

Rektor's Report – Second Quarter 2018

Student Matters

Since the last Board Meeting in early March, there have been some outstanding events both on and off campus: RCN's third TEDx event, Las Americas bazaar and show, Friluftsveka, Ridderrennet, Landmine Awareness Day, Global Concerns (Environmental – Our Earth, Our Future focus), the Visual Arts exhibition, Leirskule training week, Campus Clean-Up, Earth Weekend, the spring Fjord & Fjell, a theatre performance of 'Things I Know to be True', a kayak leadership weekend, Coastal Protection Week, SaFuGe selections, the annual Gay Pride March, International Red Cross Day (and Week) – and much, much more!

Many students stayed on campus for the extended Easter Weekend – using the time to rest, recharge batteries and prepare for exams. The Rektor is delighted to report that activities were put on by staff on campus over Easter – including walks and skiing in the local area and the annual Easter egg hunt around campus – as part of our ongoing support of students on campus during this holiday period.

We continue to receive positive feedback about the redesigned academic year with a three term structure – with health and wellness for students and staff at the heart of the design. We are treating the academic years 2017/8 and 2018/9 as a pilot period. We continue to believe that new calendar will have a significant impact on the student (and staff) experience.

Second years have recently stepped into exam mode and the RCN community is currently supporting them during this period. Their results are released in early July, and we sincerely hope that the focus on both pastoral and academic infrastructures (including the Foundation Year and learning support for all) over the past couple of years have made an impact on each student's overall experience and their performance in the IB exams at the end of the RCN programme.

Our students have been in the news having won or been shortlisted for academic prizes in competitions:

Four RCN students were invited to the final of this year's Norwegian Contest for Young Scientists (with 141 participants and 21 finalists). Our second year Swedish student Herman was awarded 1st Prize in the Young Scientists Competition 2018 for humanities research. The title of his research is 'An Investigation of the Economic Consequences of Immigration'.

For the second consecutive year, a group of four RCN students was invited to participate in the final (15 teams out of 1000 entrants) of Wharton School of Business' Global Investment Competition for High Schools – a tremendous initiative / achievement by Anton (Sweden), Arran (Canada), Ossian (Finland) and Kieren (Malaysia).

2 RCN teams won seed funding from GoMad for their community service projects back in their home countries – Peace (Nigeria) and Novi (Malawi).

The University Office and the Education Management Team nominated Amalie for the shortlist of the NC Denmark Achievement Award 2018.

Two students have been selected to represent RCN on Semester at Sea (these two scholarships are underwritten by Shelby Davis): Vicky (Greece) and Ekatarina (Russia).

The University Office reports that all second years applying to university have received at least one offer, although not all offers were for a full scholarship. We were all delighted to hear that Melvin (El Salvador / SOC member) was awarded a full scholarship to study at Ringling College of Art and Design in the US.

Some colleagues have been working on developing the RCN Safety Net with the introduction of the Safety Net Listeners.

We have had many visitors on campus and were delighted to host a group of students studying Spanish from Nordahl Grieg vgs in Bergen.

We have been impressed by the approach and attitude of the first year cohort and perceive a real desire from them to support the next wave of RCN students. Continuing with tradition, this year's newly elected Student Council (SC) went away with the outgoing SC to the Red Cross Langeland cabin in mid-April. The weekend included both team building activities, and the transfer of procedural know-how. While the weekend aided in developing the practical skills of the new SC, there was also much time for bonding – between members of the new SC but also between both new and outgoing SCs. The Rektor would like to take this opportunity to thank our outgoing Student Council for their invaluable contribution over the course of the last academic year and to welcome the incoming team.

In the last weekend of April, the incoming Student Council members were then actively involved in hosting our UWC RCN Council members and attending and participating in various workshops on key focus areas.

Maja (Norway) is our new Red Cross Student Rep and she and her team put much time and effort into delivering an excellent set of events to raise awareness of the International Red Cross Day on 8th May (including a presentation on the SOC programme) as part of the inaugural Red Cross Week on campus.

The time between the end of classes / exams and graduation is invariably a challenging time – at the time of writing, the spirit in the second year camp is positive with plans being implemented for the final phase and graduation.

We are in the process of planning an exciting and challenging final phase of term (last month) with first years – the Science Group 4 project, an overnight trip to Svanøy and other locations, some subject-specific field days, a refugee focus, an inclusive football tournament and a hike.

We are also pleased to report that we will be admitting two new students as part of our Survivors of Conflict Programme programme – one male student from Iraq and a female student from Liberia.

Management and Staffing

Our Rektor-elect, Guðmundur and his family were at RCN from 4th to 8th April for an orientation visit. The focus of the visit was very much on familiarisation (campus, local schools, Rektor's House etc) for the family. On their way back to Dubai, we put together a programme of engagement in Oslo. Guðmundur also visited campus for the Council Meeting at the end of April.

We were delighted to be able to host a team of Support Staff from our sister College, UWC Mostar, during the week after Easter. UWC Mostar kindly hosted a team of RCN Support Staff in the summer of 2012 and this presented an opportunity for us to reciprocate. Our twelve guests had an action packed programme which included presentations, meetings, dinner in Bekker House, folk dancing (gammaldans), excursions into the local region and much more, finishing with a farewell bonfire outside the new Baking House. It was a great opportunity to learn from each other and we look forward to the continuation of the cooperation.

A staff koseleg event was planned for their penultimate evening in Sperrestova with both RCN and Mostar staff presenting.

Máret Ingá Länsman, a Sámi language and culture teacher currently undertaking a Master's in Teacher Education at the Sámi University College up north in Guovdageaidnu, Norway, visited the College for a week. Rachel Schaefer of Concordia College (Minnesota) also finished her Spanish internship during this quarter. We continue to be keen to support those embarking on teaching careers and looking for a work experience in chosen subjects. We are currently looking at formalising our hosting of internships at RCN.

Mikkel Højgaard, a former intern from the autumn, kindly agreed to cover Erik Pedersen's classes for a month before the exams. Mikkel has a BA from Aarhus University in Social Science and History and is currently completing his Master's in Social Science and History. He suspended his studies for a month to support the students. We are also extremely grateful to Kåre Dale, Dan Silfwerin and Liusaidh Brown who also stepped in to support the classes at short notice.

The following teaching staff will be leaving at the end of this year: Simon and Marloes (heading to our sister college in Swaziland), Erik (retirement), Avis (two year leave of absence) and Cristina.

Each year, the staffing is a complex jigsaw. The Rektor is extremely grateful to members of the EMT for their work in recruiting high calibre staff and ensuring as smooth a transition as possible – and to the various Hiring Committees for their contributions to these processes.

We are pleased to announce the following Education Staff appointments for the next academic year:

Natasha	Spanish and House Mentor of Finland House
Laila	Danish Literature, TOK, World Literature, English Literature, English
	Language and Literature
Lisa	Humanities (permanent contract)

Summer will not be returning after her two year leave of absence and we look forward to welcoming Naren back as form his leave of absence in India our Global Politics teacher.

We are currently in the process of finalising the advisor teams – plus the plan for renovation and the allocation of accommodation.

There will be various events at the end of term to thank outgoing staff (and those going on leaves of absence) for their enormous contribution to RCN.

Following on from our internal invitation (April 13th 2018) for expressions of interest for taking on the Foundation Year Coordinator Role or Red Cross Coordinator role from August 2018 for professional development, the EMT is delighted to announce that Hilde will take on the role of Red Cross Coordinator from Avis. This will complement her work as the Survivor of Conflict Programme Coordinator. We shall make a decision on the Foundation Year Coordinator at a later stage.

Pete deserves special praise for his excellent work as IB Diploma Coordinator in supporting staff to enter information into the IBIS system - 670 pieces of work successfully uploaded and well over 1,200 grades entered. His helpfulness, support and patience are much appreciated.

This year, we have asked staff to give students their Final Predicted Grade (as enter on IBIS) in the spirit of transparency. This also allows us to provide final (accurate, helpful and honest) feedback and guidance as the students enter the exam phase.

There is still work to be done internally on training staff when it comes to academic matters. We are currently in the process of a) consulting teachers new to RCN in the past two years as

to how we can improve our mentoring system and b) revising our moderation policy to ensure rigorous and effective moderation.

We are also working on developing our Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures for both RCN and UWC Connect.

In this last quarter, the Education and Support Staff Reps have not reported any concerns by email or in person to members of the management teams.

Each member of staff has a *medarbeidersamtale* 2017/8 reviewer allocated within the framework of RCN's organizational chart. For those who had a *medarbeidersamtale* last year, the reviewer will focus on agreed action points and, as appropriate, consider action points for the forthcoming year. Our system is designed for discussion and conversation on present commitment, contribution and experiences in the RCN workplace – and to explore opportunities for professional development.

The AMU team is working with Stamina Helse to prepare our biennial staff survey for June on RCN's Work Environment. We have designed an introduction to the survey which highlights to staff areas of focus from the survey in 2016 and initiatives we have taken.

The forthcoming Staff Introduction Week in August is currently being designed by the Deputy Rektor – in consultation with the Rektor-elect to include professional development and team building for both Education and Support Staff.

Final Remarks

The Rektor flew, as the Head of the UWC Task Force, in mid-March to visit UWC Thailand and to write a progress report for the UWC International Board.

Inga Bostad visited RCN in mid-April – at the suggestion of HM Queen Sonja. Inga is currently Professor of Philosophy at the University of Oslo and Professor at Oslo School of Architecture and Design. She was appointed director for the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights at the Faculty of Law from 2014-2017 and is, from 2018, at the Department of Education at the Faculty of Educational Sciences. She is also Chair of the jury for Queen Sonja's school prize for equality and inclusion (2016 – present). Inga's programme included an introduction to the College, contributing to IB classes in Philosophy and Development Studies plus a guided tour of our campus by students. It was a real pleasure to host Inga and introduce her to our work towards peace, sustainability, access and inclusion – and, given her professional background, she has generously given us some direction as to ways we can further serve Norway in the fields of education and human rights.

It was a pleasure to welcome the members of Council and other guests from Thursday 26th to Saturday 28th April 2018 for the annual UWC RCN Council meeting here on campus. In

advance of the Council Meeting, the UWC RCN Annual Report – a printed encapsulation of our work and reflection on the year gone by – was released.

Beyond the formal Council meeting, we designed this year's programme in a way that provided members with concrete opportunities to engage with students and staff, through careers workshops and focus groups on areas of strategic importance. For the latter, we set up some Focus Group Meetings (UWC Nordic Short Course, Fundraising, Campus Development, the RCN Educational Model, and Regional Impact) on Friday afternoon – open to Council members, Education and Support Staff and the newly elected Student Council members.

The Council Meeting was followed by a themed dinner, 'Valhalla', coordinated by our Events Management students and staff team in the Høegh – with a set of performances by students and staff for after dinner entertainment. Tonje (Norway) and Flormari (USA), two of our second year students, ended the day with a wonderful introduction to gammaldans – with the help of local musicians, Jan and Andreas. Over sixty of us took to the dance floor.

We received much positive feedback about our new branded minibus at the time of Council.

Graduation takes place next weekend. We have been working, in tandem with a student team, on improving the quality of the event in Flekke on the eve of Graduation and the welcome / reception for families during their stay on campus.

The Baking House is nearly ready. The official opening is set for Wednesday 6th June (Sweden day) when Marianne Andresen and some of her children will be on campus. In early April, the Financial Times Weekend featured an article of Marianne 'At Home' at Smedbraaten; the article highlighted her support of this College. Please see [Appendix IV](#).

The Rektor's, Chief Operating Officer's and Director of Development's focus over the summer will be on the June / July programme here at RCN and also on continuing the transition process.

We continue to enjoy hosting visitors and introducing them to the special nature of our College. Please find below some recent feedback from guests:

'Can I just say how impressed I am with the most recent 'crop' of students I've met and worked with at UWC RCN and UWC Mahindra! They give me abundant reasons to be cheerful and optimistic! When I was 17/18, I was nowhere near as conscientious self-aware and focussed as they are. UWC is clearly doing something right!' (Mandu Reid – UWC alumna and TEDx speaker in March 2018).

'I am using this opportunity to thank you all again for the amazing and very meaningful time spent at RCN. Thank you all for being so wonderful to us.' (Nina Spago – UWC Mostar);

‘The visit made a tremendous impact on all of us and will sit long in our hearts’ (Gudmundur – Rektor-elect);

‘It is always with joy I go home’ (Ingegerd – Council member).

Richard D A Lamont
Rektor
6th May 2018