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To the Executive Board

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uw kenmerk
ons kenmerk UR 19 – 226
datum December 6th, 2019
bijlage(n)
cc.
onderwerp Student Wellbeing.

telefoon
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Dear Executive Board,

The University Council took notion of the student wellbeing report and corresponding plan.

The present research underpinning the plan seems to address the question, whether and how UT-students are stressed and for a part discusses their coping strategies. Finding identifiable causes has not been the focus of the study, which in the opinion of the University Council is a lapsus. Especially because of the overall importance of the topic, as related to the question whether or not the UT could remedy some causes.

Although the University Council does not advocate doing nothing about the welfare of students at this point in time, we are apprehensive of the possibility that UT policies may be responsible for a part of student stress in terms of causes that could be remedied by the UT itself. E.g., annual circle, general module design, BSA and the like. The point is: we don't know, nor what the student's salient believes are on these issues, nor how the population as a whole would respond to questions addressing these believes.

While working towards a solid plan, the University Council would like to see that the following two questions are taken into account:

- When is stress acceptable and when is it wrongful?
- How could the wellbeing plan possibly be implemented into the PDCA cycle of programmes and faculties?

Another addition the University Council would like to see in the plan is an intention to work towards more diversity within the student psychologists staff. Reason being that we have a very diverse student population and everyone should feel comfortable speaking to a professional.

In conclusion, the University Council advises to research possible underlying causes – on UT-level - that might cause student stress, to more effectively improve student wellbeing. As the topic of (student) well-being is of great importance to the University Council, we would like to be kept up to date on the developments regarding the student wellbeing plan.

CONCEPT-DECISION:

The University Council,

seen:

- UR 19 215 Student Wellbeing;

heard:

- Internal Committee OOS meeting November 20th 2019;
- External Committee OOS meeting November 27th 2019;

advices:

- to research and identify possible student stress related issues that (might also) origin from UT-policy and its implementation, to draw clear conclusions from the findings, and where possible or if necessary, take action;
- to look into the kind of stress students experience and when it is wrongful;
- to investigate whether and how to link student wellbeing to the PDCA cycle of programmes and faculties;
- to take the very diverse student population into consideration when hiring new student psychologist.

decides:

Conducting further research into the causes of stress, anxiety, loneliness that we, as a university, can influence and change. This should be the main focus of the University of Twente. In addition to this, we do see the urgency of this topic and are of the opinion that action should already be taken while carrying out a new research.

*Yours sincerely,
on behalf of the University Council*

*dr ir. H. Wormeester,
Chairman*