

## Resolution: NMBU should implement a Student Advocacy Seminar

Approved at Student Parliament 5, 11.10.2021

Around the world authorities are silencing student and scholar activists who are fighting for democracy and freedom of speech. Recently, *Scholars At Risk* published their report "Free to Think 2020"<sup>1</sup>, in which they registered 341 attacks against higher education between September 2019 and August 2020. These attacks have taken the form of killings, imprisonment, prosecution, travel restrictions and more. Of the 341 attacks, 118 were connected to students and student activism. This shows that students, as a group, are overlooked for their efforts of protecting human rights. In addition, SAIHs latest report "Students by day, rebels by night?"<sup>2</sup> put a spotlight on the alarming oppression of student activist movements all over the world. While during the pandemic, it has become harder for the student activists to gather and demonstrate, it has become easier for authorities to repress them.

It is important to spread knowledge about this issue and put it on the agenda. The Student Parliament's long-term strategy 2021-2023 states that "arrangements shall be made for students to have the opportunity to engage in local and global issues, and students should be encouraged to be active world citizens". In line with the strategy, NMBU should implement a yearly Student Advocacy Seminar where students can learn and show solidarity to student activists around the world who are fighting for democracy and freedom of speech.

A Student Advocacy Seminar is created by *Scholars At Risk*. The Student Advocacy Seminars can be implemented in many forms from an accredited class, workshops, or seminars which offer creative freedom to influence the direction the seminar takes. Essentially, the Student Advocacy Seminars provides students with the opportunity to develop skills within advocacy, research, writing, and teamwork with a focus on human rights. Mainly, the focus has been on imprisoned students and scholars, the organizational emphasis of *Scholars At Risk*. The practical aspect could enrich the academic experience for students at NMBU within a field that is presently not widely available.

The Student Parliament believes that:

- A Student Advocacy Seminar should be implemented at NMBU

The Student Parliament will:

- Actively support the creation of a Student Advocacy Seminar at NMBU

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<sup>1</sup> Scholars at Risk (2020). Free to Think 2020. Available at: <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/resources/free-to-think-2020/>

<sup>2</sup> SAIH (2021). Students by day, rebels by night?. Available at [https://saih.no/assets/docs/Pol-kampanje-2021/Students-by-day-rebels-by-night\\_SAIHrapport-2021.pdf](https://saih.no/assets/docs/Pol-kampanje-2021/Students-by-day-rebels-by-night_SAIHrapport-2021.pdf)