86, but we were later informed of its limited capacity: only a maximum of 50 people are allowed in there at any time. This location is no longer under consideration.

We have been persistent on acquiring the SterCollege and have brought up this idea with the faculty board. This is an idea that still needs to be put into motion and will only be possible once the university re-opens.

Progress: We have achieved minor progress and also have come across multiple hurdles in this ongoing process. We now know that the common room belongs solely to the FASoS students. We also know that the UM D&I Office is in the process of creating a new accessibility policy for the entire University, including a new and improved version of the accessibility options which was presented to us at the February 19th 2020 DIAS meeting. Additional information of the outcomes in this meeting (with regard to accessibility) will be addressed below. We believe this issue is of high importance and hope for further progress towards finding a viable solution in the nearest future.

Remark: In light of the current circumstances, this issue will not be on our agenda for the upcoming academic year; at least not to the same extent. However, we will resume our action on this matter during the 2021/2022 academic year.

Accessibility to the faculty for persons with disabilities

All the buildings at FASoS are quite difficult to access for people with physical disabilities. However, due to the protection of the historic buildings, the legal procedures, and the costs to be endured, it has become clear that such measures would be too complicated to implement.

The Student Representatives are regarding this issue as highly important in the improvement of the faculty learning environment, by making it accessible to everyone.

A meeting with Facilities Manager and Diversity Manager of FASoS resulted in the decision to create a proposal for accessibility improvement within the faculty. After a walkthrough of the current facilities with the Facilities Manager, we determined a number of short and long term implementations for the improvement of accessibility. These will be outlined next.

Short term:

The short term goals are ones that can be achieved with relatively low financial cost. These include:

- Hanging hooks in the bathrooms placed at heights of easier access for wheelchair users as well as people that require sacks for urination.
- Placement of computers and printers in faculty buildings (such as GG 80-82) at a lower height, so that students in wheelchairs can utilize them.
- Additionally, having signs near the printers to inform users that the screens can be tilted down will help.
- The wheelchair-accessible ramp at 80-82 should meet the appropriate slope and angle requirements set by national standards. (Maximum slope for hand-propelled wheelchair ramps should be 4.8 degree angle; 8.3% grade, and 7.1 degree angle; 12.5% grade for power chairs.)
- Adding more maps of bathroom, elevator, and exit locations for students and staff members.

Long term:

- Replacement of entrance doors.
 - o Currently entrance doors are overall much too heavy for wheelchair users to open, and many have ledges that make entering them impossible.
 - o The double doorways typically only have one door unlocked, and it would provide more space for a wheelchair to continue if both doors had the opening function.
 - o We suggest automatic doors as a solution, with the front office door and the entrance door at 80-82 being the main priority.
- Desks and Chairs
 - o Many of the desks in the faculty are too high for wheelchair users, as well as the front office reception.
 - o The setup in the Turnzaal is small in both seating and desk size, and mostly caters for right-handed people.
 - o It is practically unusable by wheelchair users and people with kinetic problems.
 - o It is not usable for people of non-standard sizes (e.g. height, weight, etc.)
- Emergency Exits
 - o Currently there is no information about existing emergency exits, which is a hazard for all people, regardless of kinetic ability.
 - o We suggest updating the information points, and adding new ones for people with mobility constraints.
- Elevators & Stairs
 - o Building GG 76 lacks an elevator, GG 86 has no wheelchair lift, and GG 76 S has an elevator out of order.
 - o We understand that this is a major topic with regards to maintaining the architectural integrity of FASoS as a historic building, however, we wish to provide equal access to all members of the FASoS community, so we request a reconsideration of the current design.
- General
 - o The parking lot is only accessible to faculty, which makes the building hard to access for students with kinetic issues.
 - o We would like to request a pass to be issued to those who need it.
 - o Additionally, there are metal poles on the pathway from the parking lot that make it inaccessible for wheelchair users, so we request to remove these.
 - o Finally, the inability for wheelchair users to access Banditos, the GG 86 common room, and the garden area limits what we consider to be a vital part of the FASoS student and staff experience, so redesign ideas here are also welcome.

Remark: These review the general points brought up in the proposal as split into what we believe to be achievable categories, based on time frame and budget. These issues will remain as a top priority on our agenda for the upcoming academic year.

Accessibility of the Turnzaal

It has come to our attention that there are dissatisfactions amongst students regarding the ease and comfort of being able to attend lectures at the Turnzaal. Students found the combination of the attached chair and table to be rather restrictive in terms of space, and extremely inconvenient for left-handed people, wheelchairs users, and people of not-straight sizes.

The combination of the attached table and chair was a sudden change in the faculty, without any consultation of the student representatives or students – who are, in fact, the end users. Soon, we received negative feedback from the students and a number of faculty staff members about the new furniture, and proceeded to brainstorm solutions, in addition to creating a list of what people find inconvenient, taking all their complaints into account.

Proposal: We decided to create a survey asking students for their views and opinions on the current situation of the Turnzaal furniture, to receive a well-rounded understanding of what the students want, since they are the end users of the Turnzaal. We brought this issue up with the facilities manager, as well as the faculty board.

Progress: We have succeeded in bringing back a couple of units of the old furniture to the Turnzaal, but have not changed it all completely. We are still working toward any other developments that we can make to improve the situation further.

Decoration of tutorial rooms

We have proposed the beautification of tutorial rooms through the curation of artwork to make it more interesting and inviting for students to come and study. Particularly, the idea is to make sure that any kind of artwork (including but not limited to: excerpts, quotes, pictures, maps, and paintings) that goes up onto the tutorial room walls has some sort of relation to what is studied at FASoS.

Proposals: During the second semester of this academic year, we organised an event in the form of a “photography walking tour”, namely a guided tour for students and staff in and around the city centre of Maastricht, aimed at taking multiple photos that portray the historic architecture, character, landmarks and landscapes of the city we inhabit.

Furthermore, the aim was to photograph the FASoS buildings and its social focal points. This will result in great engagement and interactions amongst students, hence intersecting with the diversity strand as well.

Remark: Due to the current circumstances, the event was cancelled. In the case that the COVID-19 crisis measures are sufficiently eased by the second semester of the next academic year (i.e. April 2021), we will re-start the organisation of this event.

Points for further Enhancement of Diversity and Inclusivity at FASoS

For DIAS, the multicultural aspect of Maastricht University makes diversity of utmost importance. We have also thought of enhancing and showcasing the numerous cultures present in the faculty and Maastricht as a whole.

Diversity & Inclusivity Survey

For 2020, a survey was supposed to be carried out by the Diversity Office of the University. Unfortunately, this was delayed due to the cyber attack and Covid19. This survey was set to give students the opportunity to provide feedback and any inputs on what they would like to see more of in the university.

The point of contact for this survey is the UM Diversity Officer, who we offered to help in the distribution of the survey. The results can be available for the student representatives, to better understand the concerns and issues in FASoS, and in Maastricht University as a whole. This could be seen as the start of a long-lasting relationship, in which student representatives share their concerns and advice with the Diversity Office, and vice versa.

In fact, there are a number of initiatives and projects that are happening across the board, in order to utilise resources and not conflict effects, we recommend being aware of these projects.

Inclusivity Students in Maastricht

DIAS whilst focused on FASoS, seeks to draw and connect with initiatives that are UM wide, for the wellbeing of students and benefit the FASoS community in Maastricht.

We have been in contact with multiple groups around Maastricht, for the possibility of an event at a later stage. Any plans for such an event were postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Representation of different perspectives

At FASoS many subjects include feminist and postcolonial perspectives in the literature. These efforts are important. DIAS consider the necessity to give more importance to these different perspectives essential. Sometimes these end up overshadowed by the prevalent, Western perspective. For this reason, we thought the creation of a list of relevant material could be provided to all students, giving information about how students can find and access the different articles and books or professors they can speak to. This could be considered a first step, which could be extended in the future.

To do so, the individual Course Coordinators should be contacted and coursebooks accessed and consulted. In fact, the individual courses are not open to all students, and this can limit the number of students which become aware of the different perspectives. It is a pity when the efforts made to diversify the programmes and represent different perspectives in a more equal and democratic way are simply overlooked, falling behind the dominant perspective we are more used to seeing in Western academia.

Remark: The issue of diversifying the FASoS curriculum is high on our agenda for the upcoming academic year. A strategic plan will be set out to improve the diversity of perspectives presented to FASoS students throughout their studies at the BA and MA level.

One of our members, PC ES year 2 representative Michele Dalla Rosa, is involved in a D&I Grant Project which is concerned with diversifying the language of course books (i.e. using gender neutral language, and not having all characters in PBL scenarios named *Jan* and *Marieke*). His experience in this project will be put to use on our work as well.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

The Marketing and Communications internal working group (MarComm) has enjoyed great success, despite an unfortunate cancellation of the planned Faculty Drinks and Spring Ball (both organized in cooperation with So FASoS) and the organized Photo Walk as well as the disruption of other potential events. Naturally, the events of the second semester of this academic year have affected our work significantly. Still, we have found new ways to communicate with the student body of FASoS.

Marketing of the Student Representatives

Business Cards

Found a sustainable marketing method through the approved proposal of business cards, which can be reused each year by the Student Representatives in order to gain visibility and increase accessibility in contacting the representatives.

Remark: This action is on standby until the Faculty reopens regularly in the future.

Visibility Campaigns

In order to increase the visibility of the SR, for the first time we organised planned marketing campaigns, separated into Monthly Campaigns and Awareness Campaigns. Monthly campaigns sought to bring student-related information to FASoS students, including fitness and budgeting tips. Awareness Campaigns addressed the goals of increasing visibility of the Student Representatives, as well as accessibility to FASoS Infrastructure - for example encouraging for student voices to be heard through filling out the IWIOs. Visibility has also been generated through the publishing of team photos on social media, so that students might recognize their representatives around campus and feel comfortable approaching or contacting them if needed.

Meeting Updates

Since the previous academic year (2018/2019), the SR have kept an active communication with the student body of our Faculty by providing regular updates from our committee meetings. Of course, this is done in cooperation with each committee. This is done to inform the students of the actions being taken in Faculty committees where students are represented (e.g. OMT, or the Programme Committees).

Remark: This has been well received by the students. We will explore how we can increase such communications in the upcoming academic year.

Social Events

In the first semester of this year, we increased cooperation with the (faculty) study associations. This has included more communication with So FASoS in the planning and marketing of Faculty Drinks, the Spring Ball, and a Quarantine pub quiz. However, there are certainly many more opportunities for work with other associations - already evidenced by the invitation of Outlook China, and several student magazines to attend faculty drinks.

Due to the cancellation of all social events for the second semester, our team was not able to hold more events in person. However, this has instead encouraged the organization of an online quarantine quiz using both the @So.FASoS and @StudentRep Instagram accounts which had a turn out of over 130 participants!

CAREER DAY PLANNING GROUP

Career Day 2020

Unfortunately, this event was cancelled in response to the COVID-19 lockdown. Prior to the decision to not carry out the event, our team had organised the attendance of 18 FASoS Alumni representing almost all BA and MA programmes at FASoS.

The Future of the FASoS Career Day

After three successful years of our Career Day, and in response to the request of students for more employability related actions, we have decided to take this project a step further. In order to cater to more students throughout the academic year, and to ease the planning of one massive event, our team has decided to plan three smaller events each year instead. These events will be organised according to sector themes (e.g. Politics, Development, Arts, Media etc.) and will follow the same (or a similar) format as the Career Day: i.e., alumni, workshops, and networking. For the 2020/2021 academic year, all three events will take place virtually.

From the upcoming academic year onwards, the Career Day Planning Group will be reinvented as the Employability Working Group. This group will organise the three Career Days and will tackle employability-related issues in our year plan. For instance, the improvement of internship support at FASoS, and the creation of additional opportunities for the training of professional skills.



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