



Faculty Council - Annual Report 2022-2023

1. Introduction

The participation of staff and students of the Faculty of Behavioral and Social Sciences is arranged through the Faculty Council, which meets ten times per year with the Faculty Board. In this annual report, the most important subjects that were discussed in the past year are arranged thematically. Only the most important themes will be discussed in broad terms. For more details, please refer to the minutes, which can be consulted on the Faculty's intranet.

2. Council Membership

In the period 2022-2023, the Faculty Council consisted of nine staff members and nine student members. Of the student members, all 9 were members of the PSB party. During this academic year, Anastasios Sarampalis was the chairman of the Faculty Council and the chairman of the staff section. Lars van der Lee was the vice-chairman of the Faculty Council and chairman of the student section.

Student Section: PSB

- Lars van der Lee (Psychology)
- Lisette Schuiling (AOLB)
- Anna Waldeck (Psychology)
- Dagmar Postema (Sociology)
- Salih Tatlicioglu (Psychology)
- Sabien Bootsma (Psychology)
- Sebastiaan Bensink (Psychology)
- Suske Huizinga (Psychology)
- Christianne Evasco (Psychology)

Staff section

- Anastasios Sarampalis (Psychology)
- Jaap Bos (Research support)
- Marjon Fokkens-Bruinsma (Teacher Education)
- Nina Hansen (Psychology)
- Jana Knot-Dickscheit (Pedagogical and Educational Sciences)
- Jolien Mouw (Pedagogical and Educational Sciences)
- Steffie van der Steen (Pedagogical and Educational Sciences)
- Christine Timmerman (SAS) She was replaced by Don van Ravenzwaaij in the Spring of 2023, as she stepped away from her position at the Faculty
- Ingrid Veenstra (Graduate School)

3. Meeting Schedule

The Faculty Council (FR) met eight times in the academic year 2022-2023. The meetings of November 2022 and January 2023 were canceled because no major discussion points had been scheduled. All meetings took place in person, on Faculty grounds (save for the September meeting which took place at a different location). Where necessary, members could attend online. At the start of the year, the language of the meetings was a point of discussion. It was agreed that English would be the default language and that, when necessary or desired, participants could contribute in Dutch. A simultaneous translator was present for such occasions.



4. Starting Grants

Starting grants for new faculty members were a consideration for the Faculty this year. These grants are designed to provide vital support to incoming academics, so they may establish a research programme. Key considerations include determining grant sizes, the allocation process (whether individuals or teams are awarded these grants), and clarification of the intended use of such funds. Budget constraints have necessitated a cautious approach to grant size, aiming to strike a balance between support and fiscal responsibility.

Regarding grant distribution, the Faculty Council has debated whether to award them individually or to groups, promoting both individual achievement and collaborative efforts among new faculty. Equally crucial is establishing clear guidelines for grant usage to ensure they contribute effectively to academic growth.

Anticipating new guidelines from the Minister of Education, the Faculty is poised to align these grants with forthcoming directives, maintaining alignment with national educational priorities.

During discussions, the Faculty Council expressed its support for these grants, though it acknowledged the intricate task of prioritising initiatives within budget limitations. Achieving equilibrium between competing priorities remains an ongoing challenge. The Council recognizes the importance of crafting a flexible, forward-looking policy that meets immediate needs while positioning the University of Groningen for sustained excellence in the future.

5. Quality agreements

As with every year, the quality agreements were a topic of discussion. In accordance with earlier agreements, more attention was to the personal and social development of students, more emphasis on progression in the education path and a firmer embedding of higher education in society. Particular attention was given to the following themes:

- Education intensity
- Student guidance
- Study success
- Educational facilities

Within these themes, the ongoing progress of various projects was discussed, such as educational innovation, activating and small-group education, teacher professionalisation, skills development (with particular attention on writing skills), academic success, employability, e-learning, and classroom space. In February 2023 the FB offered a memo on the progress on these themes and asked for the FR's opinion and feelings. This memo was discussed within the FR and with the FB and the FR offered its positivity for the progress of the quality agreements.

6. Tenure Track and Academic Career Policy

The FB continued with its work on developing a clear and sustainable policy with regards to the careers of academic staff at the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences. Already since June 2021, the FB mapped out a *Functiehuis Wetenschappelijk Personeel Faculteit GMW* with the aim of doing away with the current Tenure Track as a career system for academic personnel. In conjunction with the national and UG principles of the Recognition and Rewards initiative, the FB continued its efforts to revise promotion criteria (since there has been no new intake in the Tenure Track for some time), develop a Professor Plan that elucidates the disciplines and specialisations that should be present at the Professor level within the Faculty, and clarify the career development policies for academic staff who have an emphasis on education. Such efforts remain in progress.



The FC welcomed this work and expressed its eagerness to be an active participant in the earliest possible stages of development as well as its understanding of the urgency of the matter. It recognised the complexity of such a major revision in career policy and promoted the need for transparency and communication with a broad range of Faculty delegates to aid in the success of these efforts.

7. Co-Governance

In general, the FC is satisfied with the cooperation with the FB. As the end of the academic year coincided with elections for both the Student and Staff Groups, particular attention was paid at the fair compensation for all FC members, regardless of Department of job title. To this end, the FC submitted a memo in June 2023 with suggestions for improving the conditions of work of the FC, including paying attention to the number of meetings and the positioning of recurring topics in the FC agenda, for the timely availability of documents. In conjunction with this, it may be wise for the new FC members who start in September 2023 to consider making good use of any support funds available centrally for improving the quality of co-governance structures and for the FB to consider providing secretarial support for the FC.

The FR also wishes to express its appreciation to the FB for being open to organizing extra meetings for special topics (such as the discussion of the Faculty's budget) and inviting guests to the meetings (such as the Diversity and Inclusion officer of the Faculty).

8. Other Matters

a. Other subjects

In addition to the topics mentioned above, other points that were discussed during the past year included:

- The Health and Safety Progress Report
- The Results of the NSE
- Graduation regulations
- Diversity and Inclusion in the Faculty
- Education and Exam Regulations
- Social safety
- Housing policy
- The use of Sector Plan funds to enhance education
- Updated COVID-19 regulations

9. Closing word

In this report, the Faculty Council has set out the main topics of the council in the academic year 2022-2023. The council looks forward to shaping participation in decision-making in the faculty next year as well.

On behalf of everyone in the Faculty Council,

Anastasios Sarampalis (Chairman) and Lars van der Lee (Vice-Chairman)