



**L-Università  
ta' Malta**

**Faculty for  
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*From the Office of the Dean*  
Newsletter: 'Connect' | No 6

15/12/2017

Dear Colleagues,

Three months have passed from the start of this new academic year (2017/18) and already our Faculty is in full throttle; providing new courses, with a record number of Freshers', a record number of graduates, new staff recruitment, more money for research, new MoUs and a never ending list of events. This version of **Connect** will attempt to provide you; students, academics, administrators and collaborators with a snapshot of where our efforts have been directed so far.

*If you would like to link up with the Faculty FB Pages these are the URLs:*

- **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)

***Faculty activities in brief:***

You are invited to retrieve **previous editions** of the **Connect** Newsletter here:

<http://www.um.edu.mt/socialwellbeing/notices/connectnewsletter>.

- **Condolences** to the family of Jerome Frendo a student reading a BA (Hons.) in Social Wellbeing Studies (Hons.) who passed away at the start of this academic year. No worse than losing one of yours.
- **Condolences** to Mr Holger Saliba for the loss of his father, a Visiting Lecturer and Research Officer with the Faculty.
- **Condolences** to Ms Beverley Agius, admin worker (Department of Psychology) for the loss of her father.
- Dr Brenda Murphy, (Head, Department of Gender Studies) has been promoted to **Associate Professor**. Dr Claudia Psaila (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) and Dr Katya DeGiovanni (Department of Psychology) have been promoted to **Senior Lecturers**. **Congratulations!** I would like to commend Ms Beverley Agius (Department of Psychology) and Ms Marija Grech (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) for their promotion to Graduate Trainees.
- We would like to welcome Dr Pat Bonello (Department of Social Policy and Social Work) and Niamh Donoghue (Department of Counselling) who are newly appointed **Resident Academics**.
- Prof. Jeannie Wright (Department of Counselling) has moved back to the UK. I would like to **thank** Prof. Wright for her unwavering commitment to the Department and Faculty.
- Mr Elton Zammit has been **appointed** secretary with the Department of Youth and Community Studies and Ms Elena Mallia with the Department of Psychology respectively. Welcome on board!
- The ‘Lets’ Toast the Faculty’ was held for the second year running. Another successful **social event**.
- The meeting with **Freshers’** was very well-attended with an estimated 150 new students packing the hall. The event was well-received.
- It is estimated that the Faculty has increased its **new students’ intake** by an estimated 24% during this last year and a half.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, Prof. Saviour Formosa (Head, Department of Criminology) and Prof. Marvin Formosa (Head, Department of Gerontology) met with Mr Lawrence Cutajar, **Commissioner of Police** on potential areas of collaboration.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi met with His Honour the **Chief Justice** Dr Silvio Camilleri. Prof. Azzopardi was accompanied by Dr Sue Vella (Department of Social Policy and Social Work), Dr Natalie Kenely (Head, Department of Social Policy and Social Work), Dr Albert Bell (Department of Youth and Community Studies) and Dr Greta Darmanin Kissaun (Deputy Dean and Head, Department of Psychology).
- The Department of Family Studies has been given the status of **full membership** by EFTA-TIC- which is the European Family Therapy Association - Training Institutes Chamber - which certifies that the department has met the professional training programme and practice qualifications in the field of Family Therapy as set down by the same Association Training Chamber.
- Negotiations are on-going on the setting up of the **Faculty Observatory for Social Wellbeing** – *more on this shortly*.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi has met the **Vice-Principle of Junior College** to find ways how we can promote our courses with Sixth Form Students at JC. The Faculty will be

participating in the College's expo and the Faculty magazine will be circulated amongst all students.

- A new initiative with the **Presidents' Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society** is in the pipeline – *more on this shortly*.
- A working group within the Faculty has recently presented the first draft of the first ever **Faculty Strategy**. It should be endorsed following Faculty wide discussion taking place in early 2018. This committee was led by the Deputy Dean, Dr Greta Darmanin Kissau (Head, Department of Psychology) and with the administrative support of Ms Charlene Fabri (Department of Disability Studies).
- We are at the stage where we can announce that the Faculty will soon be starting the preliminary work to set up its own **On-Line Academic Journal** – *more on this shortly*.
- The Faculty is discussing the possibility of having the first **Research Festival** – *more on this shortly*.
- Work on the **Dean's Forum** is progressing well. Groups have been set up, regulations and themes discussed and sponsors found. There are 24 students, 9 academics and 2 administrators across all Departments and at all levels involved in this initiative. This activity is being coordinated by Ms Marija Grech, Administrative Worker (Department of Social Policy and Social Work).
- The Department of Disability Studies organised a **public lecture**, "It's my right to play too!": freeing play for disabled children' delivered by Prof. Beckett Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the Centre for Disability Studies at the University of Leeds
- Dr Albert Bell (Department of Youth and Community Studies) will be **collaborating** with *Agenzija Zghazagh* on a research project aimed at identifying research gaps in the youth sector.
- Dr Janice Formosa Pace (Department of Youth and Community Studies) is working on a **research project** that will be auditing quality of life and aspirations of migrant women.
- The Faculty is exploring the possibility of having a **Faculty Gender Audit**, led by the Department of Gender Studies in collaboration with the rest of the Faculty.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi has met with the **Director of the Cottonera Resource Center**, Dr Katya DeGiovanni, to explore ways of collaborating.
- The Department of Social Policy and Social Work organised a **public lecture** delivered by Dr Enkeleida Tahiraj, 'Beyond destinies of tradition: The state of Welfare and the Welfare State'.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi has met the **Local Councils Association** with the possibility of working towards an MoU.
- The Faculty is still working in collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry and the Department of Mental Health on an **MA/MSc in Mental Health Studies**.
- The Faculty organised a **Conference**; 'Beyond refugee, integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Maltese society'.
- The Faculty in collaboration with CRPD organised a public lecture delivered by **Prof. Tom Shakespeare**, the renowned activist and academic in the field of disability.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi was invited to **address** the 'Addiction in Adolescents' Conference organised by the ACAMH Malta. He was also invited to give a presentation during the Conference 'Re-Thinking Community' in Dresden.
- A number of team-building '**breakfasts**' were organised by the admin team. So far the Faculty Office, the Department of Psychology, the Department of Disability Studies have hosted a breakfast for the admin team. Kudos to the Faculty Officer, Dr Alison Darmanin who was instrumental in getting these events organised. A **Secret Santa** event was organised as well.

- The Faculty Board, the HoD College, the PhD Committee and the Faculty Sub-Committees are **meeting** regularly.
- The Faculty has been working on new **publicity material** to promote its Departments, Faculty and courses.
- The Faculty PhD committee is processing an encouraging number of **MPhil/PhD proposals** on a regular basis. Almost 30 MPhil/PhD candidates are currently involved. The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi met all **MPhil/Phd candidates** during this academic year.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi is currently **meeting all admin and academic staff** on a one-to-one basis.
- A **Joint European Cross-Border Cooperation** is being organised by the Department of Criminology, coordinated by Mr Paul Caruana (Department of Criminology).
- The **Tracer Study** intended to keep track of how our alumni are progressing in their careers is being launched. Kudos to Prof. Saviour Formosa, Head, Department of Criminology.
- A much larger participation of academics attending the **Graduation Ceremonies** was noted. Kudos to Prof. Saviour Formosa, (Head, Department of Criminology) who gave the **Oration** during the undergraduate ceremony.
- Two new academic calls have been published to fill in **Resident Academic Posts** in the Department of Criminology and Department of Psychology.
- Two research posts (RO2 an RO3) for a **project** that the Faculty is engaged in collaboration with MCA has been issued.
- Work on the **Cluster for Migration** is progressing well. A Research Officer will be employed shortly.
- Work on the **Faculty Students Association** is progressing.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi met Dr Joan Mary Camilleri who is supporting BPsy students in the **befriending scheme**. The Dean met the students and the staff who are supporting them at Mt Carmel Hospital. A great initiative indeed!
- Kudos to Ms Lara Ellul, Assistant to the Dean, who helped organise the **Pink October** events in collaboration with Marigold Foundation and the UM administration.
- 239 students (under-grad and post-grad) graduated this year. This group also includes a PhD candidate from the Department of Gerontology. Dr Anthony Scerri (Department of Gerontology) is the latest **PhD graduate** from the Faculty – congratulations!
- The Faculty presented a document on the proposed **University Act** to UMASA.
- The Faculty is concerned about the **insurance cover** of its students, academic staff and clients. A number of meetings were held on this matter.
- An **animated cartoon** on the Faculty has been produced and launched during Freshers’.
- *Unity*, the first edition of the *Faculty magazine* has been launched during Freshers’. It features the work of the Departments, academics, administrators and students.
- The **Faculty Christmas Party** was held on the 14/12/17, another successful social event. Once again kudos to Ms Lara Ellul (Assistant to the Dean) for organising this event.
- As had been promised by the Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, pressure has been made so that **UREC** reviews its operations and systems. This has been done and very shortly the new procedures will be implemented. The role of **FREC** will be strengthened. Details can be found here: <https://www.um.edu.mt/urec>.
- Kudos to the Faculty ‘**FREC**’ for their excellent service. **FREC** keeps meeting regularly. The committee is in the process of reviewing its procedures in line with the new UM guidelines. Kudos to Dr Katya DeGiovanni (Department of Psychology) who Chair’s this forum and Ms

Charmaine Agius (Department of Gerontology) and Ms Marica Galea (Department of Gender Studies), admin workers, for supporting this important committee.

- Work on the **Cluster on Migration Studies** keeps progressing well. A post for a Research Officer has been issued.
- The Faculty's applicant for the **Honoris Causa**, *Prof David Boswell* has been accepted. The ceremony will be taking place sometime next year.
- A memorial lecture in remembrance of the first year since the passing away of Dr Jacqueline Azzopardi was delivered by Prof. Saviour Formosa (Head, Department of Criminology). The Faculty, in collaboration with RIDT, will be setting up the **Foundation for Jacqueline Azzopardi**. The Faculty has managed to secure financing of the first post-graduate scholarship in Criminology.
- Work on the **Dean's Award Ceremony**, that will be held in February, is progressing well.
- The Faculty organised a **Faculty Symposium**; 'The Assault on Journalism: Taking stock of pressures on journalists in the aftermath of the killing of Daphne Caruana Galizia'.
- The Faculty **Annual Calendar** is being continuously updated. It is accessible to Resident and non-Resident academics.
- **Digest** is being received well. It is being published every Wednesday and its circulation is growing amongst, academics, administrators, students and stakeholders. Kudos to Ms Dorianne Cortis (Faculty Office) for coordinating this initiative. Ms Cortis is also constantly updating information on our newly installed **Information Monitor**.
- Regular **SMS alerts** are being sent to students and staff to announce Faculty events.
- The Office of the Dean has issued three **Press Releases** since the beginning of the academic year: 'Domestic violence is no longer a private matter - the Faculty for Social Wellbeing expresses concern', 'We need to speak up!' (following the murder of Daphne Caruana Galizia) and 'The Psychotherapy Profession Bill'.
- A number of academics from different departments within the Faculty for Social Wellbeing have been involved in the **16 days of activism** and the International Day for the elimination of **Violence against Women and Gender-Based violence**.
- A new **wellbeing initiative** has been launched; 'Theatre for Social Wellbeing', intended to provide for team building and personal reflection. The sessions will be led by Mr Carmel Sammut and Dr Daniel Mercieca. There will be two workshops, one for administrators and one for academics.
- Faculty is currently compiling data for the **Faculty Annual Report**.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi has sealed an **MoU with CRPD**. The Department of Disability Studies will be taking a leading role in this agreement.
- The Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi is in the process of concluding a number of other **MoUs** – *more on this shortly*.
- The **Research Publications and Scholarship Committee** continued meeting regularly and also hosted the latest Brown Bag Seminar delivered by Dr Andrea Dibben (Department of Social Policy and Social Work).
- A new **Masters in Arts in Ageing and Dementia Studies** will open in Feb 2018 (Department of Gerontology). A good response to this course is already being noted.
- **Senate** kept meeting regularly. Dr Dione Mifsud (Department of Counselling), Faculty Senate representative and Prof. Andrew Azzopardi, Dean, attended the meetings.
- The **Faculty website** is being habitually updated with the main **speeches** of the Dean, Prof. Andrew Azzopardi: <http://www.um.edu.mt/socialwellbeing/notices/deansspeeches>

- We can announce the inauguration of the **Post-Graduate Certificate in Counselling Supervision** being organised by the Department of Counselling.
- Dr JosAnn Cutajar (Department of Gender Studies) was involved in the following **events**; ‘Taking CRC to V18’ at the Chamber of Commerce, the President’s Trust, attended the Salzburg Global Seminar – Life and Justice in USA. Implications of the new administration. Austria, presented a paper on *Lingwa Inklussiva, Sessizmu fil-Lingwa Maltija, Akkademja tal-Malti*, was involved in the Signing of Emanuele Cancer Foundation, Biomedical Buildings, President’s Trust and attended a dinner at Verdala Palace to commemorate the setting up of the Emanuele Cancer Foundation.
- Dr Gisella Orsini (Department of Gender Studies); was involved in the following **events**; Presentation of the paper, “The Power of Thinness. Stating Moral Supremacy Through the Body” 13th Conference of the European Sociological Association, Athens, Greece, attended “The EU impact on patient care and workforce mobility in a small state. Challenges and opportunities in the treatment of cancer and rare diseases and on patients’ access to medicines, the MAPHM Public Health Symposium - Mater Dei Hospital.
- Prof. Brenda Murphy (Head, Department of Gender Studies) was involved in the following **events**; attended Global Diaspora Conference – University College Dublin (UCD), Department of Gender Studies, in conjunction with Gender Issues Committee and applied to the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) for Gender Training Award/ Grant.
- Dr Marceline Naudi (Department of Gender Studies) was involved in the following **events**; invited as a Keynote speaker at European Conference on Domestic Violence II in Porto, invited to be plenary speaker at European Association of Criminologists Annual Conference in Cardiff, attended the GREVIO meeting in Strasbourg, gave a talk on DV to women in Birgu - part of the local 16 days of activism on VAW (scheduled early!) and Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) and attended Board Meeting and Conference in Budapest.
- The renowned Nira Yuval-Davis, Professor Emeritus, Honorary Director of the Research Centre on Migration, Refugees and Belonging (CMRB) at the University of East London gave two **public lectures**. The Department of Gender Studies organised this event.
- The **Film screening** of Hidden Figures to celebrate Women's Equality Day – 22 August 2017 was organised by the Department of Gender Studies.
- The Department of Disability Studies held a **postgraduate symposium** on the 28th and 29th September. MA Disability Studies students who have recently submitted their dissertations presented their research to a gathering comprising academics, students, and various stakeholders from the disability sector.
- Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri, Prof. Arlene Vetere, Prof. Angela Abela from the Department of Family Studies and Jan Cooper have **launched their book**, “Intervening after violence: Therapy for couples and families” on Tuesday the 10th of October, 2017 at the UM Valetta Campus. The book focuses on helping couples and families after the violence has stopped and when family members have to deal with facing the legacy of violence, trauma and healing. The Hon. Minister Dr Helena Dalli, Minister for European Affairs and Equality, opened the launch.
- Prof. Angela Abela, Ms Ingrid Grech Lanfranco and Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri from the Department of Family Studies attended the **10th European Family Therapy Association** – Training Institutes Chamber, EFTA TIC Meeting of Family Therapy trainers, in October, 2017, held at the Valetta Campus. Prof. Abela was invited to present two papers: “Equipping our trainees to have an impact at community level: Using research creatively” with Prof. Peter Stratton, University of Leeds and Prof. Mauro Mariotti, ISCRA, Italy and “Addressing qualitative research in systemic psychotherapy in our times: Implications for training, high

quality practice and policy”. Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri presented her research findings in a paper entitled “Key clinical themes when working with intergenerational legacies of childhood experiences of domestic violence”. This meeting was a very good opportunity for family therapy trainers across Europe and the United States to network and exchange ideas and plan joint research projects.

- The Department of Family Studies **hosted** Prof. Maria Borcsa, Nordhausen University, Germany through an Erasmus exchange. She has lectured our Master in Family Therapy and Systemic Practice trainees on “Virtual Relations and Globalised Families – Using the genogram”.
- Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri, Department for Family Studies has participated in a **week-long training** on “Child- to- Parent violence” organised by Appogg, Foundation for Social Welfare Services. She also co-facilitated a workshop on “Identifying, assessing and safety planning with children” during the last day of the training at a conference on “Child- to- Parent” violence and “children witnessing violence” at the Valletta Campus on the 13<sup>th</sup> of October, 2017.

*I would like extend my heartfelt appreciation to:*

- the team of **HoDs** that are incredibly supportive, namely; the Deputy Dean, Dr Greta Darmanin Kissaun (Head, Department of Psychology), Prof. Marvin Formosa (Head, Department of Gerontology), Prof. Saviour Formosa (Head, Department of Criminology), Dr Anne Marie Callus (Head, Department of Disability Studies), Ms. Alison Darmanin (Faculty Officer), Dr Dione Mifsud (Faculty Senate Representative and Head Department of Counselling), Prof. Brenda Murphy (Head, Department of Gender Studies), Dr Clarissa Sammut Scerri (Head, Department of Family Studies) and Dr Natalie Kenely (Head, Department of Social Policy and Social Work).
- 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;
- finally, 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.
- 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](mailto:lara.ellul@um.edu.mt)*



**Prof. Andrew Azzopardi**  
Dean