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RUglobal 

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International Club active on Facebook

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Publishing information

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RuClubFrancophone



A group of RU students and teachers want to create a network focusing on France and French culture. Ideas for the contents of the network are many.

By Anne Frida Christiansen, RUGlobal

Expectations of and ideas for the network

About 20 people defied the pouring rain and dark winter afternoons when late afternoon on Monday 26 October they gathered at RU to share ideas and expectations for the creation of a student network focusing on professional knowledge of France at RU. The network first saw the light of day in an atmosphere of candle light, coffee and cake. The initiator is Heidi Bojsen, Assistant Professor, Cultural Encounters and French Studies, who during her own student years was a member of a network having “professional knowledge of France” as the focal point. As a student of French she was thrilled about the network, and the intention is therefore to prepare the breeding ground for the creation of a similar network at RU.

Many students from different parts of RU turned up for the meeting. By way of introduction, everybody briefly introduced themselves (most of them in French) and explained their motivation for joining the network. The students represented, among others, French Studies, HUM-BAS, Cultural Encounters and Public Administration. In addition to students, a number of teachers at RU also took an interest in the network. Lots of different ideas and subjects were introduced at the meeting. Some students of French Studies from RU had come to discuss their projects and other material of relevance to such studies; others wanted to use the network to maintain their French language skills that they had acquired at upper secondary school level or during their stay in French-speaking countries. Other

participants suggested going to the cinema to watch French films or inviting guest speakers, e.g. in collaboration with Institut Francais, to come and speak on a specific subject.

While giving a brief PowerPoint presentation, Heidi Bojsen described her ideas for possible network activities such as museum, café and theatre visits and research projects. She also emphasised that the driving force behind the activities of the network is Francophone curiosity. “Life at university should not only be about marks and complying with rules in relation to programme regulations. It is also about gathering, asking questions and discussing subjects without having a definite curriculum, developing new targets for oneself and not just following those that others have set out for you.” Also, network participation does not necessarily have to be time consuming, as Heidi Bojsen emphasised that it is up to the individual student to decide how much time they want to spend on the network.

Future network events

After having had discussions in small groups, the meeting ended by all participants sharing their ideas for the future activities of the network, and small groups with different interests were set up. A couple of French exchange students offered interested students to come and speak to them in French to improve their French language skills. Conversation could for instance be based on topical French newspaper articles. Others decided to organise recurring social events such as cinema and theatre visits. French cooking with somebody from outside the university with knowledge of cooking was also suggested. This group will meet again at the beginning of December. Plans of a more long-term nature for the network are for instance to have a workshop in spring on

francophone Africa. The students are now also working to organise a debate with participants from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Institut Francais and possibly also the Confederation of Danish Industry (DI) and the Africa Commission. The debate will be on the need to develop the knowledge of France and francophone countries and on improvement of the conditions for French teaching in the Danish education system. The two latter groups will meet some time in January. Finally, it was also suggested that the students gather regularly to discuss literary as well as political and social matters. The first meeting for this purpose will be a reading and discussion of the novel *Monné, outrages et defis*, or in English *Monnew* by the Ivorian author Ahmadou Kourouma on 4 January 2010.

To conclude the meeting, Heidi Bojsen thanked all students for their participation and for taking an interest in the future network, and she emphasised that, naturally, other interested students are still welcome to participate as well.

As early as the following week, Ebbe Prag at IU took the initiative to start updating the French knowledge data bases at RU based on the suggestions by the network members. (Suggestions from non-network members are also welcome and can be sent to eprag@ruc.dk)

If the network has attracted your interest, feel free to contact Heidi Bojsen using this e-mail address: hbojsen@ruc.dk

International Club active on facebook

Its official website has not been updated since January, but the International Club is far from non-existent. On the contrary, communication of activities and contact to its members has taken a step further into cyberspace – to Facebook. Such is the account given by two international students helping keep the club alive.

By Thomas Humle, RUGlobal

The International Club is the name of a voluntary student group constituting the fixed social point for many international students during their time at RU. In recent years, the Club has organised parties, excursions, cultural tours and national theme days, all targeting international students. However, since January, the Club's official website has been inactive. Those not in the know could therefore mistakenly get the impression that the Club is dead, which is not the case, however. The Club is still going strong, but has just created a new platform on the internet.

For the IC Committee, the social utility behind the International Club, has found other and more efficient methods of communication in relation to their members. Kristel Pent from the IC Committee says:

"Facebook has proved to be extremely good for us. When the new international students commenced a semester preparatory course in August, they had already established a facebook group. We therefore seized the chance to communicate with them through that group and were given the administrator rights to the group so that we could organise events and promote the International Club. It works really well."

The IC Committee still aims, however, to get the original website up and running again. In the future, they would like to use the official site to provide general information on the Club as well as useful facts on life as an international student at RU. While the official



website is rather formal, the facebook group is meant to be its odd counterpart enabling social relations to be maintained and coming events to be presented.

National theme days

Amongst many of the events in the International Club, there is a recurring national theme day taking place on the first Monday of each month. The venue is Gimle in Roskilde, and everybody is free to participate. Last month, we had a Spanish theme event.

"I think they were nearly 20 Spanish students organising a really nice event", says Kristel Pent complemented by Gosia Kulinska who is also an IC Committee member. "We always try to encourage international students to organise events that focus on their respective countries. Mostly, they handle the planning themselves, but are usually assisted by an IC Committee member helping them sort the practicalities at Gimle," she says.

In November, the theme event will focus on Germany. A group of German students

have already decided to celebrate the event by serving sausages and large bottles of beer.

"The facebook group is a really well-suited media for providing information on these events since we reach, largely, all international students at RU because many of them are members of the group. That way, we can also communicate with those who have yet to become members of International Club. They can then freely sign up as members, if they find a particular event interesting," says Kristel Pent. Gosia Kulinska elaborates by adding: "We like this approach, because it means not excluding anyone. We don't aim to become a closed club – that is not our intention at all."

The International Club membership fee is DKK 50,- per semester, but that also entitles the members to a discount card for Gimle and the opportunity to take part in various events, parties and excursions arranged by the International Club. Amongst the future events is a joint trip to Tivoli to watch "The Crazy Christmas Cabaret". "There are still a few seats left" says Kristel Pent, and thus encourages all those students who might be interested to quickly sign up.

The International Club – now also a job agent

International Club also handles other and more serious tasks. The IC Committee mem-

bers have great success in posting job advertisements at the Facebook group. At the moment, eight accessible job advertisements are posted on the group's site.

"International students, especially those visiting Denmark for more than six months, are very eager to get a good job. They want "real jobs", not just jobs as cleaners or kitchen assistants in a café", says Kristel Pent, and Gosia Kalinska continues:

"We post relevant jobs that international students are capable of handling. There is an increasing number of students that stay in Denmark for several years, and who may also consider whether to stay in the country after having completed their studies. Therefore, a good student job is absolutely essential. It gives international students the impression that getting a good job in Denmark doesn't require being Danish.

Inviting Danish students into the Club

In principle, the International Club is also meant to be a club for Danish students. We want it to be a place where Danish and international students have a chance to meet and create networks and friendships across cultures. At the moment, the number of Danish student members is low, and Gosia Kulinska would like to see that change: "Currently, there are hardly any Danish student members of the International Club, which is a shame. Hopefully, we will be able to change that in the future," she says. Kristel Pent would also like to see more Danish students become members of the Club: "We would like to be a link between Danish and international students. We need ideas for events that both Danish and international students would find interesting. Most international students share accommodation, primarily at the halls of residence Korallen so they know each other well and are good friends, and therefore it may be difficult for Danish students to "break" into those circles."

Kristel Pent and Gosia Kulinska encourage everybody, Danish as well as international students, to sign up for the Facebook group. They also invite students to pop in to talk to them at their little office in building 0.1 – just next to the university clergyman/-woman. If you have a good idea for a new event, please feel free to pass it on at the office. All suggestions are welcome. The IC Committee will be at the office Mondays through Fridays from 12 noon to 1 pm.

The facebook group can be found at "International/Erasmus Roskilde 2009/10".



RUC Sunrise Triple C Conference

Climate – Change – Communication

New Perspectives after the COP15

First Announcement

The RUC Sunrise Triple C Conference: Climate – Change – Communication, will take place from the 20th-22nd of April, 2010 in an attempt to address the various impacts of climate change on a regional, as well as global level after the COP15. The Sunrise conference is an alternative three day gathering which will bring students, academics, business people, and NGOs together in order to discuss climate change through three different lenses: culture, communication, and clean technology.

The interactive conference will host a panel of distinguished keynote speakers, such as Mads Øvlisen, Member of the UN Global Compact Board and Chairman of the Copenhagen Center for Corporate Social Responsibility. In addition to keynote speakers there will be presentations of academic papers, talks from business people and environmental activists, student posters, activities, music and multi-media events. There will also be one day dedicated to riding aboard the Klimaexpress, a bus tour which stops at various interesting locations in order to see what types of sustainable development initiatives are taking place at the local level.

Regardless of the outcome of December's COP15, climate change will continue to impact our lives on both a micro and macro level:

from the way we commute to our work and studies, to the types of energy sources our cities and towns will use in the future. If you are interested in helping to create a sustainable difference after all the talk surrounding the COP15 has subsided, then start by making a contribution here.

In order to get students more involved on the ground level we would therefore like to invite all those interested to share their ideas and perspectives on how to make this conference successful and more student friendly. Please contact Henrik Christiansen at Hech@ruc.dk (ENSPAC) or Anna Glasser at aig@ruc.dk (COMMUNICATION) with your thoughts, comments, questions or concerns. We are working hard to get our new homepage up and running where you will also be able to find more information shortly.

We want any and all ideas from students in order to help make this conference an important part of RUC, as well as RUC student life.

On Behalf of the organizing committee –
Henrik Christiansen, coordinator
Anna Glasser, student support



Photo: Sophie Bech