



Welcome

Welcome to the 13th edition of the Connect Newsletter issued from the Office of the Dean. These have been extraordinary times, ones like we have never experienced before. Trying times indeed and were it not for the leadership of the Heads and the continuous support of the admin, RSOs and academic body we would not have managed to keep offering the sterling service we gave to our 1,200 students. Hand-on-heart I feel that we have still managed to get through.

Prof. Andrew Azzopardi | Dean

Would you like to link up with the Faculty 'socials'?

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Faculty activities in brief:

- ⌚ We have started the academic year (2020-21) with almost **1,200 students** including more than 50 M.Phil./Ph.D. candidates. There has been an exponential growth of freshers from previous years.
- ⌚ Prof. Mary Anne Lauri (Department of Psychology) has been elected to serve on **Senate** together with the Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi. We would like to thank Dr Dione Mifsud (Head, Department of Counselling) for his 4 years of service on Senate.
- ⌚ **Congratulations** to Prof. Joanne Cassar (Head, Department of Youth and Community Studies) for being **promoted** to Associate Professor.
- ⌚ **Congratulations** to Dr Ingrid Grech Lanfranco (Head, Department of Family Studies) for being **promoted** to Lecturer.
- ⌚ Mr Raoul Briffa (MA Community Action and Development) is the **new student representative on Faculty Board** elections for two undergraduates will be held in March.
- ⌚ Dr Damian Spiteri has been **appointed lecturer** with the Department of Social Policy and Social Work.
- ⌚ Ms Sarah Anne Falzon has been appointed as **administrative secretary** with the Department of Counselling and Ms Amira Rose Mamo has been appointed as secretary with the Department of Social Policy and Social Work.
- ⌚ Mr Pete Farrugia and Ms Christine Spiteri are the new **Faculty RSOs**. Ms Samantha Pace Gasan, our former RSO, has moved to new pastures following her appointment as Commissioner for CRPD.
- ⌚ Ms Anna Maria Puleo (Department of Disability Studies) will be appointed as administrative secretary of **FREC** instead of Mr Stuart Bugeja who will be moving to new pastures.
- ⌚ Prof. Mary Anne Lauri has agreed to be part of the **FREC committee** to help deal with the growing number of students.
- ⌚ Dr Kristina Bettanzana (Department of Psychology) was appointed as the second **Deputy Dean** together with Dr Claire Azzopardi Lane (Department of Disability Studies).
- ⌚ **New collaborative agreements** have been signed with *Save a Live Foundation, AFM, MEDE, Malta Tourism Authority* and *CRPD*. We are in the process of working with *The Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society* on the setting up of a *Children's Observatory*.
- ⌚ **CROM Children's Rights Observatory Malta** is a new joint initiative between the faculty and The Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society.
- ⌚ The Faculty is involved in the **Wellbeing Index Project** by the Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society in collaboration with the University of Malta.
- ⌚ We have organised a **welcome concert**, in December 2020 by *The New Victorians* to usher in the new academic year. This is the **link to the on-line concert** that went down well with all the Faculty community. The concert included very interesting testimonies from our alumni and current students.
- ⌚ **societas.expert 2** is in its second edition this time round focusing on '*Not just another face in the crowd*'. We will be working on the third edition shortly.
- ⌚ Work on the 4th edition of the **Dean's Forum** has started. For the first time-ever we've had over 40 students interested in participating, an all-time record!
- ⌚ Prof. Gordon Sammut has been appointed to sit on the **National Covid-19 Action Strategy**.

- ⊗ Planning for the **Dean's Awards** (which will be taking place very late in the academic year) will be starting shortly.
- ⊗ Dr Ingrid Grech Lanfranco and Dr Lorleen Farrugia have been **awarded their Ph.D.s**.
- ⊗ The **Faculty Journal on Social Wellbeing** should be out as well - very soon.
- ⊗ In collaboration with *Lovin Malta* the Faculty organised a Q&A with Daniel Holmes. A group of students and lecturers asked questions about his incarceration experience.
- ⊗ The **Professorial-Senior Lecturers Mentoring Programme** has been launched.
- ⊗ The next **Professorial Lecture Series** will be delivered by Prof. Marilyn Clark (Department of Psychology).
- ⊗ The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi will be one of the panellists during the President of Malta's **conference on 'National Unity'**.
- ⊗ A **Faculty Conference** was held on-line and centered around the President of Malta's installation speech. The President of Malta was in attendance.
- ⊗ We have a new design for our **Digest** and **Connect Newsletter**. Kudos to the UM Marketing, Communications and Alumni Office for their support and Ms Dorianne Cortis (Faculty Office).
- ⊗ A **new academic member of staff** has been appointed with the Department of Criminology.
- ⊗ **2 Ph.D. scholarships** funded by CRPD have been issued and will shortly be awarded.
- ⊗ A new set of **Vlogs** has been produced. Kudos to the UM Marketing, Communications and Alumni Office for their support.
- ⊗ A **Brown Bag Seminar** was delivered by Anabel Scolaro on "Dignity in Care Homes for Older People: A qualitative study".
- ⊗ A **Training Workshop** was delivered by Dr Gianmarco Alberti on "Quantitative Methods and Data Analysis Approaches" organised by RSPC.
- ⊗ A second collection of chapters on social wellbeing will be published in the **Text Perspective on wellbeing: Applications from the field** edited by Dr Ruth Falzon, Prof. Marilyn Clark and Prof. Andrew Azzopardi
- ⊗ The Faculty (a first for any Faculty at our UM) has presented a document, *Making our voices heard* to the UM Council as a pre-document before the election of the new **Rectorate** happening in March.
- ⊗ Most lectures are being done on-line at the moment and so are **examinations**. I would like to thank all the staff, in particular the admin and academic staff, who have worked tirelessly to keep a semblance of normality.
- ⊗ Work is being done at planning stage on the **Faculty building**.
- ⊗ We have a new set of **freebies** which we are distributing amongst our freshers and in schools.
- ⊗ A new **waiting area** has been refurbished in the main Faculty corridor.
- ⊗ Prof. Saviour Formosa (Department of Criminology) has once again submitted to the media a detailed **Crimemalta annual report**.
- ⊗ Various members of the academic body sit on **Senate Committees and joint Council/Senate committees**.
- ⊗ The **College of Heads, the Faculty Doctoral Committee and the Faculty Board** kept meeting regularly notwithstanding the pandemic. Their operations have temporarily been transferred on-line.
- ⊗ The Ph.D. sub-committee made up of Prof. Mary Anne Lauri (Department of Psychology), Prof. Paul Bartolo (Department of Psychology), Dr Claire Azzopardi Lane (Department of Disability Studies and Deputy Dean) and Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri (Department of Family Studies) will be organising a 'get to know me' seminar for all our **Faculty Ph.D. candidates**.

- ⑤ The **Faculty Magazine Unity** edited by Ms Charlene Fabri (PA to the Dean) with a design by Mr Matthew Borg from *Boldmark* and supported by Mr Jes Saliba from the *CI Group* has been an astounding success.
- ⑤ We have started our student recruitment program with a fresh new design, new streamers, new billboards, new radio clips, articles on newspapers and new Facebook and Instagram content.
- ⑤ The **intersectionality seminar** we did in collaboration with CRPD went very well - over 100 participants attended on the on-line seminar.
- ⑤ We are working on **mapping out the research gaps** – a major task being led by Dr Patricia Bonello (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) and Dr Kristina Bettanzana (Department of Psychology and Deputy Dean).
- ⑤ Dr Kristina Bettanzana (Department of Psychology and Deputy Dean) is currently working on auditing our **Plagiarism Committee decision making**.
- ⑤ An **Open Dialogue** was held to remember Prof. Oliver Friggieri's passing.
- ⑤ **Introduction of new courses:** M.A. SW by research; M.A. Social Care with FEMA; Certificate in Safeguarding and Certificate in Volunteering.
- ⑤ The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi has had **cordial meetings** with the new Leader of the Opposition Dr Bernard Grech (accompanied by a number of Heads, Lecturers and RSOs) and another courtesy meeting was held with the Minister responsible for the Environment, Climate and Planning, Dr Aaron Farrugia, amongst other.
- ⑤ **PRIDE flags** put up in Faculty main corridor and Rector's Office.
- ⑤ Dr Claire Azzopardi Lane (Head, Department of Disability Studies and Deputy Dean) has spearheaded a poster **campaign on LGBTQI awareness**.
- ⑤ The **Research and Publications Sub-Committee** with the leadership of Dr Ruth Falzon (Department of Counselling) and with the administrative support of Ms. Lucienne Gellel (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) have worked tirelessly.
- ⑤ Kudos to Dr Ruth Falzon (Department of Counselling) for her work in leading the B.A. (Hons) in **Social Wellbeing Studies** with the support of Ms Dorianne Cortis and Ms Shirley Muscat (Faculty Office).
- ⑤ **Virtual Social Europe Days** were organised.
- ⑤ The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi managed to lobby Senate to re-think the allocation of people on boards that should reflect **gender equality**.
- ⑤ Prof. Marvin Formosa has been appointed as **Ph.D. external examiner** by the Department of Sociology, University of Vienna.
- ⑤ Prof. Marilyn Clark (Department of Psychology), Dr Sandra Scicluna (Department of Criminology), Dr Janice Formosa Pace (Department of Youth and Community Studies) and Dr Trevor Calafato (Department of Criminology) were involved in a consultative document commissioned by UREC on how to complete **ethics with inmates in prisons**.
- ⑤ Prof. Marilyn Clark (Department of Psychology) **launched her latest book project** (co-authored with William Horsely, University of Sheffield) with the Council of Europe, *A Mission to Inform: Journalists at risk speak out*.
- ⑤ Prof. JosAnn Cutajar (Department of Gender and Sexualities) is co-chair of the **Gender Equality and Sexual Diversity Committee** and Dr Marceline Naudi (Department of Gender and Sexualities) and the Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi are members.
- ⑤ Dr Joanne Cassar (Department of Youth and Community Studies) has been appointed to sit on the **Senate Students Associations Committee**.

- ⑤ **Research report for Government:** Abela, A., Sammut- Scerri, C., Grech Lanfranco, I. (2020). *A Scoping Review of the current Family-friendly practices in Malta; with recommendations for policy and research post Covid-19.* Commissioned by the Ministry for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity.
- ⑤ Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri is member of the **Cost** country representative of 2020 COST Action CA19106 Multi sectoral responses to Child Abuse and Neglect in Europe: Incidence and Trends (Euro – CAN).
- ⑤ **Dr Ingrid Grech Lanfranco** (Head, Department of Family Studies) attended the following conferences and training courses: "Online Therapy with children and families" by Dr Sarah Helps, Tavistock Clinic and Portman Trust, organised by the Maltese Association for Family therapy and Systemic Practice, on 25 June, 2020; Research presentation at the ACAMH annual conference on 'Innovations in Practice in Child & Adolescent Mental Health', on 5 October, 2020; "Therapists' inner conversations in therapy and supervision" By Prof. Peter Rober University of Leuven, organised by the Department of Family Studies, 20 October and 3 November 2020 (5 CPD hours); attended online training with the Tavistock Relations, London on 'Train the Trainer for Parents as Partners Co-parenting Programme', on 10 and 11 November, 2020 - 6 CPD hours.
- ⑤ **Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri** (Department of Family Studies) attended the following conferences and seminars; "A study in Trauma and Somatic memory" by Dr Janina Fisher, Ph.D., a zoom webinar on 13 and 20 June, organised by CONFER, UK. 6 cpd hours; "Online Therapy with children and families" by Dr Sarah Helps, Tavistock Clinic and Portman Trust, organised by the Maltese Association for Family therapy and Systemic Practice, on 25 June and 24 September, 2020; "Understanding reactions to Covid-19 pandemic. Insights from the Polyvagal theory and Oxytocin Hypothesis" by Prof. Stephen W. Porges Ph.D. and Prof. Sue Carter, Ph.D. on 18 July, 2020, and organised by CONFER, UK. 6cpd hours; "Designing, Developing and Evaluating Online Study Units – July – September 2020"- organised by the University of Malta; "Training in the tool SARA – Spousal Assault Risk Assessment – a structured professional judgement tool for violence risk assessment, organised and delivered by Dr Ruth Tully, Consultant Forensic Psychologist, UK and author-approved trainer, on 8 and 9 October, 2020; "Introduction to Rapid Qualitative Research" and "Introduction to Rapid Qualitative Research in Complex Health Emergencies" held on 2 October, and 23 October 2020, organised and delivered by the Rapid Research Evaluation and Appraisal Lab, (RREAL), University College London, UK; "Therapists' inner conversations in therapy and supervision" By Prof. Peter Rober University of Leuven, organised by the Department of Family Studies, 20 October and 3 November 2020.
- ⑤ Dr Albert Bell (Department of Youth and Community Studies) is hosting the third edition of **Konnekt on Campus FM**. This 30 minute radio programme (in Maltese) is a Research and Publications Sub-committee initiative that aims at shedding light on the Faculty's research agenda with this third edition focusing on the Faculty's M.Phil/Ph.D. candidates and their exciting studies on myriad fields and through diverse perspectives.
- ⑤ **Dr Marceline Naudi** (Head, Department of Gender and Sexualities) was involved in the following; EOF Advisory Board Meeting; 'Protecting victims of domestic violence in the workplace' webinar (Led By HER and the Kering Foundation) – speaker (GREVIO); Family and Domestic Violence and the Link to Complex Trauma - webinar organised by Partner Violence and Mental Health Network supported by the World University Network; Internal Identity sub-committee meeting (SEA_EU) UM; Shelters' Meeting; CCWR sub-meeting; COVID-19, Women and Governments – webinar – attended and helped with organisation; Management Board meeting of Fondazzjoni Sebh; ORAPO International Conference on 'HOMICIDE AND GENOCIDE INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES ON LETHAL VIOLENCE' - speaker on 'femicide and the Istanbul convention'; Departmental meeting with the Spanish Ambassador; Malta Women's Lobby >

meeting; WRF meeting; various CCWR sub-meetings; Meeting with WRF and VSM re rape and sexual assault; EOF meeting (re EIGE tender); various GREVIO Bureau meeting; INIA (intersex project) supervisory board meeting; SEA Universities Project Meeting - observatory on migration meeting; Meeting with organisers of the 4th European Conference on Domestic Violence; Board meeting of the Institute of European Studies; Chevening Alumni meeting; EIGE gender statistics experts meeting; GB-VSO Seminar; EIGE gender statistics experts meeting (cont.); Judiciary/ Mediators informal meeting re Domestic Violence; Commission on GBV&DV Conference – speaker; CCWR sub-group meeting; Varieties of Gender Regimes Webinar (attended); TalkTown - International conference organised by the Women's Council Denmark – speaker; CWR Seminar Transposing EU Work-Life Balance in Malta (followed online); UN Webinar on VAW – attended; Chatham House Event: Virtual Roundtable: Domestic Violence in Russia and Central and Eastern Europe: Challenges and Responses – speaker; 'Towards a gendered recovery in the EU' virtual launch of the G5+ report on Covid (attended); Action Plan on the Implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights - Seminar – attended; Meeting with GREVIO secretariat; Platform of Independent Expert Mechanisms on Discrimination and Violence against Women (EDVAW Platform) meeting (organised by the UN rapporteur on VAW and its consequences) online; Exchange of Views with the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe – online.

- **Prof. JosAnn Cutajar** (Department of Gender and Sexualities) was involved in; Organized international conference entitled COVID-19, Women and Governments; Attended Webinar organized by ODIHR 'New tool promoting Women's Participation and Leadership in Political Parties'; took part in Stakeholder Review conducted by NAO on 'An Audit of Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 1; presented paper on Surrogacy and Disability, in Children and Disability Webinar organized by UM and University of Leeds; attended EU Mutual Learning Programme in Gender Equality. Gender Balance in decision-making in the context of COVID-19 organized by EC DG for Justice and Consumers, Unit D2. Gender Equality, representing Malta; organized seminar on Work-life Balance Directive and its transposition by Malta as coordinator of Consultative Council for Women's Rights presented paper entitled Surrogacy - the epitome of the materialities of reproduction and global reproductive economies. Online conference, Unequal World; presented paper on Gender Equality, in EPSR online conference; took part in GENDERACTION General Assembly. H2020 project
- **Prof. Brenda Murphy** (Department of Gender and Sexualities) was involved in; Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) 29 September was GMMP Day; coordinated TV, Radio, Print, Online and Twitter news data capture on 29 September 2020 with the support of the Malta Broadcasting Authority and Mediating Women - The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) is a worldwide media monitoring, research and advocacy project implemented collaboratively with various organisations, groups, academics and researchers across the world since 1995. Every 5 years, GMMP undertakes a media monitoring project and the findings from this research are used to keep the spotlight on gender inequalities perpetuated in and through the news media, and the demands for change. This research updates the data for use in sensitising new generations of journalists, creating awareness in media consumers, and for media policy and practice change advocacy. Prof Murphy has been the National Coordinator since 2000, and Malta has been part of the Global Media Monitoring Project since then. It is the longest and largest longitudinal study undertaken around media and gender. The Department of Gender and Sexualities, in conjunction with Mediating Women (facebook.com/MediatingWomen), has 'just' recruited 20 volunteers from across faculties at UM and beyond - (ex-students, graduates and activists); was invited speaker at the Forum of Mediterranean Women Journalists – Bari 5th edition #WomenLivesMatter #WLM #PressFreedomMatter #FMWJ ONLINE WEBINARS - where she spoke about the impact of the Global Media Monitoring Project on Practice and ➤

Policy; was also appointed to take part in the research project - Monitoring Media Pluralism in the Digital Era; she is currently involved in two COST Actions (CA18121 Cultures of Victimology and CA19122 European Network for Gender Balance in Informatics); she is also part of a Network of Proposers for a 3rd Action (Inclusion of Vulnerable groups in Research for Equitable Outcomes); attended (July) international conference entitled COVID-19, Women and Governments; attended Re-imagining Home and Belonging in 21st-Century Women's Writing: Online conference 23-24; Varieties of gender regimes 24; EU Work-Life Balance Directive 2019 and Malta 29; involved in a series of meetings with Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG) so that Malta can be represented in this Alliance; Gender, Media and ICT Network - UniTwin UNESCO - planning discussions for Media Training and more.

Appreciation is extended to:

- ④ The **team of HoDs**, who are incredibly supportive, namely; the Deputy Deans, Dr Claire Azzopardi Lane (Head, Department of Disability Studies) and Dr Kristina Bettanzana (Department of Psychology), Ms Alison Darmanin (Faculty Manager), Dr Christian Borg Xuereb (Head, Department of Gerontology and Dementia Studies), Dr Sandra Scicluna (Head, Department of Criminology), Dr Sue Vella (Head, Department of Social Policy and Social Work), Dr Dione Mifsud (Head Department of Counselling), Dr Marceline Naudi (Head, Department of Gender and Sexualities), Dr Joanne Cassar (Head, Department of Youth and Community Studies), Dr Gottfried Catania (Head, Department of Psychology), Prof. Mary Anne Lauri (Faculty Senate representative, Department of Psychology) and Dr Ingrid Grech Lanfranco (Head, Department of Family Studies).
- ④ The **Faculty Board members** for their important role in running this Faculty.
- ④ 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.
- ④ The **administrative staff** and **Research Support Officers**, both serving the Faculty in the Departments as well as in the Faculty Office, for their unwavering support and commitment.
- ④ The many stakeholders who are closely engaged with the Faculty.
- ④ Ms Charlene Fabri (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 charlene.fabri@um.edu.mt