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STUDENT FACTION XVI

PSB! NEWSLETTER



Introduction

Dear reader,

We are thrilled that you are joining us for the second newsletter of this academic year! In this edition, we'll bring you up to speed on the latest developments within the faculty and give you a preview of what's coming next.
We value your feedback. If there's anything about this block that isn't going as smoothly as it could, or if you have ideas for improvement, don't hesitate to reach out and share your thoughts.

Warm regards,

PSB! Faction XVI

Why This Newsletter?
We believe clear and regular communication is key to building a strong connection with students. In our policy plan, we committed to increasing our visibility and keeping you informed.
This newsletter is our tool to do just that: sharing some updates on faculty developments, our ongoing projects, and important points from the faculty council meetings. Our goal is to keep you in the loop and make sure your voice is heard.

Developments in the Faculty

Update Alternative These

In this newsletter we would like to update you about an important topic in the faculty counsel:
The thesis is under discussion at our Faculty What initially was introduced as a revision of the master's thesis now also seems to include the bachelor's thesis. A working group is currently developing an alternative, although what that alternative will look like remains unclear. What is known is that the faculty is aiming for a reduction of 25 percent in contact hours.
The proposed changes are motivated by two factors: budget cuts and the growing challenges posed by artificial intelligence. Thesis supervision is intensive and costly, and reducing contact hours would lower staff workload and expenses. At the same time, a new model is expected to better address the increasing use of generative AI in academic writing.
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The plans have started a debate. Within the faculty council, opinions are divided. While both staff and student council members also acknowledge concerns about AI, we argue that reducing supervision does not solve the problem. On the contrary, fewer contact hours may mean less insight into students' research processes and therefore less oversight of AI use.
For students aiming to pursue a research master's programme, the potential changes may carry additional consequences. The thesis has traditionally been the key moment for demonstrating independent research skills. If the structure or intensity of this component changes, it could affect both academic preparation and competitiveness. Moreover, altering the thesis is likely to have ripple effects on earlier courses designed to prepare students for research.

So far, no concrete alternative has been presented, and it remains unclear how students will be affected. Within the University of Groningen, this discussion appears to be unique to our faculty



Explaining our projects: Mental Health Working Group

The Mental Health Working Group (MHWG) is a collaborative initiative made up of students from various degree programs across the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences. We work to bridge the gap between students and the faculty by launching initiatives that promote mental health awareness and advocating for improvements to faculty-wide well-being. We hosted a Board Game Break in December - a huge thank you to everyone who joined! Missed out on the games? Don't worry! Our next event is right around the corner. Mark your calendars for March 5th for our Pub Quiz. It won't be just about mental health; we have plenty of fun topics planned as well. It's the perfect mid-block breather, so keep an eye on our social media and the faculty screens for further information.

About us

Partij Studenten Belangen (PSB) is currently the largest sitting party in the Faculty Council of Behavioural and Social Sciences of the University of Groningen. Since 2010, PSB has actively represented the interests of all students in this council. The participation of the staff and students of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences (BSS) is arranged through the Faculty Council. At the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences (BSS), this council consists of nine elected members representing the staff and nine elected members representing the students.

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