

# **Academic Student Council est. 2011**

## **Policy Manual**

**academic  
student  
council**

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## Section 1

### Article 1: Status of the policy manual

- a. All regulations and aims set forth in the ASC Statutes will be upheld.
- b. The Policy Manual functions as the by-laws of the Statutes.
- c. Should the Policy Manual conflict with the Statutes, then the latter will be upheld.
- d. All ASC members should be familiar with the contents of the Policy Manual and the Statutes.
- e. ASC will inform the UCU Management and student body on changes in the Policy Manual.
- f. The student body will be given the opportunity to comment on the changes in the Policy Manual. In the case that 5% of the student population express their objections, an official voting among the student population will be organized on the proposed changes in the policy manual.

### Article 2: Language

- a. As the official language at UCU is English, English is the official language of ASC.  
English is the language that will be used for:
  - i. Internal communication, both spoken and written;
  - ii. All documentation wherever possible;
  - iii. Communication towards UCU students;
  - iv. Communication with external parties whenever ASC deems this necessary.

## Section 2

### Article 3: Members of ASC and Task Description

#### *Chair*

The chair carries the overall responsibility for ASC's functioning and is expected to:

- a. Function as the motivating factor for ASC members, and ensure that each member functions to the best of their abilities.
- b. Represent the position of ASC to relevant parties in and out of UCU.
- c. Be the (Vice-) Chair of the College Council.
- d. Be aware of all on-going matters within ASC as well as all relevant academic matters at UCU and keep an overview of these matters at all times. In order to do so, the ASC Chair will:
  - i. Make sure the other ASC members are aware of all academic rules and regulations and the functioning of the tutor group, College Council, the Management Team, the Exam Board and the College Board;
  - ii. Act as a contact person for all UCU related parties such as the UCU Management and the UCSA, unless decided otherwise by the ASC members;
  - iii. Serve as a contact person for parties external to UCU, such as the Uraad, ISO and Vidius, unless decided otherwise by the ASC members.

### *Student Assessor*

The Student Assessor is expected to:

- a. Be the official student representative in the College Board.
- b. Attend all Management Team meetings.
- c. Attend the College Council meetings as an observer.
- d. Maintain contact with Student Assessors from other UU faculties, among others, by means of attending College van Utrechtse Assessoren meetings.
- e. Strive to uphold professional standards with the UCU Management and be discrete with the information provided in all meetings with the UCU Management.

### *Academic Affairs Officers (AAO)*

The Academic Affairs Officers are the executive members of the ASC and their overall responsibility is to:

- a. Take seat in the College council, which involves:
  - i. Being informed of and representing students' views on relevant academic issues;
  - ii. Being informed of the UCU rules and regulations;
  - iii. Preparing and advising on UCU policy and policy documents.
- b. Be the main contact person for the departmental student representatives and student assistants, this includes:
  - i. Attending and participating in all student representatives' meetings whenever possible.
- c. Communicate with faculty, tutors and staff in order to:
  - i. Organize discussions with faculty when deemed necessary, always in cooperation with the faculty representatives in the college council;
  - ii. Handle course complaints;
  - iii. Sit in on tutor meetings when deemed beneficial;
  - iv. Maintain contact with the Fellows of the AAO's relevant department in order to be informed on changes in tracks;
  - v. Handle any other situation which requires communication between students and faculty, in which students' interest are at stake.
- d. Take up academic initiatives of any sort, including but not limited to the organization of the following annual events if and when it is seen that there is sufficient interest from the student body:
  - i. Master's information event in cooperation with the career development officer;
  - ii. Thesis information event
  - iii. The UU and UCU teacher of the year awards
- e. Function as the antennas of ASC and, therefore, serve as the main communication channel with the student body, this involves:
  - i. Being proactive in finding issues that students cope with;
  - ii. Employing focus groups, questionnaires or any other research method to detect students' academic issues.

### **Article 4: Council Functions**

*All members of ASC have a shared duty to perform the following tasks:*

- a. Tasks regarding UCU as an academic institution, including but not limited to:
  - i. Taking seat in the College Council (CC) and being obliged to attend the CC meetings where an official vote can be cast, with the exception of the counsellor taking seat in the College Board (CB) and notifying both parties in case of absence;
  - ii. Attending all Management Team-ASC (MT) meetings and notifying both parties in case of absence.

- b. Tasks regarding students' academic well-being, including but not limited to:
  - i. Having office hours;
  - ii. Being able to assist students with any questions concerning the academic rules and regulations of UCU, or redirecting students to the appropriate person;
  - iii. Being able to assist students with problems related to courses, such as complaints concerning course content or teachers.
- c. Organisational tasks, including but not limited to:
  - i. Recognizing that cooperation with affiliate bodies is important and making a continuous effort to sustain this cooperation;
  - ii. Maintaining a clear image and communication of ASC towards the UCU Student Body, Management, Faculty, Staff and any other affiliated body;
  - iii. Striving towards minimal overlap in activities with the CLF and UCSA.
- d. Being familiar with other policy documents, including but not limited to:
  - i. The ASC Statutes;
  - ii. The UCU Academic Rules and Regulations;
  - iii. The College Council Regulations (Reglement);
  - iv. The Quality Management Plan;
  - v. The Exam Board protocol;
  - vi. The "Wet op hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek" (WHW);
  - vii. The "Faculteitsreglement";
  - viii. The procedures on personnel and staff employment.

**Article 5: Course reduction**

- a. All members have the right to a maximum of 2 course reductions per semester.
- b. Each member is expected to dedicate the time offered to them in the form of course reductions to ASC related functions.

**Article 6: ASC Elections**

- a. Elections shall be held at the end of the spring semester of each academic year of University College Utrecht.
- b. All students enrolled at UCU at the time of elections, including students that are on exchange at UCU and students that are on exchange somewhere else are eligible to vote in the elections for the Academic Student Council.
- c. All students enrolled for at least one more full academic year at UCU after the elections, and that are not on exchange the following year are eligible to run in the elections for the Academic Student Council.
- d. Elections shall be announced at least 30 days before they are to take place, not including the day of the announcement, nor the day of the elections. Candidates must make their desire to participate in the elections known at least 48 hours before the elections are to take place.
- e. Candidates may write an election statement, which will be made public to all UCU students if possible at least 48 hours prior to the elections.
- f. Candidates have to introduce themselves briefly at the Elections Event by means of a short speech prior to the elections, after which they should be available for questions:
  - i. Those candidates that are unable to present themselves at the Elections Event may prepare a video message or write an official letter, to be presented or read out during the Elections Event;

- ii. Candidates not present at the Elections Event must be available for answering questions through any means of communication, unless deemed practically impossible by ASC.

**Article 7: Voting at ASC Elections**

- a. All UCU students have the right to cast one anonymous vote.
- b. The candidates with the most votes get elected for their respective position in ASC.
- c. In the case of more than 50% abstentions for the position of chair and/or student assessor, a re-run shall be organised between the original candidates and potential new candidates, within five days of the original elections, not including the day of the original nor of the day of the new elections:
  - i. New candidates must submit their candidacy at least 48 hours prior to the re-run of the elections.
  - ii. Only those students who have voted in the original elections are allowed to vote in the re-run.
- d. In the case that two candidates for the same position get the same number of votes, a re-run shall be organised between these two candidates only, within five days of the original elections, not including the day of the original nor the day of the new elections:
  - i. Only those students who have voted in the original elections are allowed to vote in the re-run.
- e. The elections event will consist of speeches and questions (see article 6).
- f. Voting will be made possible via:
  - i. Paper ballots during the elections event.
  - ii. Unless practically deemed impossible, an online voting system will be made available for those who did not vote with a paper ballot.
  - iii. After picking up the ballot, voting online will be made unavailable for the corresponding person.
  - iv. Online voting will be made available for 48 hours after the end of the elections event.
  - v. Anonymity and safety will be guaranteed.
  - vi. If possible, the speeches of the elections will be made available in the online system of ASC.
  - vii. If an online system is deemed impossible by the current Academic Student Council, a paper ballot voting system shall be put in place with proper authorization procedures for those students that cannot attend the elections event for any reason.
- g. Any matters relevant to the ASC Elections which are not addressed in this Policy Manual or the ASC Statutes will be decided upon by ASC.

**Article 8: Transition Period**

- a. The duties of the outgoing and incoming members of the ASC during the transition period, i.e. the period between the Elections Event and beginning of the new Academic Year, are as follows:
  - i. The outgoing members of ASC shall make themselves available for questions at all times during the transition period;
  - ii. The outgoing members of the ASC shall edit the Council Book. The Chair is in charge of the finalization and transfer of this Council Book;
  - iii. The outgoing members are required to meet with the newly elected ASC with all new members present at least two times a week until the end of the Spring semester;

- iv. Each incoming Council member should meet his/her predecessor on an individual basis as often as the outgoing ASC member deems necessary;
  - v. Each arriving Council member should be present at meetings of the outgoing ASC, if at all possible; this includes but is not limited to ASC meetings as well as meetings with the UCU management, the College Council and the College Board;
  - vi. Should an arriving member feel that he or she is not being or has not been trained properly, he or she can contact the ASC Advisory Council.
- b. The Council book is the document in which the current ASC members describe their functioning, main tasks, and results of their year in ASC. It serves as a cumulative transition document, passed on from year to year.

**Article 9: Vacancies**

- a. Should any member of ASC resign or be incapacitated during the year, one of the following steps must be taken:
- i. By redistributing the tasks among the remaining Council members, only if holding elections is deemed impractical due to time constraints;
  - ii. By appointing one of the remaining Council members to the vacant position and electing a new member;
  - iii. By electing a new member to the vacant position.

**Article 10: ASC Meetings**

- a. ASC shall meet at least twice a week during the semesters of University College Utrecht.
- b. An ASC member present at the meeting and appointed for that purpose by the Chair shall take minutes on the proceedings of the ASC meetings.
- c. Minutes made by ASC during meetings are confidential. Only in the case of investigations by the law will these be made available to the appropriate organs.
- d. Abstracts of minutes of ASC meetings shall be available upon request to any UCU student, so long as the contents are not deemed confidential on professional grounds.

**Section 3**

**Article 11: Distribution of positions**

- a. The chair of ASC will always take seat in the College Council and will hold the position of chair or vice-chair.
- b. By default, the Student Assessor will take seat in the College Board.
- c. The Student Assessor will attend and participate in UCU Management Team meetings.

**Article 12: Obligations**

- a. All ASC members should attend all meetings that their function requires.
- b. All ASC members must uphold high professional standards of work, ethics, confidentiality and discretion, as would reasonably be expected by the student body they represent.

**Section 4**

**Article 13:** The Advisory Council

- a. The Advisory Council consists of up to 15 former ASC members:
  - i. Members of the Advisory Council hold their position for the minimum duration of one year with a maximum duration of 5 years;
  - ii. The Advisory Council shall elect a chair and secretary from its midst;
  - iii. The chair of the Advisory Council is in charge of approaching outgoing ASC members to join the Advisory Council while maintaining the maximum number of members as mentioned in article 13 a.
- b. ASC must meet the Advisory Council at least twice a year, with an agenda set in mutual agreement:
  - i. The Advisory Council will present recommendations on the workings of ASC. No advice of the Advisory Council shall be binding upon ASC;
  - ii. ASC is entitled to request advice from the Advisory Council whenever ASC deems this necessary.
- c. The Advisory Council may pass advice to ASC, either after having discussed the matter at hand in a meeting, or after a written discussion.
- d. The Advisory Council may advise only the current ASC, unless ASC decides otherwise.

## Section 5

**Article 14:** Communication with the UCSA

- a. ASC must inform the UCSA of its work, therefore:
  - i. ASC and UCSA Board will have two informative meetings per semester, or more often when deemed necessary, to be arranged by the chairs, with an agenda set in mutual agreement;
  - ii. An abstract of the minutes of ASC meetings may be distributed to the UCSA Board upon request;
  - iii. The UCSA chair and the ASC chair will meet every 2 weeks with an agenda set in mutual agreement;
  - iv. The UCSA Board member responsible for the CLF and the Student Assessor will meet every 2 weeks with an agenda set in mutual agreement.
- b. Commitments set in the UCSA Policy Manual article 36 will be upheld by ASC.

**Article 15:** Communication with the management of UCU

- a. The Management Team and ASC meet at least twice a semester.
- b. All ASC members are obliged to be present at these meetings.
- c. All ASC members may schedule additional meetings with any members of the UCU management as they see fit.

**Article 16:** Communication with the Student Representatives and Student Assistants

- a. ASC should be aware of the student representatives' and assistants' projects in order to prevent any miscommunication and overlap. For this purpose it is important that:
  - i. ASC receives the minutes of the student representatives' and assistants' meetings;
  - ii. ASC informs the student reps. and assistants on the projects they work on and the course complaints they receive;

- iii. At least one ASC member sits in on the meetings of the student representatives and students assistants when possible.

**Article 17:** Communication with the UCU student body

- a. The UCU student body is kept aware of ASC's functioning by means of:
  - i. The ASC newsletter, or ASC Update, to be sent out at least once a month or more often if deemed necessary;
  - ii. Organizing information events to which all UCU students are invited;
  - iii. Updating the ASC section on the UCU intranet regularly;
  - iv. Any other informative meeting ASC deems necessary.
- b. At any time when ASC is engaged in or strives towards considerable reforms or changes in academic affairs, it must solicit the expression of a democratic opinion from the UCU student body as a whole:
  - i. Such an opinion, although it cannot be binding, must be considered with the utmost seriousness, and given attributed a very high significance for ASC's actions;
  - ii. This opinion may be solicited through extensive questionnaires, advisory votes at UCSA General Assemblies, or a vote at an ASC information event.

**Article 18:** Communication with the URaad

- a. Communication with the URaad takes place between the relevant member of the URaad and one or more ASC members.
- b. The ASC member(s) and the URaad contact person meet at least once per semester to present mutual updates.
- c. All ASC members can contact URaad members additionally as they see fit.

**Article 18:** Communication with other University Colleges

- a. ASC should strive for cooperation with other university colleges wherever possible, therefore the ASC shall:
  - i. Take an active and leading stance in cooperating with other UCs within the framework of the UCSRN in cooperation with the UCSA Board;
  - ii. Attend inter-UC summits and other inter-UC meetings where councils are present.

## Section 6

**Article 20:** Events

- a. All annual academic events mentioned under Article 20b shall be organized by ASC if it is seen that there is sufficient interest in them from the student body.
- b. The annual academic events over ASC shall organize are at least, but not limited to:
  - i. The Master's event;
  - ii. The Thesis event;
  - iii. The UU and UCU teacher of the year award.
- c. Non-academic events such as intraweek events or the College Hall pub crawl may be organized if the ASC members see them as promoting ASC's goals.

**Article 21: The ASC budget**

ASC receives its budget from:

- a. College Hall for the basic functioning of ASC as specified in the UCU Reglement:
  - i. At the end of each academic year, ASC will compose a detailed budget for the coming year, which will be sent to the UCU Management for approval;
  - ii. The set funds provided by the UCU administration will be transferred to the ASC account no later than September of each academic year;
  - iii. ASC, together with the UCSA Auditing Team, shall compile and provide the UCU Management Team and Comptroller with an audit report evaluating ASC's financial administration on a yearly basis.
- b. The UCSA:
  - i. A fixed amount of €400 per year set in mutual agreement and conditioned by ASC's functioning according to its policy manual, as specified in article 36 of the UCSA Policy Manual.

**Article 21: Annual Audit**

- a. The ASC will be audited twice a year along with the UCSA audits by the UCSA Auditing Team.
- b. The Audit will be performed according to UCSA Statutes articles 19 and 21, and articles 38 and 39 of the UCSA Policy Manual.
- c. An auditing guideline shall be formulated containing the required contents of the annual report. This guideline shall be established in cooperation between ASC and the Auditing Team. Changes to this guideline may be made only with mutual consent.
- d. Following each audit, ASC and the UCSA Auditing Team are to compile a detailed Audit Report evaluating ASC's financial administration.
- e. Each Audit Report shall be submitted to the UCU Management and Comptroller.
- f. Each Audit report shall be mentioned at each UCSA Budget General Assembly, together with the general Auditing Team report.