

# Notes 10x10 session

June 7, 2021 - 15:00 - K7

## **Introduction**

Introduction by Wim and Rob.

Introduction round: first reminder (1) and why Tilburg (2). Some quotes:

"Never regretted it!"

"The philosophy of the university appealed to me."

"A real campus."

"A beer in the lecture hall during TOP Week."

"This is home."

"This is where I felt at home."

"I like coming back here, why did I leave in the first place?"

## **Dreams and challenges**

Workload for academics/students:

- Working conditions for academics; for example, many flex contracts.
- The goal is sound research, not just motivated by loan capital.
- Pressure on students is high. Besides of studying, also working to pay rent. Combination of pressure in curriculum and pressure to make ends meet.
- Focus on getting credits, rather than focus on learning something new. Has it become a matter of tallying credits?
- Many environmental factors put pressure on students. There is also a pressure from society; we live in a performance society. The university is part of that environment.
- Are study programs becoming too economics driven?

Help with workload:

- As a student, take the space you need (in the broadest sense of the word). The space may be there, but not everyone dares to take it. Financial reasons play a role here.
- There's a lot of help out there, but people can't find it. Too high a threshold?
- Offer training to learn how to cope with the environment.
- Training/coaching at an individual level?

Bringing theoretical and practical worlds together:

- Philosophy and Ethics, 12 credits already in the curriculum. Sometimes such courses come "out of the blue." They should be introduced more and the importance should be clarified.
- Theoretical models are not reality, continue to discuss this. The model is not the truth.

Art/Creativity:

- Art in character-building education.
- People who are engaged in art are engaged in inclusiveness, diversity, and ambiguity. Art can help to draw attention to this.
- A broader picture in society.
- Collaboration with art schools?
- More creativity, in character building. A means of challenging people.
- Art as habits of mind
- Learning to observe

- A link was made between 'play' and 'attracting play on campus'. More aware of the space the campus occupies in the environment/neighborhood.

Numbers and values:

- Wish for fewer publications, better quality. More value this way, but "fewer numbers." More is not better. Take your time.
- Values and numbers are two different things.

Personal Development:

- Talked about resilience program at University College.
- On certain things, you have influence, what lies within your "circle of influence."
- Have we forgotten development as a person a bit?
- Passing assessments vs. understanding the subject?
- Learning to think for yourself about meaning. How to be critical.
- Suggestion of "I set my own pace" during my studies. Structure is necessary though, freedom costs a lot of money.

### **Statements**

Tilburg University cannot do without character-building education, and character-building education cannot do without art. (See above)

Students are given plenty of opportunities to get a glimpse of work life during their studies.

- Too little.
- Good connection to practical examples within courses is lacking.
- Internship opportunities are limited. Students can choose to do so, but outside the curriculum.
- If you want something, you have to arrange it yourself, but this doesn't seem to happen much.
- The two worlds don't seem to mesh well enough.
- As a university, addressing more opportunities, sometimes companies knock on doors, but this is not passed on correctly.
- Having a "coffee" with alumni.
- Relatively little bonding between alumni and the university.
- Extended Master's programs are a best practice. However, there are only 2 Master's programs like this. There are opportunities here.
- Connection to professional practice is missing, perhaps especially in the Master's. Looking for that unique opportunity at this stage of your studies.
- What does it take: taking the step during your Master's to get closer to working life.

Is it bad to have no practical experience?

- It's a perk for yourself. In this way, you can find out if you really like it and learn from practice. In practice you are confronted with yourself.
- How does it relate to board experience? Exists side by side and builds on each other.
- Every student is different. The question is: what's right for you? It's not generic.
- This is where "caring" comes into play: the university must meet the need to provide personal guidance.
- Difference with universities of applied sciences: you become a professional and your knowledge and role is fixed. Academic: knowledge base is fluid and your role can be different. Two types of profiles.

- The skills you learn at the internship do fit the university.
- The university should provide a kind of mentor role.

### ***Core values and other***

Comments on the Tilburg University logo:

- History? The tree of wisdom and ambiguity, intricacy and interestingness: relationship truth, wisdom and knowledge.
- What does it evoke: growth, development.

Mission:

- Side note: The mission statement makes it seem as if the university is hierarchical and precisely above society. It may feel like "the system above society. Thought of a flock of sheep and their shepherd?
- Education is not "above" a group, but right in the middle of it.
- Looking at it another way: listening and anticipating as a "leader," more connected to the rest.
- Ultimately, the university serves the truth. The best argument must win. This is the core of what the idea of the university is.
- Aware of power dynamics, can't avoid hierarchy. But organize in such a way that one is independent to some extent.

### **Final remarks:**

A fifth C: Conscious, committed, critical, creative.

"Setting goals, but leaving room for the unexpected! Agility."

"Drafting vulnerably. Transparent in communication. Not being above it, but among the students."

"Despite growth, retain sense of small scale. Even after 100 years!"

"Always think about whether you want to nurture the performance society that is based on economic value, or whether you want to educate a critical student."

"Digitization: thinking about hack attacks?"

"Agreeing to do this again in 2027 like this?"