

## Report LUS Breakfastclub “Inter & Intra Faculty Community Building”



### Introduction

This Breakfastclub about Inter & Intra Faculty Community Building started with an introduction of two members of StOP (Studieverenigingen Overlegplatform); Thijn van der Kooi and Masja Fokkenrood. Students are all part of Leiden University as a whole, but the connection between faculties and students is not always as strong as one would want. In aiming to strengthen the bond, StOP focuses on study associations and bringing them together.

StOP was invited by the LUS to give a short introduction about the aforementioned topic and to explain what exactly they are working on. The primary aim of StOP is to connect study associations with each other and provide them with useful information. For example, they provided the study associations with information about the new privacy policy and organise meetings to help with acquisition. Furthermore they organise events, such as career events, debates and congresses. They also organise drinks to give study associations the opportunity to talk with each other in a more accessible atmosphere. In organising all these events to join associations together, StOP noticed that a lot of study associations are willing to participate in joint activities. However, the main issue within the theme of connection is that it is very hard to schedule something with all those different agenda's.

### ***What is the current situation?***

FGGA indicates that there are many 'groups' in The Hague and that there is little cohesion within the faculty. A possible reason given for this is the language barrier. An idea such as the pub quiz that was organized by L.A.S. Terra (Archaeology) together with the LBC (Biology) could stimulate more mixing of people and thus break the categorization. LUMC indicates that the students are particularly close to the study association and that there is little "need" to do more outside of it. Small study associations like L.A.S. Terra noticed that they sometimes can get overlooked, also because they are the only association at their faculty.

- ❖ *There needs to be more focus on breaking through the language barrier.*
- ❖ *More events catered on a faculty basis needs to be done, before making a plan for interfaculty events, so everyone gets involved.*

### ***How can Leiden University increase the feeling of a community between faculties?***

Cooperating bodies that we could think of: STOP, assessors, LUS, honors. Promotion could be done by EL CID and assessors. What is central in this is that the university should make use of all the existing bodies, as they provide ample authority to bring study associations closer together. The common factors on which a community feeling can be established are mainly big events with multiple studies.

During the breakfastclub it was discussed what an interesting event for all faculties could be. L.A.S. Terra told us that they organise an archery tag tournament what will be open for all faculties. Events like these could be a nice suggestions for an inter-faculty event. If the university of Leiden would like to organise other events for all faculties they should focus on a topic that is relevant for all faculties, examples are student wellbeing or sustainability.

Another problem with organising bigger events is the fact that there is no clear overview of which association is organising what. If a public agenda, maybe per faculty, could be created, associations can check what others are organising and either work together or ask if they can come too. If associations want, they could better promote open events such as lectures. A general agenda of university events and lectures already exists, but it would be a good addition if a more informal one for study associations would also be created.

### ***What can a faculty community and interfaculty community mean for students?***

When asked how to strengthen the interfaculty community and whose role it is, it is indicated in particular that the StOP is already doing this well. The facilitation of moments where associations can talk to each other is experienced as pleasant, however, it is indicated that after these moments little communication is present and the needed next steps are not taken. An idea for interfaculty events are for example organising a challenge or hack-a-ton in the beginning of the second year where students of different studies can participate and connect with each other. This can be done in collaboration with PLNT and the municipality (under the guise of social importance and 'Leiden kennisstad'). Another idea was to do this, or a lecture or debate discussing important current topics, such as elections, climate change or terrorism. What also could be a good way to link students together is facilitating a language exchange program as has already been set up in The Hague. Two students come together to teach their language to each other. In doing this, new contacts are created. The aforementioned events and initiatives can help create a tight Leiden University network with people from multiple disciplines which can aid in future career prospects. In order to organise these overarching events, one should not put more pressure on the studyassociations or assessors; a committee that is made up of 'normal' students of multiple studies could maybe help in this.

- ❖ *Creating large (informal) events that are connected to all students can help to strengthen an interfaculty community, this can be worthwhile for all students.*

***Action points:***

- ❖ Existing bodies like StOP should be used to promote events like galas, sports events and lectures which could aid in informal socializing.
- ❖ Keep the focus on smaller studies, because they are easy to be overlooked and aren't always the ones that are actively looking to become emerged in a faculty feeling.
- ❖ Make study associations aware of the possibility of inter and intra faculty events, and which events are already there. In doing this, they can be more aware of the promotion and creation of these events. Right now, there is not real framework for this, so it isn't always clear what the merits are for study associations in creating a faculty community, let alone transcending it. Their focus is now on keeping their own networks active. Creating an overarching framework of events on a interfaculty basis, such as a general agenda, that promotes study associations to work together, can help with this.