

Student Council Work Plan 2020

Political Priorities

RUC's part in the national educational landscape

As the Student Council of RUC, the foundation for our political work is to ensure that RUC is continuously developed through the values on which RUC is built. In a political landscape that tends towards increasing standardization, it is important that we as students stand our ground and fight for what makes RUC unique. This is applicable for our mentality as a university, the structure of our educational programs, and our pedagogical methods. Student-initiated projects, combined educations, interdisciplinarity, and project work are all elements that make the education offered at RUC both progressive and diverse.

Currently, universities are facing a national development that leans strongly towards adjusting to the demands of the business world. Through study progress reforms and incentive management, we as students are forced through our education to be available for the job market as quickly as possible. We are encouraged to choose educations with high job security, according to what the business world requests. At the same time, universities are continually faced with threats of cutbacks making it increasingly more difficult to plan and execute quality education programs. This is problematic not only for students, but also for the progress and development of our university and society as a whole. This is why the Student Council must work to keep RUC as a progressive university where diversity and creativity is celebrated, and where the students are the main focus. The best way to do this is through the different influential bodies at RUC, and by participating in public debate about the university's role in society. Thus, the fight for our values and self-understanding at RUC must be taken both internally and externally.

Local Priorities

We will continue our fight for inclusion of all students in the decision-making processes at RUC. We see a tendency that more and more decisions are made by the university leadership at the expense of the study boards. We have to keep fighting against this trend and insist that RUC will continue to be a university where the study boards make decisions relevant to the educational programs. This is why decision making power should be brought back to the students and scientific personnel within the different subject areas of RUC. The Network of Student Representatives at RUC should be a key forum for discussions about local consequences of centralization, as well as to push against this trend from the bottom up.

In general, it is the opinion of the Student Council that all students should be heard in matters of their own education. Therefore, we will push for broader representation. This will be done partly through continuing work to ensure that all main subject areas are represented in the Academic Council, and partly through an enhanced focus on possibilities for

involvement and cooperation with RUC - and a broader, more strategic use of these possibilities.

National Priorities

We will take part in national discussions about student welfare and social affairs as well as discussions about academic affairs through our collaboration with Danske Studerendes Fællesråd (DSF) and other Student Councils. It should be a priority for the Student Council to encourage our fellow students to take part in the national political work done in DSF. This will be done by informing them about the different committees, activities, courses and events, etc. that are hosted by DSF.

Continuous Political Agendas

We must strive to live up to the mandate the students have given us at the university election. This doesn't end as a new year begins and therefore, it will be the priority of the Student Council to work on the political agendas from the previous years concurrent with the work of the parolés from the 2019 election as well as new political priorities that may occur within the coming year.

The previous years we have worked to improve justice for students in the form of a student ambassador, who would offer independent legal advising for students encountering unjust treatment by RUC. The student ambassador should also be able to give general comments on RUC's practices. This fight is not won, and we should continue to push for a fair and transparent legal system for all students at RUC. Even if we will get a student ambassador, we have to remember that it is still the role of the Student Council to be on watch for the students.

We have, in past years, worked to prevent two of the most common issues with recent cutbacks. One of which being worsened conditions for our educations - especially in regards to project work. Too often have students had issues with supervisor hours, censor ratings, and the like. As RUC continues to cut down on core parts of our projects, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the high level of subject knowledge and academic competencies that we wish for our students. Therefore, we will continue the work to ensure a good frame for a good education at RUC.

At the same time, the quality of the study environment has been complicated by the many financial cuts and subsequent forfeiting of buildings, which has resulted in less space for more students and a larger distance between the students and the administration. The institutes are lacking a cohesive and thriving student environment, and many students find that they lose connection to their house after their first three semesters. This means that students no longer recognise the safe structure of their education after they finish the third semester. The Student Council will work towards making sure that all students of RUC have physical spaces where they feel secure, welcomed, and feel some degree of ownership. We will push for proper classrooms as well as group rooms. This is a continuous struggle that we will participate in through different bodies at RUC in cooperation with our fellow students.

As mentioned above it is important that all students are heard and represented at the decision making bodies, and therefore the Student Council will continue to push for representation areas in the Academic Council.

This is especially important in matters where the conditions for some students at the university vary from others. This is still largely the case for international students. RUC claims to be an internationally-minded university, but in reality it is far from it. We have international students enrolling every year, bringing a lot of perspective, knowledge, and experiences. However, too many are disappointed when they learn of how few subjects are available for them to choose from. At the same time, too much of RUC is inaccessible to non-Danish speakers - from information at intra.ruc.dk to our political bodies. We believe that RUC should live up to its promises and be serious about internationalization, not just for the sake of internationals, but for all of us as students.

Climate

In recent years, there has been a noticeable push from students towards taking action on combating climate change. Last year, as a recognition of climate as a part of today's student identity, we began a number of initiatives that have taken action towards battling climate-related issues. However, the election of a climate-focused candidate in the 2019 university election shows us that we have only just begun this work.

Therefore, we will continue to focus on these climate-related issues and initiatives, and work towards developing our stance on climate as action-oriented and ambitious. This includes continuing and improving upon our own internal practices, as well as actively fighting for RUC to take action on its own shortcomings.

Organisational Priorities

The subject councils

The subject councils are the most important players in creating coherence in the local study environments, mobilising activity around campus, and representing the students in the local Study Boards. We consider collaboration with the subject councils as one of the most legitimate ways to represent students in the four subject areas, and to understand the challenges they each experience locally. Therefore, it is a top priority to continue supporting the subject councils as active and well functioning units - both organizationally and financially. We aim towards a mutual cooperation where all organisations can benefit from each other.

The Student Council will also continue to invite the subject councils to participate in internal decision-making processes. This will in part be done by encouraging all four subject councils to select a representative for the Board of the Student Council, and by inviting and encouraging those active within the subject councils to participate in the activities of the Student Council (such as weekend seminars). Our aim is to strengthen the chain of representation between subject committees, subject councils, and the Student Council.

Student Representatives Network

The student representatives in the study boards, institute councils, Academic Council, and the Board of Directors are crucial for the student political work at RUC, and therefore make up essential parts of the Student Council's focus. It is important that the Student Council prioritizes the support of - and coordination between - these representatives through the work in the Student Representatives Network. There are two main goals of this work: 1) to ensure coordination and collaboration between elected representatives of different bodies and 2) to ensure the upgrading of qualifications and professional discussion between the elected representatives to maximise their influence. Through a strong network we can push further for the inclusion of students in all decisions.

International focus

When speaking of internationalisation and international focus in an organisation, the most important part is to focus on making a platform where all students feel comfortable, safe, and fully included. We have made great strides in the past year in working towards building a platform where students always feel safe to share their perspective, no matter what their preferred language is. We will continue to ensure that everything is translated for all involved to understand.

We have been fortunate in the past year to have international, primarily English-speaking members in our executive committee, and for the first time an elected international Vice-Chairperson. This trend of international representation and activity in the Student Council is one that we aim to foster and support in the future. We will continue to lead by example through having a strong international focus.

Communication and Public Relations

It is important to inform our students about what we do as the Student Council. Therefore, we want to be more transparent in our work and initiatives. Our communication on social media should be organised and clear in order to reach a broader range of students. The Student Council should be more open about what topics are being discussed at board meetings and use the agendas to catch the students' interest in various topics, and thus foster a wider interest in the Student Council's work.

Internal communication will be centered around digital platforms that increase transparency and makes tasks easy to approach. We will strive towards keeping internal communication on social media to a minimum.

Volunteer 'hygge' and working environment

An organization with as many different tasks and workloads as the Student Council needs to have a continuous focus on maintaining a positive working environment. This has been an issue in the past, therefore, we want to increase our focus on fostering such an environment in 2020. We want to prioritize creating a comfortable and relaxed social atmosphere for all our volunteers. We wish for the Student Council to be able to accommodate all kinds of volunteer involvement and engagement. The working environment should be inclusive,

welcoming, and should strive to meet the requests and wishes of the volunteers. Our volunteers are students first, which should always be accommodated in the organization.

In order to fulfill this, we will have to recruit and include a broad range of students, making sure that there are always enough hands to do the job. This will be achieved through a more transparent workflow, making it easier for new volunteers to figure out where to put their focus. The hope is to recruit more new volunteers and at the same time take better care of the ones we have, ultimately leaving the Student Council with a bigger volunteer basis. We understand that this is not achieved within a single year and the work should therefore be done in a sustainable way, making sure that the effort can continue in the future.

Cooperation with other organizations at RUC

The other student-driven organisations at RUC, especially those in the Student House, do a huge job in improving the social environment at RUC. Therefore, they are natural collaborators in a lot of the work of the Student Council. We should prioritize good social relations, as well as cooperation with these organizations when we have interests in common.

Financial priorities

We want to be inclusive and transparent in financial matters and decisions, as all financial decisions ultimately will be political decisions as well. It is essential that we use our financial resources in a way that benefit the students at RUC as widely as possible. The limited resources we have should be used with care and reflection, so we have a stable economy and get as much value for money as possible. At the same time, it is important that we do not buy in to the fear of cutbacks, and that we live up to our full potential by staying ambitious with our activities and goals. Throughout the year, the Board will make initiatives to maintain an overview and assure the quality of the financial reports.

5 Year Plan

The 5 year plan is a visionary document made to guide the Student Council in a coherent direction, where we can work to set ambitious and long term plans for future developments, as well as avoid difficulties related to short term memory in an organisation with ongoing changes in the student body and leadership. It should therefore be discussed by the sitting board as an opportunity for the current board to see themselves as a part of the bigger picture of the Student Council's history.

Academic Priorities

Academic Network (Fagligt Netværk)

The FANE collaboration offers a broad range of courses to all RUC students - free of charge. We believe that it is part of our job as a Student Council to work towards filling in potential knowledge gaps at the university, and we see this collaboration as a good and productive way of doing so. We will therefore continue to work for this - and to work to make it even more relevant for the students. If need be throughout the year, we will supplement the FANE

courses with academic courses of our own in order to offer the right extracurricular courses for the students of RUC.

Skill Development Effort

It will be a priority to provide skill development workshops and seminars for different types of active students in the Student Council. We believe that we need to prepare our internal members and collaboration partners for the tasks they have taken upon themselves, so that all active students in the Student Council have a feeling of getting the help they need. Furthermore, we see skill-development as a great opportunity to pay our volunteers back for their hard work.

Social Priorities

Tutoring

Tutoring is the foundation of the study environment at RUC - both for new students and for tutors. This is in huge part thanks to the people involved. Though tutoring should always be done for the new students, it is important to remember that it starts with the volunteers. As being responsible for the study start, the Student Council will help to ensure that all people involved with tutoring get the proper education and assistance needed. This can be done in multiple ways, but the key method for this will be skill development for the rus-chairperson and RUSK team, and a strong Student Council presence in the events of tutoring this upcoming year. The Student Council will furthermore push RUC to do the same, demanding skill development opportunities for the Student Council and RUSK team in regards to tutoring.

Tutoring has not evolved much in past decades, however, a new strategy for evolving tutoring has begun in 2019. This will continue throughout 2020 (and possibly further on) with the goal of making tutoring the most welcoming and inclusive it can be - for new students and volunteers alike.

Locally embedded social environment

One of the things we are proud of about RUC is the range of possibilities for students to actively engage in their local environment. The development of the social environment in local arenas is a substantial part of supporting the greater study environment and well-being amongst all students. Therefore, supporting a healthy study environment in the local arenas at RUC should continue to be a priority for the Student Council. We will continue to focus on the social and structural study environment - both in the houses, at the individual subjects, at the institutes, and across campus in general. The Student Council shall work to ensure that the social environment at RUC is not limited by rules and structures, and that it can thrive on student driven initiatives and engagement.

RUC'ers by Choice - Social activities for all

While a local social environment is important for the university, broad and inclusive social activities are equally important. The Student Council should continue to organize social

events for all RUC students in order to facilitate socializing between students from different institutes. This is also a good way for the Student Council to reach out to different groups of students than we normally meet through most of our other activities, and should therefore continuously be prioritized. Additionally, we want to utilize RBC to a greater extent with regards to taking good care of our volunteers in order to provide them with fun and exciting experiences.

Roskilde Festival

The Student Council has cooperated with Roskilde Festival for about a decade now. The subsidy that the Student Council receives each year in return for managing the Caravan area is a key part of our budget. However, it has been difficult to raise the amount of volunteers needed in past years, leaving doubt about whether or not to continue with such a large task. It is essential for the Student Council to maintain liquidity in order to freely plan and host activities for the students. Therefore, the Student Council will this year increase the effort of recruiting volunteers for the festival. Furthermore, there will be an increased focus on the volunteer experience in an effort to keep some of the RUC students as general volunteers for the Student Council once the new semester begins.

Right now, cooperation with the festival leaves a lot of potential unused. Roskilde Festival offers a range of initiatives for their volunteer organizations, such as free grants and skill development. This year the Student Council will work to improve our cooperation with the festival, and at the same time work to take further advantage of these initiatives.