

Amsterdam 07-06-2019

To: Executive Board of the Faculty of Behavioral and Movement Sciences
From: ODC-FGB, FSR-FGB
Concerning: Response to the concept reorganization plan UCGB

Dear members of the Executive Board of the Faculty of Behavioral and Movement Sciences,

The Employee Council and the Student Council of the Faculty of Behavioral and Movement Sciences have carefully reviewed the proposed Reorganization Plan for UCGB and the concept Personnel Plan provided to us. We have also collected many responses from the employees of UCGB regarding the mentioned documents, as well as their points of concern regarding the proposed process and ultimate goals of the reorganization. We want to thank the Board for organizing the extra joint meeting (GV) on May, 29 to facilitate our understanding of the reorganization process and for extending the deadline for our response.

From the joint meeting it has become clear that the proposed plan in its current form is a concept plan that merely outlines the reorganization process without specifying the implementation details. Below we provide our response to the plan treating it exactly like it is – a concept. We want to stress that our ultimate recommendation will critically depend on the implementation details, since they will determine whether the reorganization is a success. After all, devil is in details.

1. The causes and goals of the reorganization

From the proposed plan and conversations with the FGB's Executive Board it has become clear that the reorganization has two main and tightly related causes: a content one and a financial one. The content cause is aimed at adjusting the vision of UCGB, while the financial cause is aimed at shifting away from financial losses that have been troubling UCGB for some time now. The stress, in our opinion, has been mainly placed on the content causes and goals: they are dominating the proposed plan. Discussion of financial causes is constrained to the first paragraph of the plan and is not discussed further. We believe that the financial causes and goals are just as important as the content ones for achieving a successful reorganization of UCGB. We encourage the Board to improve the formulation of financial causes for all 3 goals listed in Section 2 of the reorganization plan. This includes outlining the perspectives of the financial situation if reorganization does not take place and, most importantly, providing an analysis of how the proposed changes will be reflected in financial wins. We believe that such an analysis will provide a better and more global overview of the situation and provide a better explanation of the context for the proposed reorganizational choices.

2. The move of Master Docent HGZO and related products to VUMC

The general impression of the ODC, as well as the employees of team SZV, is that the plan in its current form contains very limited explanation for choices for the proposed implementation of

the Master at VUMC. While the choice for moving only 3 employees may be justified, it is not transparent (neither to the ODC, nor to the employees, judging from their response) what the “unique qualities” necessary for selection for transfer to the VUMC were. In addition, it is necessary to provide a schematic illustration and explanation of how the tasks/products of the HGZO master are coupled to the personnel and how much extra personnel would be needed to support the tasks/products of the master. Such an overview is crucial for both the management and the employees. Since the employees are uniform in indicating that extra personnel will be needed in some form or another, it is necessary to include the details of how this will be implemented (hour contracts, secondment, etc.)

We would like to stress that explanations for proposed choices and implementation details are of critical importance for making this transfer a success. We strongly advise to closely involve the employees of the team SZV, and in particular the director and coordinator of education, in crafting the implementation details. Since they will be the ones running the Master and related products at the new location, they need to take an active part in the decision-making process.

3. Reorganization of UCGB from 5 to 3 units/teams

Our analysis of this proposed change shows that it has a long history. The transformation from 5 into 3 units was started in consultation and involvement of the employees of UCGB. The goal of this transformation was to increase collaboration within UCGB, which would in turn improve its quality and efficiency. The current reorganization is planned to finish this transformation. However, from the current plan it is not yet clear (neither to us, nor to the employees, judging from their reactions), how the collaboration will be achieved. The plan contains only the mechanics of the transformation from 5 teams to 3, but the implementation details of embedding the employees of team SEN and team SZV into bigger teams VO and HO to promote collaboration are absent. It remains unclear to the employees how their expertise will be used, how they fit into the existing teams and what their new tasks would be. At the same time, the concerns of the current members of the teams VO and HO regarding receiving new colleagues are also palpable. They are not sure what the roles of the new members would be and worry whether there is enough work for everyone.

We strongly advise to provide an overview of the existing tasks/products for each team and to illustrate how each new member fits in the existing structure and what tasks are expected from him/her. Just as in the previous point, it is absolutely necessary to closely involve the employees in this process. Each employee needs to have a clear idea about his or her future in the new team and the proposed goal of collaboration should still be the central focus in this process.

4. The move of valorization, POPS, DOC-MB, DOC-BW to the department of Movement Sciences

This point is largely unspecified in the proposed plan. As such, it is completely unclear how the proposed products will be functioning after their transfer to the department of Movement Sciences. The plan indicates that one person will be transferred to the department of Movements Sciences. However, it appears that this person will not be responsible for the

products/tasks that are being transferred to the Faculty. Furthermore, we were informed that the personnel transfer was finalized before the reorganization plan was finished. This lack of clarity, unfortunately, leads to unnecessary agitation among the employees. As before, an overview of the tasks/products and their coupling to employees responsible for their implementation is crucial for success of this action.

5. Responses of UCGB employees

We have received a large sample of responses from the employees of UCGB regarding the proposed reorganization plan. These responses were used to formulate our response to the plan. Another signal that was clear from many responses is the stressful environment and high workload currently in place at UCGB. The current teams VO and HO are considered by many employees to be fully staffed, meaning that there is no extra work available. This raises concerns regarding further increasing the size of the teams due to reorganization. We urge that the risks of increasing already high workload are assessed and communicated in the reorganization plan. We have also received alarming signals regarding increasing loss of confidence in the management team of UCGB. Besides it being an issue on its own, in the context of reorganization, this means that special care should be taken in closely involving the employees in the decision-making process in order to make the reorganization a success.

6. Timeline

As ODC we are concerned about the extremely compact timeline in which the proposed reorganization is expected to take place. Given the concerns outlined above we strongly encourage to take the time to come up with the implementation details of the proposed plan that is optimally tailored to the needs of all employees of UCGB.

7. Master students

Reorganization of UCGB also concerns HGZO master students. It is important that students are informed about the transfer of their master to the VUMC as soon as the decision is taken. We encourage to incorporate the timing of this event into the reorganization plan. In addition, it is not clear which student organization will represent the students: would it be the Student Council of the Faculty or of the VUMC?

8. Inaccuracies

The current plan contains several significant inaccuracies. For example, on p.3, second line from the bottom, it says that the Master HGZO is being transferred to the departments within the Faculty. We urge that the next version is written more carefully.

We hope that the provided feedback will help to reach the common goal of a successful reorganization of the UCGB. The ODC and the FSR are prepared to work closely with the Faculty Board to optimize this process.

With best regards,

On behalf of the Employee Council and the Student Council of the Faculty of Behavioral and Movement Sciences,

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