Elaborate update VeSte period 2

1. Student Charter

The student charter (studenten statuut) consists of several documents concerning rules and rights for students. The Student Council has right of approval on changes made in all these documents. Two of the documents are of interest right now.

You can see all documents of the student charter here: http://www.wageningenur.nl/en/Education-Programmes/Current-Students/20152016StudentCharter.htm

1.1 Education and Examination Regulations (EER)

Amongst others, this document contains rules about study progress and prior knowledge needed before starting a thesis, ACT, an internship or a course. **Study progress** refers to a certain amount of points needed. **Prior knowledge** refers to specific courses or learning outcomes. The latter can be mandatory or assumed. At the moment mandatory prior knowledge (maximum 12 credits) can only be asked for theses and internship.

The OWI board (educational institute) has a couple of proposals with regard to study progress and prior knowledge. They invited the Student Council for a discussion on this topic, since the proposals require a change in the EER we have to approve. The proposals are the following:

1. Asking 90 credits of study progress, of which the entire first year, before starting a BSc thesis.

2. Including required study progress of 24 credits for the MSc internship and 36 for the MSc thesis.

3. Asking 24 credits study progress for ACT/AMC (academic master cluster, a disciplinary specific replacement of ACT).

4. Making it allowed to ask mandatory prior knowledge for courses, under certain conditions. These conditions are not yet defined.

At the moment we are forming our opinion about these proposals within the Student Council.

1.2 Education Framework (EF)

The following quote comes from the Educational Framework:

'In general, no educational activities for compulsory or restricted optional courses are scheduled in the evenings (18:30 -21:30 p.m.), holidays or weekends. Only interim examinations (including partial interim examinations) can be scheduled in the evening during the exam period. Exceptions can be made for special courses like online/distance learning, excursions, honours programme courses, and summer courses.'

The first bold part of this quote needs to change to clear the path for evening lectures. Since the Student Council has approval right on changes in the EF (as part of the Student Charter), it has approval rights on evening lectures.

The second bold part is part of a topic we are investigating: partial examinations in the evening. This quote indicates it is not allowed to make partial examinations in the evening compulsory. In practice this means partial examinations are allowed in the evening, but only if students have the opportunity to make one big exam in the exam period instead. We received signs of courses where this is not the case.

2. Growth of the university

2.1 Vision document

In the Student Council we are writing a vision document concerning growth in general. In this document we point out areas of concern regarding student facilities, study facilities, quality of education and staff members. The document will be finished shortly after the Christmas holiday.

2.2 Evening lectures (Student Council)

The Student Council received an implementation plan regarding different options to accommodate growing student numbers. This plan pointed out three different options, for more details take a look at the dossier about growth send with this email.

The Student Council has the feeling the implementation plan shows the Executive Boards favours evening lectures. Therefore, we will write a response saying we don't favour this alternative and stimulate the Executive Board to think disruptive and look to new ideas besides the three presented.

The implementation plan stated the Student Council has a right of approval on a **pilot** with evening lectures. However, now it is said this was a mistake and we don't have this right. We are investigating our rights on a pilot within the different councils we are present, using the law and former cases.

2.3 Evening lectures (VeSte)

VeSte wants the Executive Board to stop considering evening lectures as a possible solution for growth. We asked student organisations in Wageningen to write a statement containing their opinion on evening lectures and the consequences they will have for their organisation. The letters are combined and send to the Executive Board with an accompanying letter. We are looking forward to their response.

3. Excellence policy

On December 2nd the Student Council organised a debate to discuss excellence within the university and the possibility of an honours programme that is open for every willing student. It turned out the university needs an excellence policy. The current honours programme can be part of this excellence policy, but also other options like following multiple courses at the same time or capita selecta should be in there.

We are currently talking with members of corporate staff about the possibilities to make an excellence policy. The goal is to ask Arthur Mol to make such a policy in the next consultation meeting (February 9th).

If this policy will be made, we want to use the policy as back-up when we work at specific issues . For example the financing of capita selecta.

4. FOS dispute

The date for the dispute is known: **February 4th**. We are currently discussing with the lawyer if it is wise to have people in the public. If this is the case, you will get an invitation. After the dispute, the dispute committee has 6 weeks to announce the outcome.

5. Framework letter

Last week the Student Staff Council approved the budget for 2016. The budget is always based on a framework letter containing the financial focus points for next year. The Student Staff council is involved in making the framework letter for 2017. This way we can influence the budget at an early stage. Discussions about the framework letter have already started. An example of a topic we try to get in the framework letter is the student-staff ratio.