

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE UTRECHT
UCU **COUNCIL**



UCU Council

‘Vision & Objectives’

Drafted on 15 October 2017
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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE UTRECHT
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General Plan (2017-2019)

In this document the UCU Council sets out its working plan for the academic years of 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. This plan reflects some of the needs we perceive in the UCU community that we represent. The plan also includes the UCU Council's vision and objectives which we wish to achieve over two academic years as well as the strategies and general time frame to reach them.

We depart from the understanding that UCU students are engaged and proactive, and that UCU instructors and staff members are committed, open and participative in the improvements of the college. We have a number of objectives and a defined vision for these academic years aimed to the improvement of the quality of the education provided in UCU as well as to a more harmonious community by helping building even more transparency and trust in the way UCU is governed.

UCU Council's vision

The UCU Council, the highest democratically elected body within the governance of UCU, aims to authentically represent the diverse voices of students, teaching and staff members of our community and seeks, to the best of its ability, to promote openness, public awareness and reciprocal consultation within the university college Utrecht.

UCU Council's objectives

The UCU Council's main objective is to contribute to three main aspects that any organization should strive to have: transparency, clarity and accountability.

1. Transparency ensures that processes, outcomes and inputs are visible to key stakeholders. The UCU Council is committed to encourage more transparency in decision-making processes within the UCU governing bodies.¹
2. Clarity is about using information (written and oral) to reduce complexity and uncertainty. Clarity is not only needed for decision-making but also for building trust in those making these decisions. Cognizant that communication is key to the success of any organization and that not all communication processes entail clarity per se, the UCU Council is committed to strive for more clarity in the performance of the different actors within our UCU community.
3. Accountability provides a measure of how different governing bodies within organizations are performing. The UCU Council aims to strengthen the culture of accountability within our UCU community by means of bringing more transparency and clarity to the functions and responsibilities of each individual working at UCU as well as acting as a monitoring mechanism.

¹ While it might be impossible to aim to full transparency, selective transparency may be attainable. This is relevant because some personnel matters should not be open to all stakeholders due to privacy rights.

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2017-2018 UCU Council's agenda

Transparency

1. Transparency regarding the follow up on course evaluations outcomes and its visibility to key stakeholders.
2. Visible accreditation strategy
3. Adoption of a career development possibilities strategy
4. Promotion of labour rights of all the personnel at UCU.
5. Clear outline of tasks and responsibilities of all UCU governing bodies.

Clarity

1. More clarity regarding UCU teaching best practices:
 - a. Clear strategies of peer feedback, and feedback between teachers and students.
 - b. Clarity regarding learning objectives, their visibility in the different course syllabi, and clarity in the assessments per course
2. Proposal for improvements in the course evaluations in order to make them more informative and a fair representation.
3. Constant revision and improvement of the ARR and the Reglement in order to enhance a culture of work based on trust, transparency and respect of our rules.
4. Working closely with the MT to ensure a well-functioning relationship, through regular meetings with the assigned project groups.

Accountability

1. Constant follow up on the course, track and thesis evaluations.
2. Constant update on our work as a UCU Council through our UCUC blog.

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2018-2019 UCU Council's agenda

Transparency

1. Together with relevant parties (MT, CB, BoS) work towards the main goals of UCU. We want UCU to be great, excellent. Not just good!
2. Clear and open policy of LAS curriculum (oversee of costs/benefits and results of courses currently available)

Clarity

1. More clarity regarding UCU teaching best practices:
 1. Helping establishing clear strategies of peer feedback, and feedback between teachers and students.
 2. Advising on the need of more clarity regarding learning objectives and course syllabus assessment
2. Helping defining clear admissions policy including diversity and fundraising matters
3. Providing recommendations on communication methods between different parties at UCU, in particular between students and College Hall
4. Reducing the distance between the teachers and the students.
5. Clarity as to: (i) how we strive towards a more interdisciplinary mode of learning, (ii) how to make UCU education more interdisciplinary, and (iii) how we can increase the interaction between departments and tracks.
6. Clear guidelines regarding thesis procedure and assessment components per track or field
7. Clarity regarding the Education Quality Assessment Plan (EQAP) – How the evaluation of our education is carried out?, and which UCU governing bodies are involved?

Accountability

1. Clear accountability measures and processes within the UCU community (emphasis on the need of evaluations for the heads and fellows)
2. Enhance the application of our ARR and Assessment Policy. Encourage the ExamBoard to motivate its decisions, especially when making exceptions to clearly established rules in the ARR and/or the Assessment Policy.
3. Creation of recourses to which any employee may resort in case of a controversy with his or her immediate superior.
4. Helping to bring more awareness of labor rights.