

The three key words of the MIB council are Integration, Promotion and Business.

Integration: The MIB program works toward integrating international students into Norwegian culture and encouraging the Norwegian students to embrace new cultures.

Promotion: We seek to promote the MIB programme both at school and abroad in order to raise awareness that the programme exists hence increasing marketability of graduates.

Business: We seek to be in touch with businesses in order to promote the programme and to create links both at home and abroad, once again opening job opportunities for graduates.

Bearing the above in mind the MIB Council has embarked on a number of projects and activities as listed below.

Social Activities

Welcome week: The MIB Council had a successful welcome week that went a long way to helping the new class become fully integrated in the school. The Welcome week had activities and programmes such as 'A Taste of Norway', a bonfire and a company trip to NUTEC one of our active business associates. The school was generous in their funding and support. Currently international students make up for more than 8% of the school population.

Social Nights

The council has just started having 'Social Nights' which are dinners hosted by students from different cultures. The first two nights were 'American Night' and 'Asian Night'. In each case the students cook a dinner and share a bit of their culture with the rest of the class. The American Night presented a Thanksgiving Dinner and the Asian Night introduced students to some Chinese and Indian outfits. This Sunday will be 'Multicultural Night' with students from Ghana, Germany, France, and Finland, Lebanon and Peru hosting dinner and sharing a bit of their culture. This has been helpful in integrating some of the Norwegian MIB students.

Pending Programmes

The council plans to have an International Lunch on the 31st of October. During this event the MIB students cook traditional foods from their home country and serve them at school. Last year this event was very well attended and was published in the school web based newspaper. It was funded by the school last year and we have applied for funding this year as well.

There are plans to have a photo contest during the course of this semester. Last year, there were a number of contestants. The competition was advertised in the school

newspaper. The judges came from various school groups. The winning pictures were published in the school newspaper and the winners received a bottle of wine each.

Programmes on hold

The Language Games were fairly patronised last semester. It was held once a week in the school club. Even though there was a fair amount of publicity on notice boards and in hallways there were only a few participants every night. This semester it has not been restarted because of problems with finding a suitable venue.

Politics

Quota

This semester there were changes in how the quota grant was awarded. Quota was awarded only to students from partner universities. This change was unfortunate because it limits the number of foreign students that can join the MIB programme and makes the class far less diverse because there is the likelihood that fewer students from developing countries will be willing to join the programme without the assurance of a scholarship. The students that came despite the change have become very preoccupied with finding alternative sources of income to support them while here. There is a possibility that this shift in focus towards self-sustenance could adversely affect their academic performance. We hope that this will be taken up by the ISU.

Norwegian Classes for foreign students

The MIB President along with a member of the Central Student Board (Kjernestyret) has seen the Rector and the Pro Rector concerning the need for foreign students to have the opportunity to learn Norwegian. They were receptive to the suggestion and promised to take up the issue.

English section in the School News paper

The suggestion has been made to have sections of the school newspaper translated in English for foreign students. Some committee heads have also been implored to make English translations of pertinent announcements. This was suggested on the 28th of September and results are yet to be seen.

MIB Forum

The MIB Forum which is the main event for bringing MIB students in touch with businesses is scheduled for the 26th of October. The topic is 'Russia: Opportunities and Challenges'. Speakers include representatives from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Moscow, The Norwegian Chamber of Commerce, Telenor, Statoil and Innovation Norge Moscow among others. We have received sponsorship to the tune of about 95,000 NOK. To date speakers have been confirmed, their flights and hotel accommodation has been

secured and the forum team are currently on the marketing phase. For further information on the forum please check: <http://www.mibforum.no/2005/overview.htm> .

Conclusion

Overall the MIB Council is quite satisfied with the increased level of cooperation from the school and the Norwegian student body. The School has been very cooperative both in terms of funding MIB programmes and considering MIB issues. International students as a whole have an increasingly better atmosphere for study. Norwegian students have also been more open and increasingly send out invitations to international students for social activities.