

German Jordanian University
Network „Social Work for Refugees and Migrants“
Network Meeting 2018
Kassel University
8th – 10th November 2018

Minutes

Attendees:

Dr. Monica Heitz	Director GJU Project Office, UAS Magdeburg-Stendal
Dr. Jochen Pleines	GJU Network Head
Dr. Rawan C. Ibrahim	GJU, Department Social Work, Exchange Coordinator
Prof. Dr. Sigrid James	U Kassel
Prof. Dr. Rahim Hajji	UAS Magdeburg-Stendal
Prof. Dr. Steffi Kraehmer	UAS Neubrandenburg
Prof. Dr. Robert Northoff	UAS Neubrandenburg
Prof. Dr. Ralf Roßkopf	UAS Würzburg-Schweinfurt
Prof. Dr. Vathsala Aithal	UAS Würzburg-Schweinfurt
Prof. Dr. Ute Straub	UAS Frankfurt/Main
Prof. Dr. Angelika Groterath	UAS Darmstadt
Mr. Magnus Frampton	U Vechta

Apologized:

Prof. Dr. Carola Bauschke-Urban	UAS Fulda
Prof. Dr. Petra Bendel	U Erlangen

Guests:

Dr. Constance Engel,	University of Kassel, International Affairs and International Cooperation
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Ms. Franziska Seidel University of Kassel, Dept. of Social Work and Social Welfare
Mr. Juri Kilian University of Kassel, Dept. of Social Work and Social Welfare
Representative City of Kassel
Mr. Habib Azizi Kunsthochschule Kassel, filmmaker

Keepers of these minutes: Dr. Rawan W. Ibrahim & Dr. Jochen Pleines

Agenda:

cf. Appendix

Duration: Thursday, 8th November, 19:00 – Saturday, 10th November 2018, 13:00

Thursday 8th of November 2018

- Pre-meeting dinner Thursday 8th of November

Friday 9th November 2018

8:30 - 9:00 Welcome and Registration

9:00 Opening and Introduction

- Professor Dr. Sigrid James, Kassel University, Department of Social Work & Social Welfare

Professor Dr. Sigrid James welcomed the participants of the Network meeting on behalf of the University of Kassel. Ms. Constanze Engel from the Office for Internationalization and International Cooperations at the University of Kassel, also welcomed the Network members.

- Dr. Jochen Pleines, GJU, Network Head

Summary Points:

As the Network Head, Dr. Pleines extended a warm welcome to the attendees and especially to Dr. Monica Heitz (Director of the GJU Project Office, Magdebourg-Stendal) and her team. He also extended a welcome to Dr. Rawan W. Ibrahim, the Exchange Coordinator representing the Department of Social Work, GJU.

Dr. Pleines welcomed the newest member of the Network, Mr. Magnus Frampton from Vechta University who had collaborated with GJU colleagues on the „Bilingual Terminology Handbook English for Social Work“.

Since the last network meeting Dr. Pleines noted that he visited four universities that are members of the network (UAS Neubrandenburg, UAS Würzburg-Schweinfurt, Vechta University and Magdeburg-Stendal) where he was invited to deliver lectures and workshops.

OPENING AND INTRODUCTION:

Dr. Monica Heitz, Director of the GJU Project Office at UAS Magdeburg-Stendal, outlined the principles of the project TNB/TNE: Transnationale Bildung/Transnational Education which is underlying the German government's programme aiming at promoting bi-national universities.

This presentation treated the following issues:

1. What does TNB/TNE mean? Why is it so important to us?
2. A short story: The year 2018
3. What are the strategic aims and goals?
4. How is the bi-national university organized?
5. Where does the money come from, where does it go to?

Dr. Heitz finally summarized 8 measures to be undertaken in the course of the coming 4 years:

These 8 measures will comprise:

1. Topic of the year
For 2020, the topic of the year is scheduled to be "Migration and Refugees"
2. Accreditation, quality assurance and knowledge management
3. Research and practice-oriented learning in a transnational context
4. Strengthening the academic networks
5. Strengthening the relationship with industry and practice
6. Strengthening internationalization, mobility and the German dimension
7. Strengthening the German language skills
8. Reputation and relationship to politics in general and higher education

Further details will be found in the PPPresentation in the appendix.

Dr. Jochen Pleines, GJU, Network Head

GJU-Network „Social Work with Refugees and Migrants“: What is the Difference?

Networks are one of the central stepping stones of the GJU policy and are closely linked with the basic concept of the German dimension.

All GJU Schools have established and are working with networks bringing together GJU departments, lecturers and researchers with their counterparts in German partner universities.

The network for Social Work with Refugees and Migrants exhibits a number of characteristics distinguishing it from the majority of other GJU networks:

1. Other networks concentrate on undergraduate study programmes where the focus is on B. A. students going to Germany for their compulsory German Year in their 4th year of study; students incoming to Jordan are welcome, but few in number; a large part of the debates in these networks is related to the German language requirements for GJU students.

In contrast to this, the GJU Department of Social Work does not have an undergraduate programme and, for the time being, therefore does not have outgoing students in this field; being centred on graduate programmes (Master and Professional Diploma) not including a compulsory stay in Germany. Social Work and its GJU network are dealing with a disproportionately high number of incoming students from Germany and other countries.

Here, therefore, study fees form a central topic of the debates.

Another issue the importance of which is likely to be underestimated is the language issue with English as a prerequisite for classroom activities and Arabic as the means of communication during field trainings.

2. Whereas most of the other GJU networks are based upon cooperative activities having grown and developed over a longer period, with German partners (department level or individual experts) joining and augmenting the networks individually and successively, most members of the network “Social Works” have been in contact with each other as a group even before the GJU emergence of the department at the GJU. In addition to this, the period of planning and setting up the department was remarkably short.

3. Possibly more than in the other GJU networks, the members of GJU Network for “Social Work with Refugees and Migrants” have a mediating and bridging function between German universities and the GJU Department. In figurative terms, the network partners who initially had a function of midwifery care for the department, are now, after an extremely short phase of adolescence, observing a Department of Social Work with a full-fledged adult responsibility.

Work Session I: The Framework

- **Dr. Rawan W. Ibrahim, GJU: Social Work at the GJU: State of the Art. Overview of study programmes, status of accreditation, fees, academic staff, summer school, international internships.**

Dr. Rawan Ibrahim provided an overview of the Department of Social Work. She focused on what was achieved and on plans to move forward. Her presentation began with providing context and history that served as an impetus to establish the department of social work. The main reason being the need to professionalize social work, primarily in Jordan, the region and

then internationally. She underlined the serious shortage in post-graduate academic programs that target already existing social-work para-professionals. The importance of targeting them is that they are believed to constitute the majority of current practitioners. They are committed to the field, however many do not have the needed qualifications due to the absent regulations governing social work in Jordan (an issue that is most likely shared in much of the region).

Other needs to professionalize social work are the development of specializations, the poor research infrastructure and limited if any evidence-based interventions, strategies and policies.

Dr. Ibrahim then provided an overview of the two academic GJU programs in social work (the professional diploma and the masters in social work). The focus of both academic programs is on refugees and forced migration. What each program entails is below:

The diploma programme:

- 5 month intensive program
- 4 courses and field training
 - Mental Health and Psychosocial Support to Refugees
 - Administration and Coordination of Humanitarian Systems and Sustainable Transition Building
 - Social Work with Minors and Women in the Country of Origin or Transit
 - Conducting Research with Refugees
- The field internship requires a completion of 120 hours typically in two NGOs
- **5 Cohorts since 2016** (5th in progress)
- **Current group:** 21 (Jordanian, Syrian, Italian, English, Austrian, Korean, and the majority are German)
- **Previous groups:** 111 (Jordanian, Syrian, Iraqi, Yemeni, Sudanese, Italian, German, American)

The Master's programme:

2 years – 4 semester programme (comprehensive or thesis tracks)

- Social work methods, social work in the 21st century, research methods, mental health, administration and coordination of humanitarian systems, etc. (course plan on website)
- Field internships (introductory semester 1, rotational semester 2 and focused semester 3)
- **2 Cohorts since 2018** (2nd in progress)
- First cohort: 11 (8 Syrian candidates on scholarship, 3 self-paying Jordanian citizens) New cohort: 10 (All self-paying Jordanian citizens)

Additional detailed information, including the biographies of the lecturers, can be found on the department's website.

Current Staff

Full time – only 2 with extremely limited administration support

- Christine Hildebrandt (is the Dean of the School of Applied Humanities and Languages, and is also the Head of the Department of Social Work)
- Rawan Ibrahim- Assistant Professor in both the master's and the professional diploma programmes.

Part time

- Sahar Al Makhamreh
- Bothaina Qamar
- Noor Amawi
- Rihan Al Tarawneh
- Wael Massoud

The department's website is being updated and it will include the biographies of all of the lecturers.

Collaboration with Network Members:

A briefing about the collaborative initiatives which took place between the Department of Social Work and some network members was provided to exemplify areas of work that the Department and network hope to have, which go beyond hosting flying faculty.

- **Würzburg:**
 - Student participation since the establishment of the department of social work in 2016:
 - Würzburg students have been attending all of the diploma courses and have an annual summer school at the GJU. Collaborative DAAD projects allowed Würzburg and GJU students to participate in mobility initiatives that included seminars and conferences in Jordan, Lebanon and Würzburg.
 - Students from Würzburg will join the GJU masters for one semester every fall semester.
- **Vechta:** Published a joint bilingual (Arabic – English) handbook about social work terminology.
 - This is a link that provides information on the handbook project <http://www.gju.edu.jo/news/launch-%E2%80%9Cenglish-social-work-bilingual-terminology-handbook%E2%80%9D-8482>

- This is a link to the handbook itself <http://dx.doi.org/10.23660/voado-59>

- **Kassel:**
 - **Flying Faculty:** GJU is hosting two faculty members (Sigrid James and Ingo Bode) from the School of Social Work that will be supporting the department in teaching specialized areas.
 - **ERASMUS+:** Kassel has successfully applied for an ERASMUS+ project with the GJU Department of Social Work which entails both faculty and student mobility.
 - **Hosting a masters research student at the GJU:** As part of the ERASMUS+ project, a masters student from Kassel is already in Jordan for the fall semester.

 - **Planning for research projects:** Because Sigrid James and Rawan Ibrahim have the same concentration (child protection and alternative care systems), they have paired and decided to embark on joint research projects. A current application has already been submitted to UNICEF Jordan in collaboration with Oxford University. This type of pairing and collaboration on topics of interest is an example of the pairing that the department hopes to achieve with all faculty members, whether they are full-time or part-time.

- **Frankfurt:** Ute Straub also joined the Department of Social Work in the fall semester as flying faculty. There are discussions on hosting a PhD candidate at the University of Frankfurt.

Current Issues to Consider

Fees:

According to the recently adopted university regulations (adopted June 25th 2018, letter reference no. 299/4/4/1), there are two sets of fees that are to be considered for the professional diploma and the masters degree. The distribution of fees is as follows:

Professional Diploma:

- JD 900 for self-paying students and individual non-partner/exchange students

- Exchange students (i.e. from partner universities) pay JD 230 and are enrolled in Arabic courses. They receive student IDs from the Consultation and Training Center (CTC) at the GJU which hosts the diploma course. Upon successful completion of diploma course, students also receive certificates from the CTC.

Masters:

- The cost of each credit hour for self-paying Jordanian and non-partner students (referred to as visiting students) is JD 120. This is in addition to fees that include JD 500 for the first semester, and JD 230 for the following semesters.
- Exchange students from partner universities coming in for one semester pay JD 500 for training and JD 230 for academic courses (lump sum)
- Visiting students coming only for field training pay JD 500, via the CTC.

Challenges to Consider Overcoming:

- **Government system challenges:** The GJU is a public sector institution and therefore many of the issues that apply to the wider government will also apply to the GJU. Most notably, the capping and limited opportunities to increase human resources due to financial difficulties and limited budgets. As such, the Department of Social Work only has one full-time member that is dedicated to the department, with very limited administrative support. This needs to be considered with any project that networks want to embark on. It was agreed that projects will entail budgets to hire the needed administrative staff.
- **Field considerations**
- There are short and long term issues that need to be considered for field training. The long-term priorities of the Department of Social Work is the employability of its students (local and also considered for international students), as well as maintaining relationships with partner NGOs to not only host local and international students, but also as partners in the wider field of social work who may also partner with us on other initiatives such as research projects. Therefore field training is an integral component of both academic programs.
- A main challenge for the GJU is securing placements for a high number of international students. Most partner NGOs only want to work with speakers of Arabic, because they cannot provide translation services to international students.
- A main complaint of partner NGOs that host social work students from other universities is the lack of planning and lack of follow-up by their respective departments. What they appreciate with the GJU, is the continued communication and organization. This requires continued visits and calls. Developing learning plans, conducting visits to supervise students, reviewing their reports, and making follow-up calls can easily take up to 3 hours per student per week upon commencing and then biweekly. Due to the financial constraints, we are unable to hire a full-time practice assessor. We invest in people whom we can only hire as part-timers, however we cannot compete with the market where NGOs pay much higher salaries. The more international students we have in particular, the higher the need for a practice assessor who is bilingual.

- **Moving Forward**
- **Expansion of specializations and programs according to local and regional needs:** The Department of Social Work needs to continuously be in a position where it is meeting the local and regional needs. As clarified above with regards to the need to professionalize social work and to develop specialized courses, the Department is seeking to expand its specialization.
- **German accreditation:** The GJU on the whole is seeking to ensure that all its courses have German accreditation. This process is due to take place with the Department of Social Work in 2020.
- **Flying faculty for next semesters:** It was agreed that flying faculty will be selected based on the needs of each semester where the GJU needs help with specialized teaching that is not available amongst its own staff. Each semester they will circulate a call for their needs in order for the network members to express interest. A merit-based approach will be utilized to nominate the appropriate candidates. The Department does however welcome visiting faculty, and if there are other means and sources of funding, they would be happy to host network (and other) faculty.
- The courses were reviewed in Working Session III below

Working Session II: Achievements and Lessons Learnt

The representatives of Social Work Departments gave an overview of activities and results achieved by them in the framework of the Network:

- Mr. Magnus Frampton (University of Vechta) presented the bilingual handbook „English for Social Work“ for speakers of Arabic that was accomplished as a cooperative project between Vechta University and GJU; feedback on this publication expressed by the other members of the Network was clearly very positive; he also mentioned the 2 events launching the book in Vechta (February 2018) and in Amman (March 2018);
 Mr. Frampton put forward the project of enhancing and consolidating cooperation between his university and the GJU by translating, adapting and editing German or English textbooks for the academic public in Jordan and other Arab countries.
- Prof. Ute Straub (UAS Frankfurt/Main) had returned back from a research and lecturing stay at the Social Work-Department of GJU only few days before the Network Meeting. She also mentioned the internship stay of one of her PhD-candidates at the GJU and the wish expressed by further candidates to absolve internship and research at the GJU.
- Prof. Straub underlined the urgent need for staff support at the GJU Social Work-Department which will be needed to fulfill the tasks of a field advisor needed for international students.

- Prof. Ralf Roßkopf (UAS Würzburg-Schweinfurt) emphasized the proven system of student and staff exchanges between both universities; these exchanges being now into their third year already. He also mentioned joint research activities, as e. g. the writing and editing of a handbook for international social work, plans to extend and diversify the cooperative links by inviting partners from universities in additional countries and regions. Prof. Roßkopf referred to the successfully established tradition of Summer Schools in Jordan and the region. He also expressed a strong interest in establishing perspectives for joint PhD-programmes.
- Prof. Sigrid James (Kassel University) formulated the wish of her Department to extend the cooperative links between both universities, mentioning in particular the three Social Work programmes at Kassel University; at present, there is one student from Kassel studying in the GJU Master programme; Dr. Rawan Ibrahim (GJU) had been staying at Kassel University giving lectures in 2017; several research projects in different fields, including PhD-projects are currently being outlined or already realized; Prof. James and her Kassel colleague Prof. Ingo Bode will be teaching as „Flying Faculty“ in the GJU Social Work-Department for one week, starting immediately after the Network Meeting.
- Prof. Angelika Groterath (UAS Darmstadt) expressed her and her Department's interest in developing the partnership with GJU activities in the field of Social Work; she regretted that, for the academic years 2017/18 and 2018/19, this interest could not be satisfied.
- Prof. Steffi Kraehmer and Prof. Robert Northoff (UAS Neubrandenburg) referred to their extensive experience in cooperative projects in the Middle East region, especially in Palestine; they expressed their respect with regard to the achievements of the GJU Department of Social Work; they renewed and emphasized their interest in exchanges of students, staff (lecturers and researchers) for three study programmes at their university;
- Prof. Northoff informed the Network members about a handbook for Social Work students and practitioners which he is preparing and which will have its focus on legal and psychological aspects of Social Work.
- Prof. Rahim Hajji (UAS Magdeburg-Stendal) described the problematic situation due to the fact that his university only has undergraduate study programmes and no Master's programmes for Social Work; to date, undergraduate students in their third year could be allowed to enroll in the professional diploma courses; this path cannot be opened within the Master's study programme. Prof. Hajji enquired about the possibility of opening a Bachelor programme for Social Work at the GJU; Dr. Ibrahim declared that talks in this direction were conducted, but that these plans will most probably not be realized in the near future.

- As a major result of feed-back reflections in this Working Session, Dr. Rawan Ibrahim gave an explanatory description of the background for this situation by referring to the limitations in staff and support during the phase of setting up the Master programme in this year with two intakes in one academic year and with the professional diploma being organized simultaneously. Dr. Ibrahim announced that as the exchange coordinator, she will be the person to be contacted and, channel offers and requests for cooperation expressed by Network members; she will examine the incoming requests and will recommend to the Head of Department of Social Work (and the department as a whole) which of these offers match needs of the GJU curricula.

Working Session III: Projects and Perspectives for Cooperation with the GJU

- Dr. Rawan Ibrahim went through the course calendars as well as the study programmes of the diploma and both masters' tracks: the thesis and comprehensive diploma. The network and Dr. Ibrahim discussed the potential slots where the Department could host flying faculty.
- The link to the academic programs is as follows: <http://www.gju.edu.jo/content/programs-6505>
- Dr. Monica Heitz informed the network that the number of possible flying faculty is limited to two per department for the entire academic year 2019/2020.

Working Session IV: Research

There is a general interest in research and other academic projects; this is especially true for research projects as the GJU colleagues have to publish for their career development.

Limited administrative and scientific capacities on behalf of the GJU have to be taken into regard. Funding for coordinating/research assistants should be included into grant applications.

Proposals of network members should be sent to the exchange coordinator (Rawan Ibrahim) who is responsible for informing the Dean.

As soon as such a network member and the GJU see any potential for further elaboration on the application idea, they inform the network in order to avoid useless efforts of other network members or competing applications. In that case the two parties and any other network member who is interested in a joint application with the GJU will try to see whether the proposals can be coordinated respectively which proposal should be realized.

Prof. Vathsalla Aithal asked the network members to bear in mind that success prospects for research funding will require that research project staff will have to be recruited among full-time professors and not part-time lecturers.

Working Session V: Agreements & MoUs

- Each university had been provided with a copy of its current MoU with the GJU prior to the commencement of the meeting.
- The status of all MoUs with network and partner universities were revised. Some had expired and were dated.
- It was agreed that because the MoU with Vechta University is the most recent and broad, it is best to use that as a template or model. The preference is to have broad agreements rather than potentially detailed agreements that may be limiting and that might have to be up-dated regularly. It will be easier and more useful to add annexes and updates rather than change the entire MoUs.
- As the annex to the Würzburg MoU was signed before the establishment of the Master programme at the the GJU and therefore referred to the Professional Diploma exclusively, Professor Vathsalla Aithal and her colleagues will revise the Würzburg MoU according to the minutes and to the current state of study programmes at the GJU.

Working Session VI:

Presentation and discussion of the documentary film “Abschiebung 12 Uhr nachts” by Habib Aria Azizi (Kunsthochschule Kassel).

Network Meetings 2019 and 2020:

The network meeting 2019 will be organized by Prof. Ute Straub on behalf of the University of Applied Sciences Frankfurt/Main. It is scheduled for 27th till 29th June 2019.

Members expressed their wish to hold the network meeting 2020 in Jordan and to embed it in the activities for the topic of the year 2020 which is scheduled to be “Migration and Refugees”.