

Minutes 256th FC meeting (ext)

Thursday April 25th 2024, 10:30 AM – 12:00 AM

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To-do list

Closing hours Mandeville building

LV: What is now the status of the closing hours of the Mandeville building. It was presented as a pilot to shorten the closing hours, but is this still a pilot phase?

SEC: I will pick it up with the director of operations, and if we have an answer in the meantime, I will inform you.

Scheduling lectures based on registered working hours

LV: Another point was about registering working hours in the HR system and whether it can be combined with the scheduling of lectures.

SEC: I will also take this to the director of operations.

Updates

Internationalization

DoF: I can update you a little bit on this.

A couple of things are going on. First of all, the language trainings are going quite well, so we had almost 30 people sign up, which is really a huge improvement from what we had.

I think we continue with this, so that means that we will do another run after summer, and we will talk with HR what that would look like. I guess that we will continue to the next level for the people that want to, and offer again a starting level for those that are interested in it.

Another thing is that there are plans to extend the notion of language training to create somewhat of a language community, so that we can do fun things in a group of people that do speak Dutch and don't speak Dutch, where everybody speaks Dutch during that evening. There, people can meet each other, cook together or have a game night together, and at the same time practice language. I am enthusiastic about it and once it happens, we'd come to you also for spreading the word and getting people to come there, because I think that's the challenge.

We haven't had a check-in on internationalization with the faculty since last time we discussed this, since other topics are also picking up in seriousness in the school. But it's good that it's on the agenda for us every time to remind us..

Recruitment of DoEN

LJ: I think we gave a positive advice, so we are just curious, everything is already official now for the DoEN

Dean: Now, in terms of Dean of Engagement, I received your positive advice, so thank you very much for that. As you know, this is a combined appointment also at the BV side, so I

also needed a formal advice from the Employee Council, which is now also in, and what we actually also need is a formal appointment through the shareholder of the BV in order to be able to position the new Dean of Engagement also within the one-tier board of the BV. I just received yesterday an informal consent on that as well, so that means that I'm trying to get out the announcement by the end of this week, which of course also depends on the candidates approving the text, and of course also agreeing with the terms of the appointment, but I don't see any issues there, so my guess is, that by the end of the week, or if all else fails, next week that we can announce the new Dean of Engagement.

Recruitment of Dean

DoF: The recruitment of the Dean is taking place and is led by the CvB. From our side, it's our Secretary and myself who have the initiative within RSM. At first, we discussed the profile with the chair of the CvB, the heads of departments, directors from professional service and EB members.

Regarding the different committees, our aim so far has been twofold.

One is that we would like RSM to have a prominent presence in any of the committees there to make sure that we have our say in who will become our Dean.

At the same time, it is important that we try to represent all the parts of our community in those committees, and that's not easy because we're a very complex school.

We have a faculty and employee council, we have the BV, we have the professional services, we have the academic departments, we have the EB. So, what we have done is we have created, eventually, three committees:

The first committee is a selection committee, containing six members: the Rector Magnificus, the Dean of ESE, the Dean of Erasmus Medical Center, and then we also have three people from RSM: Chief Operations Officer of RSM BV, the Dean of Research and they represent faculty, professional services, the EB and the BV side, and then we have a professor / head of department, also representing faculty.

Then we have an advisory committee that has six people, all from RSM, and we try to really make sure that professional services, BV, faculty, departments, everybody is getting involved.

And then we have the third committee, which is the committee that has to do with Faculty Council. Two people from the public side, faculty council, and someone from the Employee Council.

We have a meeting soon with the organizers of the entire process, where we want to safeguard the link between the school as a whole and the process. We really want to make this a transparent process where everybody understands what's going on at all times.

LV: What worries me is that we have not been approached yet on anything in this process.

CR: The secretary of the recruitment process asked me Tuesday, and she was under the assumption it was already been done. But then I found out that it's not been done. I will ask her to come back to you, because that is in the procedure.

LV: Okay, since also I saw the newsletter or on the internet, which says that in March the profile will be ready and in April and May we'll have the interviews.

DoF: I think what's important then is if you have any questions or you need something in the process or you need to know something or you want to schedule something, the easiest way to go is through our secretary and me. We have short lines there and that means if you need something or you're worried, reach out to us and we immediately reach out to the CvB and try to make sure that things run smoothly.

Tenure track

LJ: We have had the spring P&T, but we also we would like to hear some update on the educational track.

DoF: I think there's three things to discuss.

One of this is that we had two P&T sessions, both having four candidates. The education one was the more special one, because those were four candidates for the Associate Professor of Education. We have four new Associate Professors of Education in our school now, which amounts to five in total.

The second P&T we had was two weeks ago. It contained three midterm candidates and one candidate for Senior Lectureship. We have three tenured Assistant Professors in the school now, who will also receive the starter grant.

And we also have a new Senior Lecturer in the school.

As you know, we have set up the reviewing system for the P&T to see how are we dealing with things. We're meeting every month, I think every three weeks, to update the PMT and to come up with new improvements. One thing that we have decided in the light of one of the points that you gave earlier is that we created a two-year grace period. That means that the first four P&T rounds after this new system came into being, the people that did not get tenure at the midterm got a second chance afterwards at a moment of their choosing. So, if it turns out that we were too restrictive or something, there is at least a second chance for those people to make sure that they are not the victims of this system.

Question on cap per department

KR: Looking forward as there's more demand for the teaching track, will there be a cap per department or an aggregate target?

DoF: At this moment, we don't necessarily have caps. We have the tenure track system where it's clear that if you come in as an assistant professor, you're in a tenure track and there's a position for associate professor waiting. And either you get it or not, but the position is there. There is not a tenure track for the associate professor of education at this point yet, so there is the position, but there's not a tenure track towards it. That means that for every instance, the promotions work the same as they do with all other positions that we have in the school.

Every candidate should talk with their head of department to see whether there's an option. And the head of department will discuss it with me and with EB, and then we decide whether it is useful to have an associate professor of education. What we clearly don't want is that every single person in our school is an associate professor of education.

However, at this moment, we are very clearly not at that point. So far, I don't think there is a lot of resistance to getting those positions in many of the departments. At a certain moment, it could be the case that there will be a cap since there is a certain amount of these positions that we need as a school.

Question on promotion likelihood

LV: For senior lecturers and assistant professors that are already tenured, it looks like now there are career opportunities. It can also be very disappointing if later on it only means there's only one position in this department which we can fill. Those people could use a bit more clarity about the likelihood of getting it.

DoF: I think also a lot of these things don't really only have to do with these positions, but they have to do with the way we do our HR and R&O, in which we should be much more forward-looking. People should discuss with their supervisors their ambitions for the coming years and not for promotion next week. Then you can get feedback about whether there is a potential. That way, we can say whether there is something for you or not well in advance, but what I cannot say is that there's indefinite places and everybody can get one.

Question on equal resources for associate professors of education.

LV: Another point is that the regular research track associate professors have a lot of ERIM support programs, so we have a luxury position there. But I think it's, of course, also important for the other associate professors of the education track to have these resources.

DoF: It is clear that they need to, but indeed under current regulations, they don't always meet requirements for this to formally get this. We are looking into it to make sure that they do.

At the moment, it's not the case that if they want support, they cannot ask for it or they are always denied. We could have chosen to make sure that everything was arranged before I put this profile into existence. However, we have decided to put it into existence now to speed up everything else. We have tried to look into most of the things beforehand, but not everything, so we are hitting bones that we try to solve at the moment that we get to them. This is one of them, and we will solve it, but it takes some time to change policy.

LV: Are we talking about one year? Or more?

DoF: This year.

Faculty model

Parallel to the P&T's, we've also been looking at the governance and the organization of the project as a whole because it's not going fast enough to our liking. What we've done is we've got a project manager to the project now that works on it 20 hours a week. Together we've now created a very strong project governance system. This has now been at the EB, and it will go to the heads of departments and the faculty council as well.

It essentially works with a steering group and a number of working groups that are all supported by the project manager, policy writer, policy support, HR support, communication support. It follows normal project management logic, and I think that's a lot better. It also aligns with the EUR recognition and rewards. Diversity and Inclusion Office has a place in the project now as well. That proposal is going to come your way in one of the next meetings.

LV: One more question on the lecturers. Yesterday, the Dean of Faculty communicated in a meeting that we now have the opportunity to have tenured lecturers. I was just wondering how is it going?

DoF: We have quite a lot of contact with the heads of departments. And they are really looking at their lecturers and making informed decisions about whether they don't want to prolong contracts, whether they want a second temporary contract, or whether they want to go for a permanent contract. Those are very informed decisions, where HR also makes sure that the same procedure is followed. As a result, every now and then we make a decision to tenure a lecturer. It's very clear to the heads of departments now that this is an option. Every time a contract seems to expire, we have this discussion now.

Future proof

DFC: You are aware of the roadmap that we drew for the future proof plan. We have delivered that to the CVB and had some good discussions with them, providing more details on the what and how in that plan. We also are in very close contact with the senior leadership of RSM. We just had a meeting this week with them to discuss the current situation of the plan, but also the things that we are expecting based on the new figures from the Erasmus perspective.

And those figures are not as good as we hoped. On the contrary, we will receive less money than we expected for 2025. That gives some additional challenges. And to be honest, if I look forward to the year after 2025, those years won't be any better than the current situation. So that really underlines the necessity for a future roadmap and a future proof plan that we are setting up and making real choices in what we are going to do. We hope that we will come to the first larger decisions before the summer holiday, such that we know what will be coming at us at the second part of this year.

Question on reorganization

LV: So far, it was said that there won't be large re-organizations and a lot of firings of contacts. Do these new figures mean that there is no way out anymore without big reorganization?

DFC: No, at this moment, we are not looking at reduction in personnel. What we're saying is that we are trying to do this in an intelligent way, which might mean looking at workload as well. We need to make choices in how we can free up capacity within our educational system, but we also need to look at which services we want to provide within RSM. We are in discussion with EUR Central about which tasks can they take over.

Question on update on real numbers

LV: Can you give a little bit of an update on the real numbers now for 2023, 2024 and 2025.

DFC: 2023 was minus 2.7 million and that means that our current reserve position is minus 200.000 euro. We are now in the fourth month of 2024. I find it hard to give a prognosis for a year's end, but based on the budget and the adjustments that we made by the shorter measures, we will approximately be between 1 million and 2 million deficit for 2024. But it is based on the shorter measures that we took, so the 5% budget cuts for all departments. That was a non-intelligent way, because it doesn't change the way we do the things that we are doing.

LV: In our approval of the budget of 2024 we asked you to send us the bi-monthly updates that are going to the CvB as well.

DFC: I can send that immediately.

Question on Erasmus perspective

LJ: I also had a question with regards to the Erasmus perspective, because you said that it was less than expected. Why is it less than expected?

DFC: It was already announced last year that the government is paying less to universities, since the so called referentieramingen have been lowered. On university level that means that there is 90 million less than expected last year. And that tickles down to the departments of the services and to the faculties. This budget cut will increase, at least in the coming two years, from 90 million to 22 million to 30 million in 2027. It is up to the CvB and the deans to decide how to allocate this, but that makes it difficult for me, since the choices that they currently make might differ from their future choices.

LJ: So, you already heard last year that it was going to be less, but yet you were still negatively surprised by perspective. What changed in between that made the prognosis from the CvB back when you first heard about it different from what the result of perspective is now?

DFC: Last year it was announced that the government would cut back on the money, but they did not. The CvB then made the decision to not take that budget cut into account and that's what you see happening now. They told us that next year it would change, but the extent of that was not clear at the moment, so that's not taken into account in the figures of the Erasmus perspective of last year.

LJ: Do you have any idea of whether the way EUR Central will allocate the money is going to remain the same as it was or do you maybe foresee a change in it?

DFC: Two points there.

Changing the allocation system is not something that you do easily so that is a long process and that's something that they've been talking about for years.

Having said that, in the current year you still can make changes in the outcome of the allocation model and that's something that's being discussed at the deans level, so I'm not

part of that discussion but there can be a positive impact for RSM. However, that won't be to an extent that really helps solve our structural future proof problem

Dean: Two things. First of all, within the current allocation system the system works a bit like: you get in an amount of money and then you take off some money to do some central facility things then you take off a little more money to do some other things and then what is left goes to the faculties, which means that receiving less money especially hurts the faculties in the first instance.

There has been a discussion about this between the deans and the CvB and this has resulted already in redoing those calculations and therefore redistributing the money and to some extent also our pain for 2025.

The allocation model discussion is ongoing and I think it will continue to be ongoing, bringing both possibilities and threats. Of course, there is also discussion across the different faculties since they are not perfectly aligned as to which parameters should count most in terms of how you receive the money.

In a general sense I just want to re-emphasize that the deficit that we're facing and therefore also the challenges that we're facing are really serious. This is not something that we can just make go away by traveling a bit less or not doing lunches anymore. We really see a structural issue already now and the outlook will only increase those structural problems so we also need to come with structural solutions.

We're trying to do that intelligently, trying to reduce the harm coming from it but it becomes increasingly difficult to come up with solutions that do not really hurt. It is the awkward truth that we will be looking at measures that will make neither us nor anyone else happy. Certainly now science and education are not top priorities for the government, we need to prepare ourselves and the school to be able to be strong even though the first money stream may go down.

LV: How about the possibility that RSM has to pay back 4 million regarding the PMB issue, as mentioned in Erasmus Magazine?

Dean: The PMB was a program that we ran a number of years ago which was a program that came under scrutiny later on and indeed some of the former students filed complaints and actually went to court. We have been put in the right by judges in previous cases, but now it is with the highest court and there has been an advice of the Advocate General to the High Court about this situation in which the Advocate General actually takes a different position than the ones we have heard before which is more in favor of the students.

It might be that the High Court will rule along the lines of the Advocate General but it might also not be and then that would be the end of it. If they are going along with the Advocate General that would mean that the case would need to go back to a lower court to be redone with the possibility that they still stick to the old ruling.

If all goes in the wrong direction that could mean that there would be a claim from these students towards Erasmus University because that is the entity that is in court and then of course we would need to be in a discussion also with EUR Central about how to deal with any of the damages that might then occur. In that sense it is also a question of how to look

at an educational track that was there that was there not only on instigation of RSM but also with approval from the whole university.

. I am stressing that that would be a one-off payment, not something structural.

Using student evaluations as HR tool

LJ: We already had a meeting with the Dean of Education, in which a lot of questions were answered, but there were some questions that he couldn't answer due to his portfolio being education and not HR.

DoF: I've heard it and we discussed it with the Dean and the Dean of Education as well and we've all agreed that we are acting on it and we are extending the types of evaluations that we have. It should not always be only evaluations and I think there's lots of issues with evaluations.

What I can talk about now is whether and how we use this as HR tool. If we need to investigate it that's going to take a lot of time and I really wonder whether it's going to bring us anything. I think it's better to have a discussion on how and when these are used as HR tools. We have to distinguish them between a couple of things.

R&O's

One is regular R&O's. Second we have the promotions like the P&T and another point was also placement.

Regarding R&Os, we have a discussion on every single candidate and say how are things going. And the idea there is to see whether people have been already moving forward and performing well. In those discussions by and large we don't really talk about teaching evaluations all that much unless there is really a serious issue. And the reason for that is mainly because we all understand that there's many reasons why teaching evaluations might go down. We look at the broader picture instead.

In the discussions I have with heads of departments about all faculty members, very rarely do evaluations pop up as something problematic or very good. Sometimes they do and then it's usually a pattern of very low evaluations with a contextual perception of why that's the case and that's something problematic For instance, when we see that someone has a serious motivational problem, we see it in many things, including evaluations over the last couple of years. The same holds actually for awards, I hardly get to hear about them.

P&T

When it comes to the P&T and when it comes to the promotions, that's slightly different in the sense that it's much more visible. Clearly, we look at evidence and part of the evidence is evaluation. But if you look at the P&T files for instance, everybody needs to demonstrate what are the evaluations that he or she gets both for the course as well as personally. However, it is not as important as people might think. They do serve as an indicator of quality, but interpretation still plays a crucial role. In a P&T file you get all the evaluations of

all courses over large periods of time and the way we tend to look at it is: if by and large these are okay, it's fine. If it is low throughout, we might ask some questions.

For awards, this is different. We know that not everyone is eligible for awards and not everyone gets an award. So, we only look at awards in the sense that if people get them, we see it as a nice positive sign, but if they don't, that's not a negative sign in any way.

Placement

The third issue is the issue of placement and external, and this is more difficult because we don't control how people look at awards. That might be problematic in a sense because not everybody has equal chances on awards, and that's something to think about. At the same time, to me, I would never then think about reducing the number of awards or something like that because I do think that internationally it might actually help people. So if anything, I would stimulate getting awards also locally and in groups, and we tried to do that.

The thing about awards is that it's not just us. A lot of the awards that are out there are external awards that we do not control. We need to keep having the conversation and keep telling that they do not mean anything internally, but might help people get better placements outside.

So yes, we want to stimulate more unity in awards, but I really am doubtful whether we want to centralize this though. I don't think we want to do it, since I want to give the different departments the decision what to do there because it might also differ over different communities. I think in the strategy community, it might be more important than in the finance community.