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Faculty of Laws Newsletter

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Faculty Board recent decisions

Faculty Board met on 10th March. Amongst the matters discussed, was an update from previous FB meeting, concerning opening of VLE Turnitin for Students: according to VLE UM official instructions, Students may only be given one opportunity to upload their draft assignment; at previous FB Meeting the Dean had commented that this did not make sense, and that Students should have as many opportunities as necessary to upload and change their draft version, thus allowing them to upload early (feeling comfortable with the fact that they can resubmit) and not leave matters to the last minute (sometimes literally), with all the problems this brings with it on those occasions where the time expired before the Student completed the upload. One also had to keep in mind that according to the same instructions, Students were to be given multiple opportunities to upload the final version of their assignment, so why only one opportunity to upload their draft version? This simply did not make sense, and the Dean further reasoned that there was nothing wrong with giving Students who notice a high percentage similarity, opportunity to correct their work in draft form and check the percentage again.

The Dean informed Faculty Board that, since last FB meeting he had discussed this with the Academic Registrar, who confirmed that he was aware of this anomaly in the official UM VLE instructions, and was addressing it. In view of this, the Academic Registrar agreed that when opening VLE for Students, the Academics should change the setting from 'Generate reports immediately (Students cannot resubmit)' to 'Generate reports immediately (Students can resubmit until due date): After 3 resubmissions reports generate after 24 hours'.

In view of this, FB agreed that with immediate effect, when opening VLE Turnitin for Students, the Students are given multiple opportunity to upload the draft version of their assignment.

At Faculty Board, the new Faculty Journal was also discussed. Chair reported that the Faculty had received four proposals for the position of Founding Editor and

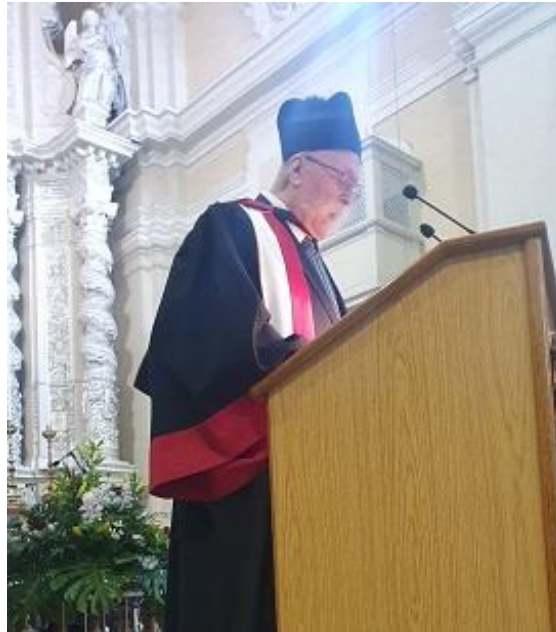
that he, together with Deputy Dean Prof Ivan Sammut would be meeting these academics in the near future. Prof Sammut further informed FB that the intention is for the Academic Editor's job to be restricted to the vetting of articles, while proof-reading will be outsourced to the chosen publisher.

Important comment by the Rector

The UM Rector holds periodical meetings with the Deans, to discuss various issues. At one such meeting held in March, one of the issues raised concerned promotions of Academics, the common sentiment being that these are not awarded fairly in the sense that they are based too heavily on the Academic having published the right amount of academic work, the end result being that people shun other duties because they are not considered as 'useful' since they do not lead to one getting promoted. Indeed it was commented that promotions tend to go to those Academics who are wise, and steer away from administrative and related duties, to make sure that they have enough time for their publications; some people take it to extremes, effectively refusing to contribute to the growth and welfare of their respective Faculty and ultimately to the University of Malta itself, and ironically get rewarded for this by being promoted relatively quickly to Associate Professor and eventually to Full Professor. In reply, the University Rector stressed that when it comes to promotions, while publications are important, the University will not promote somebody who has the correct number and quality of publications, but has not performed satisfactorily in terms of administrative contribution, teaching and outreach.

Onoris Causa ceremony

On the 3rd of March, Judge Giovanni Bonello was awarded a D.Litt. in recognition of his contribution towards the development of human rights law in Malta, as well as the popularisation of Maltese history through prolific contributions; for his role as judge in the European Court of Human Rights; for nurturing among students and peers a consciousness about human rights law and practice in Malta; and for being a beacon of excellence in the study of law and history in Malta. Prof Tonio Borg delivered a particularly befitting oration, commenting on Judge Bonello's career and achievements as a lawyer, judge, historian and writer, while Dr Ivan Mifsud as Dean of the Faculty of Laws, sponsored the event.



Dr Bonello delivering his acceptance speech

The ceremony was held at the Church of the University, in Merchants Street Valletta. On the same occasion, Dr Maria Grech Ganado was also awarded a D.Litt., for her contribution to literature, to the teaching of literature and for promotion of Maltese literature beyond our shores.

Dr David Fabri book launch

On the 22nd March at the Chamber of Advocates, Dr David Fabri's 'Studies in Maltese Regulation - Financial Services Law' was officially launched. Prof Tonio Borg delivered the introductory speech at this event, followed by Dr Arthur Galea Salomone, and finally Dr Fabri himself. This book is not only a very insightful technical work, but also contains a quasi-biographical element, having been written by a person who early in his career, left private practice to contribute to the development of financial services law in Malta practically from its inception, and therefore can and actually writes from a personal angle and with a particular insight into the subject which only people who have lived through it are capable of bringing out.



Dr Fabri's book is published by MIDSEA Books and is available to purchase from leading bookshops.

Prof. Ray Mangion book launch

On 10th March, at Saint Vincent de Paul Residence, Prof Ray Mangion launched the first volume of his *Memorji minn San Vincenz de Paul*, a work consisting of a series of detailed interviews with residents, which interviews are intended to serve as a collective memory of a completely different way of life from that which we are used to nowadays and which is at risk of being completely forgotten as these people get older and eventually pass away.

The launch was compered by Mr Keith Demicoli.

M.Adv and LL.M. Students' visit to European Institutions

A group of around twenty M.Adv and LL.M. Students visited the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Auditors, during the last week of March. At the CJEU they toured the building, attended a plenary sitting, and met Judge Professors Peter G Xuereb and Eugene Buttigieg. They were also given

information about possible career paths within the CJEU, and indeed actively encouraged to consider joining the CJEU for a *stage*.



At the European Court of Auditors the students were greeted by Dr George Hyzler and also received a brief, but very interesting insight into the role and workings of the ECA.

This visit was organised by Prof. Ivan Sammut and Ms Michela Brincat, and partially sponsored by the CJEU itself.