

BETREFT

Agenda Meeting FB / ODC / FSR BETA

DATUM

10 October 2024

LOCATIE

W&N F503 en Teams

Tijd

15.10 – 16.30

GENODIGDEN / AANWEZIGEN

ODC Bèta:

Ivo van Stokkum (vz), Anton Feenstra, Els Ufkes, Yves Bollen, Paul Jennings, Ad van Dommelen, Gwenn van den Brink, Christian Bick, Trynke Hoekstra, Priyanka Rao-Ruiz, Meike van den Beuken

Toehoorder / auditor:

Anne Linnartz, Brecht Reintsema

FB:

Aletta Kraneveld, Esther van Hengel, Johan Gemser, Maaïke Verbree, Judith ten Brink (HRM), Mareanne Karssen, Pieter van Beukering, Iwan de Esch

FSR Bèta:

Brothin Choudhury, Jasmine Chen, Annelie Mars, Erika Kulic, Sree Balaji, Alexandru Mititelu, Cassandra Budai, Debdutta Guha Roy

Notulist / Minutes:

Xavier van de Kastele

1	Agenda	Bijlagen/Attachments
	Opening and adopting agenda	1. Agenda FGOV 10 October 2024
2	Minutes and announcements	
2.1	Notulen / Minutes FGOV	2.1 Draft minutes FGOV 3 September 2024 One remark by the ODC is that Gwenn van den Brink is still on the attendees. She is no longer active and can be removed. Further they want to share that Marie Louise had to resign she is no longer active in the work council.
2.2	Notulen / Minutes FB	No remarks.
2.3	Notulen / Minutes AHO	No remarks.
2.4	Mededelingen / announcements	The FB announces, there will be nationwide demonstration by the universities on November 14th, exact times and location are undetermined. The university stimulates students and employees to be present. They stress on the fact this will have impact on the activities on campus and everybody is encouraged to have close contact with each other regarding these activities. We are waiting on central communication from the VU about what and how to communicate this with the students. Also, there is a strike planned by the students the 17th of October, against the "langstudeerboete" (Long-study penalty).
3	Strategie	Bijlagen/Attachments
3.1	Bijsturingsmaatregelen	The ODC explains that for the functioning of the employee participation, it is important that information is received on time, which has not been going well recently. Contact has been made with Aletta for some urgent questions, for which answers have already been provided. A clarification is requested for the employee meeting of earth sciences on June 8th, where confusion arose regarding the use of the word "reorganization," and later communications did not provide clarity. What exactly is the status, and what are the next steps? There is a lot of communication happening at different levels, and everything is becoming mixed up. The FB acknowledges the complexity of the reorganization process, which has been initiated following recognition from the CvB. Committees have been formed to find solutions, and financial arrangements for departments have been explored, though a separate process was needed for Earth sciences. They are awaiting clear communication from central authorities to inform faculties and services about upcoming changes. Earth sciences has already started an exploratory committee to assess the department's future. The FB cannot disclose details from the exploratory committee's report, which presents five potential scenarios for the future. The Executive Board (CvB) will make the final decision on these scenarios. While the existence of the report has been communicated to the management team, upcoming strategy sessions are planned for next Monday and Tuesday. Originally

		<p>intended to focus on strategic priorities, it was decided that including Earth Sciences would be too ambitious at this stage. Instead, the focus is on developing soft skills and addressing a budget shortfall of €14 million out of a total €26.7 million, which won't be resolved before the 2025 budget. The aim of the sessions is to foster collaboration and open discussion to strengthen the faculty.</p> <p>The ODC observes that department heads, often prioritize their own departments during challenging times, which can create tension and competition. This issue became more evident in July as tensions increased. The ODC stresses the importance of focusing on the human element, as past experiences show that unmanaged competition can lead to conflict. To address this, Trinke has suggested adding a junior staff member from the operational team, aiming to create a more balanced dynamic and improve trust. This approach has already been implemented in Health Science.</p> <p>The FB looks forward to incorporating fresh perspectives from younger staff during the upcoming strategy sessions. They emphasize the importance of department heads actively listening to their employees' input.</p> <p>The ODC notes that some department heads have less rapport with certain individuals, particularly with departments that do not work together harmoniously. Just as students are involved in the FGOV, this involvement should also happen within departments. As department heads, they do not always have a clear view of what is happening in the operational side. The ODC believes that efforts should be made to invest in culture and collaboration, seeing this as a positive step.</p> <p>The FB recognizes that many issues in the process go unaddressed and aims to encourage a broader perspective among staff to focus on the faculty's future and funding. They hold regular meetings on this topic, though department heads may not be as engaged. The FB plans to reintegrate department heads into financial discussions soon.</p> <p>The FB cannot provide a clear answer on the timeline for the strategy sessions. The difference in pace between the VU and the faculty is difficult to estimate. Theoretically, it could align with the same timeline, but this is also dependent on external factors, which may require adjustments.</p> <p>The ODC emphasizes the importance of making Earth Sciences feel separately included in the process. The FB responds that their approach changed after discussions with the AHO and acknowledges receiving questions about Earth Sciences. The ODC notes that there are ongoing discussions between VU and Twente about potential collaboration, including a joint Earth Sciences program. The FB explains that a previous assessment concluded that Twente could not host the program due to entry requirements. A new preliminary exploration with Twente is now underway to explore further possibilities for collaboration.</p>
4	Onderwijs / Education	Bijlagen/Attachments
4.1	Onderwijs / Education	<p>The FB explains there is now a decline of 34% in bachelor students and a 6% decline in master students.</p> <p>They elaborate that they are in a period of realization. Discussions were held with all 40 programs, and assignments were carried out. In turn, they processed these, and we are now having meetings and discussions. The result is that we have arrived at leaner and more efficient programs and portfolios. The merger of programs takes more time and decisions. However, decisions within programs are easier to implement.</p> <p>Furthermore, the FB wants to emphasize that it is important not to have competing departments or faculties. Improvement should not come at the expense of others.</p>

		<p>The FB acknowledges that, in order to achieve a more efficient, leaner, and streamlined faculty, programs and portfolios will require tough decisions, such as staff reductions.</p> <p>The FB further explains that the directive from the VU to explore new markets is not a viable option for the faculty in a declining market.</p> <p>The FB's response to the ODC's questioning of the SOZ is that all services, including the SOZ, are being considered, as every service within the VU is expected to reduce costs.</p> <p>In response to the ODC's question about whether people with a handicap are also regarded as "Onbekostigde studenten"(Unfunded students) the FB explains that they had not considered this connection and will take it into account. Additionally, they clarify that the term refers to students who are pursuing a second master's degree or those who take more time to complete their program. Lastly, they note that the break-even point for master's programs is lower.</p>
4.2	Hiring freelancers for thesis supervision.	<p>The FB acknowledges that the issue had previously been on the agenda. They state that this would only be permitted in cases where there is a shortage, preventing students from finishing their studies, and that the final assessment should be done internally. The FB is not aware that in some programs, freelancers are involved in the sign-off process, and they emphasize that intervention is necessary if this happens.</p>
4.3	Harmonize internship guidelines	<p>The ODC questions the ongoing process, noting that it has been discussed in the FGOV and in onstage harmonization meetings. They ask if there is an update, expressing frustration over the interpretation of basic terms. The ODC mentions that they will contact Pieter about this matter.</p> <p>The ODC clarifies that these processes are labor-intensive, but it is important for people to understand their roles, even when roles change. They emphasize that time and attention are needed for individuals to adjust, as only then can the true bottlenecks be identified.</p>
5	Bedrijfsvoering / Business operations	Bijlagen/Attachments
5.1	Housing (only when there are updates)	<p>The FB provides an update, stating that next week the neuroscience department will begin its move to the new research building. The FB will relocate to the HG in December, after which only the labs will remain in their current location. The ODC inquires whether the helpdesk and IT will also move.</p> <p>The FB confirms that they must move but expresses uncertainty about the details.</p> <p>The ODC anticipates a surge of problems, noting that the IT helpdesk will be busy when everyone transitions from desktop to laptop. They suggest that if several large departments are moving, it might be beneficial to have temporary helpdesk support available to assist with the transition. The ODC emphasizes that IT helpdesk employees should be present to provide assistance and states that they will bring this point up at the meeting tomorrow.</p>
6	Onderzoek / Research	Bijlagen/Attachments
7.	Valorisatie / Valorization	Bijlagen/Attachments

8	Overig, rondvraag en sluiting	Bijlagen/Attachments
		<p data-bbox="635 192 1460 320">The ODC inquires about how the VU is financing the Matrix building. The FB responds that it is a commercial building, so it is unlikely to be fully funded by the VU. They mention that there is currently an effort to streamline processes related to D-lab.</p> <p data-bbox="622 356 1444 483">The FB clarifies that the Matrix building will be situated next to their new building, and they need to consider the surrounding developments. They express confidence that those in power will take these factors into account and ensure that all necessary considerations are addressed.</p> <p data-bbox="635 524 1449 714">The FSR explains that their chair was denied an extension of her BSA and had to resign. A similar situation occurred last year with the previous council. The “Kiescommissie”(Selection committee) informed them that a new person needs to be found. However, they express that the current process is too burdensome. Therefore, they are seeking approval from the FGOV.</p> <p data-bbox="622 754 1406 815">Both the FB and ODC confirm that this will not be an issue and they can continue with a member less.</p> <p data-bbox="635 826 1406 920">The ODC explains that the UvA emailed their students and shared the budget plan, allowing for responses. They find this opportunity for “medezeggenschap” (participation) interesting and wanted to share it.</p> <p data-bbox="622 956 1465 1016">The FB notes that the UvA has significantly more supporting staff, suggesting that this may be an issue.</p>