Rotterdam School of Management
Erasmus University

RSM Erasmus
FACULTY COUNCIL

Minutes 252th FC meeting (ext)

Thursday December 21th 2023, 10:30 AM – 12:00 AM

FC members
Luuk Veelenturf (**LV**)
Luca de Jong (**LJ**)
Taslim Alade **(TA)**
Mira Nikolova (**MN**)
Xena Welch Guerra (**XWG**)
Karthik Rapaka (**KR**)
Jessie Lee (**JL**)
Robbie Steegman (**RS**)

EB members
Myra van Esch (**ME**)
Werner Brouwer **(WB)**
Daan Stam **(DS)**
Claudia Rutten (**CR)**

Guests
Gabi Helfert (**GH**)

Agenda

Agenda and minutes

XWG: Okay, let’s have a look at the agenda then and we can just quickly check collectively, but I think there are probably no changes necessary and we can just keep it as it is. Anything regarding the minutes of the last meeting?

ME: Not from my side.

XWG: All right, that's wonderful. So, then we will be uploading them soon to the website.

To-do list

Tenure track communication

XWG: We have some things from our to-do list. Maybe I just start reading them out. The first is about tenure-track communication. So, this is something we had discussed in one of the previous meetings. What's the current status on that?

DS: So, it comes back in the announcements as well, but we've had our last meeting of this year with the tenure-track committee.
We're making some small changes for the spring PMT, but those are small ones. We want to, again, make sure that those are clear before we then reach out to the tenure-trackers, which will happen early January. So, the second, third week of January, when they start also drafting their stuff, is when we reach out to them.

LV: The question was more on communicating to the broader audiences. Since you had the meeting with the tenure-trackers, they know about the new document, as well as the heads of departments, but is there some place online where everyone can just find the file?

DS: Yeah, there is already an online place where you can find it. So, it's available online.
I think it was Karolina van der Werff (manager of RSM accreditations) who put it somewhere online. But, more than that, somewhere in January, I hope to also have a meeting in the school, saying something about the faculty model and then stuff about the tenure track will come in there as well.

XWG: I think that would be good because, of course, one thing is a very targeted information for those whom it concerns, but, of course, there are more people who are thinking ahead and would like to have a better understanding of how things are generally.

DS: I agree. In general, the faculty model will get to that point, under point six, I think. There's some developments there and I think those also need to be clearly communicated to the entire faculty. And I think the tenure track actually will be closely aligned with that. So, I think that should be in the same meeting such that we can discuss it all.

Faculty council: student compensation

XWG: Yeah. Okay, good. And then we have three items on the to-do list that concern the faculty council itself.

I quickly list the three. It's student compensation, external chair for the FC, and hospitality agreement. So, what is the current status?

ME: Well, in terms of the compensation, I've asked for information but haven't received it from central, so I have to wait for that. I think we need to know that first and then we need to discuss whether this is, for us, an acceptable situation or it isn't.

I do think that, in general, we shouldn't change too much from what is offered centrally, because otherwise we're making it also difficult for the other faculty councils that we have on campus.

CR: I sent you some information because we heard that the CvB made a decision in October, something about the compensation, and something has been changed. And the faculties have to look into it, what this means and how this will change. That is above the profileringsbeurs, the funds that you get from students already. But we have to check what we have to do, and we are also communicating with the other faculties how we will deal with that, because we want, of course, to have the same rules and things in place for all the faculties. So, I have been in contact with the executive secretaries from the other schools to discuss how we can deal with this. So we will come back to you on that, I think, in January already, and otherwise it will be February.

Faculty council: hospitality agreements

XWG: Yeah, all right, great. Then the external chair and the hospitality agreement. I think for the hospitality agreement, we are just quite concerned that things are going to the student emails.

CR: We can arrange, of course, the hospitality agreement, but I heard that in the past, there was a method of how you work together. The faculty council agreed to not send documentation to the student accounts. And I heard that from Sylvia, so if that was the case, it shouldn't be necessary to have all these separate email accounts and also not have this hospitality agreement.
We can look into that method and see if you still want to work that way. And if you don't want to work that way, then, of course, we can assure the hospitality agreements, but I don't know if that is solving your issue. I heard you work via Teams, also because of privacy issues, but apparently still some communication happens via email.

So I can contact Reinier and Luca, and talk with Sylvia, because she can explain what the privacy issue is. And otherwise we can make the hospitality agreements. Sylvia said that in the past, because of a discussion about privacy issues of sending all this kind of information to the student accounts, it was decided to do everything in Teams. But if we make all these separate emails, there will still be the same privacy issue as before. And that was a decision made by the faculty council back then.

XWG:
Yeah, I understand, but Luca is the vice chair, right? So, of course, he has to send emails from time to time, so there has to be email communication.

CR: Yeah, and we'll set up a meeting with Luca and Reinier, and with Sylvia to discuss that further.

Faculty council: external chair

XWG: Yeah, I think that's good. And the question with the external chair. So, at least for me, it was not part of my career workload plan to be in this role and so we are looking for an external chair and a permanent secretary. Of course, rather sooner than later.

ME: Yeah, so in terms of the secretary role, I think part of the discussion that we need to internally have is what is the relationship with the EB secretaries that we have, right? So, the role that Claudia is now moving back into. We need to figure out what the relationship then is with any secretary support that is needed for the faculty council. That's something that we haven't discussed yet, because it wasn't part of it previously.

And for an external chair: maybe we can help in finding organizations that can help find these people on the outside.

LV: It can also be an EUR person.

ME: Yeah, it can be an EUR person. But I'm also sure that these are positions that are offered by brokers that find people for you to do these things. Because I'm sure there's a world out there that need these kinds of positions.

LV: So there's not really action taken yet?

ME: No, but maybe we can work together on a profile. I can take initiative on it to set up a profile and maybe start looking internally and then outside of RSM and then outside of EUR.

XWG: Okay, let's do that. That sounds good.

WB: Yeah, I think it's especially important that you feel comfortable with whatever profile you end up with, because it's your chair. And if we want to look internally, there may be light ways of trying to find people as well. I think then the main criteria would be not from RSM.

LV: Or it might even be RSM, I think, but there's no rules on that. It's just someone who does most of the communication. He has no voting rights or whatever. But yes, of course, if you are from RSM, you are a bit biased.

XWG: Yeah, good. I think that would clearly improve the functioning of the council if we can move forward on that.

LV: May I add something to the email topic? So at least I want to say that indeed now Luca is using his law email address, because there is an employee account. But to improve internal

communication, it is desirable that emails are sent to fc.rsm.nl, such that every one of us gets it.
It is already in place, but not for the ones who were in the council from 1st of August, so I think Taslim is not added to it yet. But, all emails sent to fc.rsm.nl are automatically distributed to all the student emails and employee emails. So that's also a concern I have. And at least the new ones should be added as well.

CR: Yeah, the last part we already discussed. Reinier also looked into that. And somebody internally looked into that. But maybe we can also discuss that a bit in meeting with Luca and Reinier to discuss this further, how we can arrange that.

Announcements

Internationalization

XWG: I think then we can already move forward to our typical announcements.

DS: Yes, shall I start with internationalization? I think last time we met, we already discussed that we had the second internationalization meeting. What came up there as an important theme is the bias in the housing market. This is something we discussed with the CvB when we met them. They promised to take this up as well.
I haven't heard back anything from that yet, so think it's something that we also need to keep an eye on. I also doubted that that would happen before Christmas, to be honest. but I think this is something that we have to keep on the agenda to make sure that we get back to them as well. It is something that I think really also needs to be tackled on the EUR level.

The second thing is that we were busy with the language courses, right? So last week we finally got the offer from the Language Training Center. The email has been sent out to everyone that signaled they were interested in these courses. In the proposal they have, they don't have full capacity for everyone for us. That's too bad, but for them it's also short notice. I think they have a lot of demand. So, we're working on two tracks.
One is in January, where we have availability for probably up to 28, 29 people to start, which I think in essence is already good. We have more people that indicated they might be interested, so we're also working with them to see whether they can enlarge the capacity from, for instance, after summer. That way, all people can eventually join. But, at least we have this 28, 29 people that could start from the second part of January onwards on Tuesdays during lunch. I think that's really great and I hope a lot of people come. We also integrated ESE in that as well, so they also have some people that might join in those sessions.
Those are the two main announcements for internationalization from my side.

ME: Can I add something to that?

We had an internationalization meeting for everybody at RSM. I think it was a very worthwhile meeting. One of the things that we then discussed with the CvB later on, because we had our bylaw anyway, was the fact that this whole discussion about learning

Dutch led some of our faculty to believe that there was an intention of the university that in the end you would have to actually teach in Dutch.

So we checked that with the CVB and that is by no means the case. So if you can play a role in this, if anybody ever asks you, that is not even close on the table. There's no way that anybody would expect any person who is a non-native speaker to actually teach on a university level in Dutch. If somebody wants to take on this themselves, it's perfectly fine. But it's not a requirement now and it's never going to be a requirement. It's not on the table. So I want to make that very clear, because there was a little bit of unrest about that.

So the fact that I'm now learning Dutch, does it mean that in the future I have to teach in Dutch? No way. This is about you being part of society in the Netherlands and us trying to provide you with the means to be that more, to at least reach a level of Dutch where you can have a simple conversation with somebody. We even talked to some of the faculty who have been here 20 plus years and speak perfect Dutch, and they don't even know how to teach their courses in Dutch. They would struggle with that in a great way. So just to make that perfectly clear, not on the table, never will be.

DS: I think it's an important one. It is also absolutely not on the table that this is a requirement for promotion. So, that's something that we can even more clearly state than we stated.

LV: I think it also initiated from someone who said, I want to be more socially involved in the language process.

DS: Yeah, but I think there's also a lot of misunderstanding about what is on the table politically and what's not. It is of course uncertain, because politics is still forming, but at this point, it is really not on the table, and it's never been on the table. I think that's also important.

XWG: Yeah, we had one quick question, and that was to whom exactly did the invitation to the Dutch courses go out?

DS: So, I think it's been out to all international staff first to see whether they're interested. And the second round went out to everybody that replied to the first one that said, I'm interested.

XWG: And that goes by passport, we then figured?

DS: I don't know.

LV: Because not everyone with a Dutch passport speaks Dutch.

DS: That's a good point.

ME: If your suggestion is, maybe we should more broadly ask whether there are still people that we missed, we can do that. But like Daan just explained, right now, it could be that we're already pretty full. So then people would be on a waiting list as soon as a spot opens up.

DS: So I'm going to check with Barry. I see him this afternoon anyway for a meet-up, so then I will ask him.

WB: And if you meet anyone in the hallways who might be interested, just give them the email of Barry so that he knows, right? It's not a closed system.

DS: I think it's also been in kind of like newsletters and things like that. But I think people don't really read them. The newsletters have become a big thing.

Starter and incentive grants

XWG: All right. Starter and incentive grants.

DS: I think the main thing is that there's been a meeting with the people that got the starter grants. And I think that was a nice meeting. A couple of people afterwards raised some additional questions and they came to me and we've had a good discussion.

I think moving forward, the incentive grants are still a little bit of a black box. We have ideas so far, but it's not super clear yet. So this is something we need to go into next year.
And regarding the starter grants, now that there is a good package now with information about it, I think it would be very good to start talking about this more with the entire community. But, our first goal was let's first talk to the people whom the starter grants really concern and this has happened. And I think they were almost all there as well.

XWG: No. I was there. It was quite small, but there's another one in January, right?
And then clearly I think everyone received information. There was this slide deck.

DS: Yeah, you are right.

XWG: So I think with regard to the starter grants, the ones who now received it, I would assume feel well informed. Regarding the incentive grants, however, there's still quite a lot of fear and speculation. And we would also be happy to know your intended timeline on that.

DS: Yeah. So I think I'd have to ask Karolina van der Werff (Manager of RSM accreditations) as well, right? I mean I must say she only started with the starter grants in September, October, something like that. But I think she's actually done a pretty good job of making it much more structured and better. She's doing the same for the incentive grants, so what I'll ask her is to get us a timeline for that and a project idea of when that would be. And then we'll get back to you. I don't know it now immediately.

XWG: Okay. Is that a process for which you are waiting for Inga's term to start?

DS: No, that is not the case.

WB: I mean I think there's also a lack of clarity at the level of the university at this moment in time. So I think we're just waiting for things to become clearer. And then once the rules of engagement are a bit clearer for the incentive grants, then we can also make the translation into RSM. I think Inga may well already have started by the time that we have that completely clear.

ME: But we're not missing anything in the meantime. It's not like we're too late then for applying for anything. We have time. It's just that the sooner that we get it clear, the sooner we take away this annoying uncertainty for people. There was a sequentiality in first getting the starter grants right because there was a time pressure on that and then working on the incentive grant.

LV: But you want to have them all next year, right?

DS: I think they come yearly. So it's similar to the starter grants. We have a yearly allotment.

LV: But in the proposed budget, the EUR said to you that you had to take them away.

WB: No, that's a different thing. It is still there, but that doesn't mean that you take all of them in one year. It does mean that the money that was reserved for it is already in the budget and it's felt free in that sense for the number of incentive grants in that year, so not for the total amount or anything.

DS: So it means that normally if you get an incentive grant, you might get money over two or three years. Now they said 'you get the money in the first year and then you spend it'. So, it's not that all the incentive grants we're ever going to get are pushed into one year.

ME: So we will receive everything next year, but we will spend it accordingly. That's the way the university wants it.

DS: So for the people to get it, it doesn't make a difference. But it makes a difference only for our budgets. It's only for the people who get it next year that all the money flows in. The university is still busy with this as well. We had a meeting in between I think with the accountant as well to discuss starting an incentive grants. I think the accountant of the university was quite positive and super happy with what they got, but they also need to go outside to the external accountants. There are also still processes happening externally, even for the university, that are uncertain. So, that makes it hard for everyone I think. But at the same time, for the starter grants, things seem to shape up. And my belief is that the same will happen for the incentive grants in the next months.
But I'm going to ask Karolina van der Werff (Manager of RSM accreditations) to communicate a timeline.

Tenure track

DS: Then tenure track. I think there's two things that are important to mention here in terms of progress.

One of them is that we've identified a couple of small changes that might be impactful, but small anyway. And they're often things having to do with the procedures behind the PMT that need to be a little bit better. They have to do with clarity towards candidates that can be better. We're dedicating ourselves to already changing that for the spring PMT, so all of that needs to be done third week of January, before the whole process actually starts.

There is also bigger things, and one of them is also how the tenure track might change in regards to the new faculty model. This week, we decided we can't do this before the spring PMT anymore, so the deadline for that is before summer, so that in the fall PMT, we have all those things implemented and ready. And that will clearly also move towards your table in between.

We will devise a process in January for the project to end, I guess, in July. That means that somewhere around June, July, you will see a final version of this here. And in between, with the subcommittee that we talk about faculty model, I'll update you every time as well about the tenure term. So that's the update, I think, for the tenure track.

XWG: Sounds good. You mentioned that there were some minor changes now about the spring PMT?

DS: Yes. And that mainly has to do with the operations behind. So that's not something that candidates will ever see. It's about how the deadlines are handled, who delivers what to whom when. It's about what kind of letters we write and when and how they're written. Those kind of things are actually quite impactful and important because they create clarity and strictness to the process. That's not always perfect now, so those changes we are going to implement.

XWG: So that clarity about the process is then for whatever decision is made in the PMT afterwards, right?

DS: yes. And the other thing that we decided now is that from January onward, I will have a talk with every tenure-tracker after the first year. The reason is that we see too many uncertainties, and again it's about what's going on, where they need to go, how the midterm works, but also what the criteria mean, etc. So we extensively discuss those criteria also within the PMT committee, and they're necessarily vague to some extent. That's always the case, it's not a checkbox. That's not how the PMT works. So what we said, the best way to deal with that uncertainty is not by creating files that become ever longer to be clear, and then they become less clear usually, but is to say that I will have meetings with the first-year candidates after the first year, one-on-one with each of them, and I will have meetings with all our heads of departments every year to discuss all of the tenure-trackers and how they're doing. So those are the two mechanisms we're going to put in place to make sure that we don't get into the situations anymore where I talk to candidates after the midterm, and they say, 'hey, I never expected this, or I thought very differently about this', so we're trying to avoid it that way.
So, those things we're trying to implement already, bigger changes somewhere for the fall PMT.

LV: Yeah, sounds good.

Finance

ME: All right, so now move to finance? Okay, well, the situation we're in now is that we've received a letter that you've seen from the CVB stating that they will support us for two and a half million next year, and for the other two and a half million, we've gone through a process with all the different academic departments and the professional services departments. We gave them an amount, or percentage, that they should reach.
They've reached it. They've given us, based on some of the suggestions that we made, an estimation of the different categories they can reduce money in, and it gives us a little bit of slack. So as you've seen, we have about a million, and we think that we need that on the safe side because we're still trying to get more in control, and sometimes we get surprises, and most of them are negative surprises, so we need this extra slack.

We discussed yesterday the process with the heads of department, and they also stated that, and I can very much confirm this, that this was a very unpleasant situation, but a very pleasant process. So, it was very constructive on both ends, everybody's trying to think along, trying to find solutions, be realistic, workload was discussed often, so I think, all in all, I am very happy with the outcome of this, and the CVB is happy too.
And when we had a bylaw, we presented where we were, and the only request that they had is they're very interested in how much we actually want to save per which category. So this is additional information we will provide to them based on the calculations from the various parts of the organization, and then we need to monitor it, and also report this back to the CVB. That's part of the agreement, which is fine.

What still is hanging over our heads is the budget for next year, and because you had very good reasons not to approve it, the question then becomes, are your concerns addressed enough for you to now say we approve it? The information only came together this week, so it's not surprising that you haven't gotten back to us.

LV: And this approval formally needs to be there before Christmas?

ME: Well, nobody works between Christmas and New Year's anyway, right?

LV: But what happens if you don't have an approval?

ME: I think the lights will come on and we'll start the new year, but I think it will be something that at some point will come back to the table. So whenever you guys have the time, and if you have any additional things that you want to discuss, or that you want us to be part of, then by all means.
We feel that we've done a lot and we're in an exceptional position compared to the other faculties, where we really get this little backwind for us to help us through the next year. I'm very happy with that. And by the way, the CvB explicitly asked us to also share with some of the other parts of the university how we did this and why they are supporting us, so that it's no secret. But yeah, I'm happy and maybe even a little proud that we got where we are.

I do think you guys especially need to be critical and look at the points that you raised, because I also know that not all of them have been met. So the question is, does the balance flip into the right direction for you guys? But that's up to you. And I'm perfectly fine if this happens in January. If it's February, I think we'll have somebody pounding on our door saying, listen, we're missing one signature.

Question on work pressure: vacancy board

LV: Well, the first question is: I see a lot of measures are taken in the hiring or the rehiring, but do the departments have a good overview of what it means for work or pressure?

ME: Yeah, I think it's a good question. I think it's a difficult question for me to answer. I do realize that something that you don't have yet is always easier to go back to discussing than something that's already there. So, to have a natural inclination to look at hiring when you have a deficit or when you need to bring down your costs, I think that's a very natural way to go. There are two ways about this.
One is: what does the impact from not hiring on the rest of the organization or not even rehiring? That's a discussion that we've been having. And I have to believe that if somebody says, yeah, we think it's the best way to do it, I have to believe them.
The second answer to this is what we've also done is create a vacancy board in terms of hiring because it's very hard for your little puzzle piece on the map to make a decision whether it's worthwhile to hire. It's better to look at this from a more holistic RSM perspective. So, we said instead of putting the burden on an individual manager, whether it's professional services or academics, maybe it's better to put in one extra step. Right now what normally happens is that if you want to put out a vacancy, we look mostly at the budget. We believe that somebody has an idea that they need somebody to do some work, so we look whether there is enough budget. And if there is, we grant it. That's how it works, so it always comes by our offices anyway. But now we put in an extra step where we say, maybe we'll need to have a discussion about this a little bit more and say: why are you hiring this person? Did you really look at it? Do we absolutely need it? Could we go without it? I know that you've already reached the level that you've agreed, but maybe this helps another department or we've had a setback or anything like that.

So we've created this vacancy board, at least for the next year, to go through these steps in the hiring process. We haven't set any very clear guidelines on why would you then approve and disapprove, but we feel like as we go along, we will develop those based on what we're doing at that time. So, we can share that if that's something that you're interested in.

DS: Maybe there's one additional thing. This particular measure, especially in departments, is the one that we see the most. So we've also asked all the departments to come up with statements about workload and to analyze how would this impact their workload for people and how would they alleviate it. Also, it doesn't only impact workload, sometimes it might also impact the income. So both of these, I think we wanted insights on. Some departments, as you might see, have already really looked at this.

For instance, there is one department that has already said: we cut on hiring. Well, they actually spent more money on external hire, short-term hire, because it's a cheaper way of getting the same work done for one year. And then after that year, they fill in the vacancies and they’re okay again. So there's already some departments that have really looked at this. It could, of course, also be that some people are hired while the jobs to be done can actually be done next year such that we don't get any additional workload. Then it doesn't matter so much, but I think for others we need to have some insights into workload.

I think the deadline was actually already tomorrow, but realistically, the first time we can get into that will be, of course, after the break. It is clearly something that we are concerned about.

ME: It's an awareness exercise. We want people to realize that if you make the quick decision about not hiring, that it might impact the workload that we're trying so desperately to reduce.

WB: Just to add: what we've therefore asked all the different departments is to look into workload and if they come up with ways to reduce workload, if that would, for instance, mean cutting back on things that otherwise would also have a financial component flowing to the department, we will talk about whether or not we can do that budget neutrally. So just to give an indication, let's say that for some reason you could just skip a course for one year, or perhaps permanently, then we can make a provision that it doesn't hurt the budget of that particular department, but it does reduce workload.

So along those lines, I hope that we can have an open conversation about those things that we can actually cut back on without people not putting it on the table because they think, well, if I cut back on this, then you'll cut back on my budget, which is not the type of conversation that we want to have, of course, because then we keep each other basically occupied until forever.

XWG: Which could be potentially very, very fruitful, but so far there have been clear behavioral barriers to that, right?

WB: Absolutely, and that's why we need open conversations with all departments, so that they also know that we mean what we say when we say that it will not affect their budget if they would reduce workload.

LV: I see multiple saying that they save on external hiring, twice I see master thesis supervision as well. However, that also brings in money, so if it was really because there is less master thesis students, I think you also have less income, so it will not save anything. This really looks like putting the master thesis from external hires to the current employees.

ME: Yeah, and this is not a structural solution, right? So I know that part of the long-term plans that we are making is also looking into: do we always need a master thesis or can we find other ways of reducing the workload by using different ways of examination?

XWG: I mean, this is a discussion that we have been pushing for this conversation for a long time now.

ME: We're using this financial situation to have all of these kinds of discussions right now, but they're pretty complicated because they have impact on many different levels, right? Also in terms of workload, but at some point if you're removing certain stuff, it also makes the workload maybe change in a very different way, so that you need different kinds of people in your teams, right? We need to be aware that this may be a shift in a process.

XWG: Clearly, but precisely this complexity then requires to have people from different parts of the organization on board, right? So how are you setting up those conversations?

ME: Well, what we're doing is we're sort of setting up more of a step-by-step plan, and then working those out within the different consortia. So, we're working right now within the EB and the portfolio manager, and then the heads of departments and the personal services managers, and then you will be involved. So I have a whole Gantt chart where I have sort of a cascade model of how we work through this entire process.

This will be very dense in January, February, whereas in March, we can finish up the first ideas to present them to the CVB at the end of March. But this is the future plan. So this is 2025 and beyond, and it will certainly take some time to develop it. It will very much take some time to detail it and to create an implementation plan. And the implementation plan, I can assure you, we all say and hope that it will finish in 2024.

I can assure you, it will be a multi-year culture change within the organization, because that's what we're talking about. If you change, it's not just about maybe not having as many theses anymore, but it's also about: what do we actually teach, and what kind of research do we do, and how do you want to have this structured? What does engagement mean for us?

So, we're building up to the outline of the plan, so that we can show that we're on the right path. But there will be many situations where input can be provided to come up with.
This is a phased plan and if you want, I can give you up front an idea in what moments in time right now we're thinking of involving you guys. I can send you a list of that, but it's a bit in flux.

So, the end of March, the beginning of April, that's the deadline we have for the CVB, for the future plan that we need to deliver. It's somewhere between January, because December is for me finished today, and the end of March. And I would say more in February than in March. And I think the focus will be in February, but it will start in January. That's how much I know. Any other questions?

Question on donating leave days

LV: So one thing which was, also from what I heard from colleagues, not perceived that well was the ask to donate leave days. You say it is voluntary, but in this last meeting, it was said that one department collectively decided to donate these.

ME: They've done this for years and years and years. It's not related to this.

LV: No, okay, but it's brought like something new, so is that not also a bit of peer pressure there? Since if you are a new colleague, if you are a PhD student, can you say no to this?

ME: I don't know. when I started working two and a half years ago, I learned about this department. I was very surprised that it worked that way. And then more recently, I learned that this is actually an arrangement for academics within the EUR. So it's not professional services. I have no idea why. Those questions that I have about this have not been answered yet, but apparently there's a form on my EUR, where you as an academic can say: I don't want to write my leave days. I'm just going to take what I need and the rest will be voided after the year. And you sign the form and it's an individual form. It's you and the EUR organization. And apparently there's one department who collectively makes use of this.

But this is an existing situation for years. Right now, what we say is: we want people to use their days. If they are going to use the leave days that they still have, plus the ones that they've already seen in the ESS portal for 2024, that's perfectly fine. It doesn't hurt us in the budget. What hurts us financially in the budget are those leave days that you keep in your account for years and years and you're not using. Because we have to make a reservation for that.

Now, if you're saving for something, like a sabbatical or some extra leave, or you expect to take care of your mother like I'm doing right now, then by all means keep them. But we also have people in the organization that say, yeah, I have these 200 hours still and I get so many more for next year and there's two I'm actually not using. And I cannot do anything with them because I cannot sell them to the university and get money for it. If you don't need them, because there's a new lake opening, has opened already for 2024, by all means donate them to us because then we don't have to keep making the budget reservation. And if you want to do this, please do this in 2024 and not 2023 because then it doesn't happen.

So I can understand that this is sensitive. I assure you there are universities that are doing this mandatorily right now. But legally, based on our collective labor agreement, we cannot take those days away from anyone. And we will not and we don't want to. We're just saying if you've collected them and you don't need them.

LV: Or managers should send people more on holidays.

DS: But they're not opposites, right? I think the benefit, there's a benefit to academics for doing this as well. They don't have to register any leave anymore. So you just talk to your supervisor and if you want to go and leave, you take leave. That's it.
So you don't have to register anything anymore. You don't have to be in the systems anymore. That's the big benefit of this. And I must say, I've also heard the opposite reactions from quite a lot of people who say: yeah, I mean, sure. I don't need this. I'm going to write them off myself in January because I don't need these hours and if I need to build up something, you can build up something outside of those leave hours. You can have a sabbatical bill or anything else. And if you want that, you need to discuss it with your supervisor anyway. You can't do it yourself. So, I think there's actually quite some people who are quite open to this. And what is going to happen then, of course, is it's going to alleviate our financial issues as well, which means that maybe halfway through the year, we can be more lenient in other ways.

ME: No peer pressure. And of course, people don't approach me if they're completely against it, but I've heard a lot of people who said to me: I have these days that I'm not using and I've been collecting them for a while now. I'm just going to hand them over and just use next year's days.

LV: But they have not been using them. Sometimes also there was a reason why. Because actually, we should support people to take the days more, right?

DS: This is the whole thing. Actually, the signing off is basically a statement saying, you're going to use all the leave you need such that we don't have to make a financial reservation in the end of it. You also have to see that actually, you can't save these unendingly, right? They fall away after five years. Some of them fall away after half a year, but some of them fall away after five years, which means if you don't want to do anything with them in the next five years, for your situation it doesn't even matter if you donate them now or not. Because if you donate them now, you'll save up them again in the next five years and then it's fine. So, you'll be in the same situation in five years. If you don't want to use them in the next five years, might as well donate them now.

ME: It's a delicate balance, right? So in terms of workload, you're always right. People should take their leave days. The fact is, we have a lot of them. Compared to many other organizations, we have a lot of leave days. So if you work effectively, the chances are that you're not going to use them all. You can, and we urge you to, especially if you need them. But in many organizations, it's pretty common to say you can take five days on to the next year, and the rest of them are voided anyway. And we don't do that; we are not asking people to void this endlessly, because it won't work, but we're just asking now as some sort of relief. And there are people that are willing to, that’s fine. And if you're not willing to, that's completely fine as well. If there's peer pressure, we would like to know, because that wasn't the intention.

LV: But will that be also on the table for the long-term measures to change that policy of taking leave days?

ME: No. We can't, because it's part of the labor agreement.

DS: What might be in the measures though is a much more strict, not a policy, but a mechanism to make sure that people take their leave days. Because people need to take their leave days so that they can recuperate over the year. That's also a workload thing.
I think it would be really good if many of us start focusing on that a little bit more.

Question on saving on software

LV: I also saw in this documents with measures from departments that there were also some suggestions to save on software, et cetera. Are the end users also involved in this?

ME: No, the end users are also involved. The one thing we did decide upon, we didn't ask every individual end user because we don't think that's relevant, is keeping our hardware for a longer period of time. But this always means that if your hardware is broken, we're not asking you to walk around with it a year longer, right?
So if it's possible to work with it a little bit longer because it hasn't broken down and it's actually still working pretty okay, we're just asking you to work with it longer. And it actually saves a lot of money. Same goes for any other materials that you have, phones and stuff like that. I know in about three years, these are written off, but they're perfectly fine to use.
And there's also the agreement where you can buy this stuff, right? If you get a new laptop, you could buy the old one for your homework or your kids or whoever you want to donate it to. That will also not be possible then for the coming year because we're reusing the materials. So then even if you don't use it anymore, you get a new one for some reason, and it's still for somebody else, perfectly fine, we're not going to let you buy it out of our system.

LV: No, but also I saw that we will save on paper to scan. Does it mean something will change? Do I need to change my exam? It says here, 10k savings on paper to scan.

ME: Yeah, but I don't think it's that we're not going to cut paper to scan altogether. If you hear anything differently, I'll check.

CvB letter

XWG: Yeah. So in the interest of time, we would like to wrap up the finance thing. What else do we want to talk about? There's one specific thing. So the letter, the CvB letter, there was point five. And we wanted to briefly talk about it.

What does the last statement mean: RSM will seriously consider harmonizing support processes.

ME: Okay. So we have a number of support services that we have locally that are also provided by the central EUR. Examples of that are: HR, legal communication etc. And for years and years, long before I started, long before any one of us started here, there has been a discussion with central saying, why does RSM feel so special that they need to have their own CMC, HR, legal departments? Couldn't you just simply use the ones that we provided from central? Well, there are reasons why this exists this way, because in a previous situation, we had special requirements who were not met by central. So we said, if you're not going to provide us, then we're going to do it ourselves. That's the reason this happened in a short sentence. And there's not always a cost reduction if we move people from here to central, because then they will just bill us more. So there's not really an incentive for us to do so.

However, I am a big fan of centralization and harmonization, because I think we need to coordinate these things better, but only if it works. What it says here is that we will consider it, and consider being the operative word here. I have been having discussions for the last two months on the HR issues with Lieke, who is responsible for HR on a central level, saying: okay, how can we work together better, and would this eventually in a long-term future mean that we would arrange our processes differently, and this may or may not have consequences for the people involved. Everybody who works in a department like that knows that this is part of the discussion, so it's no secret.

LV: Okay, I could also read the last sentence, especially reading about explicit attention to HR, implying some HR measures on for example firing or hiring.

ME: In the world of the CVB, they want us to harmonize tomorrow, sign everybody over, and just leave it at that.

WB: What you read here is the end result of a negotiation, right? So it's now not consider, but seriously consider, but still it leaves us with the possibility to have considered it, and not go to things that they may wish us to go. And just to be clear, you know, this is not the only thing that is going on at this moment in time at the university. The other discussion now ongoing for all other faculties except RSM, is communication. That's where they also want a further centralization, and that's where we have claimed that our position is so different, that for us that would be really, really difficult.

ME: And that was accepted, so we're an exception.

LV: Can we also get the info from point four? ‘On time informed, if you are having deviations.’

DS: Oh yeah, of course, in the finance committee.

ME: Of course, from the CvB perspective, this is an easy one, right? They want to be informed, and there's no way we're going to inform the CvB without informing you, so we're all going to be on the same page.

LV: It's just easy to put us in CC. That was just my question.

WB: No, I mean, let's be clear, I think for the coming year, however unfortunate, finances will be on every agenda that we have jointly. There is no way, unfortunately, that I would see that that would not be the case.

XWG: All right, so you will receive a letter from us in January. Yes, please. So now, we have 25 minutes left, and we have Gabi here, and we have plenty of questions.

Faculty model

DS: I can go through the faculty model quickly, so two elements there, right?

One is about lecturers. Last time, we had a question about: can we get lecturers to potentially get permanent contracts? No, they cannot. And essentially, we said: we will change this with the faculty model, but with the urgence that you gave to it, we’ll take that out and do it specifically. So this has been a decision by the EB, also informed by the heads of departments. Everybody agreed that lecturers can now get permanent contracts.
So, the things that are going to happen in January is, you will get the official policy with the changes, and ratify them, and there'll be a writing of HR about how does this work, and what are the consequences. That will come in January. HR is busy with it now.

The other part is the profile associate professor. I think you've probably all seen the profile. We've discussed it in the committee as well. I think there was overall happiness with it. It's also been discussed with the EB, and it's also been discussed with the heads of the departments, and there, there were no major alterations to it, and actually, everybody was quite happy with it.

So, if there's no issues from the faculty council, then I think that the conclusion is that this is the profile that we are going to work with. Additionally, the EB and the heads of departments have asked whether the first batch of senior lecturers and tenured assistant professors to go up for associate professor of education can go up in the spring PMT, which is actually quite fast, and it means that we're still pretty much in the schedule that we thought we hoped to be earlier this year. So that's actually really good news.

So, hopefully in April, we'll have our first batch of associate professors of education. That's what we are talking about.
It does mean a significant change for the school where we've always said we're a research-based business school, and that means that our faculty is good at everything, but they're excellent in research, and that's it. And with this profile, we're now saying, well, here we've got people that are good at everything, but excellent in education. And that really is a shift, I think. I'm also happy with this, especially because I think we're the only school that does this at EUR at this point. Almost everybody says education is where you do a little bit less research and performance there, and you're more into the classroom. I think that's a bad way of doing this, so I'm really happy with the profile that we have, and I'm super happy that we can get our first people in, hopefully in April, I think as a school with benefit.

LV: And in terms of communication, that this profile will be there?

DS: Yeah, the talks we had with the EB and heads of departments were all this week, so yesterday we sat together. So, I think now with your reaction as well, I think this is going to be formalized. And this means that in January, we'll do information sessions about the faculty model as a whole. We'll certainly do information sessions with the people that are most concerned, but I think we'll also do information sessions about what are these decisions, what still needs to be done.
There are some steps that we still need to take, and we need to take some elements and integrate it into the spring PMT. That's something that's going to be already too late, so we need to speed up, but also in the interest of the candidates themselves, I think this is something that we really need to work with and be lenient about with them as well. We need to integrate it into the PMT process as a whole, which means that in the fall, this needs to be a steady state where it's clear what's going to happen.
And we need to also start thinking about the adaptation to the tenure track. Those are things that all need to follow, and we set a deadline for before summer. So, that's going to happen then, and at the same time, we're also trying to then develop the other elements of the faculty model, which is senior promotions, which is well on the way. But where we're not very well on the way yet, and that needs to start next year, is the engagement track, and that's going to be the next discussion. So that will take longer, but that's where we are.

WB: Yeah, and if we would have waited for the whole process to pan out further, then we couldn't do anything until the fall, and we all felt that that was too late. So this is being brought forward, and it also means that we've explicitly asked all heads of department to think about those people in their different departments that need to go up in the spring, so they can be informed directly.

DS: Yeah, so it is the first batch of that. I think there is a difference between tenure trackers going up for associate professor and senior lecturers and tenured assistants going up, because for the senior lecturers and tenured assistants, it's not an automatic that you go up for associate professor. There needs to be a position as well, while for the tenure tracker the position is created when you come in. That's not the case in the other situation, so that does mean that there is a slight different process, and there's always a discussion with the heads of departments that needs to be done before they can go up. So now the heads of departments are looking internally to see who are the people that can go up already in the spring, and after that we get hopefully a steady stream going up, and that's where we are.

XWG: Yeah, because creating those new positions also to some extent collides with the budget discussion, right?

DS: Some, but we also have to be realistic that there are some changes in the budget there. It's not monumental. There's two streams of money that change. One of them is that the salaries go up slightly, but for senior lecturers, it generally means going from 13 to 14. That's going up, but it's not drastic. I think one of the main things is that there will be a budget stream going from the school for the research time of these people one day a week, but again, that's one day a week.

WB: And that's also shifting internal money, right? These people are already on the payroll, so it doesn't change the cost structure. It just changes how you allocate the funds.

XWG: Well, it sounds good overall. I think we're very, very happy with that, and many people have been waiting for this for years. Now let's move forward to the program caps.

MSc programme caps

GH:

Thank you, I'm the Executive Director of the Master Program and I have received your questions.

<u>The first one was where and why is the capacity facing limits?</u>

So, the way we look at this is are there any capacity constraints in terms of teachers or in terms of didactical format or in terms of available space at EUR? Think of rooms, exam halls, and so on. So those are basically the three criteria that we look at when we discuss the caps with the academic departments. And for those two new programs that we have added basically to the list of programs that will receive caps, that is People, Organization, and Change, that is in principle designed as a scale program from the perspective of the curriculum.

And that is very similar also to strategic entrepreneurship where we already have a cap which is very similar. It would be very difficult to find a sufficient number of companies who would actually work with the students in this track that is running in the fall to do that over this long period of time. So that has to do with the fact how the curriculum is designed basically.

In supply chain management it's a little bit different. It's really about the teaching capacity in the department. They have also experienced quite a bit of up and down in student numbers over the last couple of years and once it went already relatively close to that 150 and they said this is really the maximum that we can do with the personnel that we have. So those were the two reasons why we now want to establish these additional caps to the ones that we already have.

<u>Is there a possibility to increase capacity and is this considered?</u>

Of course there is always a possibility to do that. If things change, like for example in the business analytics and management program which started in 2020, we started originally with a cap of 90 students which had, where the reason was that it was a new program and we didn't want to start too big. It was also a relatively complex program with different departments involved. We also had company projects and so on. So the reason why we kept it at 90 in the beginning was that we wanted to start with not a too large population. The first two years the cap was 90, then the cap was for two years 120 and now for next year we raise it to 150 actually, so for 2024 it is already at 150 and for 2025 it will also be. So that is always a possibility if things change. In practice it hasn't happened a lot but it can always change.

<u>Did you consider to raise the entry requirements for example the 7.0 and what were your thoughts on that?</u>
In general we would like to keep the master programs accessible and that is not only the case for RSM but that is also the case for EUR in general. It is a general policy to make those hurdles not too big for students and it is also a national policy as well.
The government also doesn't want us to exclude too many students and if we would really go for another cap that would be above the 7.0 that would really be a very harsh selection criterium. Plus things like for example cum laude and summa cum laude would completely lose their meaning because then everybody basically gets that. So in that respect we want to keep it accessible and we do not want to want to change the entry requirements in terms of the GPA.
However what we are looking at is for example for individual programs like the finance and investments program to look more into what is necessary in terms of pre-experience in the bachelor program. For example, currently at RSM we have these three tracks in the bachelor program in the third year where students can choose between a finance track and two other tracks that we are looking into possibly putting this as a requirement for future generations not for this application because that would be too late. But for the future we're looking into that right now the admissions department is investigating that together with the finance department.

The reason is that we see that a lot of specifically RSM bachelor graduates who did not do the finance track are struggling in the program which means they often come back in the second year. Normally we don't have a second year in that program, but still we see a lot of retakers after a year and that also puts extra stress on the teachers on the facilities and so on. So, we want to avoid that in future to really look into the students who do enroll in that program make sure that you have the relevant basically pre-experience already in your bachelor and that is something which we're currently looking into. Not for this application but for the future.

LJ: Maybe one question: In the bachelor track selection, everyone got the first choice but I'm thinking of a hypothetical scenario where someone would have wanted to do the finance track and then wants also to do the finance master but is due to the algorithm allocated to another track because there was not enough capacity in the track.

GH: Can't answer that at the moment especially because I'm also not responsible for the actual programs but as far as I know everybody who's willing to do it can.
<u>Do we ever raise or lift the caps we implement?</u>
As I said before already in BAM it actually happened.

If we do what are the circumstances that have to precede a suggestion of raising or lifting the cap?

As I said already in BAM it was basically the development of the program over the years and we had more experience we had more companies that could be involved so it was easy to raise the cap. Theoretically it would also be possible to lower the cap in a program obviously that can for example happen if we have a case where in a department the personnel structure is such that we know over three years whatever 30 percent of the people are going to retire and it will be very difficult to replace them in the next three years. That can theoretically happen and in that case we would then look into also lowering the cap but in practice so far it has also not happened yet.

What is the prevalence of CAP programs not reaching their cap versus reaching it?

So Jessie knows that already the admissions office works with algorithms. These algorithms are refined each year based on the experiences of the past years related to how many applications will actually be necessary to reach the expected number of seats.

That stays usually within a margin of about five to ten percent per year but it varies from year to year and we have also had surprises where for example, I think in 2021, it was that in finance we suddenly got way fewer applications than we actually expected. So that can always happen you know that we have a year where it's going down and we don't really know the explanation for that. It can have to do also with the international market, so that one school for example suddenly reduces their entry requirements and then a lot of students who have applied here already think oh maybe that could also be an interesting option and then just let their application go away and go to the other school or that somebody has additional scholarship possibilities for international students. It can be all kinds of things and it's it's very very hard to analyze these things and especially even harder to predict them. So, in general they are relatively close to the respective cap in terms of the enrollments but yeah sometimes it can also be a little bit off.

What is your opinion on the circumstances regarding application to the finance and investments program and more specifically the fact that the program was only open for application for one week?

My opinion is that that is obviously not what we want which is why together with the department of finance we are looking at the admissions offices where we are looking in on changing the admission process for the 2026 intake and that might then involve additional requirements regarding bachelor content but as we know this requires also a lead time because the current bachelor students should also not be disadvantaged in their choice.

This year saw an unusually big increase in applications resulting in multiple programs reaching capacity in shorter time frames than other years. What is the source of this increase?

Well to be clear it was it was a 12 percent increase in overall student numbers so it was not completely out of line. We had these increases of that magnitude before particularly after a year of decreasing student numbers which we had last year. We had like three percent fewer students last year so there are obviously a lot of possible explanations for this.

One is in this year specifically the reintroduction of the study grant. What we think that happened is that a number of students basically just waited another year to have the benefit of the reintroduced study grant. Another thing is that some of the discussions around internationalization in the Netherlands might also have led to a surge because also internationally this is being discussed in the media and there might be students just panicking: ‘I won't get in anymore if I wait another year so let's do it now’. Especially for the master that could be the case because we have a master students who don't do the master directly after the bachelor but go work first. So in that case that could also be an explanation. Another boost might have come from the excellent financial times master and management ranking result where we were third best in 2022 and we always see when we rank very high in that ranking that we also often get a boost to the other master programs. It is something that reflects on the school as a whole and not just on master and management. That's why we do these things because there's a lot of work these rankings. It might also have been a post-covid effect still. A lot of especially international students were not able to join us in previous years and might also have waited until 2023 to actually come in. So it can have a lot of sources and we don't know directly what it was but probably a combination of all of those.

<u>Do you expect that the proposed newly capped programs will reach capacity in their first year and if so at which point in time do you expect this to happen?</u>
As I said it's super difficult to make such projections. So we don't really have the applicant behavior. It's very erratic. It can change from year to year and it's also never linear. We never have seen that it really just goes up like this. It always goes like this basically. The people organization & change this year had around 80 new students. Supply chain management around 130 which means they are both 20 students away from the cap so there is room to grow a little yet.
It could also be that POC will only have 70 next year and SCM around 110 can also be. It always varies a little bit. These are really more safety mechanisms in case we face really one of those erratic surges that have happened in the past with programs. This way we can just make sure that the students get the attention that they need in the program and that we have also sufficient space on campus.

<u>Some years caps went into effect before the first master open day even took place. According to your information what percentage of students already attends a master open day in their second year or earlier and what percentage of students has their first open day in November of their third year? Ergo what percentage of students has not been to an open day before some programs are already closed.</u>
I have no information about the percentages I must admit and I also think that it will be very difficult to calculate that because we have bachelor graduates from all over the world who apply to our programs. It's not only the RSM bachelor graduates who apply to the program and it can also be some students who studied whatever two years ago who finished their bachelor two years ago and then come into the master program.

So talking about percentages of students who attended the master open day in year two or year three or maybe even after year three we don't know.

JL: We can try and pull those numbers in January, but only for RSM. Also, I don't quite understand the relevance honestly because all of the information at the master open day is always available online. There's no information given at the master open day that every applicant doesn't have access to the entire year round. It's all on the website and we have our online presentations which are the exact same as the master. So whether or not someone was able to attend the open day, they still had access to all of that information. So, that really isn't going to affect the availability of someone to get the information. They're all outs and they need to be proactive in making sure that they do get that information when they need it and it's there for anyone at any time. It's all on the website.

GH: And another thing that is on the website as well is that we basically tell students already this is a program that has closed early in previous years and last year it closed on whatever date.

JL: And there's a live tracking to let them know exactly how many applications are submitted, for every program. It is also your responsibility as an applicant to keep track of these things. We give them everything they need. Beyond but they've got to use it.

GH: And if we look at specifically bachelor students or even RSM or EUR bachelor students they really have sufficient chances also to talk to admissions. They have chances to talk to the teachers as well. I mean every teacher's contact information, email address, telephone number is on the website.

JL: They also receive reminders as internals to apply. If they've started an application and not submitted but it's getting close they'll start receiving reminders like hey it's about to close you need to submit and apply.

ME: But this all implies that somebody will actually read it.

JL: Yeah that is the issue and that is why we do track all of our communication such that we can print that out and hand it to them to say oh we let you know on this date this date this date.

ME: And even if we know all this, we still have to keep on finding ways to actually get to the students in different ways. And of course, I know you do. There is also the responsibility of parents to teach their kids to be proactive in these things.

XWG: No more questions?

GH: Well, what I would need is a letter of consent in the next two months because we basically need to send our application to EUR before the first of March.

XWG: Right, that timeline we can surely make.