

**“Advocacy for academic freedom and human rights:
internationalization in a fragmented world“**

Utrecht Network | Ruhr University Bochum | Utrecht University

Summer school schedule

14-15 and 18-22 August 2025

Location: St Janskerkhof 3 ([google maps](#)), rooms 021-022

Updated version: 14/08/2025

Thursday, 14 August & Friday, 15 August 2025

Prior self-guided online learning

Participants of the summer school are expected to engage in self-guided online learning via the following means:

- 1) **Readings:** thoroughly and critically read the obligatory introductory literature provided in the reading lists per day in Teams Classes (you are invited via a separate personal access email). Please find the literature here:
 - **USS – Advocacy for academic freedom and human rights > Main Channels > 2. Day 14-15 August > files > Assignment 1a and Assignment 1b**
 - **USS – Advocacy for academic freedom and human rights > Main Channels > 3. Day 18 August – 7. Day 22 August > files...**

- 2) **MOOC “Dangerous Questions: Why Academic Freedom Matters”**

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/academic-freedom>

Please sign in for **free** by using the address and password received by email by the course directors (for participants only).

- 3) **Podcasts “Fragile freedom” and “Free to think”**

In addition to the MOOC it is recommended to listen to some episodes of the following podcasts

- **STOAS Podcast „Academic freedom in the EU – defending a pillar of democracy:**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKFAAGkVjoE>
- **Free to Think Podcast** (Episodes No. 40, 39, 37, 34, 28, 23, 20)
<https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/resources/podcast/>
- **Fragile Freedom Podcast** (Episode 1/Belarus): <https://fragile-freedom.podigee.io/>

Monday, 18 August

Concepts, threats to and status quo of academic freedom in global perspective

- 09:00-10:00: Welcome, introduction and getting to know each other
- 10.15-11.45: Academic freedom as a fundamental academic value: meaning, scope, frames of reference (Prof. Liviu Matei, King 's College London and Magna Charta Observatory)
- 12.00-13:00: Academic freedom as a human right (Prof. Marco Borraccetti, U Bologna)
- 14:00-15:30: Threats to and status of academic freedom and the human rights of students and scholars around the world (Prof. Adam Braver, Roger Williams University and Scholars at Risk Network | Iris Vernekohl, Ruhr University Bochum)
- 15:45-17:00: What it means to be "at-risk": insights and experiences from higher education institutions and scholars at risk (Prof. Adam Braver, Roger Williams University and Scholars at Risk Network | Dr. Stella Nyanzi, Ruhr U Bochum)

Tuesday, 19 August 2025

Protecting and promoting academic freedom in a fragmented world: insights from institutional, national, regional, and global level initiatives

- 09:00-09:30: Reflection on first day
- 09.30-10:45 Protecting academic freedom in a fragmented world: what role for universities and the university community? (Bart van de Laar, University Utrecht | Iris Vernekohl, Ruhr U Bochum)
- 11:00-13:00 The (geo-)politics of academic freedom and institutional autonomy: universities, democracies and the authoritarian challenge (Prof. Marijk van der Wende, Utrecht University | Jurgen Rienks, Neth-ER)
- 14:00-16:00 Global, regional and national level initiatives in support of academic freedom and scholars at risk - *hybrid session* (Moderation: Dr. Stella Nyanzi & Iris Vernekohl | Ruhr University Bochum)
- Frank Albrecht, Inspireurope+, Scholars at Risk Germany and Alexander von Humboldt Foundation - *tbc*
 - Prof. Kwadwo Appiagyei-Atua, Africa Coalition for Academic Freedom
 - Prof. Adam Braver, Scholars at Risk Network
 - Prof. Arien Mack, New University in Exile Consortium
- 18:00: Pizza picnic in the park

Wednesday, 20 August 2025

Introduction to human rights and public policy advocacy for academic freedom and scholars at risk

- 09:00-09:30: Reflection on second day
- 09:30-10:30: Towards a *Theory of Change*: an introduction to human rights and public policy advocacy (Iris Vernekohl, Ruhr U Bochum)
- 10:30-11:00: Personal reflections on advocacy for/of a Scholar at Risk (Dr. Stella Nyanzi, Ruhr University Bochum)
- 11:15-13:00: Introduction to advocacy cases & group building
- 14:00-17:00: Project work on scholars at risk and academic freedom advocacy (group work) – Part I: Monitoring of academic freedom/human rights context and prior advocacy work

Thursday, 21 August 2025

Developing an advocacy campaign in support of academic freedom and/or at risk scholars

- 09:00-09:30: Reflection on third day
- 09:30-13:00: Project work on scholars at risk and academic freedom advocacy campaigns (group work) – Part II: developing a *theory of change* of a case related advocacy campaign
- 14:00-17:00: Project work on scholars at risk and academic freedom advocacy campaigns (group work) – Part III: designing an advocacy campaign

Friday, 22 August 2025

Presenting and reflecting on advocacy project

- 09:00-09:30: Reflection on fourth day
- 09:30-13:00: Project work on scholars at risk and academic freedom advocacy campaigns (group work) – Part IV: Preparing a convincing presentation (ppt) of advocacy work
- 14:00-16:30: Presentation, reflection and discussion of SAR/AF advocacy work (group presentations and panel)
- 16:30-17:00: Wrap up, farewell & goodbye

To be confirmed: interviews with the board of Utrecht Network