

Dear colleagues, Dear guests,

Welcome to the special seminar on Student Exchange and Medical Education at the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

The special seminar of this morning is offered by the ECTS Medicine Association and organized in collaboration with our Faculty.

On the program are distinguished speakers from this European organization, coming from the North, the South and the West of Europe. As the Dean of this Faculty it is a great pleasure and an honour to welcome all four of them. I will present them to you in a moment.

On their website one can read that ECTS MA, was founded in 2004, and “is a legal association whose members are medical faculties from the European Union, including Switzerland and Norway. The aim of this association is the optimization of the exchange of Medical Students within the E.U. using European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).” This makes the ECTS MA a European organisation for exchange and transparency in medical education in Europe.

Our Faculty became a member of the ECTS MA very recent, to be more precise in May 2008. Notwithstanding this young membership the contacts between our Faculty and the ECTS MA and her Board Members is well established.

The seminar of this morning will offer us insight in the possibilities and challenges of student exchange in the field of medical education in Europe.

The well known Erasmus project, initiated by the European Commission (EC), was founded in 1987. As you all will know the start for an enhanced mobility of students in Europe was given in Bologna in 1999, with the signing of the Bologna Declaration.

On the program this morning are four speakers.

Prof. Dr. Kiki Thermos - *Professor of Pharmacology and Coordinator of the Lifelong Learning Program/Erasmus Program at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Crete* will tell us more on the history of the European Credit Transfer System which makes teaching and learning more transparent and facilitates the recognition of studies, both important in credit transfer and credit accumulation.

The next speaker will be Prof. Dr. Borghild Roald. She is the *President of the ECTS Medicine Association since 2007 and working as a Senior Head Physician with the Department of Pathological Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Oslo*. She will speak about Student Exchange and the Medical Curriculum. Taking courses or internships abroad while studying medicine can lead to valuable experiences for our students, but it is not always easy to be planned.

After a Coffee Break and having photographs taken of the speakers and participants of this seminar we will move on to the next speaker, who is my dear colleague and Dean at the *Faculté de Médecine of the Université Libre de Bruxelles*, Prof. Dr. Sylvain Meuris. His presentation will show us some results from a powerful web-based instrument for the collection of statistics of medical student exchange in Europe.

Prof. Dr. Jorgen Hedemark Poulsen is *Chief Consultant, MD and Dr in medical sciences at the Faculty of Health Sciences of University of Copenhagen* and he will share the experiences from clinical rotations of English speaking exchange students at the University of Copenhagen.

The discussion will be moderated by Dr. Ruddy Verbinnen representing our *Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy VUB within the ECTS MA*.

And finally it is the *President of the ECTS Medicine Association* Prof. Dr. Borghild Roald who will present us some closing remarks.

For more informal mingling there will be a light lunch for all of us.