

# NEWSLETTER

# UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

[All documents discussed can be downloaded here](#)

## Introduction

In this first newsletter of 2012 we look back at the December-cycle of 2011 and what has been discussed in the meeting with the Executive Board.

This University Council-meetings cycle was by far one of the most important cycles of last year and where the University had the most varying opinions about. After many meetings and intense discussions the Council finally consented with starting the University College and advised positively about the Budgeting for 2012.

After a while the debates on the reorganization RoUTe 14+ resulted in a majority vote of the council:

a positive advice from the students and a consent from the staff members. The proposal for a general plan of implementing a new modular educational model "TOM bachelor studies" could not convince the Council enough to give her consent. Nevertheless a new plan is now in development for an educational model that will be proposed in June 2012. The Council expressed their concerns in an unsolicited advice which stated the additional demands for the new design in a list. The Executive Board promised that the Council would get sufficient opportunities to monitor the coming process.

In addition to these topics the council gave their consent to the Reorganization for the Unit Campus, the Strategic Plan Student Union, the cooperation agreement for the master-course Water Technology and extension of the pilot BSA(Study Progress Evaluation). Furthermore the council advised positively on the proposal for the further development of the Gallery (previously Langezijds) and the year-circle UT 2012-2013.

## Common procedure Water Technology

After evaluating the current master-course Water Technology (which is a program from the UT, RUG, WU and the Wetsus-institute), it has been decided to turn this study into a so-called joint degree. In this continuation the most important issues following the evaluation have been taken into account to improve the program.



The council advised positively on this new cooperation, which opens doors for future minors at the Wetsus institute or for the UT to cooperate in new research projects. Furthermore the collaboration has limited financial risks for the University of Twente.

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## Strategic Plan Student Union

The Student Union has made a strategic plan for 2012 to 2015. This plan shows the future direction of the Student Union as an organization and with it their vision on student-life at the University of Twente. The mission of the Student Union is "Improving the academic attitude and well-being of students at the UT". This plan was developed in collaboration with students, board-members, past Student Union board-



members, employees of the UT and the Kennispark, the Supervisory Board and the Executive Board. The University Council was asked to consent with this plan by the Executive Board and after several discussions decided to give their consent.

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## Guideline BSA (Student Progress Evaluation), evaluation and continuation pilot

As promised earlier the Council received the evaluation of the pilot BSA, the results as they have been used for the studies TN, ST, PSY, OWK and CW. The three-years pilot started in 2009-2010 and has been evaluated now after two years. The evaluation showed that these studies are content with the BSA and the figures show also advantage of the regulations. The number of students that stop studying after a couple of years has declined. The percentage of students that got their propedeuse in the first year has risen. Students however state that the BSA does not challenge them and that it mostly has an effect on extra-curricular activities.

## The University Council

The University Council is the central participation body of the UT and discusses regularly with the Executive Board. The University Council contains of 18 members; nine staffmembers and nine students. The University Council has a say in the policy of the UT at the central level.

In the council five parties are currently represented: Campus Coalitie, UReka, Pro-UT, Lijst Chairman and PvdUT.

At the moment the members of the UC are: Frits Lagendijk, Jann van Benthem, Björn Harink, Dick Meijer, Gert Brinkman, Frank van den Berg, Jan de Goeijen, Jan Schut, Herbert Wormeester, Lianne ter Heegde, Petra van Waarden, Eric Gropstra, Hidde Terpoorten, Sofie Kooreman, Oscar Escobosa Bosman, Dirk-Jan Cornelissen, Afshin Eftekhari and Erik Meijer.

The Executive Board promised at the start of the pilot that the council would have the right of consent on the guidelines after the pilot. Because the pilot has been extended by one



year (till college-year 2012-2013) the Board of course asked for consent to extent these guidelines for the last year of the pilot. The Board did add that they had plans for a university-wide BSA, but guidelines for these plans will be discussed in a new proposal that will be given for consent to the council.

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### **Twente Educational Model**

#### **A new educational model for the UT?**

The new educational model for the UT has been a hot topic for over a year now. Although the detailing of the model continues, the council did not consent at this time with the implementation of this model. Below we will give an overview of the goals of the model, what we think of it, what is the current state of affairs and how this process will continue.

#### **In the past**

The UT has too many long-delayed students, a too low study-yield and not enough new students. Through the educational-covenant with OCW (ministry of Education) the UT has become obliged to take action or else it will be cut on educational finances. Whether the model proposed by the Executive Board is the best solution is very doubtful according to the University Council. The current reorganization already results in more work with less staff and this new model and the University College will result in even more work per person. This will demand too much from the people in the organization according to the University Council.

Another question is: is it really necessary? The study CW (Communicational Sciences) already meets the requirements without implementing a new educational model. Furthermore the measures of a BSA, Delay-students-fine and "Harde Knip" (hard-cut between Bachelor and Master) will most likely have a strong positive effect.

#### **Goals**

The goals of the new educational model are as follows:

- Increasing the bachelor rate of return to at least 70% of the students having a diploma within 4 years.
- Substantially decreasing the number of delayed students.
- Getting students more quickly at the right spot (e.g. study)
- Substantially increasing the number of students at the UT (by increase the market share)

All these goals have the additional demand that the education needs to become 10% cheaper.

#### **Concerns of the University Council(in random order)**

Too little control – The UT is not good at implementing change-projects, past experiences like EMB and implementing OSIRIS come to mind: only parts of the goals have been achieved and sometimes their were problems long after implementation. Can the Executive Board control the process sufficiently now there are several interdependent projects (the new educational model, reorganization, redesign of Osiris and the Institute accreditation in the summer of 2013) running at the same time which are all more complex than any previous change at the university?

Expenditure estimates are too low – The Board estimates the costs of developing a new educational model too low; comparisons with the costs of implementing the Major Minor

system shows at least double the costs. The new education should become 10% cheaper, while the pilot at BMT shows that this model increased costs.

Clustering does not provide sufficient efficiency – because of the current proposal of clustering studies the efficiency benefit doesn't seem feasible (by students following the same modules).

Studies within a cluster vary too much in terms of content and procedures. If they do changed too much these studies would no longer be recognized as the same studies by the public, resulting in fewer new students.

Modular education is inflexible – Modules of 15EC ('all or nothing') are very inflexible for students, because you can't obtain above 15EC in a quartile (when you're a good student) or less (because of illness, handicaps, sports or extracurricular activities). Finding a solution for individual students is not an option, because we are talking about at least 300 students a year, which would greatly decrease the efficiency of the proposed model when the university has to take all these exceptions into account. Also small disruptions (like being ill for two weeks) will instantly lead to one quartile of delay, which is unacceptable for the Council.

It cannot be applied to all UT-studies – The different UT-studies (varying from Physics to Psychology) need different forms of education because of their different ways of working and educational goals.

To impose a binding model to all various UT studies is not achievable without effecting the quality of the education considerable according to the council.

#### **Current state of affairs**

The Board withdrew the request for consent of the new model in the meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> of December, in part because the Council would NOT consent to it. The Council nevertheless provided an extensive unsolicited advice to the Board, which clearly stated that the Council would nevertheless retain the possibility to not consent with the plans in the future.

#### **How will this continue**

Several design-teams will now develop the models of the new educational model in further detail, taking into account the questions and demands of the Council. The Council wants to see an answer to these questions before the 1<sup>st</sup> of March. The council wants the design-teams to answer questions like for instance: Whether the studies can achieve the goals



within the stated limits, if there is sufficient staff, etc. And if the answer is No, the Council would like to know the reasons for these problems.

Only when all these answers are positive, the Council will consider giving their consent in the future to these plans.

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#### **Reorganizational plan RoUTe 14+**

After an unsolicited advice in October and a critical advice of the Council in November there were extensive meetings about the reorganizational plan, between the Council and the Board as well as deans and Faculty Councils. In December this subject has been twice on the agenda, on the 14<sup>th</sup> and on the 21<sup>th</sup> of December. Eventually all things considered, the majority of the University Council approved the plan. Some important critical points still weren't (sufficiently) clear: there is still uncertainty about how the criteria for removing research-chairs have been applied, and also about

the strategic aspects that were used by the faculties and the link between the scale of budget-cuts & the number of to abolish functions. The Council and the Board did agree to decrease the cuts from 15 to 11 million Euros: this means the promotional fees will remain at the same level and the educational budget will decrease less. Future renewals will thus not be paid from the additional 4 million budget cuts, but from the static University Stimulation Budgets (9 million) and from 3TU-finances (3 million a year).

Concerning evaluating the decisions faculties made for the abolishment of research chairs and the budget cuts the Council extensively used the input from Faculty Councils, formal(advice) and informal(meetings). This resulted in the following conclusions (in summary):

- At EWI and TNW most prevalent problems have been resolved and the reorganization can be implemented without forced dismissals.
- At CTW there will (possibly) be 2 forced dismissals, nevertheless the FR CTW advises positively.
- At MB the budgetcuts will be the most severe (3 million) because of shortages on the current budgets. After a negative advice the Faculty Council MB it was better informed about the choices and plans in a new meeting. The council concluded that there are no real alternatives. 7 people will be threatened by dismissal.
- At GW most uncertainty in the discussions between the dean and the Faculty Council was about the future of the Bachelor Educational Sciences and the yet to form group Educational Sciences. In December after heated debates finally a more clearly defined implementation plan of the department Educational Sciences was presented which contained little consequences for the personnel. Although this plan still couldn't convince the Faculty Council the University Council saw little reason to delay the request for consent any further. At GW 3 employees will be threatened by dismissal.
- At the Services the reorganization is done by the so-called "cheese slicer method", e.g. slow and small cuts. By using this alongside natural attrition (people that leave because of age, etc) only one person on the financial-administration department will be dismissed.

The effects of a "dismissal-threat" on the personnel are now reduced to a total of 13 people. The board has promised to help these people towards a new job, either within or outside the university: alongside the normal regulations of the social plan these people can receive additional financial support for switching jobs. The unions in the OPUT are willing to use the reserves from the Work-demands-funding (5 million) for this purpose. An independent committee will look at the requests.



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### University College

The University Council gave their consent to the proposition of the Board to start a University College. This University College should differ from the other University Colleges in the Netherlands by its focus on Engineering. The Council emphasized the importance of this focus to also differ from the multidisciplinary study Advanced Technology. The University College will be created with a completely different way of teaching in mind. The start and maintenance of the education will ask for a lot work from the concerned personnel.

According to the Council these additional investments are only possible to a limited level, because logically there is a maximum to the time people from education and research can be expected to invest in this University College. The goal for the UC is to obtain a steady stream of 100 students per year, the board promised to look at the interest at schools yearly. Because when too little students are interested it is not possible to start and maintain such a project. The UC clearly focuses on talented students, the Engineering-focus and the educational model furthermore won't be of interest to all students. This explains why the current honours-traject will remain, because both will be needed to reach the Government goal of 20% of all students following some type of honours-program.



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### Budgetting pre-plan 2012-2016

The first discussions about advising for the Budgeting 2012 were already started in June 2011 with the Framework Memorandum (Kademota). This memorandum described the available budgets for all units, but did not include all the necessary budgetcuts described in RoUTE 14+. The Council requested the Board to create an edited version of the memorandum that would give a more realistic image of the financial situation in 2012. This document was published in September and showed that education as well as research would be under heavy financial pressure: because of the decrease of EC-funding and a decrease in the promotional premium. These measures were needed to achieve to the needed budgetcuts of 15 million Euro.

The Council had and still has doubts about the need for such a large budgetcut. The biggest doubt lay in the plans of the Board to use 3 to 4 million Euro to invest in future changes to Education and Research. The Council thought that such big investments would give too much pressure to the current education and research. This was supported by several faculties, especially the faculty TNW. In the consultative meeting the Board greatly decreased the reinvestment plans for 2012. The consequence is that the reductions for the Promotional Premium will not be implemented. Furthermore the Board promised to reevaluate the use and need of the current central stimulation-funding for education and research. At first halving the graduation-months was planned in these budgeting goals. This no longer is the case, after the policy-Vision on Activism this will be reevaluated to find out which resources are needed.

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### **Elections**

Coming spring new University Council-elections will take place for as well students as personnel. The ending date for becoming a candidate nears quickly(end of February/start of March). If you are interested in becoming a member of the council, you can contact the registry of the [Council](#) or one of the current members.

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