

STUDENTS' COUNCIL – TERM 2014-2016
3rd MEETING OCTOBER, 22nd 2014
MINUTES

On Wednesday, October 22nd 2014, at 16:00, in room 132 of SISSA (International School for Advanced Studies) in Trieste (IT), the Students' Council – summoned by electronic mail on October, 17th – gathers.

There are present:

| | Components | Role | P | E | A |
|----|------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 | Claudia MANCUSO | President – School Council – Phys. | X | | |
| 2 | Silvia CORSINI | Senate | X | | |
| 3 | Cristiano DE NOBILI | Senate | X | | |
| 4 | Matteo CASATI | Board of Directors | X | | |
| 5 | Massimo LUMACA | Board of Directors | X | | |
| 6 | Domenico MONACO | Evaluation Unit | X | | |
| 7 | Piermarco FONDA | School Council | | X | |
| 8 | Paolo GIDONI | School Council – MA | X | | |
| 9 | Yamil VIDAL DOS SANTOS | School Council – CNS - VP | X* | | |
| 10 | Federico ISEPPON | School Council - NB | | | X |
| 11 | Giuseppe PUGLISI | AP | | | X |
| 12 | Mauro VALLI | APP | | X | |
| 13 | Lorenzo DEL RE | CM | | | X |
| 14 | Giovanni PINAMONTI | SBP | X | | |
| 15 | Alessio CHIOCCHETTA T. | SP | X* | | |
| 16 | Pietro BARATELLA | TPP | | X | |
| 17 | Francesco BOAROTTO | AM | | X | |
| 18 | Giorgio SCATTAREGGIA | GEOM | X | | |
| 19 | Gianluca ORLANDO | MAMA | X | | |
| 20 | Nicolò PIAZZALUNGA | MP | | X | |
| 21 | Cristina FIMIANI | SFG | X | | |
| | Guillaume CASTEX | Postdoc - Senate | | X | |
| | Sandro BOTTARO | Postdoc - Physics | | X | |
| | Giuliano LAZZARONI | Postdoc - Mathematics | | | X |
| | Paolo VATTA | Postdoc - Neuroscience | | | X |

Legend: P present, E excused, A absent. * see in the minutes variations; ° participates for specific points of the agenda

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Claudia MANCUSO, President of the Students' Council is the chairperson. Reporting secretary is Matteo Casati.

The President, after verifying the legal number of the participants (13/21) opens the meeting with the following agenda:

- 1 Discussion and approval of last meeting' minutes**
- 2 Report of the meeting with the Director for the Welcome Day**
- 3 SCHOOL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES. Nomination of the students' representatives in Library Users Committee, ITCS Users Committee, CUG, Safety on the workplace.**
- 4 STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL. Composition and appointment of their members.**
- 5 SCIENTIFIC TRIP/MISSIONS.**
 - 5.1 Report of the Area Budgets 2014 and of Neurobiology expenditures.**
 - 5.2 Delays in the authorization and settlement of missions.**
- 6 MEETINGS OF THE GOVERING BODIES**
 - 6.1 Report of the meeting of the Board of September, 23rd**
 - 6.2 Report of the meeting of the School Council of October, 1st**
 - 6.3 Report of the meeting of the Senate of October, 21st**
- 7 Any other business**

Before the starting of the discussion, the President asks to integrate the agenda with the topic

DIDACTICS. Progress Report policy

to be discussed after point 6. The Council APPROVES.

The discussion is opened at 16:10

1. Discussion and approval of last meeting's Council

The President illustrates the minutes drafted by Yamil VIDAL DOS SANTOS, reporting secretary of the last meeting.

After a brief discussion, the Council APPROVES the minutes unanimously.

2. Report of the meeting with the Director for the Welcome Day

The President reports about the meeting about the organization of the Welcome Day, that will be held on November, 19th.

The programme will include an introductory video that mixes official statistics and more amusing activities and facts about SISSA. Claudia MANCUSO and Cristiano DE NOBILI are in charge of realizing it together with SISSA Medialab; there will be 4 people speaking in the video to be still appointed, and two students giving an interview: Arsenij TITOV (TPP) and Xiaoting FU (APP).

The 4 people to be selected should be 3 students and 1 postdocs, in such a way that they are as diverse as possible.

During the ceremony there will be two students and a postdoc addressing a five minute speech each. One of the students will belong to SISSA Club. The other speech will focus on the

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institutional activity of the students' representatives. Domenico MONACO volunteers for the speech.

The SISSA Talents project, already presented to 3rd and 4th year students in September, will be presented to all the SISSA Community. For the presentation, we need one student who completed his/her profile and explain how it works and why it is an opportunity for all the students. Giovanni PINAMONTI proposes Francesco DI PALMA (who has just graduated in SBP), who was among the first ones to test the web application. The President is put in charge to arrange his participation.

The Welcome Day ceremony will last from 9.30 to 12.25. As usual, it will include a presentation of the three scientific Areas of SISSA and the awarding of the best PhD theses defended in 2013-14 and of the 'special prize of the Director' lottery among the students who completed the Evaluation Survey in due time. The *lectio magistralis* will be delivered by an astrophysicist who is a woman, to be still picked out. After the *lectio* there will be refreshments as usual.

The Council is reminded that the Welcome Day is the formal opening of the year and all the community is urged to participate.

3. SCHOOL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES. Nomination of the students' representatives in Library Users Committee, ITCS Users Committee, CUG, Safety on the workplace.

In the meeting of September, 29th the Council discussed the need of renewing the students' representation in the Executive Committees and, after that some councillors volunteered (SCATTAREGGIA for Didactics, FIMIANI for the General Services, PINAMONTI for ITCS Users Committee), the Board was put in charge to explore the availability of other people out of the Council.

Upon request of the School Administration, the Board officially submitted the nomination of Giorgio SCATTAREGGIA for the Didactics Committee and of Cristina FIMIANI for the General Services Committees on October, 7th.

After the availability communicated during last meeting, the President proposes to appoint Giovanni PINAMONTI as students' representative in the ITCS Users Committee; moreover, the President proposes to appoint Alessio BELENCHIA, 3rd year student in APP, as students' representative in the Library Users Committee.

The Council RATIFIES the nominations of Giorgio SCATTAREGGIA and Cristina FIMIANI.

The Council APPROVES the appointment of Giovanni PINAMONTI as students' representative in the ITCS Users Committee, with the abstention of PINAMONTI himself.

The Council APPROVES unanimously the appointment of Alessio BELENCHIA as students' representative in the Library Users Committee.

Matteo CASATI informs the Council that, after ceasing from his office, Alessandro DI FILIPPO (CNS) has still been a member of the CUG (Comitato Unico di Garanzia for gender equality and wellbeing on the workplace). Having expired the requirements for being part of such a committee, and considering that he is going to graduate in few months, the President asks the Council to nominate a new *full member* of the CUG. According to the law and to the School's regulation, the replacement should be a *male* (for gender equality reasons) students' representative either in the Senate or in the Board. The official nomination shall be accomplished by the students' representatives in the Senate and in the Board themselves. After a long discussion among the representatives in the Senate and the Board of Directors, the Council proposes Cristiano DE NOBILI, with his abstention.

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Alessandro DI FILIPPO is also one of the two current students' representatives for the safety in the workplace, together with Gianluca PIETRA (NB). With a view to Alessandro's forthcoming graduation, the President informs the Council that a new representative should be appointed. The Council postpones the nomination since DI FILIPPO will be in office until his graduation in January.

4. STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

After the approval of the Regulation of the Students' Council, the President tells that the three standing committees dictated by the Regulation should be composed.

The President reminds that the scope of the standing committees is to make surveys and elaborate proposals, both upon the indication of the Council or by their own initiative, to be discussed in the Students' Council. The III Committee is, moreover, in charge of the external communication of the Council's activities and decisions. After a brief explanation of the content of each committee, the present Councillors agree to compose the Committees as following.

I. DIDACTICS

Silvia CORSINI
Paolo GIDONI
Giovanni PINAMONTI
Giorgio SCATTAREGGIA

II. SERVICES

Matteo CASATI
Cristina FIMIANI
Domenico MONACO
Gianluca ORLANDO

III. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

Crisitano DE NOBILI
Massimo LUMACA
Claudia MANCUSO

After a brief discussion, the Council appoints this committees ad interim, with the prescription that the composition of the committees can be changed in the next meeting of the Committee collecting the availability of the Councillors who were absent. In particular, the Council proposes that Francesco BOAROTTO may become a member of the III Committee, given that he is the most experienced in managing websites among the Councillors.

The spokespersons of the three committees will be elected in the first meetings of the committees themselves and shall be communicated during the next meeting of the Council.

Alessio CHIOCCHETTA T. leaves at 17.05

5. SCIENTIFIC TRIPS/MISSIONS

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5.1 Report of the Area Budgets 2014 and of Neurobiology expenditures

Matteo CASATI reports in full detail the Areas' allotments for the scientific trips of PhD students in 2014 budget (*All. 1*).

After the troubles discussed in the previous meetings about the late and underfunded approvals of the NB students to FENS, Federico ISEPPON has drafted a full account of all the money spent on scientific trips during the last academic year (*All. 2, presented with the visible names*).

An animated discussion starts. It is apparent, from the data we collected, that on the NB budget there are enough money to pay the full amount requested by the students.

Giovanni PINAMONTI points out that the information provided in *All. 1* about the ratio between the money allocated for students' and other scientific personnel's trips is not a good indicator, if not weighted by the number of people in each group. Moreover, about the NB issue, it might be possible that, at the moment of the approval, the second tranche of the budget had not been approved yet, thus preventing the students to get the requested amount of money.

Matteo CASATI agrees on the first remark and assures that he is going to add the suggested parameter. About NB, he reminds that, since the approval of the II tranche was delayed (in July as opposite as May, because of the passage to the Conto Economico Patrimoniale), the Board of Directors gave the Areas the possibility to ask for an advance payment – most of the PhD courses got it and used it for the scientific trips, but NB did not ask or received it. On the other hand, the amount of money paid exceed the first tranche of the budget; to be sure about what happened one should check the dates of the trips approvals and payments.

Yamil VIDAL DOS SANTOS reminds how already in June with the ISAC we pointed out the need of more transparency in the money usage and in the administrative procedures (we were referring to the lab supplies' purchase).

Giovanni PINAMONTI highlights how an excessive transparency – such as making publicly available the data we collected – may not be advisable (the budget is public, the detailed expenses usually are not) and moreover might harm the students themselves, for instance preventing the students from getting more than the 'strict pro-capite' quota of the trips budget. The common sense of allocating a (more or less) standard quota pro capite, knowing that not all the students will enjoy it but that the ones who will are going to have enough money, and that the next year someone else will 'borrow' money from his/her fellow colleagues, may vanish if everyone knows about the personal record of trips of the colleagues.

Claudia MANCUSO adds that the main source of inconvenience is that the trips were approved with months of delay with respect to the requests, so that people had already arranged and paid both the fees and the accommodation expenses before knowing how much they would have been refunded.

Silvia CORSINI points out the apparently inexplicable difference of reimbursements among the students who attended the same conference, ranging from 250 to 600 EUR, and the lack of explanations got from the Area Secretariat until now.

The Council charges Federico ISEPPON (absent to the meeting) to get the official documents about the students' trips (namely, the M1 and M2 that anyone can download by himself/herself) in order to go to the Area Secretariat of Neuroscience with official data, asking for a precise explanation of the adopted policy.

5.2 Delays in the authorization and settlement of missions.

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Matteo CASATI reports about the general issues with the authorization and the settlement (*liquidazioni*) of the missions, that also affected the Neurobiology issue, as pointed out by Claudia MANCUSO.

It results that at the moment the missions are settled almost six months after their conclusion, despite the Piano dei Servizi states that they must be paid in 45 days. After an exchange of mail with the Accounting Office, the employees claim that they are too few and hence are forced to be late.

After a detailed discussion, the Council charges Matteo CASATI of officially complaining with the General Secretary and asking for a 'task-force' to get rid of the backlog.

Yamil VIDAL DOS SANTOS leaves at 17.44.

The President is asked to check the legal number; the present Councillors are 11/21, so there is the quorum to proceed with the meeting.

6. MEETINGS OF THE GOVERNING BODIES

6.1 Report of the meeting of the Board of September, 23rd

Matteo CASATI asks the Councillors to read the report of the past meeting of the Board of Directors, already sent to the mailing list (*All. 3*).

6.2 Report of the meeting of the School Council of October, 1st

Domenico MONACO briefly reports about the meeting of the School Council for the candidatures to the office of Director. The stance of the students' representatives in the School Council, as emerged from the last meeting and carefully discussed among them, was to have just two 'second inning' candidates in order to make the final winner stronger, and to support the candidatures of prof. BIANCHI and CARROZZA. The School Council voted for calling two candidates, and after a poll prof. CARROZZA and RUFFO were selected – as proposed by the Search Committee. Prof. Ruffo has already come to SISSA and has met the students' representatives. Prof. Carrozza is visiting SISSA at the end of November.

6.3 Report of the meeting of the Senate of October, 21st

Silvia CORSINI briefly reports about the meeting of the Academic Senate. The most relevant topic is the Code of Behaviour, that is not about all the students but only for the one sitting in administrative bodies.

Moreover, there have been approved the requests of delayed defenses and the admission to the II, III and IV year of the students whose academic year starts in November. Among them, it should be noticed that in the attachments to the Senate meeting there was no mention about people admitted with a reservation (*con riserva*), namely who still have to give the progress exam: they were listed together with the already admitted ones. It has been reported that just one student has not been admitted to the next year.

7. DIDACTICS. Progress Report policy

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Domenico MONACO informs the Council that there have recently been issues with Progress Reports. If a student does not pass the exam, he/she has to give it again. Sometimes the students have not been informed of the outcome of their Progress and of the need of a repeat. In general, the policy is very different among the PhD courses: in Neuroscience, for instance, the referral of each exam is carefully prepared, while elsewhere it looks like a pure formality unless in very specific and *at stake* situations.

The Council put in charge the I Committee to draft a proposal of guidelines for the Qualifying/Progress Exams to be discussed in the Areas' Councils, with the aim of settling the way of conduct at least within each Area.

Having depleted the agenda, the meeting is dismissed at 18.00

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