



TiU International

Electoral Program University Council 2018

Since 2014, TiU International has advanced its values in the University Council. Thanks to your votes, we have been able to start implementing our core values: In the past period, TiU International took the initiative to propose a new procedure for the appointment of deans ('Good governance'), which has been received positively. TiU International has made a strong case for the need to evaluate BEST, and will continue to strive for it in the next period. With respect to Inclusivity, we successfully got opening hours of the mensa, library and office buildings extended, and made sure more documents and discussions were in English. In addition, TiU international importantly influenced the debate around office sizes and open plan offices, resulting in more office space per room, and less open plan offices. The current electoral program focusses on three main hot topics at our university to date: Diversity, improving support, and staff/academic work load.

Excellence in research and teaching

[Fundamental research is core business](#)

A university is defined by the creation of knowledge through the research of its scholars, which then translates into high-level education and societal impact. The need for societal impact now sometimes seems to be overstated. Fundamental research is, and remains a "must", however. We want to keep investing in fundamental research to make sure we can deliver excellent teaching and have societal impact. This long-term vision on the key role of fundamental research and theory-driven approach is the root of excellent scientific practice essential to our knowledge society.

[Teachers need to receive better guidance](#)

We are passionate about teaching and necessary training should be available to every teacher. More advanced courses (e.g., how to interact with large audiences; how to use case studies) should be designed, taught by teachers who actually do have experience teaching at an academic level.

[Optimized support for grant applications](#)

Grants are instrumental to generate external financing while at same time it increases our international prestige and visibility. Collaboration between national and international institutions is essential. To achieve the best possible results, our researchers need time and resources while our grant support teams need access to accurate and relevant information (more lobbying, more involvement) to make sure our research staff gets a head start.



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PhDs need coaching & clarity

PhD students are one of the key elements contributing to visibility and recognition of the university. We want Tilburg University to enable candidates to realize ideal top positions on the domestic and international labor market of their choice, in and outside of academia. This requires tailored and responsive supervision, expert coaching on soft skills, help in building a professional network, a constructive work environment and good facilities. Currently, differences exist across the university in the PhD requirements, and clarity and quality of support offered to students for their career development and job search. This should be resolved by improving the career support structure provided by the university and all schools.

Knowledge knows no borders

Tilburg University: an inclusive society

We are an international community, yet important documents and meetings remain Dutch only, even though non-Dutch speaking staff members are taking part. These practices exclude both our international staff and a growing body of international students, and should be put to a hold. Language training should be offered (and time provided to take the courses) to both improve English and Dutch skills.

Sabbatical leaves

International sabbatical leaves are common at top universities and foster the standing of academic staff. We want international sabbatical leaves to be encouraged at all Schools, as they lead to new research opportunities, collaborations, further exchanges, teaching opportunities, and a stronger visibility of Tilburg University. All this also benefits our students.

Top people at the top

We can only be the best if we fix BEST

Support staff still suffers from BEST. Positions were cut or reduced immediately after BEST resulting in an increased workload for our academics and support staff. The entire process has made our support services increasingly impersonal and bureaucratic and resulted in unacceptable work pressure on many staff members. BEST should first be evaluated before any new initiatives are started. We want less management, less bureaucracy, more (personal) communication, and more support staff to ensure a productive work environment. We want staff to engage in challenging and rewarding support to academics and their projects, not in administrative burden.



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Tilburg University: get serious about diversity

The National Monitor Female Professors demonstrates year after year that with 17% female professors, Tilburg University should do much more to keep and promote its female workforce (NB over 50% of our PhD students is female). One such measure could be to compensate parental leave during a tenure track. Also, other diversity issues (regarding cultural background, nationality) require attention, as currently most senior positions lack diversity, including the University Board, Deans, Vice-Deans, HoDs, and Directors of services. We want this to change by examining and removing institutional barriers of diversity.

Make workloads realistic

The University and the Schools are slowly but steadily increasing the degree of educational and administrative workload for faculty and support staff. We want to reverse this. Higher education should not turn into mass production. Policy making should be developed to assess subjective and objective workload, active prevention plan for burn-outs should be proposed. Teaching and administration will be evaluated, and taken into account more seriously in promotion decisions.

Thorough, inclusive, and transparent governance

Evidence-based planning

A University is for the long run and planning should not be reactive to short-term pressures. We want decisions to be based on clear evidence, and when possible on quantitative data, respecting the different environments and needs of each School. Growth is not only an opportunity but also a threat.

International benchmarking

Our board has the tendency to compare schools within Tilburg University. We want to benchmark schools against their (international) competitors. As a result, differences between schools at Tilburg University relative to teaching methods, hiring policy, examination policy, etc. may rightfully exist. If we standardize between schools, we should motivate our decisions (e.g., constraints of Dutch labor law, smaller revenue per student than U.S. universities). To determine best practice we need to benchmark our activities.

One campus

The strength of a University lies in the interaction among people. We want a single and green campus, and resources to be spent on high-quality quality research and teaching facilities. Recycling and energy conservation should be a top priority. Renovations should create a spacious and inspiring work environment.