

# **Election program**

**2020-2021**

*Faculty Council of Health, Medicine and Life Science*

**SHAPE**

# Election Program SHAPE

**SHAPE**, founded in 2018, is a representative party that offers an experienced and fresh look at the state of affairs at Maastricht University (UM). All SHAPE representatives are actively involved in developments within the university, which gives them a lot of **knowledge** about the state of affairs. This active involvement allows us to respond **constructively** to current topics. This year, our list of candidates consists of new candidates who provide a **fresh perspective** on the one hand, while on the other hand, the list consists of students with Faculty Council experience to guarantee **continuity**. This variety allows SHAPE to offer new innovative ideas while preserving the continuity of past initiatives. Currently, continuity is particularly important, as a new dean will head the faculty from June 2020. In this election program, you will find our vision on developments within our faculty. Through our **close ties** with fellow students, associations and student representatives within and outside the Faculty of Health Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML), we make a difference **together**.

**Vote SHAPE, to shape our university**

## Community feeling

The FHML is a faculty where different studies come together and where students with diverse backgrounds study. We think it is important to increase **the community feeling** within and between the different disciplines and faculties; this will pave the way for a more welcoming atmosphere and collaboration. We see opportunities to strengthen ties with the residents of Maastricht and the surrounding area; after all, our community is not limited to the boundaries of our campus. To achieve a greater sense of togetherness, we define several pillars: organization of education, safeguarding inclusiveness, improving facilities and increasing transparency and visibility.

Within the **organization of education**, we want to bring more attention to interfaculty collaboration. In order to achieve this, there is a need for more intra- and extracurricular projects or courses that allow students from various educational programs to work together. In this way, students develop a broader range of competencies, which benefits their development into a fully-fledged professional. The development and implementation of the interfaculty Bachelor of Global Studies is a good start in this regard. This kind of collaborative initiatives can be expanded, namely to include the neighborhood and the inhabitants of Maastricht and its region. UM must be a breeding ground for starting student initiatives that encourage collaboration with the surrounding area. The aforementioned is in line with the social commitment that UM has formulated in its strategic program 'Community at the CORE' <sup>(1)</sup>.

Due to the great **diversity** of students at Randwyck, it is essential that everyone feels **included** and involved within the faculty. There must be an open atmosphere in which everyone can be themselves and express themselves in an authentic manner. This atmosphere can be fostered by connecting students and broadening their horizons, leading to an increased understanding of others. Training students to become a 'Global Citizen' <sup>(2)</sup> will play an essential role in this, with each study addressing global issues of a social, political, economic and ecological nature. Inclusivity starts at the gate, which is why we stand for equal opportunities in selection and admission for everyone.

**Improving facilities** has a supporting role in connecting and creating a community feeling. Regarding the renovations that will take place on Randwyck, we anticipate sufficient formal and informal study places and facilities in which every individual feels comfortable regardless of background, religion, orientation and gender. We also strive for a faculty bar, where students and staff can meet in a more informal manner and ideas can be shared.

As has become apparent in recent months, there is a strong need for **transparency** and **clear communication** from the Faculty Board and from programs to students. Not only in these times of crisis, but also in following times to come. It should become more apparent to students where and who they can turn to within the university if they have questions or problems. In this, there is also a responsibility for the Faculty Council; be more **visible** and integrate more with other representative bodies, associations and employees. Representation should become an intrinsic part of the community where input from students as well as feedback from representatives is vital. Last year we already made a good start by setting up the 'Toilet paper' to create more insight in what the representation is acting upon.

### Study improvement

Education within the FHML is continuously evolving. SHAPE members have a good view of these developments due to extensive experience within the student representation. This vast experience allows us to set realistic goals and to work constructively with all stakeholders within and outside the university. Regarding educational improvement our spearheads are digitization, training specific improvements, internationalization and increased possibilities in tailoring educational packages.

The **COVID-19 outbreak** has an inevitable effect on the future, which may require us to look at education differently. Now that we are more dependent on remote contacts, we are forced to **digitize**. We see that much can still be optimized in the online learning environment. Think of developing more E-modules, knowledge clips, teaching apps and improving digital testing. The **Quality Agreements** <sup>(3)</sup>, which were drawn up by the government from the previous student

financing system, play an essential role in this. This budget is intended for educational improvement and can be used for new initiatives such as digitization. We will take great care to ensure that this money benefits the students, also bearing the already set goals from the past years in mind.

We also want to focus on **program-specific improvements**. We want to provide more practical learning moments in the different educational programs, more intensive contact hours, integrate the concept of employability <sup>(4)</sup> within the curricula and provide appropriate travel reimbursement for elective education for each student. We will take a critical look at the curriculum reviews that will take place for European Public Health and Medicine. We also want to pay attention to the development of new programs within our faculty, where interfaculty collaboration must be a spearhead.

There are also opportunities to improve the **international** aspect of our education with respect to program content, global collaborations and possibilities to go abroad. UM has an extensive international network that can be further used to increase the global range of available internships, minors and elective options. Communication is essential in working with people of different nationalities and backgrounds. Therefore, Dutch **language courses** should be offered to non-Dutch speaking students who study in Maastricht. Additionally, we also want other language courses to be more accessible to all students.

Looking to the future, we believe that individual students should be able to compile their **own educational package** to some extent. This can be accomplished within and outside our study programs; think of following courses at another faculty within elective education, gaining experience abroad, the possibility to deepen research internships as a student assistant or contributing to the community with a student initiative.

### Healthy campus

Within the FHML, health is a core value. Besides offering this in our curricula, we would like to see this value reflected in the sustainability of the faculty, the development of a healthier environment and the improvement of student well-being. Within all these themes, it is essential to realize that we students, as future professionals, have an exemplary role to society.

The subject of **sustainability** is playing an increasingly prominent role in today's society. UM must take responsibility for this. Within our faculty, we can contribute to this by sustainably organizing the FHML, increasing awareness among our students and propagating a sustainable mindset to our environment. The objectives are to be CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral within a reasonable period, to optimize waste separation, to invest in green energy and to embed other sustainable developments.

Within education programs, more attention should be paid to the influence of our behavior and work on our ecological footprint.

With a view to a **healthier environment** for students and staff, we strive towards a viable smoking policy in the coming year. Furthermore, we want to promote physical health by stimulating taking the stairs and facilitating an ergonomic study and working environment. Living a healthy lifestyle naturally also includes a varied and healthy food supply and attention must be paid to what a healthy lifestyle is. Together with our fraction from the University Council, we work on high-quality and affordable catering; a varied offer must be available to ensure that vegetarians, vegans, and people with other dietary needs, have plenty of choices.

The prevalence of **stress-, burnout- and other psychological complaints** is high. This must change; we believe students must be able to approach confidants, such as mentors or student psychologists, more easily and regularly. Furthermore, many students need more study-related **guidance** for which you can go to the study advisor or student counselor. The waiting times of such facilities have been the subject of discussion for some time. We want to work on shortening and optimizing the waiting times, in close collaboration with the university council. There should also be more attention to the **welfare** of the students within our education to make students more resilient to the contemporary 24-hour mentality, by stimulating initiatives such as the 'well-being movement' <sup>(5)</sup>.

### In conclusion

Finally, we will be tackling the faculty budget, educational procedures, examination procedures, professor appointment and other current topics that are of importance, where we act upon our described view. In the upcoming year, SHAPE will be taking an active and constructive role in achieving our goals, but besides we keep our eyes open to new developments and we strive to keep you as a student informed!

In case have any suggestions or questions, please feel free to contact us through [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [E-mail](#) or come for a chat at the Hub in UNS40 A0.763.

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