

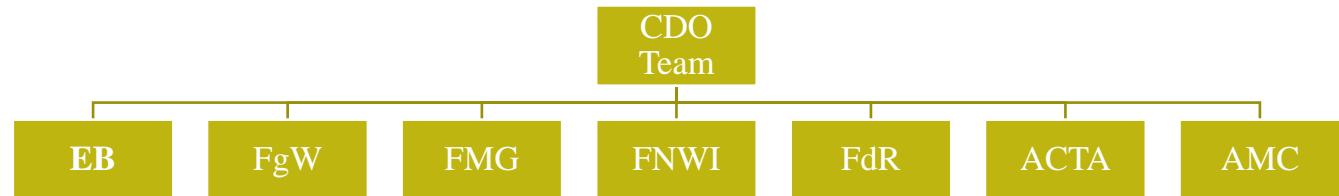


Diversity Committee  
**Mini-projects presentation:  
The Student Perspective**

# Agenda

1. Welcome from dr. Siri Boe-Lillegraven (faculty diversity officer)
2. Presentation 1: Adrian-Stefan Oprea
3. Presentation 2: Abdul Dabboussi
4. Break
5. Presentation 3: Jiachen Zhong
6. Presentation 4: Ihab Laachir

# EDI at the university



- EB Diversity Policy & Action Plan
  - Everyone is responsible (ultimately the dean)
  - FDO coordinates, advices, encourages and facilitates activities
- The Diversity Committee advises the FDO
- Student projects to involve students



## Diversity Committee

# The effect of student diversity on their class contribution

How can students from different backgrounds be supported to “speak up” and contribute to a more interactive classroom?



## Introduction



### Adrian-Stefan Oprea

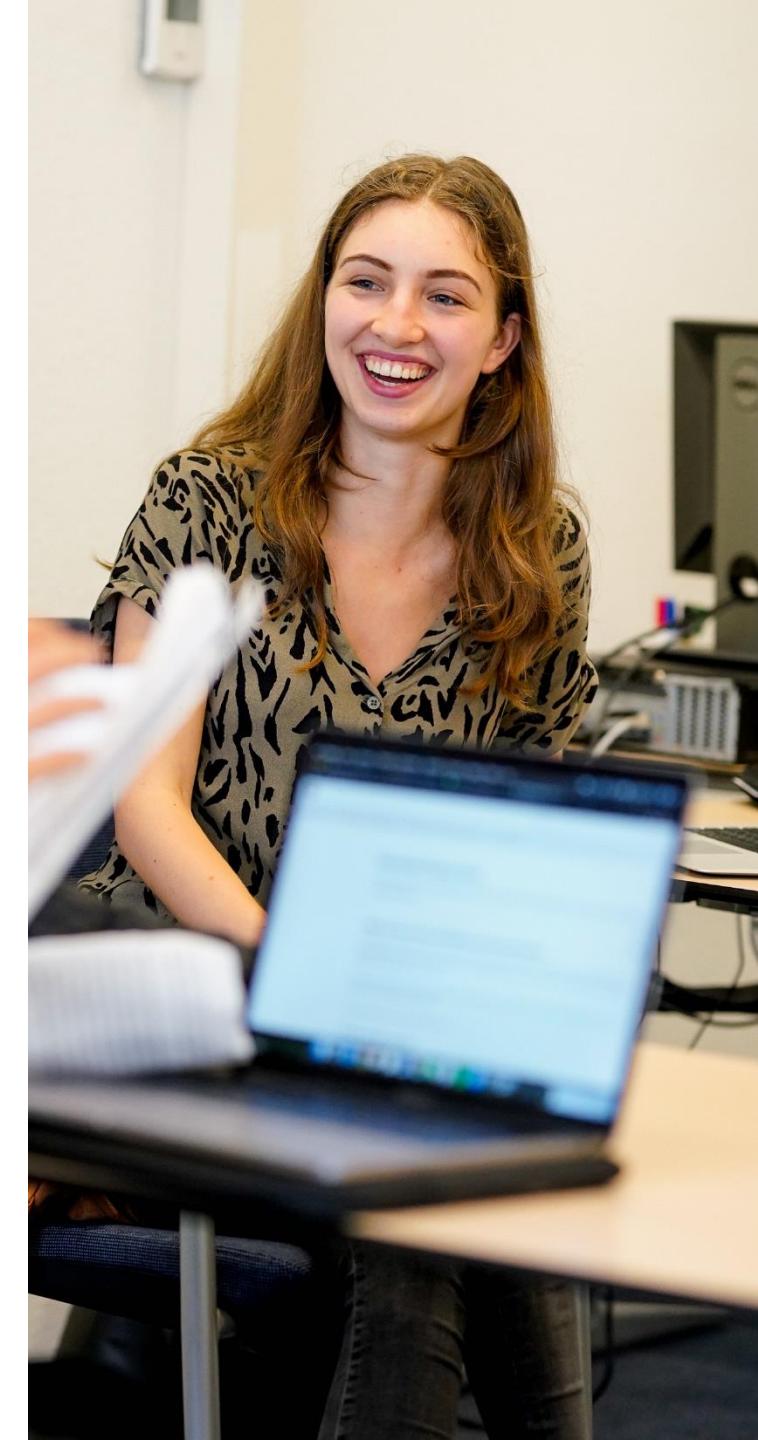
**Student member**

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Year EBE Student, specialization in Finance 
- Fond of Data Science, Macroeconomics and Corporate Finance 
- Hobbies: Biking (not in the rain), cooking and practicing sports 

## The effect of student diversity on their class contribution

### Background information

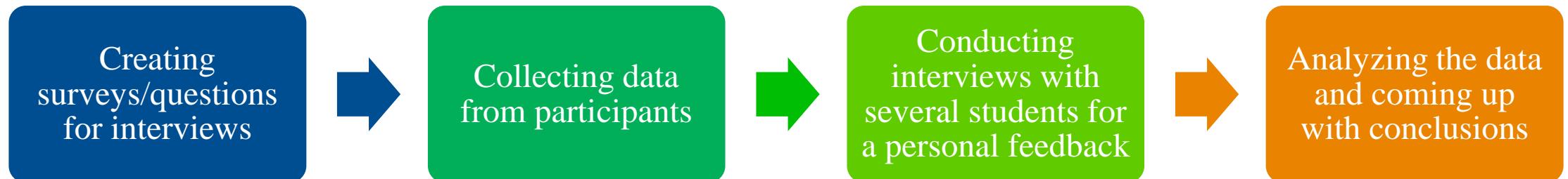
- **Scope of the project:** Analyze how students from different backgrounds can “speak up” and contribute to a more interactive class activity.
- Why this topic?
  - Personal experience during tutorials
  - Desire to find out about other factors that might have an effect on class activity
- Before this project:
  - Shyness or hesitance might be the only reasons for a decreased class contribution.
- Expectations:
  - Original and honest answers from students
  - Observing the inclusion efforts from UvA and their effectiveness towards students and staff



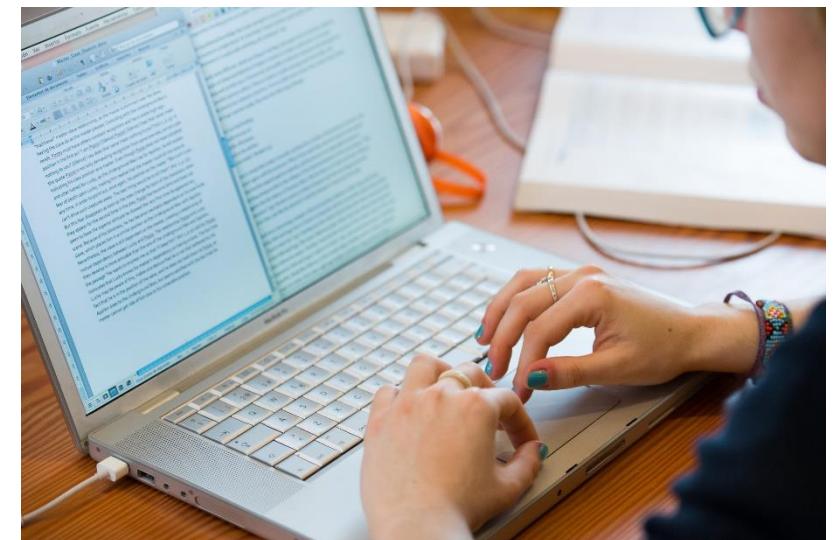


## The process (1/3)

- Key activities:



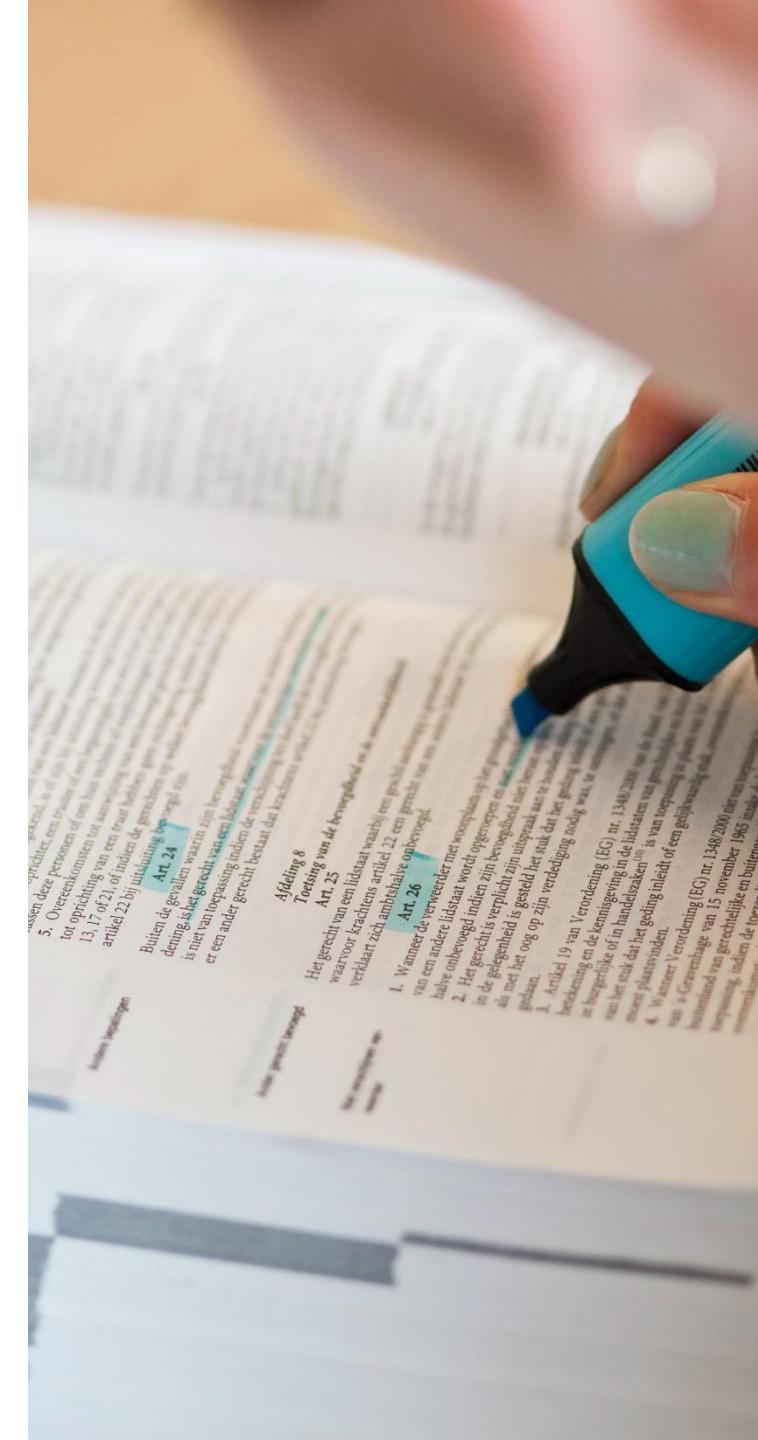
- Who was involved?
  - EBE 2nd and 3rd Year Students (Sample: 98 students)
  - Student Advisers
  - The Diversity Committee
- Potential bumps along the way:
  - Students not fully committed regarding filling the surveys
  - Rescheduling interviews with students due to unavailability issues
  - Data gathering can take a lot of time



## The process (2/3)

### Relations to the Diversity Policy and Action Plan:

- Paragraph 2: Ambitions and strategic objectives of UvA EB**
  - Diversity:** As the number of international students is growing, there are more people from different cultures, which means that classes contain people with diverse cultural backgrounds and the problem of “speaking up” can be observed better.
  - Inclusion:** At UvA, inclusion is about creating an environment where students feel part of the academic community. This project has the purpose to analyze if students feel included during class regardless of gender, sexual identity or origin.
- Paragraph 5, part A: Measures concerning education**
  - Point 7:** The project has also the goal to assess the tools provided by UvA to promote diversity and the way teachers promote it during class, with focus being on student experiences and study outcomes.





## The process (3/3)

- Students had to answer questions like:
  - *In what year of Economics and Business Economics Bsc. are you?*
  - *Did you experience the same issue in your home country?*
  - *How do you feel when the teacher asks questions, and no one answers them?*
  - *Do you think that you would be more active in class if you knew your classmates?*
  - *Do you think the diversity of students has an impact on class activity?*
  - *What are your suggestions regarding the issue?*
  - *What events/activities could be done by the university staff in order to improve the dynamic of the class activity?*

A photograph of a silver iMac computer monitor. On the screen is a digital form from the University of Amsterdam. The form includes the university's logo and name, a greeting to the participant, a descriptive paragraph about the project, and a question with four radio button options. The monitor sits on a white desk against a dark background.

UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM

Dear participant,

You have been asked to participate in this project about the impact of student diversity on their class contribution. This project is conducted by Adrian-Stefan Oprea, member of the Diversity Committee at FEB. The purpose of this project is to analyze the way the diversity of students has an impact on the class dynamic. Participation is not mandatory, but would be highly appreciated.

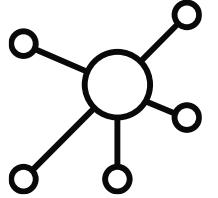
In what year of Economics and Business Economics Bsc. are you?

1st Year

2nd Year

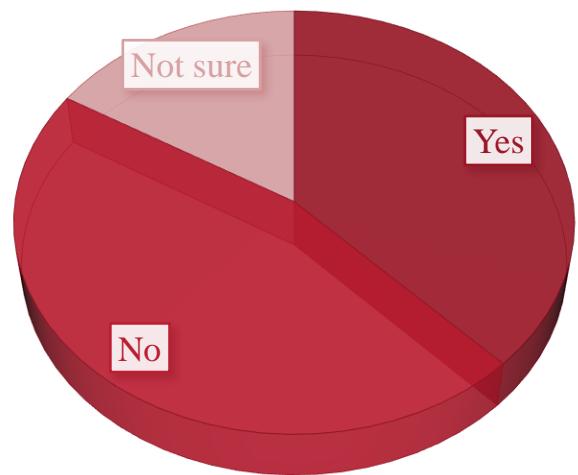
3rd Year

Additional year/s



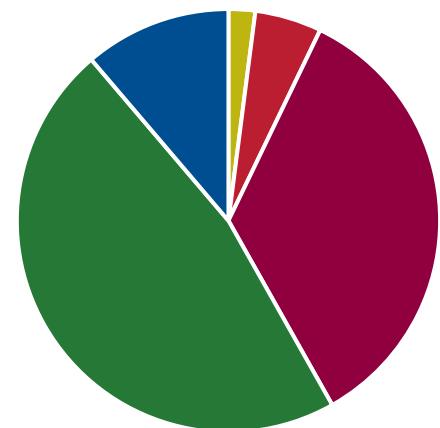
## Results (1/2)

Did you experience the same issue in your home country?



How do you feel when the teacher asks questions, and no one answers them?

- Extremely good
- Somewhat good
- Neither good nor bad
- Somewhat bad
- Extremely bad



- Almost a half of the students did not experience the same issue in their country
- Around 2/3 of the students feel bad when the teacher asks questions and no one answers them



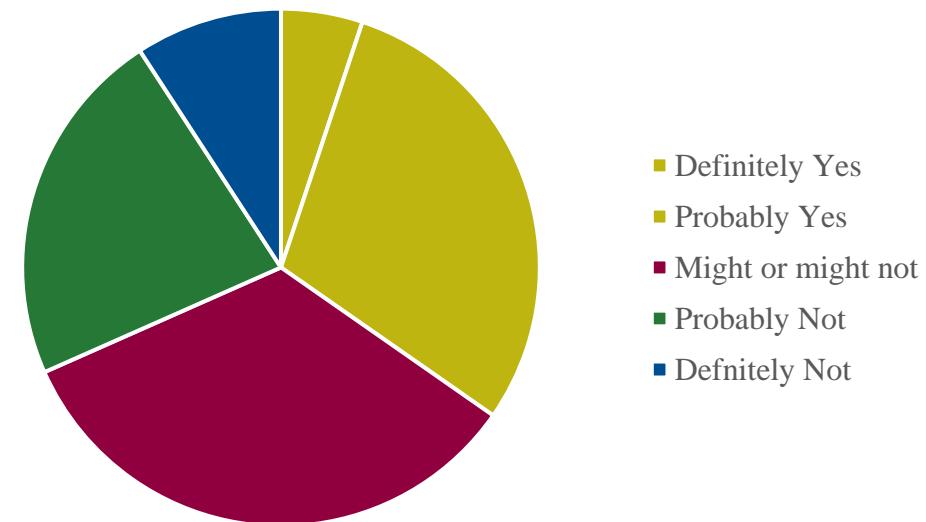
## Results (2/2)

Do you think that you would be more active in class if you knew your classmates?



- Definitely Yes
- Probably Yes
- Might or might not
- Probably not
- Definitely not

Do you think the diversity of students has an impact on class activity?



- Definitely Yes
- Probably Yes
- Might or might not
- Probably Not
- Definitely Not

- Moreover, students brought up suggestions and proposed activities that could be implemented, such as:
  - More constructive feedback from the teachers, even if their answers are wrong
  - Teachers should make more inclusive activities
  - Students from different backgrounds or cultures should get to know each other via those activities
  - Reduce criticism as much as possible



## Interviews

- During the interviews, students were asked similar questions but with a more personal approach
- 3 out of 5 students that were interviewed stated:
  - They are more afraid of criticism in a diverse environment
  - Because the groups are changing all the time, they feel like “strangers”
  - During the tutorials, there are no inclusive activities
  - Group work is being forced and it becomes less effective for some students, as they can not fully express themselves
- However, 2 out of 5 students stated:
  - They do not mind working in a diverse group
  - During breaks they try to reach out to other students in the classroom

## Recommendations

- Some students are afraid of criticism from other people
- They need more inclusive and interactive activities during the class to boost their confidence and social skills, such as:
  - Kahoot questions
  - Getting to know each other before the class
  - Feeling that the tutor is more sociable and open to diverse ideas and people
- My personal suggestion for the tutors would be to organize more interactive activities in the beginning of the class
- Moreover, I think the organization of more social events by the faculty for students to get to know each other would be very positive, as students would meet people they already know, in the case new groups are formed



## Appendices

- Did you experience the same issue in your home country? Students: 98
  - 46% of students did not experience the same issue in their home country
  - 38% of students did experience the same issue
  - 16% of students were not sure
- How do you feel when the teacher asks questions, and no one answers them?
  - Extremely good – 2%; Somewhat good – 5%; Neither good nor bad – 35%; Somewhat bad - 47%; Extremely bad – 11%
- Do you think that you would be more active in class if you knew your classmates?
  - Definitely Yes – 11%; Probably Yes - 37%; Might or might not – 24%; Probably not – 18%; Definitely not – 10%
- Do you think the diversity of students has an impact on class activity?
  - Definitely Yes – 5%; Probably Yes - 30 %; Might or might not – 34 %; Probably not – 22%; Definitely not – 9%



A wide-angle photograph of a street in a Dutch town, likely Curacao, showing a row of colorful, traditional Dutch-style houses with red roofs and white trim. In the foreground, there's a large, ornate wrought-iron ball covered in many small padlocks, a blue signpost, and a historical wooden cannon on a cart.

UvA EB Diversity Committee

# Challenging the definition of a Dutch Student

Abdul K. M. Dabboussi, July 8th 2022

# Introduction



**Abdul K. M. Dabboussi**

**Student member UvA EB Diversity Committee**

- Economics and Business Economics, Major: Economics
- Podcast Host at Slim Radio
- Chairman SEFA International Student Committee
- Member of SEFA Case Club
- UvA EB Social Media Student Assistant
- Parttime Marketeer at StudiJob

# The kingdom of the Netherlands

- Four countries:
  - The Netherlands
  - Aruba
  - Curaçao
  - St. Maarten
- Three special municipalities:
  - Bonaire
  - Saba
  - St. Eustatius



# The Project

- Highlight the experiences of students from the Dutch Kingdom (other than the Netherlands) at the Faculty of Economics and Business.
- Create an awareness of students from countries in the Dutch Kingdom other than the Netherlands.
- Develop a more nuanced definition of what it means to be a “Dutch” student.



## The why

- My own personal experience as a student from Curaçao.
- Report “Kopzorgen van Caribische studenten” by Nationale Ombudsman
  - Language barriers
  - Culture shock
  - Lack of sufficient information regarding courses
  - Practical arrangements (BSN, DUO and housing)
- Prior to the project: I expected that the issues that this group of students face are most likely due to the lack of a more nuanced definition of the differences between a dutch student and an international student

# UvA EB Diversity Policy and Action Plan

- **Measure A.4:**
  - Diversity and inclusion is stimulated by deploying our own students who fall within the relevant target groups
- **Measure A.7:**
  - A culturally or internationally diverse composition of students does not automatically make a study program inclusive.
- **Measure A.13:**
  - Ensure that information about resources for students that might struggle with mental health issues is widely disseminated and paid attention to, especially at the start of the academic year.



## The process

- Get a little bit of insight through the national ombudsman
- Create a template for the focus group setup and topics/questions to be discussed. E.g.:
  - Do you identify as a Dutch student or an international student?
  - Why did you choose your programme and do you believe that you received sufficient information?
  - How easy do you think it is/was to integrate into UvA student life and/or Dutch society?
  - What is your first language? And do you believe that you suffered from a language barrier?
  - What are some of the most prevalent challenges/obstacles that you faced during your studies?
- Created a one-page outline of the project and stated sending this along with invitations for the focus group to students.

# Insights/Results

- The project confirmed my initial expectations:
  - Lack of a nuanced definition of the differences between Dutch and International students
  - Students tend to find themselves stuck in between being “Dutch” or “International”
- There are occasions where students also faces this issue with regards to faculty/university procedures
  - Application procedures
  - University housing
  - Etc.
- Another thing that was noted was the need for more language courses:
  - Currently students are only offered Dutch 1A and Dutch 1B as electives
  - Dutch language skills in a corporate environment and/or program to help familiarize students with Dutch labor market

# Recommendations/Takeaways

- **Most important takeaway** is that we need to perhaps rethink the definitions of Dutch and international students.
  - This is the first step; it would provide more clarity in many instances. Not just for students but also the faculty.
  - With clearer definitions, we can tackle the problems that these students face more efficiently.
- **Recommendations for definitions:**
  - International students: Students that come from countries outside of the Dutch Kingdom.
  - Dutch students: Students from the Dutch Kingdom including countries other than the Netherlands.

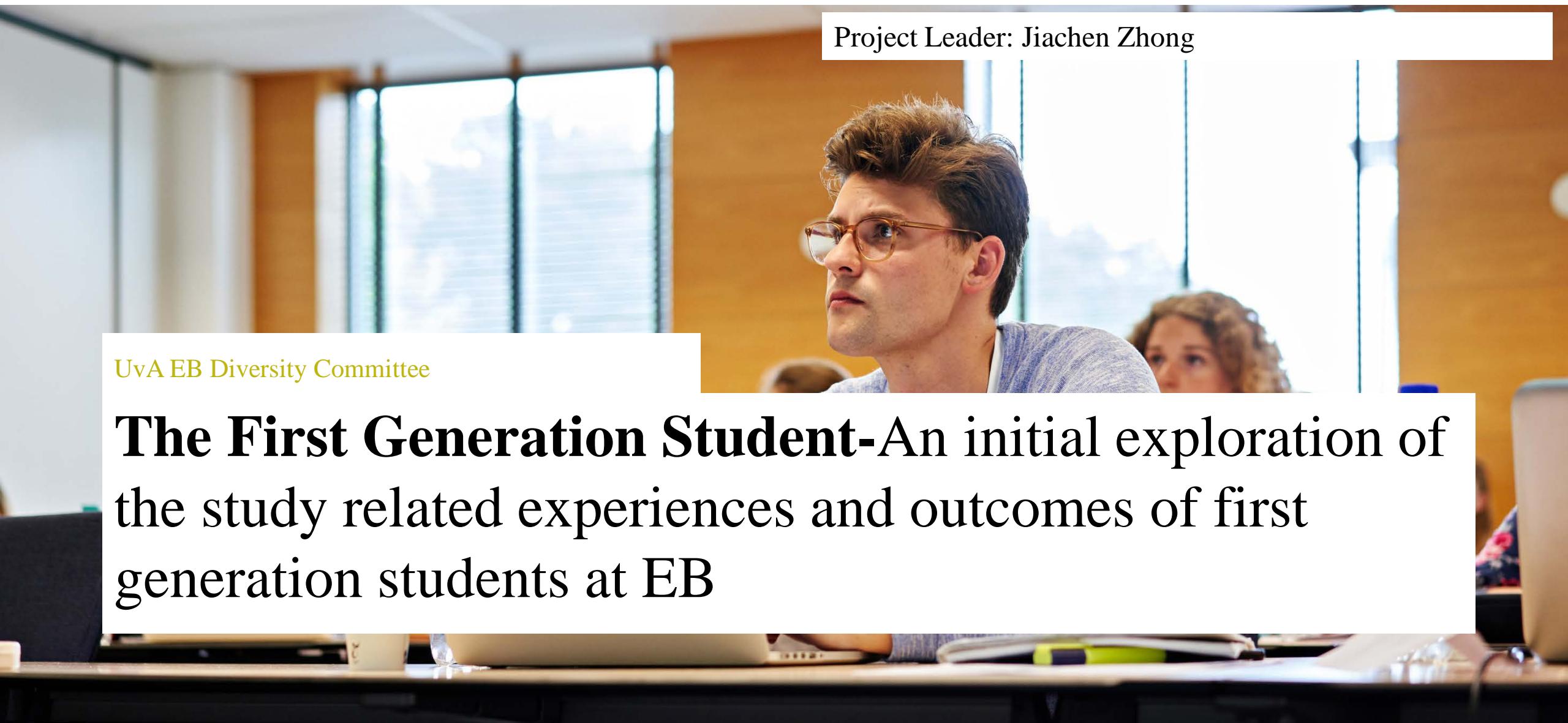




**Thank you!**

Abdul K. M. Dabboussi





Project Leader: Jiachen Zhong

UvA EB Diversity Committee

# The First Generation Student-An initial exploration of the study related experiences and outcomes of first generation students at EB

# Introduction



**[Jiachen Zhong]**  
**Student member**

Short intro: BSc Econometrics(Data Science), 0.5 year intership experience in Data Science position, Boxing and basketball

# Why important?

- Mission: Investigating the situations of the First Generation Student Group at Faculty of Economics and Business.
- Motivation: I do care about the minority group and look forward a more diverse Faculty environment with human care. It would encourage all of us to understand and help each other from different perspectives and being more creative by being united and cooperated.



# Background Information

- Before: I only knew the concept of the group before this project.
- Expectations:
  - Understand the real needs and situations of the group at our Faculty.
  - Evaluate the current workshops/programs and give suggestions to the future.



# Overview

- Key activities: Quantitative and qualitative analysis.
- Dr. Silvia Dominguez Martinez  
Dr. Siri Boe-Lillegraven  
Student: Two Bachelors students from EB
- Potential bumps:
  - Difficulty of acquiring the real data (privacy)
  - Lack of Interviewees(Unwillingness)

## Current State

- The percentage of the group at our Faculty is high (24%), and they still need help.
- Get Ready Program: A summer school focused on better preparing first-generation students for the university.
- Meet Your Mentor Program (Only Dutch): Help target Dutch students to adjust to the labour market (From Turkey, North Africa, Suriname or the Antilles and the first-generation)
- Skills classes (Only Dutch until this summer): once a week for the first two blocks in the first year: Q&A about study between senior students and the first year.

# Quantitative Results

- The percentage of the group at our Faculty is high (24%), and they still need help.
- The fraction of the students is slightly higher within EU student group than the non-EU group (26% vs 16%).
- The group showed a lower rate in obtaining BSA (57.1% vs 57.5%).
- The general results and this result can be biased due to data selection.
- The data mainly from the research of Dr. Silvia Dominguez Martinez and is only partly accessible due to the privacy problem.

## Qualitative Results (Sample)

- The group is still affected by the identity and need support .
- Skills classes are highly welcomed by the group, while other programs are not adequately promoted and expanded. (language and marketing).
- They tend to get less financial and mental support from family when making their life choices (major/university/career) and at the trough.
- The most serious problem for the group is financial problem and making friends (different education experience and living environment).
- The influence level of being the first generation students depends a lot on their place of origin, education resources and financial background to be specific. (Only looking into it by race can be biased).

## Recommendations (1/2)

- The current programs (Get Ready/ Meet Your Mentor/ Skills for AE) should be kept and further supported with better marketing: Skills can be expanded to longer periods (1 or 2 more blocks) and the other two can be expanded to English. expanded (frequency and english) and better promoted (marketing).
- The underlying issue for the group is the financial problem and more advertisement of on campus part-time job can be promoted to the group.
- Systematic track of the group from both quantitative and qualitative sides.



## Recommendations (2/2)

- Skills can be considered to be extended by one or two more blocks
- Better promotions to the target group



# Conclusion

The Group:

- ambitious; tough; determined;
- vulnerable; Financially unstable; little access to resources (even the public); easy to be isolated; need support from the public
- Continuing targeted support is important to them!



# Appendices

Dominguez-Whitehead, Y., Phommasa, M., & Caudillo, A. (2021). Unmasking First-Generation College Students and Professionals. *Journal of First-Generation Student Success*, 1(2), 145–155.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/26906015.2021.1940390>

Mangan, K. (2018, May 18). *The Challenge of the First-Generation Student*. The Chronicle of the Higher Education. Retrieved May 20, 2022, from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-challenge-of-the-first-generation-student/>

Pascarella, E. T., Pierson, C. T., Wolniak, G. C., & Terenzini, P. T. (2004). First-Generation College Students: Additional Evidence on College Experiences and Outcomes. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 75(3), 249–284. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jhe.2004.0016>

# Thank you!

EB Diversity Committee

## **Helping students with a physical disability: What works and what does not?**

**Accessibility of education at EB for students with a physical disability**

Ihab Laachir

# Introduction

## Ihab Laachir

Student member

- 5<sup>th</sup> Year EBE Student
- Hobbies: animé, reading, traveling

# Project content

- Personal experiences
- Want to analyse what other students experienced
- Good points:
  - Good exam facilities
  - Conversion of the study material
- Areas to improve:
  - Limited flexibility regarding new insights
  - Limited initiative taken to think outside-of-the-box and improve processes
- Project process: not one part with all the information and concrete solutions

# Recommendations

1. Make sure people are aware of their responsibilities.
2. Departments should stay up-to-date which students have physical impairments.  
This does not solely regard new enrolments, also older students.
3. Create project or platform for students and alumni with disabilities, so seniors can help juniors. Because of the limited size of the target group, make the platform UvA-wide.
4. Create a sustainable feedback system to reflect on accessibility and act accordingly.

# Diversity Policy and Action Plan

Recommendation	Proposed measure
Make sure people are aware of their responsibilities.	A11. UvA EB commits to and makes known to relevant parties the University-wide policy, for <b>how to best accommodate and include</b> students with a disability in educational activities, while ensuring that <b>mandatory attendance requirements or rules</b> about study load are not unnecessarily preventing students with a disability.
Departments should stay up-to-date which students have physical impairments. This does not solely regard new enrolments, also older students.	
Create project or platform for students and alumni with disabilities, so seniors can help juniors. Because of the limited size of the target group, make the platform UvA-wide.	A4. Diversity and inclusion is stimulated by <b>deploying our own students</b> who fall within the <b>relevant target groups</b> , for example via the Meet your mentor program for (first generation) Dutch students with an ethnic minority background.
Create a sustainable feedback system to reflect on accessibility and act accordingly.	E1. Issues as well as problems that students and staff with a functional disability encounter in REC, specifically in buildings E and M are <b>systematically collected</b> . Relevant bodies (e.g. FSR, study advisors, OR, facilities managers) are consulted to discuss how <b>accessible and inclusive the campus facilities and buildings</b> . Based on this, <b>FS is expected to make improvements where possible</b> .



# Thank you!

Diversity Committee