

Second VeSte Party 1998-1999

The second faction of VeSte consisted of only two members. The Student Council Parties were not able to find more than twelve candidates for the elections in the spring of 1998, PSF had two seats, CSF had four and so two were left for VeSte. As a result of this the candidates were directly chosen according to the regulations and no elections had to take place. So whether or not VeSte was able to acquire more than two seats was not of relevance due to a lack of candidates.

Faction members

The second faction was formed by Douwe van der Veen, student Biotechnology since 1995, and Geert Hurenkamp, Molecular Sciences student from 1996 a year later. Both being members of Ceres, Douwe has been active in a number of committees amongst which acquisition, Geert has been active in the musical scene of the same association. Also both participated in organizing and attending committees and activities of their study associations.

Reorganization and new courses

The year 98-99 can be described as one of the most tumultuous years in the history of the university. When the budget of the ministry of Agriculture was published in September '98, it became clear that the budget of the university had to be shortened with approximately 10%, the biggest cut ever for Wageningen University. This meant a large scale reorganization had to take place and some 300 jobs would be lost. Furthermore the minister of Education wanted to decrease the number of courses in the Netherlands drastically. Which indicated Wageningen had to deal with two major policy changes in one year. The Executive Board used these proposed changes to insert a policy change for the whole university, in substance as well as education. The whole year therefore was focused on the reorganization plan for the university; on June 24th 1999, so almost a year later the Student Council and the employee council approved the plans officially.

The major renewals were:

- the original 18 study courses were decreased in number to 14 and together with that some were totally restructured also to fit within the framework of the new Bachelor-Master model
- each course had to contain 30% problem orientated education
- approximately 20 research groups were placed at other universities or were closed
- internally the whole financing system was renewed

Own initiatives include for example a closed course on Environmental Health, which eventually even expanded to a new study: Environmental Sciences. Furthermore the student mensae had to cope with a major budget cut which resulted in a new budget model.

Student contacts

Apart from the administrative activities Douwe and Geert have also put much time in the making and keeping of contact with other students groups in Wageningen, like the sports foundation, the boards of the study associations, and so on. Better contacts with these groups led to more understanding of the whereabouts of the Student Council, but also problems, like shortage of financial compensation, could be addressed more directly to the Executive Board.