



Course of Actions for International Affairs

2014-2017

Studentorganisasjonen StOr

Introduction

“StudentOrganisajonen” (StOr) is the student council at the University of Stavanger (UiS).

StOr is a goal-centered and non-party affiliated interest organization which purposes to attend to students' democratic, disciplinary and social needs and rights.

Students automatically become members of StOr when they are registered as students at UiS.

StOr functions as an umbrella organization for all the student organizations at the university, and takes responsibility to facilitate their work.

To ensure progress and continuity in the work related to international affairs, StOr have drawn this course of actions for international affairs, where we try to concretize what actions we believe must be taken in the period 2014-2017. The document will be divided into four main topics as it follows:

1. International students

The UiS admits around 400 international students a year, and the institutional strategy of UiS sets the target for growth in the coming years¹. To move to a foreign country involves challenges. StOr wants to be a simplifying factor in the international students stay at UiS and hope to contribute into their integration.

2. Exchange

In 2012, 357 students from UiS chose to go abroad through an exchange programs². StOr is convinced that even more students would benefit from the exchange programs if the different aspects are facilitated and improved.

3. Cooperation

In the affairs concerning both international students at UiS and exchange students, there are several stakeholders involved that would benefit from increasing cooperation and communication.

¹ <http://www.uis.no/international-relations/>

² http://dbh.nsd.uib.no/dbhvev/student/utveksling_rapport.cfm

4. Solidarity

StOr represents a group of students that, in an international perspective, are privileged concerning both economical and democratic conditions. StOr considers it a solidary liability to participate in programs that helps students in difficult situations.

1. International Students

For international students language often is the main challenge.

UiS has three different arrangements concerning languages used in the programs: Programs in English, programs in Norwegian and programs in both languages.

- **StOr wants to increase the number of courses and programs held in English.**

Students that have completed the program “Norwegian language and culture for foreigners” (NOMSA³) are accepted into programs in Norwegian.

It is acceptable that not all the courses at UiS will be held in English. However it cannot be required of NOMSA students, whom are accepted into programs in Norwegian, to understand Swedish and Danish in addition. This is the case today when several programs have reading list that include Swedish and Danish literature.

- **StOr wants to ensure that all the reading lists in question contain alternative literature in English.**
- **Where it is possible it is also important to provide alternative English literature for the Norwegian literature.**
- **StOr wants for the NOMSA students to have the opportunity, and the right, to submit exams/assignments in English, regardless of which language the program are held in.**
- **Make sure that course descriptions and essential information, given both by the university and StOr itself, are available in English**

Because of language difficulties streaming is particularly important for the international

³ Norsk Språk og Kultur for fremmedspråklige

students. The possibility to hear and see the lectures several times will reduce language difficulties.

- **StOr's general goal to stream all classes is particularly important for the international students.**

International students face housing challenges.

- **StOr expects UiS to take full responsibility for the housing of admitted international students.**

2. Exchange

Students

It is mainly the university faculties that make the exchange agreements. This results in a difference between exchange possibilities according to which faculty the students belong to, and complicates the overview of the different exchange programs.

StOr believes that not enough information about the exchange possibilities reaches the students.

Some of the agreements are made with universities that only teach in local languages.

The increasing use of both ordinary and social media to promote exchange possibilities would make more students more willing to go.

- **StOr wishes to cooperate tightly with the international office in order to take part in the process of making more students aware of the exchange possibilities.**
- **StOr believes every bachelor/master program should include one semester of exchange, or 30 ECTS to be taught in English.**

Employees

StOr looks at the opportunity for Academic staff to exchange with other Universities in the network of European Consortium of Innovative Universities (ECIU) as an important step for improve the employees' skills both academically and in English.

- **StOr would like to open the opportunity for academic exchange through ECIU**

3. Cooperation

Student Welfare Organization in Stavanger (SiS)

StOr has a good level of cooperation with SiS.

- **We would like to have SiS as a partner in arranging an international day twice a year.**

International admission office, UiS

StOr looks at International admission office as a main partner in integration and internationalizing process of UiS.

- **StOr would like to establish a better communication with the international admission office with a fixed representative in the weekly meeting at International admission office.**

4. Solidarity

Tuition fees

As of today, neither Norwegian or international students pay any (considerable) tuition fees. Lately, the discussion of implementation of tuition fees for international students in Norway has been returning topic.

The right to education is acknowledged as a universal human right⁴. Free education is of great importance to ensure this right to be more than a formality.

Therefore StOr is firmly against tuition fees for anyone, including international students.

- **StOr will work against the insertion of tuition fees.**

Open Access (OA)⁵

Open Access means unrestricted access to publicly funded research.

⁴ According (inter alia) to protocol to the convention of human rights and fundamental freedoms art, Incorporated into Norwegian law through "menneskerettsloven 21. Mai 199 nr.30" <http://lovdata.no/lov/1999-05-21-30/emke/p1/a2>

⁵ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/resources/publications-and-communication-materials/publications/full-list/policy-guidelines-for-the-development-and-promotion-of-open-access/>

- **StOr wants more of UiS's research to be published Open Access.**

*Students at Risk*⁶

Student at Risk is a program that provides relevant education for students in risk because of their political activity in their home countries.

- **StOr wants UiS to become a host university for students at risk.**

*Scholars at Risk*⁷

A scholar at Risk program provides relative academic positions for scholars in risk because of their political activity in their home countries.

UiS is already a member of this program, but not an active member.

- **StOr wants UiS to become an active member for Scholars at Risk.**

⁶ <http://student.no/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Informasjon-om-%C2%ABStudents-at-Risk%C2%BB.pdf>

⁷ <http://saih.no/Artikler/7088.html>