

Ontwikkelgesprek cluster Economie VU Government-funded programmes

Friday 18 November 2022

Panel: Prof. dr. H. van Ees, prof. dr. N. Hermes, prof. dr. W. van Grembergen, prof. dr. A. Jorissen, J. Kikkert, BSc en M. Delmartino, MA (secretary)

SBE: Prof. dr. H. de Groot, dr. S. Dobbelaere, prof. dr. E. Beutner, dr. A. Estevez Fernandez, prof. dr. B. Heidergott, dr. H. Karabiyik, prof. dr. H. Koster, dr. A. Aydinli, prof. dr. J. Boter, prof. dr. C. Camfferman, prof. dr. R. Zwinkels, dr. N. Seeger, dr. T. Artiga Gonzalez, prof. dr. T. Budding, dr. S. Telg, dr. E. Wiersma

It was decided before the development meeting to cover the topics of active blended learning and internationalisation.

Active Blended Learning

- How do you organize the right balance between campus and online education?
- What is the added value of campus education? For which education components is the campus essential?
- Are there any points of attention for quality? Do we need to organize our quality assurance differently?

SBE and the VU as a whole feel that they are a “campus organization”. We do however want to strike a proper balance when it comes to the digitalisation of education. We have been working on the (implementation of) an Active Blended Learning (ABL) policy. The chair mentions that, during the meetings, the panel did not get a real idea of an ABL strategy. They did however hear examples of innovative teaching techniques.

Some further clarification of ABL is given. Roughly one year ago the team for ABL was put together. The team not only consists of scientific staff but also of support staff specifically dedicated to ABL. The team has gathered information from different perspectives within the School. The ABL team is now active in supplying departments with further information about ABL and the possibilities that come with it. SBE’s goal is to activate students with ABL and have an optimum mix of online and offline education. A canon of digital sources that includes knowledge clips of the most important concepts that feature in multiple programmes is being developed. There is also collaboration with the VU Teaching and Learning Center.

The panel likes the concepts being presented and appreciates the idea of activating students; the panel also emphasizes that students learn most when being part of a community. The panel also stresses that providing a large number of technologies for them to use is not enough; they need to receive guidance and content specific to their needs.

The panel also adds that using the right technology that works every time is of paramount importance. Next to this, active participation by students is also a requirement.

Internationalisation

- What are some good examples of internationalisation (in programmes) seen during the visit?
- What are areas of development that SBE can further work on?
- How can this be integrated in individual programmes (and what is the programme directors’ opinion on this)?

The concept of internationalisation at SBE is introduced and it is explained to be more than just attracting a large number of international students and staff. Departments within SBE also need to have the opportunity to finetune internationalisation efforts to their tastes.

The panel mentions that an international classroom can work very well. Indeed, being part of an international network can be a very valuable asset. Students going abroad is a very valuable experience as well, though housing can be a challenge. In addition, students from different nationalities can also collaborate in virtual classrooms, organized jointly with international partners.

The panel also feels that students need to be able to learn from each other's cultures. In practice students often don't interact with students from other countries. Teaching students intercultural skills is therefore very important: making everybody feel at home requires more than only mixing students in classrooms. You have to think about how foreign students perceive their new environment. The panel mentions that one of the ways you can further investigate intercultural skills is through questionnaires.

The panel also suggests to investigate whether current (phrasing in) documentation affects students less familiar with Dutch higher education, i.e. international students and/or students from disadvantaged backgrounds.