



Memo
Career Minor

FRONT

FOR THE ACTIVE STUDENT

December 10th 2020



Introduction

Following the response to our submitted initiative on "extension minor opportunities", we are very pleased that the Executive Board recognizes that there are more opportunities in the field of minors and intends to explore these options. In particular, the introduction of a university-wide minor has been positively received. That is why Front wants to submit a proposal that is in line with the previous submitted initiative.

Current employers expect more and more from students. It is no longer sufficient to just pass your courses. You have to be able to show that you also acquired other skills during your time at university. Students experience an increased study pressure to graduate faster (partly due to the loan system), but they also have to meet the requirements of their future employers. In view of the increasing demand from employers for students with a comprehensive curriculum vitae, Front thinks it's important that our education responds to this demand. We would like to see that career preparation will play a more prominent role in the curriculum.

Motivation

Tilburg University's strategic plan¹ states that education should prepare students for the labour market. Therefore, all educational programs include courses that teach students practical skills. The university would do its best to ensure that TiU students have a good starting position in the labour market.

However, students do not feel well enough prepared for the job market. For example, Tilburg University scored lower than the average on the section "preparing for a professional career" of the National Student Survey of 2019². This shows that 35 percent of the TiU students are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the preparation of their professional career. The section mentioned above is based on the practical orientation of the program, the acquiring of skills in the professional field and the contact with the professional field.

Front would like to see that a university-wide career minor will be offered. This minor prepares students for the labour market. Concretely, this means that the knowledge of a sector is strengthened as well as learning skills and abilities that are important to function well in the professional field. The career minor will ensure that bachelor students can apply their academic skills in practice. By gaining experience in the professional field, students will also be able to make a better and more informed choice for a master program. In addition, a university-wide minor will ensure that students from different faculties and study programs come into contact with each other and start working together. This is extremely valuable and stimulates a multidisciplinary perspective among students participating in this minor. This perspective is of great value in solving complex social issues.

The strategic plan states that we strive to find the right balance between multidisciplinary and small-scale education. Front thinks that the career minor can achieve this balance within education. We are aware of the fact that many student organizations are engaged in labour market orientation. We would like to collaborate with these student organizations for the implementation of this initiative. That way we can ensure that the topics are relevant and match as optimal as possible with the students of different programs.

In addition, this initiative also fits in well with the Tilburg Education Profile. TEP was established in order to let TiU students distinguish themselves from other students by adding character building within the study programs. Preparation for the job market and being able to establish relationships with other disciplines play an important role in this.

1. <https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/sites/default/files/download/Strategisch%20Plan%20Tilburg%20University%202018-2021.pdf>

2. <https://www.studiekeuze123.nl/nse/dashboard>

Proposal

Student Party Front proposes to offer a university-wide career minor so that every student who has the opportunity to do a minor within his/her studies, has the choice to gain practical experience within this minor. The University of Groningen already offers a university-wide career minor³. They have divided the minor into two blocks. The first block offers orientation and the second block consists of a practical assignment. In the first block students follow two courses in which they acquire knowledge and skills, carry out assignments and broaden their knowledge of a certain theme. During the second block of the career minor, students can choose to do the following: 1) carry out a concrete assignment for an organization in an interdisciplinary project group or; 2) an individual assignment in the form of an internship or 3) develop their own start-up as a follow-up to the theme of entrepreneurship. In the latter option, the student can opt for an internship or develop and implement a plan for their own company/startup.

Within the career minor there will be a number of fixed components that are the same for every student, regardless of which faculty they are in. We would like to see the career minor offered within the mobility window of the study. For those studies where there is no mobility window, we would like to see the career minor implemented in a different way.

To achieve this we would like to see a working group set up in which all faculties will participate in order to discuss how a university-wide minor could be created. Which also will determine which fixed parts will be important for the TiU student and which parts are important per faculty and study. Career Services supports this initiative and has indicated that it would like to participate in this working group. TEP has also indicated that it would like to join this working group. In addition, we think it would be of value if the vice deans would participate, this way the practical experience will be aligned with academic knowledge which students have obtained. We also see value in adding an internship coordinator in order to clarify the opportunities for internships, but also to bring more knowledge of the current labour market to the table. Furthermore, we would like to join as well in order to bring the student perspective to the attention, since we have good contact with the students and the student organizations.

3. <https://www.rug.nl/let/studeren-bij-ons/bachelor/career-minor>

Conclusion

Front asks the Executive Board to set up a working group that will further explore and elaborate the options for career minors. We believe that the combination of a multidisciplinary and career-oriented minor will have a strong added value for the development of our TiU student, which fits well within our motto 'Understanding Society'. Front hopes that the Executive Board will consider this initiative.



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