

Party Program Student Party ECCO 2021-2022



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Student Party TiSEM

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Introduction

For the past 30 years, Student Party ECCO has been your voice in the TiSEM Faculty Council. In the past years, our focus has centered around the following topics: Career Development, Quality of Education, Student Welfare and Student Integration. These overarching focus areas have provided a solid base for the many positive changes, innovations and solutions that we have realized in the previous years. In this document, we used these focus areas to summarize our party program for the elections of the upcoming academic year with even more new ideas and aspirations in order to improve your student life at TiSEM.

What is the faculty council?

On a two-monthly basis a faculty council takes place, where we meet with the Faculty Management Team and the personnel parties to discuss ongoing affairs in the fields of education, research and budgets. We represent student interests in situations where the Faculty Management Team has decided to amend existing policies or introduce new measures. Furthermore, via our right of initiative, we create new benefits for students. Often students and staff have different interests, but the discussions between the two sides are definitely constructive. The challenge for both parties is to benefit from finding the best possible solutions.

In the past, Student Party ECCO arranged several important affairs for students. For example, Student Party ECCO is co-responsible for the realization of two start dates for most of the master programs offered at TiSEM. Furthermore, we have arranged that for TiSEM students there will be no forced additional costs on cases and software licenses. In collaboration with staff representatives, ECCO has achieved re-implementation of the Last Chance Regulation, starting in September 2020. ECCO will always argue in favor of improving the quality of education, even in times of austerity and performance targets.



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Career Development

TiSEM students are more often than not starting a career outside of academia after their bachelor or master program. Of the nearly 20.000 students approximately 95% will pursue a career outside academia. We, as Student Party ECCO, want to improve the connection TiSEM students have with the labour market already during their studies, to make sure they are better prepared when entering this same labour market upon graduation.

Curriculum integration

Currently, students can orientate themselves on the job market in various ways. Study associations and other independent organisations for example fulfill a large role. We however see opportunity for the faculty to extensify the opportunities available to our students. Although TiSEM already offers our students with great facilities that they can use for career development, by means of our excellent TiSEM Career Services Office, improvement is possible. For us, this improvement would mainly lie in a better integration of these facilities into the student's life. One way of accomplishing this difficult task would be to integrate these services into the curricula. An example could be workshops about the writing of a cover letter or the creation of well-constructed curriculum vitae. TiSEM Career Services periodically organizes such an event. Not enough students however know about the career services platform. Implementing these workshops into the curriculum improving the promotion of these opportunities among students would be beneficial for all parties involved. Correctly implementing career development into the curriculum is a task that has been proven difficult. Student Party ECCO would strive for well-designed guidelines for everyone involved in order to ensure an optimal result.



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Expanding the variety of opportunities

Furthermore, we want to ensure the continuous creation of new career opportunities for every student within the TiSEM faculty. In our opinion, the faculty should implement more practical cases in the career development offered. Real world cases will give students a better grasp of the activities a recent graduate is going to encounter. This can for instance be achieved by adding more business cases to the curricula. These kinds of changes can give bachelor students the ability to make a more informed decision about what master's program to choose. Whereas, master students will enter the labour market with better preparation and more knowledge of practical cases. This can in the long run be a signal to employers that TiSEM students possess practical knowledge via real life cases. We also recognize that promoting these possibilities to the students is of the utmost importance, because a part of TiSEM students do not know the existence of these possibilities.

Internships and minors

Lastly, we see an opportunity for internships and expansion of minors within the curriculum. First of all, our aim is to achieve better assistance and support for gaining real world experience through an internship. First steps have been made in previous years, since students can now earn ECTS for doing an internship. A developed online learning environment (e.g. recorded lectures) would improve flexibility which is useful when a student is busy with an internship or other extracurricular activities from 9 to 5. The possibility of predetermined compositions of elective courses would not only help with exam schedules but also for students who find it hard to choose which subjects to take.



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Quality of Education

The reason people come to a university in the end is to get good education in a specific field of practice. TiSEM strives to provide the very best education and ECCO wants to make sure no measure is spared to provide students with everything they need to obtain their bachelor and master in the best way possible, or to even pursue higher degrees within the university. ECCO also cares about the divide that has started to form between teacher, management and student views. We have found that there is a low feeling of responsibility and structure to a faculty members actions, for us it is important to reiterate that a successful and fulfilling course needs to have the students and faculty striving for the same thing. In order to tackle this misalignment of interests, we feel the following points are of great importance.

Responsiveness and Communicative Capability

Currently, ECCO would argue that a majority of studies of TiSEM are dealing with a communication problem; students in several sounding board and Education Committee (EC) meetings have made it apparent that they feel they have too little contact or responsiveness from their relevant teacher or coordinator. We believe this needs to be tackled on a central level since it is playing a part in all studies within the faculty. Looking into the issue, it quickly becomes apparent that two issues are at hand: (1) Professors, teaching staff and coordinators are all equipped to deal with the digital complexity of noticing, replying and giving the relevant reply over the right channels. And (2) they feel that they do not have to respond for they are at their 'full capacity' already, and are unable to bear the load that being a contact person is next to being a full-time member of the faculty. ECCO would argue that we need to look for a solution that involves students, and enables other faculty members to help where needed since that would lighten the load on both parties ultimately making communication a smooth process again.



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Standardization and Usability of Information sources

This year, ECCO has handed in a proposal to develop a standardized syllabus for each course. This avoids confusion on all sides and reduces stress for students and allows them to plan their schedules efficiently. ECCO wants to make sure that next year this is implemented throughout the faculty, since some courses are still not using it. We think that the standardized syllabus reaches an agreement which on one side leaves teachers feeling in control of their content and on the other side makes the students able to easily read and find their course content. One other point would be the Mailbox/Announcement system and its current usage. A lot of notifications are being pushed out through either e-mail, canvas mail, or announcements and sometimes even modules. ECCO proposes to streamline this process, making it easier for the faculty and students to send and receive messages or announcements.

Online course material post-corona

Although students need everything to be online, it happens too often that teachers refuse to make their teaching resources available via Canvas. The university allows this if a teacher wants to encourage students to come to the lectures or if he or she feels that it is good for the educational value. We at ECCO believe that this negatively impacts students who do not have time to attend all lectures at their specific timeslot, but are still working hard to finish their studies. On top of that, this practice is in direct conflict with the teachers job to best teach their course and have their information be delivered to the students. ECCO pushes for a middle ground where teachers have their lectures recorded and course material/tutorials posted as well, albeit possibly at a non-hindering delay in order for everyone to pass their exams. Having material available to go back to online has become an integral part of a students study routine and has shown itself massively valuable in the eyes of the student; we fully align ourselves with that belief.



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Effective examination

Exam periods can be the most difficult and stressful times of the academic year and TiSEM should do as much as it can to make the process as smooth as possible. Unfortunately things still go wrong too often: students do not get their grades on time to prepare for a resit, are falsely accused of fraud or something goes wrong technically during the procedure of examination when using Proctorio. ECCO believes that TiSEM can do a lot more to limit the amount of problems during these exam periods. In addition, it is often the case that when something goes wrong, the students are asked to be flexible or to adapt to the situation. If proctoring is going to be a part of future examination, we believe that small adjustments should be made such as evaluating exams differently by, for example, getting a second look/opinion by your own teacher and have them have a stake in the resulting verdict to make it more personal and less of a mechanised process.

Another issue we see is that the exams should be tested better for content and representativeness. A lot of exams (especially early in the bachelors) are made to be easily checked and graded. However, this has taken a turn for the worse as many students feel they are making a test that measures their knowledge of terms rather than the concepts discussed. We believe that there is room for improvement when it comes to the overall quality of examination, and we want to work to get a feasible alternative to the current state of affairs.



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Student Welfare

During your time as a student at Tilburg University, student life can sometimes prove difficult and stressful. Stress that is being amplified by the pandemic and the consequences that the past year has on the education system moving forward.

The year 2020 has created many challenges for students, forcing them to adapt to a new education format, which allowed us to understand the underlying issues that students face and do our best to improve them. With the pandemic coming to an end, we would also like to focus on continuously improving the students welfare.

Stress factors

Due to these issues, Student Party ECCO wants to dedicate time and effort to alleviate the problems that students have been facing during the pandemic, but also the issues that might arise in the future, by making sure that the necessary information is easily available. Some of the areas we want the faculty to focus on are: stress created by the Binding Study Advice (BSA) threshold, housing issues, physical and mental health.

One clear channel of communication

To make sure that all students have all the resources necessary to deal with the stress created by the topics mentioned above, we would like to create a channel, such as a website page that can be found under Student Portal, where all the necessary information is accessible in one online place.

Information that we believe should be accessible is: the right people to contact such as student psychologists, education coordinators, self-help tips and details about workshops that can help students improve their academic life by allowing them to find their strengths and the right learning style for them. We would also like to make the process of contacting the people qualified to help students with special circumstances easier and more accessible.



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PASS Improvement

PASS (Program for Academic Study Success) has been designed to help first-year TiSEM students receive the help, support and guidance they need for the duration of their first year.

To bring the PASS program to the next level, we would like to improve the quality of the PASS program. This can be achieved by offering the PASS-mentors various training such as being trained to recognize the problem by students and be able to refer to the right person. In addition, we believe that there should be a support system for PASS-mentors as well.

We believe that these changes will improve the experience of student life and student wellbeing.

Monitoring student welfare

Student Party ECCO would like to monitor the state of the student welfare. For that reason, we would like to create an open survey dedicated to all TiSEM students, where you can share your experiences with us about recurring problems within your study life. Based on this survey, we can continuously recognize new trends relating to student welfare and act upon them.



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Student Integration

TiSEM is a very international faculty with a foreign presence of almost 26%. However, we believe that this international character is not fully exploited, in a way that both Dutch and international students can engage in activities, both in and out of class, that can benefit them in terms of knowledge and information about each other's experiences. Thus, ECCO would like to dedicate itself to further improving the internationalization process within TiSEM.

Uniting the student body

The social disruption between international and Dutch students is detrimental to the scope of the study programs because it is directly impeding the learning outcomes and social aspects that we could all benefit from. Thus, getting to know many students from different backgrounds would make us more prepared for our careers, since we live in a globalized world where cultural sensitivity is of great importance. We would like to change this by advocating for mixed workgroups (i.e. diminishing the chances of having groups formed of students of the same nationality) and the continuous recommendation to speak English so that everyone can understand each other.

Internship opportunities for international students

Generally, international students have a difficult time finding internships in the Netherlands. We would like to help them by having TiSEM focus more on intensively finding partner companies that are willing to hire foreign students for internship positions. Furthermore, we will advocate for the organization of events involving companies that have an international orientation, so that both Dutch and foreign students can benefit from an enriching working experience in an international setting.

PASS mentors focused on integration

The PASS mentors are another important aspect of integrating the Dutch and international students, as they make up the first impression for the international students. We want to make sure that the PASS program has more foreign student mentors and that they strongly advise the Dutch students to speak English at all times, so that they can include everyone in conversations and activities.

Vote Student Party ECCO

on April 28, 29 an 30



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