

**European Consortium of Universities Student Wing Meeting
17th April 2004 University of Strathclyde**

MINUTES

The meeting commenced at 9:30

1 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

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|-----------------|-----------------|
| Maiken SØRENSEN | Aalborg |
| John MCLEAN | Strathclyde |
| Marko DORSCH | Hamburg-Harburg |
| Ian ROBERTSON | Strathclyde |
| Peter OLESEN | Aalborg |
| Rosa NOGUIERA | Aveiro |
| Celine DELABRE | Compiègne |

Non-attendance

- No responses were received from Warwick, Monterrey, Dortmund or Barcelona.
- Twente responded that they would be unable to attend.
- Joensuu are no longer part of the consortium.

John McLean agreed to do the minutes.

Since Ian, Rosa and Celine are newcomers to the student wing, a brief description of how the student wing came about was given. And discussion was also led on the website and access. It was agreed that minutes of the meetings of previous student wings should be available on the site for successors.

The group then went around and introduced themselves and their roles within their institutions.

Lack of clarity. Continuity. Marketing and Communication. ERASMUS and ECIU – one is better known than the other.

2 BOARD MEETING UPDATE

This item was deferred to give people a chance to consider the minutes and get a copy of the agenda for the next minutes.

3 COMPOSITION OF THE ECIU

John was asked what the Board had discussed with regards to new members and he updated them on those who have been proposed as members and those who have been discussed for associate partnership. Ian Robertson reported that the Technical University of Lodz in Poland had e-mailed him to discuss this, and the minutes show that they had been considered for associate membership.

Since 12 had been agreed as a nice number and there are only 9 members now, it was predicted that 2 full time members would be appointed and one associate member.

The Student Wing welcome moves to increase the membership of the ECIU, however some of the suggested motives seem rather arbitrary (12 is a nice number, it would be nice to have an Italian University). If both Turin and Milano fulfil the requirements, it may be an idea to accept both rather than select one over the other.

4 FINANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE STUDENT WING

It was noted yet again that certain Universities were not happy to pay for trips to the Student Wing meetings. Twente said that finance was part of the reason for their non-attendance and it was noted that Dortmund had suggested that this was a problem was well.

Maiken noted that Aalborg have a good relationship with the University and can usually come to a consensus on payment for things at the student wing meetings.

The Student Wing noted that at the last Board Meeting, a consensus was reached on what the host university/union would pay for at each Board Meeting. It was agreed that the Student Wing should formulate a formal proposal and present it to the Board asking them to ratify the suggestions. This way, each University will be bound to follow these conditions regarding hosting Student Wing Meetings and sending representatives for Student Wing Meetings.

It was agreed that Strathclyde will formulate a proposal for these financial arrangements and circulate it amongst the members of the student wing. This gives separate institutions the chance to respond with any concerns that they have.

It was suggested that a pack could be put together informing all student representatives of what their role would be on the student wing, what would be expected of them and what they have to do.

It was noted that PR and Marketing for the ECIU is very poor. There is not enough information on the website, there is not enough information on the finances and how the courses will be funding, the contact details are not clear and this needs to be addressed since knowledge of our existence is poor.

5 STUDENT WING – PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Maiken noted that one big problem is the lack of continuity with Student Wing members especially where there is a rotating sabbatical systems like at Strathclyde and Warwick. Handovers seems to be a big problem and this is something we have to consider. It was also noted that there isn't the best structure for the student wing.

Maiken produced minutes of the third student wing meeting where there was a list of decisions and actions to be taken.

- Maiken suggested that a constitution for the ECIU should be drafted and presented to the Board Meeting. Strathclyde agreed to help formulate a constitution from a draft that Maiken would make.
- Communication is a key issue and everyone should respond to an e-mail in some manner or form, even if just a blank reply.
- Often it is difficult to know whether you are enquiring to the right person. It is the obligation of the outgoing representative to hand over to their successor. It is important to know whether there is a formal, or personal, or institution e-mail things are being sent to.
- On previous meetings it had been suggested that e-mails could go to a personal address; the eciu@institution.co.country address and finally to a continuous staff member who could act as a contact point at the students association or students union. However, only Aalborg and Hamburg-Harburg have made the effort of creating this sort of e-mail.
- It was agreed that for the logo, we would use the standard ECIU one but with the words STUDENT WING added to it. John McLean agreed that he would arrange this and give everyone a copy of the student wing logo.
- It was also agreed that if anyone was leaving the student wing then they would have to send out an e-mail and inform the student wing of this and the e-mail address of their successor.
- John McLean suggested that for Strathclyde, rather than have 2 new sabbaticals each year, that if the previous Strathclyde representative is still a student the following year (like Ian or John), then they attend the next meeting with the new President for a degree of continuity.

It was agreed that there WILL be a full delegation from every University at the next Student Wing meeting (perhaps with the exception of Mexico). We will also have to try and ensure that Barcelona has a student representative who we can at least inform of what is going on, and also encourage Dortmund and Warwick to attend meeting more regularly.

6 PROGRESS OF THE JOINT MASTERS PROGRAM

The Joint Masters Program on Material Science will be commencing in September and the participating institutions are Aveiro, Aalborg and Hamburg-Harburg. Twente and Aalborg are definitely interested in another program on innovation. Maiken has been invited to a meeting on the Joint Masters Program but is unsure if the University will be able to attend. There is also another one on Innovative Technology and 5 Universities are interested as well but nothing yet is definite.

7 STANDARDIZED WEB PAGES

John McLean suggested that all the students unions have their own web page with standard information and contact details for each institution.

It was agreed that a central site would be essential as well and could have updates and new featured on it.

It was agreed that Maiken would produce draft text for the basic information that every students union site should hold and that this is what we will all use as a basis for our webpage. This text will also be an introduction for newcomers in the Student Wing. The rest of the Student Wing members will respond to this and Maiken will

collect comments and send it to the rest of the students unions. This is important so that we know we are all holding the same information, even if it is in a different language. We will have the chance to respond to this and finalise the text that we want to use. It was also agreed that the page would feature the new student wing logo as well as our own union logo. It was agreed that the information should be standardized, but because we all use different web programs then it would be hard to standardize the colour, form and layout of the site. It was agreed that the page should have the same identity as the rest of the site for each union, so that it does not look out of place. However the information shall be the same in the language of that country with a link to the other institutions (and an addendum “to view this in Portuguese, click here” etc).

As for the main ECIU student wing page, it was agreed that we should finalise our text, and agree on our own student union sites and send the minutes of this meeting to Saskia and then begin work on our own site. It was agreed that there should be some information on our own institutions and what it is like to study there, and a few pictures. Everyone should send this text to Maiken within two months – as she has only received the text from Hamburg-Harburg.

8 QUESTIONNAIRES

Results of the questionnaire were not very impressive. The best response to the questionnaire was at Aalborg, Hamburg-Harburg had sent out a survey and they had difficulties with it. Apart from Compiègne the remaining universities did not send out the questionnaire yet, which is not enough of an effort since this has been agenda point for at least a year.

- As a general rule about 90% of students were unaware of the existence of the ECIU.
- Different Universities have different levels of interest, but Aalborg, Compiègne and Hamburg-Harburg have very high interest levels.
- At Hamburg-Harburg students were also asked which countries they would prefer to study in, and the results tended to show a greater interest in English speaking countries. This of course distorts the results, as the students would have no knowledge of what the University of that country has to offer, and rather base their choice on the city/country/language rather than the quality of the course.
- Concerns were raised that not everyone would know what a joint masters programme would be and Compiègne and Aalborg mentioned that they had brief descriptions of what this would be, so that students would have a clear idea of what this would be.
- 36% of students would be prepared to study a subject in another foreign language other than English at Hamburg-Harburg. At Aalborg, 42% said they would be prepared to do so. The comments here also mentioned that it would depend on which language they would have to study, as some of them would have a basic grounding in certain languages and it would be easier to speak some more than others.
- There was a question over whether students would pay tuition fees for these courses or not. At Aalborg – one third was positive, one third was negative and the final third expressed no particular opinion. This would depend on which University they visited and what the cost would be for the tuition fees.

It was noted that in Denmark and Scotland, students do not pay upfront tuition fees. It was also noted that this was the case in Germany but this has now changed, and students in France and Portugal have to pay tuition fees. At Hamburg-Harburg – 21% would pay tuition fees, the remainder either responded in the negative or expressed no opinion or no answer. Since fees are not hugely expensive at Compiegne, very few students would be prepared to pay high tuition fees at an international university.

- At Aalborg – there were differing responses from different faculties. 50% of the responses were from Science and Engineering, 25% of the responses were from the social sciences faculty and 25% were from the Humanistics Faculty.
- 70% or so said that they would like the idea of having a double diploma. At Harburg 62% of students also said they would like this idea.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions we have reached from this are that very few students have heard about the ECIU but many of them on hearing what we do seem very interested and think it is a good project. Many expressed the opinion that they would have become involved in the ECIU if they had heard about it earlier, and it is up to us to market and promote this as best we can to reach more students. With regards to the more specific questions, it was clear that many people would be prepared to make the effort and pay fees and even learn another language in order to participate in this scheme.

9 THE BOARD MEETING

The student wing have now had time to consider the minutes and ask John McLean questions about events at the last Board Meeting.

The Student Wing noted that it is important that when a project is begun that a long-term financial strategy should be devised rather, as often financial hardships or problems are encountered later in the day.

Maiken noted that Student Wing Input – was not noted on the agenda. John assured her that the student wing definitely had input on every agenda point, but agreed that it would be good to have a separate point, to note the achievements of student wing this year so far (as has been the case previously).

Peter noted that in relation to staff-student mobility that he thought it would be a good idea to team up with AIESEC as they are far more experienced at student internships (this has also been suggested before – both in the Student Wing and at the Board Meeting). There was some discussion on whether every Institution had an AIESEC operating and how best to work with these groups. It was also thought that it might be good to look at their website and see what they have available.

Discussion followed on the Summer Academy and the Graduate Researchers Prize.

Discussion then followed regarding the newsletter which many people found very confusing. It was unclear whether this was aimed at those involved in the ECIU or whether it could be aimed at potential students who could be involved/researchers etc. It was also noted that different logos were being used and the Student Wing felt that one should be chosen and used as we are losing a corporate identity with the use of several or more logos. Also the Student Wing felt that they would like a section of this newsletter for their own input.

- The Student Wing want a definition of what is too big according to member universities, and why is that number too big?
- Do we not feel that replacing Chalmers and Joensuu and adding another member would be good for the financial situation?
- What is the difference between a full member and an associate member?
- It was also suggested that new members joining could be subject to a penalty clause, whereby if they wished to leave the consortium then they would have to pay the membership fee for a further year after leaving, to prevent frivolous applications.

We note that the Board have set the decision to pay for two nights accommodation, and this has prompted the Student Wing to set down similar guidelines for clarity to be approved by the Board.

It was also recommended that student wing representatives consult with the university beforehand to seek approval for hosting a meeting rather than informing the University that they will have to pay afterwards. It was also suggested that in the case of Student Wing meetings that help be obtained from the general fund to pay for accommodation.

10 MARKETING AND WEB PAGES

- They should be making some form of leaflet that we can distribute within Universities and Unions informing students of the ECIU.
- If there were any other surveys etc., prizes could be offered for participation.
- Marketing tools, stationery products, ECIU folders, T-shirts.
- Maybe look at sending promotional materials/leaflets etc. to the departments most likely to have students who could be involved in the exchange programs.
- An induction pack or a small presentation leaflet that you can keep. Something that can be given to the members of the student wing as well – especially new members of the student wing who know very little about the ECIU and need a briefing to get them up to date and let them know what the ECIU is all about.
- Strathclyde could maybe have an ECIU reception for international students and tie this in with their annual international students welcome.

11 NEXT SET OF MEETINGS

The next Board Meeting is to be held in Dortmund on the 27th and 28th May 2004. As President of the Student Wing, John McLean will be attending this meeting and the Student Wing agreed that the next student wing meeting should be held at Aalborg University. Therefore as incoming President, Maiken Sorenson will also be attending. In the event of Maiken being unable to attend, Celine Delabre will attend instead.

*The proposed date for the next Student Wing meeting is 22nd-24th October. If this is unsuitable – the weekend prior to that would be acceptable.
The next Board meeting is the 18th – 19th of November.*

The meeting terminated at 16:00