

LIST LEX

Election plan
2023-2024



LIST
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Preface

In this document you can find the election programme for List LEX for the University Council elections for the academic year 2023-2024. List LEX is a young collaboration of ambitious and qualified individuals, which aims to make a stand at University level in subjects that truly matter to students. We strive towards a great study time at Maastricht University.

Before discussing our election programme, it is necessary to lay out what the University Council entails. The University Council is a participatory body regulated by the Dutch Law for Higher Education and Scientific Research (Wet op hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek or WHW). UM has one University Council, on central level, and all Faculties have a Faculty Council. These councils consist of students and staff members.

The University Council's duties are formulated in the WHW: 'To the best of its ability, the council strives to promote openness, public access and mutual consultation within the university. In general, the council guards against any form of discrimination in the university and, in particular, promotes the equal treatment of men and women, as well as the inclusion of people with a disability or chronic illness and persons with a migration background.' (WHW ART. 9.32.3 - 4)

In the University council, members have the right to consent, right to advise, right to information, and right to take initiative. This election programme serves as a framework when drafting our own proposals and guides us on how to judge propositions from the Executive Board. With your vote, we will do our best to improve the topics in the plan.

**"WITH YOUR VOTE, WE WILL MAKE OUR CASE FOR:
BETTER EDUCATION BY PASSIONATE REPRESENTATION"**

Our priorities

In this document we would like to further explain how we want to improve the university, and what we strive for.

Language courses

Maastricht University offers various language courses to all students through its Language Centre. These high-quality courses have seen little usage in recent years by many students seeing the high price tag as a threshold. List LEX aims to lower the price of these courses, making them more affordable for students. This will make language courses more widely available to students and further encourage multilingualism within the university community. Our focus will be on Dutch language courses, as the demand for them from international students is high. We aim to make these Dutch language courses free of charge.

Digital infrastructure & app

We at List LEX have noticed the continued developments of software within education over the past years and this trend is said to be expanded in the coming years. As a part of this, List LEX would like to make the following proposal to aid students with these digital affairs. We would like to propose to the university to centralise a few websites into one website with a corresponding app. This website would simply enable the students to find all the necessary information for studying in an easy way on one central website. This website could include things such as: the reserving of rooms, printing within the university, the use of student support facilities such as study advisors, class schedules, the student intranet and finally, announcements regarding your Faculty and the university. This would enable us to gather all the information we might need from one website instead of having to search through tons of websites and links to gather the information we require.

Visibility student representation

One of the most important reasons to have student representation is to ensure that the interests of the students are properly taken into account when those within governing positions make decisions. Inherent to this is that students understand the topics that are being discussed by governing bodies, this is however not the case in the majority of situations within our university at the moment. Students are often unaware of what is going on or what is being discussed and therefore the student representatives are unable to properly know the interests of all students pertaining to said topic. To solve this problem List LEX offers several solutions to enhance the visibility within our university.

Firstly, we wish that the agendas and the meetings are publicly announced via mail to all students so that students are able to know what is going on in the council and, should they wish to, share their opinions regarding said topics to council members so that they might be able to use said opinions when considering the topic.

Secondly, we will be looking to create a student panel with the goal of enhancing communications between students and representatives. Here, representatives can ask for student opinions regarding topics being discussed and students can render opinions or ideas.

Thirdly, List LEX wishes to emphasise the communication between representatives and students in general. We wish for there to be clear information and communication regarding how students can get in touch with representatives online or physically, so that students are able to be heard throughout the entire year and not just the election season. We at List LEX will strive to render such information as clearly as possible and communicate it to all students.

Sustainability

List LEX has been working hard to make UM more sustainable over the past few years, which we will continue to do next year. The focus will be on digitizing open book exams. The amount of paper wasted by printing everything out is outdated. Instead, documents should be available online for use during the exam. Furthermore, List LEX wants to reduce energy consumption, for example by installing more sustainable light bulbs in university buildings. Finally, List LEX aims to improve the natural facilities on the various campuses. Planting more trees and flowers will enhance the ecological system and cool down the environment more.

Community feeling

While in past years efforts have been made to improve social cohesion within individual Faculties, List LEX aims to strengthen the bond between students from different Faculties and emphasise a sense of community across the entire university. We aim to achieve this by creating more social spaces throughout the university where students can meet and interact with each other. Additionally, List LEX wants to encourage the university to organise social and sports activities that are open to all students of Maastricht University. We also want to involve the study associations in these efforts. For example, the FHML and FPN already organise a Randwyck party. By collaborating with study associations, we hope to organise similar initiatives university-wide. Through these efforts, we hope to foster better social integration between international and Dutch students.

Housing

The housing crisis has been and still is a very stressful and difficult situation for students. There is too little housing and the housing that is available is often unreasonably expensive. The university has already taken steps to build more housing units in cooperation with the municipality. Though in the right direction, this still is a short term solution and List LEX wants to make sure that a lasting long term solution is found for this crisis. We want to accomplish this by both investing in even more housing for students with a price cap for rent and forcing the university to be realistic about how many students it can facilitate. Our university makes a lot of effort to recruit students to come to live and study in Maastricht without ensuring that these students get what they need in order to do that: housing. The university should therefore be obligated to clearly communicate to students what they can expect when they come here. With the study grant on the horizon, we expect more students next year. Therefore, we must also stop recruiting students for whom housing cannot be facilitated.

Student wellbeing

It has come to our attention that within our university certain facilities are available in great numbers in one Faculty but that these same facilities in other Faculties are nearly non-existent. Things such as the ability to reserve a room or the waiting times to speak to a study advisor are examples of this. We hope as List LEX to create more equality regarding these facilities, not by decreasing the facilities of one Faculty but rather to work with Faculties to improve theirs. It cannot be the intention of our university that one Faculty barely has any facilities and the other Faculty has an overwhelming amount of facilities. We wish to review the possibilities of supporting a growth in capacity and facilities within these Faculties with the university council enabling students to receive a more equal access to them during their studies.

Extracurricular activities

Extracurricular activities are important to student wellbeing and to a successful academic career. Maastricht University should play a role in making room for extracurricular activities and making these more accessible by lowering the pressure of nominally passing your studies. There can, and should, be room to deviate from the "nominal is normal" practice. Students can fill in this extra room by working, representing students, internships, or becoming active in student associations. Extracurricular activities make student life!

Availability University Library

For the past year List LEX has been working hard in the University Council on University Library availability. Something we will keep working on next year if elected! We believe that with a fair distribution of reservable study spaces the University Library can have more available study spaces. Furthermore List LEX wants to lengthen the University Library opening hours during and before exam weeks.

Within the database of the University Library, many of those publications are hidden behind a so-called "paywall". This results in people having to request the University Library to buy these publications. The process behind this however can take quite a while. List LEX aspires to broaden the University Libraries' licences, resulting in shorter waiting times. Besides broadening the licences we also strive for the expansion of the range of publications available for students without any extra costs.

Testvision

Since the shift to online education, Testvision has become the standard platform used for exams at the MECC. For many students (and the environment), this is an improvement compared to paper-based exams. Unfortunately, Testvision has presented new challenges. During previous exams, the system has repeatedly shown that it does not function properly. Additionally, it still lacks several features that would benefit students greatly. As such, List LEX wants to collaborate with Maastricht University's ICT department to ensure that the system becomes more reliable in the future. Within these improvements, the desires and ideas of students must be taken into account. Students should also be granted access to online books and notes during open-book exams within Testvision. There should be enough keyboards with an AZERTY layout. Amongst other international students, mainly French and Belgian students are accustomed to an AZERTY layout and they are negatively affected with a lack thereof. List LEX initiated this plan over the past year and wants to continue building on it in the coming year.

Furthermore, List LEX advocates for a university-wide policy for accessing exam results. Exam scores should be available online after the exam so that students can use online resources to support their feedback arguments.

National debate on internationalisation

As many of you may know, there is a big debate currently on-going on the national level concerning the internationalisation of universities within the Netherlands. We at List LEX are of the opinion that this topic has a fairly simple answer as for our university. It is our opinion that international students belong within our university, our university would never have been how it is, had it not been for internationals. It enables us to learn new and different cultures, expand our networks and learn other perspectives and this is all very important within the currently globalising world. The Netherlands has never been so internationally involved in the world and the presence of our international students is a good sign of this, and they belong here as part of this globalisation. Internationalisation is a part of the values and core of our university and we should be proud regarding our number of international students attending our university and the amount of cultures within our university and we'd love to see this expansion continuing. We therefore strive as List LEX to reflect these opinions within the university council whenever and wherever possible.