

Present: Jeroen Knol, Eline Klaassens, Hilde Ruis, Yvonne Smolders, Carla Dullemeijer, Rinke Stienstra, Heidy den Besten

1. Minutes from last meeting

No Comments.

2. News and Announcements from VLAG

Prof. F. Kok is going to be replaced as director of VLAG. His successor will be announced in November.

3. News and Announcements from Wageningen PhD council

- There is an update on the contract extension for PhD students started after the 15th of august 2005. In the new CAO, extension of their contract is possible in case of illness, pregnancy leave or other reasons. However, PhDs started before this date don't have this opportunity and whether or not contracts will be extended depends on their department. This is mainly due to problems with money. In case of individual problems, F. Pepping or R. Rabbinge can be contacted. Furthermore, it is now also possible to give PhDs a 1 year contract followed by a three year contract.
- There has been some debate about the back-pack money available for each PhD student. The HRM-department can interpret the new CAO in such a way that back-pack money will no longer be available for PhD students. However, all departments receive enough money which is specifically intended for the 'back-pack' and the HRM department can't use this money.
- In December, elections for the joint Student-Staff Council (Gezamenlijke Vergaderingen GV) are taking place. Niels Olieman will sent around a list with PhD candidates. Every PhD is encouraged to vote since the number of PhDs in the council is, at the moment, very low.

4. Review on Socrates Intensive Programme 'Food & Health'

The Socrates Summerschool took place in Paris and was organised by universities from Gent and Paris. Jeroen has visited the Summerschool which lasted for 2,5 weeks (= 5 ECTS). Some comments:

-There was no representative of the Department of Human Nutrition (due to communication problems). PhDs from Wageningen that attended the Socrates programme were selected within each department.

-Many of the topics that were discussed within the programme were already familiar for the PhD students from Wageningen.

-There was a big difference in scientific level between the PhDs from Western Europe and Eastern Europe.

-Since many people were involved in organizing the course, the summer school was lacking some focus.

-It was a very busy programme not leaving much time for social activities.

- The organiser for Belgium brought 3 Msc-students to join the programme. This should be avoided in the future since the Socrates programme is specifically intended for PhD students.
- Next year, the summerschool will take place in Warschau, Poland. If it's feasible, one organiser should be responsible for setting up the programme in order to avoid the problems of this year. Next year maybe VLAG will organize the Socrates programme?

5. Questions/Remarks

Yvonne> A new ethics course is being planned which will hopefully attract more PhD students than last year when not enough PhDs were interested in following the course. The 'uitstroomcursus' will still be organised 4 times per year by all the graduate schools in Wageningen together. Some other (new) courses have been announced in the email that has been sent to all the PhD students from VLAG.

Next meeting> Tuesday 10th of January 2006, 16.00, Canteen Biotechnion