***Short report of Labour rights workshop By Laura Monden and Jan Boersma (both from FNV), Friday May 25 2018***

17 employees present from both teaching and supporting staff, 23 others interested but not able to join.

FNV officer for UU also present: ‘First-aid kit’, first person to talk to in case of problems:

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This is the first time FNV visits UCU for a workshop. They were pleasantly surprised about the turnout. Very high compared to other such occasions according to Erik Hendriksen.

Amongst the audience three FNV members plus one VAWO member present.

Goal of meeting: to get acquainted with people, get some information. A short round of personal introductions, who and why here makes clear that most are just curious, everyone knows the info is present (but scattered) online. Workshop is seen as highly needed wake-up call that something like unions exist; some are interested because of unclarities in procedures and legal issues.

It was appreciated that the MT (Bettina) was initially present to say hello, thank the organizers and insisted her door was always open. She subsequently left so as not to impede people in speaking their minds.

1. First presentation by Laura Monden about the role of UCUC and about the specifics of our reglement.

Stresses importance about transparency and about being asked and informed by management even if unsollicited.

Tasks UCUC:

(1)     Representing both employees and students

(2)     Being accountable to employees and students

(3)     Monitoring and influencing policies of the organization

(4) Acting as opleidingscommissie (not a union item)

Problem of small organization: Council cannot represent individuals; MT is a party, and if we go to HR then MT feels bypassed. Because it is easy for management to figure out where issues come from the question is what to do. The vertrouwenspersoon (Paul Herfs) plays an important role in this. We will ask him if he sees such general issues and if so, if he is willing to draw up a black book that we can subsequently take to the MT. If it is a bigger issue (a problem affecting more than one person or the collective) we can also seek council with the union. In the mean time we have contacted him and have learned that he publishes a yearly public report with facts and figures. From that, we see that in 2016 as well as in 2017, over 9% of our employees have seeked council which, when compared to the percentage of employees from the rest of the entire UU seeking council (2,5%) seems rather high. We must figure out the reason behind this large number and will discuss it with the management.

‘WO in actie’, planning a week of action to raise issues with workload in Uni. (see also letter by colleages at the Humanities dept.) Workload issues have top priority. It should also have top priority for UCUC. We will invite the management to discuss and evaluate the remuneration list with us maybe preceded by a questionnaire to the personnel.

Working conditions are treated in the ARBO wet. We are not made aware of changes in the ARBO wet. In general there are complaints about the quality of communication between management, HR and personnel concerning task descriptions, expectations, and possibilities like CAO a la Carte. It is apparently expected that everyone can find everything him/herself. As an example, one attendee complained about a recurring struggle concerning left-over holiday hours in which his/her superior actually gave the wrong information and was unwilling to consider the issue further.

One teacher complained that the governance structure of the College is messy as exemplified by unclarities in who is responsible for the quality and content of the curriculum. Is it the BoS? Is it the DoE? Is it the heads supported by the fellows?

1. Next speaker Jan Boersma ( negotiates for FNV CAO with VSNU):

Unions involved in negotiations for the new CAO (collective labour agreement): VAWO, FNV, CNV and FBZ

Issues in new CAO:

-         Permanent versus flexible contracts (incl. PhDs, postdocs), with training opportunities (research time, qualifications etc.)

-         Junior-docent onderzoekers (6 years instead of four years training to get BKO and PhD, with the BKO part financed from ‘eerste-lijns’ geld)

-         Development/training of support staff

-         Generatiepact > step back at certain age to work less, paid in part by employer and partly yourself. E.g. go working 3 days a week, you get paid for 4 and pension still for 5 days. Why would employer agree to that? Improves productivity, work pleasure, prevent illness/burn out (more expensive for employer), promotes junior people stepping up and continuity.

-        Wage increase (hoping for 4%)

1. Q&A with present staff

  Individual cases where you don’t agree with MT > vertrouwenspersoon is nice, but unless you are willing for legal actions that is the end of the road. What can we do? Bring confidential councillor to a meeting? Or Recht op bezwaar (op papier) > send to Dean or head of support staff. What if disagreement is with the Dean? Then you go to the uni, possibly up to CvB (who will send it to legal affairs)

  What are the rights concerning personal files? Every person has the right to see these by addressing HR if they are kept at the Bestuursgebouw, or the Magaging director if they are kept at UCU. It is actually unclear where they are kept. They should be easily accessible in their entirety and may be copied as such as well. It is normal that someone from HR is present to prevent any meddling with or loss of the files.

* It seems that HR and MT are in very close contact and inform one another immediately if someone has contacted either party about labour conditions. Is this normal? This is unclear even to the FNV representatives.

  We are hired by UU, and basically installed at UCU. If a staff member would like to move on to another place at the UU, can the MT be expected to facilitate this in any kind? They can be expected only in case of reorganisation, in other cases you will be considered an internal candidate in case of a vacancy. Mobility is limited by the fact that the new “faculty” takes over risks with respect to social security and some other rights that accumulate during your UU career. So another department at UU may want you but you would be expensive because of your acquired extra rights.

  Employer is allowed to temporarily (!) give you other tasks, but they need to take into account your level, qualities etc.

  Confidential councillor apparently publishes an (anonymised) report of what kind of issues he comes across. He could, if agreed with by his ‘clients’ point the UCUC to particular recurring issues.

  How about hours for tasks; it was for instance never explained why 250 hours were reduced to 200 hours per course, and why time for preparing a new course was scratched completely. There is talk of new changes to the ‘table’ where hours are assigned to each task. This should come to UCUC for advice (at least) as part of working conditions, and we should aim for transparency and fairness.

* Is a reduction in hours in a contract (“deeltijdontslag”) legally allowed? No it is not.
1. UCUC thanks the speakers and promises to bring over a present for their efforts which in the heat of the preparations was forgotten.