



**L-Università
ta' Malta**

**Faculty for
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From the Office of the Dean
Newsletter: 'Connect' | No 10

23/1/2019

Dear Colleagues,

We are practically mid-way through this academic year. The Faculty and all of its Departments have been working tirelessly over these last months, ably led by the respective Heads of Departments. The number of events and activities we've had so far are evidence of a dynamic Faculty that is committed to scholarship and to the cause of 'social justice'. The slogan '*we are in this together*' is surely a claim that we can do much better when we engage with the challenges collectively.

Would like to link up with the Faculty FB Pages?

- **Faculty for Social Wellbeing:** <https://www.facebook.com/uom.socialwellbeing>
- **Department of Counselling:** <https://www.facebook.com/Department-of-Counselling>
- **Department of Criminology:** <https://www.facebook.com/uom.criminology/>
- **Department of Disability Studies:** <https://www.facebook.com/uom.disabilitystudies>
- **Department of Family Studies:** <https://www.facebook.com/uom.familystudies>
- **Department of Gender Studies:** <https://www.facebook.com/uom.genderstudies>
- **Department of Gerontology:** <https://www.facebook.com/uom.gerontology/>
- **Department of Psychology:** <https://www.facebook.com/uom.psychology>
- **Psychology Lab:** <https://www.facebook.com/uom.psychologylab/>
- **Department of Social Policy and Social Work:**
<https://www.facebook.com/uom.spsw>
- **Department of Youth and Community Studies:**
<https://www.facebook.com/uom.youth>
- **Twitter Account:** <https://twitter.com/FacultyforSW>
- **Instagram Account:** [facultyforsw](https://www.instagram.com/facultyforsw)

You are invited to retrieve **previous editions** of the **Connect** Newsletter here:
<http://www.um.edu.mt/socialwellbeing/notices/connectnewsletter>.

Faculty activities in brief:

- I would like to start by making a special mention and voice my appreciation for all the **visiting and casual academic members of staff**, who support the work of the Faculty through the respective Departments, whether it is through dissertation supervision, placement supervision and mentoring, lecturing, sitting on committees, scholarship and research. Their commitment and loyalty to the Faculty is greatly appreciated and does not go unnoticed.
- Two **new administrative members of staff** have joined the Faculty; Mr Stuart Bugeja (Faculty Office) and Ms Katrina Xuereb (Department of Counselling and Faculty Office).
- For the first time we have an Administrative Staff II responsible for **FREC**, Mr Stuart Bugeja (Faculty Office) and supported by Ms Charmaine Agius (Department of Gerontology) and Ms Josienne Falzon (Department of Disability Studies). Kudos to the academic staff members who form part of this committee and Dr Trevor Calafato (Department of Criminology) who leads this team.
- I would like to thank all the **administrative staff**, who from this year each have duties with the Faculty as well as with their respective Departments. The work of the Faculty has grown immensely and so has the support from all the Departments. Appreciation is directed to the HoDs who give time of their administrative staff to be dedicated to the many Faculty activities notwithstanding we have such a busy agenda in our departments.
- Planning is underway in preparation for a Faculty '**Schools Outreach Programme**' which will be led by Ms Shirley Gilson (Faculty Office), Mr Stuart Bugeja (Faculty Office) and Ms Katrina Xuereb (Department of Counselling and Faculty Office).
- Congratulations to Prof. Gordon Sammut (Department of Psychology) who has been **promoted** to Associate Professor.
- The Office for Human Resources Management & Development organised an **Orientation Day for Academics** which was held at the Valletta Campus. A number of academics have attended this seminar. Apart from that a number of resident academics are also attending the **CPD sessions**.
- The **Digest** Electronic Newsletter is still going strong. Kudos to Ms Dorianne Cortis (Faculty Office) who sets out and circulates the Digest every Wednesday.
- Dr Greta Darmanin Kissaun (Head, Department of Psychology and Deputy Dean) is leading a review of the **Strategic Plan** of the Faculty.
- The Faculty has been involved in ongoing discussions to have a **UM Strategic Plan**. The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi and Dr Maureen Cole (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) led workshops during these seminars. Kudos to Pro-Rector Prof. Tanya Sammut Bonnici for running this UM initiative.
- Dr Natalie Kenely (Head, Department of Social Policy and Social Work) was appointed as member of the **Safeguarding Commission of the Archdiocese of Malta**.
- The Department of Social Policy and Social Work held their annual Away Day for the Department's **Freshers**'.
- Dr Natalie Kenely (Head, Department of Social Policy and Social Work) and Dr Sandra Scicluna (Department of Criminology) met an enthusiastic group of around 20 **Gozitan 6th Formers** who are interested in reading for a Degree in Social Work or Criminology.
- Dr Natalie Kenely delivered the **keynote speech** "Alone in a Crowd" at the Faculty Conference on Loneliness. She was also invited to deliver a **keynote speech**; "Inspirational Leadership and

Emotional Intelligence" at a conference for 240 Assistant Directors in the Public Service, organised by the Office of the Permanent Secretary (People and Standards).

- An **MoU** with Agenzija Sapport is going to be signed shortly.
- An **MoU** with the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector is in the making.
- Dr Sue Vella (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) together with the Dean are working in collaboration with the Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector to start a **Diploma course** for administrators working within the voluntary sector.
- The Department of Social Policy and Social Work held its annual **Dissertation Work in Progress Seminars** with its final year students.
- The Department of Social Policy and Social Work hosted Dr Matthew Donoghue Lecturer in Comparative Social Policy from the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford. He delivered **lectures** to the Department's MA (Social Policy) students.
- The Department of Social Policy and Social Work enjoyed a **team-building away day** in Sicily.
- Dr Katya Degiovanni and Dr Gottfried Catania (Department of Psychology), together with the Dean are working on a research and training initiative with a **commercial company**.
- A group of academics, postgraduate students and practitioners working in policy, media, community action and development, local councils, disability and youth have formed an informal consultees group to examine the **White Paper on Local Government Reform**. The contributors included academics Prof. Andrew Azzopardi (Dean, Faculty for Social Wellbeing), Dr Marie Briguglio (Department of Economics, FEMA and who also services the Faculty for Social Wellbeing) and Mr Colin Borg, (Visiting Lecturer with the Faculty for Social Wellbeing); Local Councillors like Ms Stephania Fenech (Zejtun Local Council and reading a Masters with the Department of Youth and Community Studies), practitioners like Mr Oliver Scicluna (Commissioner for the Rights of Persons with Disability and alumni of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing) and Mr Melvic Zammit (Public Broadcasting Services), as well as activists like Mr Eman Borg (Kunsill Nazzjonali taż-Żgħażaġh and student reading a degree with the Department of Social Policy and Social Work) and students like Ms Denise Farrugia, (reading a Masters with the Department of Youth and Community Studies). Dr Maria Brown (Sociologist and lecturer with the Faculty for Social Wellbeing) coordinated this initiative.
- Our Faculty **website** has undergone a complete makeover with the contemporary look and feel based on the rebranded UM website. Kudos to the Communications and Marketing Office and Ms Dorianne Cortis (Faculty Office) for the work they have put into this.
- Ms Jamie Bonnici, Research Support Officer II has finalised a **Faculty Gender Audit** led by the Department of Gender Studies. Ms Bonnici, is also working on a project in collaboration with the **Msida Local Council**. She will also be part of the team working on the new 'Loneliness in Malta' project.
- The Faculty Research Officer, Ms Jamie Bonnici and the Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi are supporting a **Vote 16 campaign**, soon to be launched.
- For the first time an informal **Faculty Research Support Officers forum** has been set up. The Research Officers had a meeting with the Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi.
- The Faculty is developing an **Inclusive Language Policy**, which after being adopted internally, will be presented to Senate for potential adoption by the rest of the Alma mater.
- The Dean is currently setting up **individual appointments** with all the students of the Faculty. He is also meeting all the **cohorts** of students reading a course with our Faculty.
- The Faculty is working on a joint degree with the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery; an **MSc in Addiction Studies**.

- An MSc in **Psychological Studies** will be offered starting this February.
- Work is underway to set up a **Master in Contemporary Family Studies**. Kudos to the Department of Family Studies.
- The Department of Disability Studies (in collaboration with the Department of Psychology) will for the first time be offering a **BA in Disability with Psychology** and a **BA in Disability with Social Wellbeing Studies**. Work on this initiative is well underway.
- The Faculty is working on a joint degree with the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery and the Faculty for Health Sciences on an **MSc in Mental Health Studies**.
- Dr Maria Brown, Research Officer III and Visiting Senior Lecturer in collaboration with the Dean is drafting a community development project in collaboration with the **Valletta Local Council**.
- The HoDs had their regular **HoD College meetings**.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi and Dr Dione Mifsud (HoD, Department of Counselling and Senate Representative) attended **Senate meetings**.
- **Faculty Board** meetings were held regularly. Two new students were elected to sit on the FB; Mr Matteo Camilleri and Ms Jillian Spiteri.
- Negotiations are ongoing on a study that the Faculty will be doing on **Human Trafficking**.
- The Department of Social Policy and Social Work and the Faculty Office teams have both organised a collection of food over the Christmas Holidays that will be sent to the **Food Bank Malta**.
- Dr Sandra Scicluna (Department of Criminology) delivered a lecture during the **Dr Jacqueline Memorial Lecture**, two years from her passing; *Education in Female Prisons: The Paradox of Success*.
- A local company has granted **two full-time PhD scholarships** following negotiations with the Faculty. The candidates will also be employed as RSO 2s as part of their scholarship.
- The Faculty in collaboration with RIDT has **crowd-funded an MPhil/PhD scholarship**, the Dr Jacqueline Azzopardi Scholarship in the area of criminology studies. 6 candidates have submitted an interest and selection process will take place early this year.
- The MPhil/PhD sub-committee have organised two **sessions**, one delivered by Prof. Marilyn Clark (Department of Psychology) and one by the PhD candidate, Ms Amy Camilleri Zahra (Department of Disability Studies).
- The 2018 graduands were welcomed by the Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, during their **buscades**. They were given a souvenir. *We are proud of every single alumnus!*
- For the first time the Faculty has **organised drinks** for families and the graduands before their graduations. This highly successful event was received with enthusiasm by the families, administrative staff, academic staff and students.
- Dr Maria Pisani (Department of Youth and Community Studies) **presented** findings of a publication to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly committee on Refugee and Migrant children and young people.
- Loneliness is a phenomenon that in these last decades has been hitting us fast and hard. The Faculty for Social Wellbeing in collaboration with Caritas Malta have analysed this phenomenon in the documentary, *"Il-Gerħa tas-Solitudni: il-Mixja lejn Soluzzjoni"*. The 26 minutes **Documentary** had over 3,000 clicks on You Tube, and counting, an estimated 40K have seen it on TV and circa 12K heard it on radio. There were an estimated 10 articles/features covering this theme and a full *Dissett* programme was constructed around this documentary. There is also a version with English sub-titles and another version with sign language. A conference and a documentary launch event were organised as well. This was an initiative by the Community

Engagement Sub-Committee led by the Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, Dean and Dr Andreana Dibben (Department of Social Policy and Social Work).

- The Department of Gender Studies and the Dean's Office have supported the Foundation's **SOAR PR**.
- The Faculty and the Department of Criminology are working closely on a number of **training initiatives** with the CCF.
- The Faculty for Social Wellbeing has started a **Vlog**. So far we have had Vlogs by Prof. Andrew Azzopardi (Dean), Dr Albert Bell (Department of Youth and Community Studies), Mr Aleksandar Dimitrijevic (MPhil/PhD student with the Department of Gender Studies), Dr Andreana Dibben (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) and Dr Daniella Zerafa (Department of Social Policy and Social Work)
- **Konnekt** the Faculty radio show on Campus FM is currently being recorded by the Presenter and Producer, Dr Albert Bell (Department of Youth and Community Studies). Kudos to RSPC for this initiative.
- The **Brown Bag seminars** by the RSPC are still going strong and well-attended. Kudos to Ms Lucienne Brincat (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) for providing the administrative support. The lecture by Dr Gottfried Catania and Dr Greta Darmanin-Kissaun (Department of Psychology) was called, *'The Repertory Grid Technique: A method of data collection and analysis amenable to both qualitative and quantitative analysis'*. Another session of the Brown Bag Seminar was delivered by Dr Sandra Scicluna (Department of Criminology) on; *'Migrant women and gender based violence'*.
- For the second year running, we have achieved the **1,000 target** of students reading a course with our Faculty, making us one of the largest in the UM, and this after just 7 years since the Faculty was established.
- A first seminar of the **Professorial Lecture Series** was delivered by Prof. Carmel Cefai (Department of Psychology). *'An education for wellbeing and empathic understanding'*. The seminar was well-attended.
- Work on the **'Cluster of Migration'** is ongoing – developments are in the pipe-line. Kudos to Ms Jamie Bonnici, Research Officer II for the work she is doing in this area.
- Clayton Micallef a Faculty for Social Wellbeing graduate was recently awarded the **National Order of Merit** by HE the President of Malta, Marie Louise Coleiro Preca. He has worked tirelessly to increase awareness on disability issues and other social challenges the community is being faced with, notwithstanding his physical impairment.
- The Dean's Office has issued a **Press Release**; *'Dealing with the rental market'*. Dr Charles Pace (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) contributed immensely to this PR.
- The Faculty for Social Wellbeing and the Faculty of Education organised a **half-day round table** seminar for decision makers on *'Ensuring Quality in Early Childhood Education in Malta'*, an initiative of Prof. Paul Bartolo (Department of Psychology).
- The Administrative Team of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing organised an innovative fun activity for **Halloween**.
- *Unity*, the second edition of the Faculty magazine has been **circulated widely** both in soft and hard copies versions.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, Prof. Mary Anne Lauri (Department of Psychology), Mr Clayton Micallef and Ms Sam Debattista (Department of Psychology alumni) delivered **Orations** during these Year's graduation ceremonies.

- Work is underway, coordinated by Ms Marija Grech (Department of Social Policy and Social Work), on the second edition of the **Dean's Forum** with over 30 students, administrators, research officers and academics involved in this initiative.
- The **Femicide Observatory** which is being hosted by the Department of Gender Studies is one-year old.
- Prof. Marilyn Clark (Department of Psychology) has been very busy with a Council of Europe **study** that found that almost 70% of European journalists' experience psychological violence on their job.
- A **new Faculty publication, Research magazine**, is being designed. This publication will have basic scholarship and contact details on all members of the academic staff and also short empirical pieces of research. It will be distributed amongst stakeholders.
- **New posters** have been designed and are being distributed in schools, Local Councils, Government entities, Stakeholders amongst other.
- The International Institute on Ageing, United Nations-Malta, in collaboration with the Department of Gerontology (Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta), organised a **conference** on '*Gerontological and Dementia Care in Malta and Gozo: Present and Future Challenges*'.
- Ms Amy Camilleri Zahra (Department of Disability Studies) has been appointed to sit on the committee that will discuss the **Maltese Constitutional Reform**.
- Dr Claire Azzopardi Lane (Head, Department of Disability Studies) now sits on the **Maltese Sign Language Recognition Act**.
- On the 1st October 2018, Professor Carmel Cefai, Director at the Centre for Resilience and Socio-Emotional Health, was invited to address an **International Conference** in Vilnius, Lithuania on '*How do we educate our future leaders today: emotional intelligence vs. artificial intelligence*', organised by the European Association of Institutions of Non-formal Education of Children and Youth (EAICY). During the conference attended by 250 experts and policy makers, Prof. Cefai discussed how social and emotional education may be effectively integrated in the curriculum in schools.
- Dr Sandra Scicluna (Department of Criminology) closed the Project **CAPTIVE*** (Cultural Agent - Promoting and Targeting Interventions vs. Violence and Enslavement). The research and work conducted through project CAPTIVE in the past 2 years has allowed the project team to bolster their knowledge of sexual and gender-based violence among migrant and refugee women.
- On the 23rd October 2018, Professor Angela Abela (Department of Family Studies) was invited to participate in the opening session of a **high-level conference** on Parenting, Child wellbeing and Development organised by the Doha International Family Institute with UNICEF as the main partner. The opening session was broadcasted on Al Jazeera.
- Professor Angela Abela (Department of Family Studies) was invited by the Family Studies Institute at St Cyril and Methodius University in Macedonia to **lecture and discuss** future collaborations between the Department of Family Studies and the Institute.
- Prof Angela Abela delivered a **practice seminar** prior to the AGM of the Maltese Association of Family Therapy and Systemic Practice (MAFT-SP) on Friday the 14th of December at Mount St Joseph Retreat House. The title of the Seminar was: *Working Systemically with children and their families in the context of trauma*.
- Dr Dione Mifsud (Head, Department of Counselling) and Dr Ruth Falzon (Department of Counselling) were invited to deliver 5 **workshops** in India.

- Dr Dione Mifsud (Head, Department of Counselling) gave a **keynote speech** on transcultural counselling at the University of Cologne. It has been published as a CD and DVD by the German Association for Counselling
- An **MoU** was signed between the Department of Counselling the University of the Cumberland. Negotiations were led by Dr Dione Mifsud (Head, Department of Counselling)
- Dr Marceline Naudi (Head, Department of Gender Studies) was **invited**, as GREVIO Vice-President, by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, to speak at their National Human Rights Forum on the 10th December (Human Rights Day). Whilst there, Dr Naudi had a meeting with the Minister of Social Affairs and Labour, and another with the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights in relation to their ratification of the Istanbul Convention.
- Dr Marceline Naudi (Head, Department of Gender Studies) is organising a **forum** for academics interested in the field of gender based violence.
- A number of initiatives are being put in place so that the Faculty starts **promoting its courses**, some very original and innovative. *More on this soon.*
- Dr Marceline Naudi (Head, Department of Gender Studies) was **invited** as GREVIO rapporteur for the evaluation of Montenegro's compliance with the Istanbul Convention, to speak at the Ninth Women's Parliament Session held on the 26th of November in Podgorica.
- On the 23rd November a **conference** was held of the '*Full Cooperation: Zero violence*' EU funded project, of which the Department of Gender Studies and Prof. Marilyn Clark (Department of Psychology) was part.
- A first of its kind **Faculty Research Magazine** in collaboration with Corporate Dispatch will be launched during the forthcoming academic year.
- Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri, Head, Department of Family Studies has been invited as an **expert speaker** at the Hearing on 'Children victims or witnesses of gender-based violence within families', organised by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, at the European Parliament.
- Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri also delivered a **presentation** on "Children's experiences of domestic violence in families" to the Chamber of Advocates on the 10th of December. She presented as a member of the Commission on Domestic Violence as part of the 16 days of activism against gender based violence and domestic violence.
- Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, Dean, **sits** on the Ministry appointed *Kumitat Tishih tal-Familja*.
- Dr Vicky Gauci (Department of Disability Studies) has been **awarded her Doctorate** from the University of Leeds following a successful viva.
- Dr Vickie Gauci, (Department of Disability Studies) has been **awarded** the Premju Soċjetà Ġusta (Fair Society Award) by the Parliamentary Secretariat for Disabled Persons and Active Ageing.
- The Faculty of Health Sciences, the Faculty for Social Well-Being and YMCA Valletta are organising a **symposium** entitled, '*Homelessness: The Hidden Scandal*'.
- These last 5 years have been a journey for Mr Clayton Micallef who was reading a B.Psy. (Hons) with the Faculty for Social Wellbeing. Following a serious accident Clayton had a number of impairments to contend with, but this did not come in the way of his studies, and through the support of the Department of Psychology, Faculty and the services offered by the University of Malta and the Ministry for Education and Employment, Clayton managed to see through his studies with a **First Class Honours**.
- Implementation phases for social wellbeing enhancement through reduction of crime, money laundering and the increase of community safety project being implemented through the

Department of Criminology include the **National projects** (ERDF and ESF), SIntegraM, SpatialTRAIN, pLotteR and SFECS.

- Prof. Saviour Formosa (Head, Department of Criminology) is involved in **training** on hi-end technologies and licences for aerial, terrestrial and bathymetrics, LiDAR and data capture, drone piloting for the acquisition of data for safety and security, ground penetrating radar and other technologies that will help in post-disaster management and disaster-victim identification.
- Prof. Saviour Formosa (Head, Department of Criminology) and his team are working on the final phases of the preparation for the **European Values Survey**.
- Work is underway on the first ever **Faculty Festival** that will be held in April.
- In collaboration with the Ministry for the Family, Children Affairs and Social Solidarity, work is progressing well on a research on '**Homelessness**'. Ms Ann Marie Cutajar is the Research Officer responsible for the project led by Dr Sue Vella (Department of Social Policy and Social Work).
- A panel led Dr Maureen Cole (Department of Social Work and Social Policy) has been set up to work on the **Faculty Research Journal**.
- Work on the second **Social Wellbeing Text**, *Perspectives on Wellbeing: applications from the field*, has started. The editorial team is made up of Prof. Marilyn Clark (Department of Psychology), Dr Ruth Falzon (Department of Counselling) and Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, Dean.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to:

- The team of **HoDs** who are incredibly supportive, namely; the Deputy Dean, Dr Greta Darmanin Kissaun (Head, Department of Psychology), Dr Claire Azzopardi Lane (Head, Department of Disability Studies), Ms. Alison Darmanin (Faculty Officer), Prof. Marvin Formosa (Head, Department of Gerontology), Prof. Saviour Formosa (Head, Department of Criminology), Dr Natalie Kenely (Head, Department of Social Policy and Social Work), Dr Dione Mifsud (Faculty Senate Representative and Head Department of Counselling), Dr Marceline Naudi (Head, Department of Gender Studies) and Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri (Head, Department of Family Studies).
- The **Faculty Board** members for their important role in running this Faculty.
- The Academic members of **staff**, whether resident full-time or part-time, casual or visiting, dissertation and placement supervisors and the **students** who make this a cohesive Faculty keen to respond to the challenges of society;
- I would like to thank all **the administrative staff**, both those serving the Faculty in the Departments as well as in the Faculty Office, for their unwavering support and commitment. In my eyes they are equal members of staff but having a different role. A Faculty depends on the collaboration and sharing of the different responsibilities.
- Finally, my appreciation is extended to **Ms Lara Ellul** (PA to the Dean) for her dedication and constant support.

This is most certainly not all that has happened in the Faculty during these last months. If there is anything you would like to include in the future editions of Connect please send an email to lara.ellul@um.edu.mt

Prof. Andrew Azzopardi
Dean