



**Universiteit
Leiden**

**Annual Report
Faculty Council FWN 2024–2025**

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1. Introduction

This annual report compiles all relevant information regarding the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Science at Leiden University for the 2024-2025 academic year. The purpose of this document is to inform the constituency and other interested parties about the Council's activities this year. Additionally, it can serve as a reference for future Council members.

This report will first address the Council's organization, including its composition, the distribution of its members across the committees, and its collaboration with the University Council and programme committees. Next, the report will address the topics the Council has placed on the agenda during the year, as well as all topics on which approval or advice has been given. Finally, an overview of ongoing matters and recommendations for the 2025–2026 Faculty Council will be provided.

2. Organization of the Council

This chapter discusses the composition of the Council, the distribution of members across the committees and working groups, and finally, collaboration with the University Council and the Programme Committees.

2.1 Composition of the Faculty Council 2024–2025

For the academic year from September 1, 2024, to September 1, 2025, the FWN Faculty Council consisted of the following members:

Group	Name	Group
Staff	Martina Huber (Vice Chair)	Hard Sciences
	Tessa Gote	LACDR/LIC
	Laura Heitman	LACDR/LIC
	Henk Hoekstra	Hard Sciences
	Linda Holtman	LACDR/LIC
	Michelle Spierings (until November 1, 2024)	Party for Biologists
	Lars Jeuken	LACDR/LIC
	Jeanette de Wolf starting November 1, 2024	LACDR/LIC
Student	Jelle Oonk (chair)	PBMS
	Darcy Reynolds (until April 1, 2025)	PBMS
	Sander van Zon (until July 2, 2025)	PBMS
	Arnaud Saint-Genez (starting April 10, 2025)	PBMS
	Harshit Khandelwal	PBMS
	Nadine Potters	PBMS
	Marke Tadema	PBMS
	Jason Hart	DSP-SC

The official secretary of the Council is Liselore Brederode.

Because one of the Council members spoke a different language, it was decided in consultation with the Faculty Board to conduct the meetings in English whenever possible.

Due to the departure of one of the student members, the Council had a vacant seat for a student member as of July 2, 2025. It has not been possible to fill this seat for the remainder of the academic year.

2.2 Committees

The Council currently has four committees: Finance, Student and Educational Policy, Public Relations, and Personnel and Research Policy, with the latter comprising the entire staff delegation. The distribution of members across the other committees is as follows:

Committee	Members
Finance	Jeanette de Wolf (chair)
	Tessa Gote
	Laura Heitman
	Jelle Oonk
	Jason Hart
	Nadine Potters
	Mark Tadema
Student and Educational Policy	Linda Holtman (Chair)
	Martina Huber
	Tessa Gote
	Lars Jeuken
	Darcy Reynolds / Arnaud Saint-Genes
	Sander van Zon (until July 2, 2025)
	Harshit Khandelwal
Public Relations	Jason Hart (Chair)
	Darcy Reynolds / Nadine Potters
	Lars Jeuken

2.3 Collaboration with the University Council

FWN's interests must be effectively represented within the central representative body. Due to its science programs and numerous laboratories, FWN is significantly different from the other faculties at Leiden University. As a result, its interests may differ from those of the other faculties. Maintaining good relations with the University Council is therefore of great importance, and the Faculty Council attaches great value to this.

In this context, an introductory meeting took place between several members of the University Council and the Faculty Council at the start of the Council term.

The chair of the Faculty Council has also participated on several occasions in interfaculty consultations with chairs of other Faculty Councils. Topics such as the budget, social safety, and workload were discussed during these meetings.

2.4 Collaboration with the programme committees

Our faculty offers many study programs with diverse needs. Therefore, it is important that the Faculty Council is well-informed about what is happening in the various study programs. Furthermore, collaboration is also of great importance, for example, in drafting the Education and Examination Regulations (OER). Both the Programme Committees as the Faculty Council have advisory and approval rights on the Education and Examination regulations, however the rights differ for both bodies. Therefore the collaboration between both bodies in drafting the Education and Examination regulation is of great importance.

At our faculty, contact between the Council and the programme committees is organized through the “Overkoepelende Samenwerking Opleidingscommissies”(OSOC). This is a joint consultation of representatives from every programme committee in our faculty, chaired by the assessor, the student member of the Faculty Board. The Faculty Council also participates in this forum with a few representatives to gather feedback from the programme committees and to inform the programme committees about developments at the faculty level.

To further strengthen cooperation with the programme committees, the Faculty Council organized an informal event on February 4, 2025. During this event, the Faculty Council’s role was explained, the challenges faced by both bodies were identified, and participants got to know each other over drinks. The event was well-received.

Finally, each programme committee is linked to a member of the faculty Council, typically a student. By attending (at least) one program committee meeting, they have gained further insight into the challenges programs face, and the lines of communication between program committees and the faculty Council have been strengthened.

2.5 Collaboration with Institute Councils

The buddy system for Institute Councils is an initiative in which each member of the Faculty Council is linked with a specific Institute Council to improve communication between the faculty administration and the academic staff. In practice, the buddy attends an Institute Council meeting to get acquainted and then maintains close contact with the IC-chair throughout the year, including by reviewing the agendas. This ensures that the Faculty Council stays better informed about what is happening at the department level and identifies overarching issues more quickly, making the Council more accessible to the faculty community.

2.6 Participation in Faculty Working Groups

Two Council members participate in the Faculty Admissions Policy Working Group: Lars Jeuken and Tessa Gote. The working group identifies the problems arising from the new admissions policy and investigates whether an appropriate solution is possible.

3. General strategy

Over the past year, the Council has focused on the following points:

1. *Proactively placing topics on the agenda*

In addition to the topics on the annual agenda, the Faculty Council may propose topics for discussion with the Faculty Board. The Council has discussed several topics with the Faculty Board. See 3. Proposed Topics for details. For this purpose, topics and questions were identified via Teams prior to the agenda meeting. The Council recommends continuing to use this method.

2. *Focused on priorities*

At the beginning of the year, the Council held a session to formulate priorities. This enabled the Council to articulate its own views more clearly and consistently. The Council recommends continuing this approach, noting that it is important to allow ample time for the formulation of priorities.

3. *Strengthening external contact*

The buddy system between the Faculty Council and Programme Committees (OCs) and Institute Councils has been continued. Students are linked with Programme Committees, and staff members with Institute Councils. This approach has led to additional specific input on various agenda items. Therefore, the Council recommends maintaining these contacts. It is important that all buddies visit their Programme Committees or Department Councils at least once.

4. *Efficient Meetings*

Preparation is crucial for efficient meetings. Therefore, the cycle from previous years has been continued. First, agenda items and questions are formulated via Teams. Then, the agenda consultation takes place with the Faculty Board. Subsequently, various Faculty Council committees meet. Finally, the chair drafts an agenda for the preliminary meeting. During this meeting, the Council prepares for the meeting with the Faculty Board. All of this saves a lot of email traffic prior to a meeting, and time during the meeting.

4. Key Priorities

Priorities were formulated at the beginning of the year. With these, the Council hopes to proactively set the agenda and anticipate proposals from the Faculty Board. These priorities were as follows:

1. *Finance / Budget*

Cost-cutting measures must be implemented in a balanced manner and with as little harm as possible, while maintaining the quality of research and education; in doing so, the faculty itself must also bear a fair share of the burden and be transparent about the consequences, while critically examining costs, revenues, and the allocation of resources within research, education, workload, and support services.

2. *Updating Faculty Regulations*

Faculty regulations must be updated to ensure that mandates are clearly and efficiently defined.

3. *Faculty Strategic Agenda / Implementation Agenda*

Key themes previously set aside under “Getting the Basics Right” must be actively followed up on so that they are actually incorporated into the final strategic agenda, with specific attention to topics such as educational logistics, financial policy, IT systems, and research and data management.

4. *Issues regarding the new building (education)*

Problems that have arisen following the move to the new building, such as overcrowded classrooms, limited access, and a lack of study spaces, must be identified and addressed in a timely manner to prevent further deterioration, especially in light of future capacity pressures and the potential for more evening classes.

5. *Greater student involvement in the Faculty Council*

Student involvement must be increased because budget cuts have direct and indirect consequences for their education, requiring extra attention to boosting voter turnout in elections and creating accessible ways for students to provide input.

6. *Limit education to working hours (student well-being)*

Educational activities such as lectures and exams should take place within regular working hours as much as possible to safeguard the well-being of students and staff, which requires a joint effort to limit evening and weekend classes.

7. *Regulations regarding AI in education*

There is a need for clear and consistent guidelines for the use of AI in education, as its use is rapidly increasing and there is currently uncertainty regarding responsibilities at the program, faculty, and university levels.

5. Topics raised by the Council

The Council has the right to propose items for the agenda of the meetings between the Council and the Faculty Board. This right was exercised frequently this year. The following items were proposed by the Council during the past academic year and discussed in consultation meetings and/or committee meetings.

1. *Occupational Health and Safety and Environmental Services*

At the Council's request, the Head of the Health & Safety (AMD) provided information on the AMD's capacity during the meeting on December 9, 2024. This led to the Council issuing a written recommendation to the Faculty Board on January 26, 2025. The recommendation concerned the safety training provided to master's students, PhD candidates, and staff conducting chemical, biochemical, and physical laboratory research.

2. *More PhD Candidates in Student Representative Elections*

On January 27, 2025, the Council expressed concerns about the low number of PhDs standing for election to the faculty Councils and the University Council. Because PhDs have shorter appointments and the term of office on the Councils is two years, PhDs seem less motivated to stand as a candidate. On the other hand, PhDs make up a significant portion of the faculty, and their representation in the participation bodies is of great importance.

Although the Faculty Board emphasizes the issue, no faculty-level solution could be found. The organization and regulations governing the elections are managed at the central level.

3. *Registration procedure for (re)exams*

The Council raised the concerns received from the student body regarding the issues surrounding the registration procedure during the preliminary meeting of the Student and Education Policy Committee with the vice dean on February 12, 2025, and at the meeting with the Faculty Board on February 17, 2025.

Berber Verhalle (assessor) conducted a survey among students and shared the results with the Council on April 15, 2025. The results were also shared with the HSO and the University Council, as the registration policy for exams and retakes is currently under discussion by the University Council and the Executive Board.

The Council has placed this topic on the agenda and made it clear that the specific issues facing FWN regarding the procedure must be brought to the attention of central administration. It is now important to maintain momentum.

4. *New Access Policy for FWN Buildings*

On April 15, 2025, the Council shared feedback received from its constituents regarding the implementation of the new access policy. The Faculty Board has received similar feedback and decided to establish a working group in which two Council members will participate. This working group is tasked with ensuring that a realistic and workable access policy is developed to replace the initial set of rules.

5. *University Facilities Management (UFB)*

The Council has compiled a list of critical questions for the UFB. A response from the UFB is expected after the summer of 2025.

6. *Rules for campaigning during elections*

During the last elections, a number of negative experiences and complaints were reported by students and other participating student parties. The reports were submitted to the Faculty Election Committee and Central Election committee, as well as to the Faculty Board. The Central Election Committee has indicated its intention to revise the rules for next year to prevent future problems.

6. Reassessment of the faculty governance model/reorganization

The new governance model within FWN was implemented on July 1, 2024. The staff representatives on the Council were closely involved in the entire process leading up to this change.

Points for consideration for possible evaluation by the Faculty Council in the next term (2025–2026):

1. *Portfolio Holder for Education:*

It took a long time to fill the positions of Director of Education (DE) for all eight research institutes of the FWN. This gives the impression that this position is considered demanding, in addition to research and teaching duties, leading to reluctance to apply for this position.

The role of the DE on the institute board may have been defined too administratively. Combined with the role of Director of Education (OD), it is a demanding task.

2. ***Assessment for Directors of Education***

Some of the prospective DE candidates felt that conducting an assessment during the appointment process was undesirable. This was one of the points on which the Faculty Board did not act on the suggestions of the Faculty Council.

3. ***OD meeting***

This is the periodic meeting of the OD's with the vice-dean; with the current DE's, the group can number approximately 10 to 15 people. Given the large group, a new meeting structure has been implemented for the DE's and OD's.

4. ***Faculty Strategy***

Topics such as the involvement of students and staff from the institutes require greater attention from the faculty board. The topics of "admission policy" and the recent "revision of educational logistics" demonstrate a tendency among the faculty board and its surrounding structures to set up processes in an overly procedural manner, while devoting too little attention and space to the participation and input of those involved.

7. Approvals

As prescribed in the "Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek" (>WHW Article 9.38) and in Article 35 of the Faculty Regulations, the Faculty Board has sought the Council's approval on certain matters. In the 2024–2025 academic year, the Faculty Council approved the following matters:

1. On January 27, 2025, the Faculty Council unanimously approved the Risk Inventory & Evaluation (RI&E) for the Cryogenic Department of LION, including the Action Plan.
2. On April 15, 2025, the Faculty Council unanimously approved the new FWN Faculty Regulations, version 2025.
3. On May 26, 2025, the Faculty Council unanimously approved the amendments to the FWN Education and Examination Regulations 2025-2026.
4. On May 26, 2025, the Faculty Council unanimously approved the appointment procedure for student members of the program committees for the 2025-2026 academic year.
5. On August 25, 2025, the Faculty Council unanimously approved the main points of the 2026-2023 Budget.
6. On August 25, 2025, the Faculty Board unanimously approved the revised Rules of Procedure for the Faculty Council.

8. Advices

As described in the "Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek" (>WHW Article 9.32, paragraph 2, and Article 36 of the Faculty Regulations), the Faculty Board is required to seek the Council's advice on certain matters. During the 2024–2025 academic year, the Faculty Council issued the following recommendations:

1. On January 26, 2025, the Faculty Council issued a written opinion on its own initiative regarding the safety training sessions organized by the AMD for master's students, doctoral candidates, and staff members conducting chemical, biochemical, and physical laboratory research.
2. On February 5, 2025, at the request of the Faculty Board, the Faculty Council issued a written opinion on the revised FWN Internal Distribution Model (IVM).
3. Following the consultation meeting on February 17, 2025, the Faculty Council, at the request of the Faculty Board, issued a written recommendation on the Faculty Education Annual Report 2023–2024, which led to a few minor adjustments.
4. On February 17, 2025, the Faculty Council issued a positive recommendation on the Leiden FWN Program Register.
5. On May 1, 2025, the Faculty Council submitted a written recommendation regarding the amendments to the FWN Education and Examination Regulations 2025-2026 (OER).
6. On May 26, 2025, the Faculty Council issued a positive recommendation on the proposal for the nomination to the Executive Board regarding the new assessor for 2025–2026
7. On July 14, 2025, the Faculty Council issued a positive recommendation regarding the ongoing process to draft the FWN Budget 2026-2030.
8. On July 14, 2025, the Faculty Board requested advice on the Vision and Action Plan associated with the Educational Logistics Program. On August 12, 2025, the Faculty Council submitted a written recommendation.

9. Public Documents

Below are the links to view the public meeting documents, namely the draft agenda and the approved minutes of the meetings between the Faculty Board and Faculty Council. The Faculty Board's public list of decisions is published on the Faculty Board's website.

1. The draft agendas and approved minutes can be found [here](#).
2. The Faculty Board's public list of decisions can be found [here](#).

10. Visibility of the Faculty Council

To increase the visibility of the Faculty Council, the Public Relations Committee organized an information session at the beginning of the year for members of Programme Committees. Also, the Instagram account has been revitalized. Through Instagram, we shared the topics discussed at a number of meetings with our followers.

11. Ongoing matters

At the end of the 2024–2025 academic year, there are still a number of ongoing matters that will carry over into the next Council year. These include the following:

1. *Finance*

A key theme for the coming year will once again be finances. The 24-25 Council recommends taking a critical look at the logistics behind our education and the processes within the faculty,

and prioritizing which elements are crucial for maintaining the quality of education and research.

The financial climate will also influence the implementation and developments of the strategic plan.

2. *Relocation*

The relocation of the Theoretical Physicists (Lorentz Institute), who are moving out of the Oort building and into the new Gorlaeus building, requires relocations within the new building to make room for the IL as a unit. Plans for this are currently being drawn up, and the question is how this will play out for everyone.

It is up to the Council 2025-2026 to maintain contact with those involved and to continue checking in to ensure everything is proceeding smoothly.

3. *Implementation Agenda*

An implementation agenda has been drawn up in response to the strategic plan. Key topics include Recognition and Reward and Data Management. It is up to the Council to monitor the implementation agenda.

4. *Additional resources for student participation*

The Executive Board has set aside funds for the faculty to improve employee participation. In the 2023–2024 academic year, the plan for an annual event was approved by the Faculty Board; this event also took place this year and serves as an opportunity to bring together Faculty Council members, programme committee members, and Institute Council members.

5. *Regulations Regarding Artificial Intelligence*

With the growth of Artificial Intelligence, a need has arisen over the past year for regulations regarding its use in degree programs and research. University-wide regulations will be published in the fall of 2025, but it is possible that our faculty may require tailored regulations. It is up to the Council of 25-26 to actively consult with their program committees on this topic as buddies; different committees will have different needs, and some program committees may have already taken initial steps in this process. In this way, the Council can determine whether these university-wide regulations are relevant to our faculty and the programs under its purview, or whether adjustments or additions are needed.

6. *Institute Councils*

Maintaining contact with the Institute Councils remains important; there are significant differences among them—some are more active than others. Although department Councils are not official representative bodies and function as advisory bodies to the department administration, it is important to maintain good contact.

12. Recommendations to the new FWN Faculty Council 2025-2026

1. *Finance*

To begin with, no part of the Faculty Council uses as much jargon as the finance section. Here's a small sample: AEG model, first/second/third funding streams, starter and incentive grants,

general and designated reserves, and so on. Make a list of these terms and ask what a term means whenever it's unclear. This is the only way you can follow the discussions.

The implementation strategy is under pressure due to the upcoming budget cuts; monitoring priorities is important.

The faculty board has opted for an Internal Allocation Model (IVM) that closely aligns with the AEG model and budget, in which funds are allocated primarily according to fixed, neutral distribution rules, without much additional direction or strategic choices.

Although this is a sensible and stable approach from a financial perspective, it may actually be useful to pursue a more targeted policy on certain points. By consciously setting priorities, the faculty can better prepare for the future.

An example of this is valuing third-party funding projects (such as grants and external research funding) differently, so that they are more strongly incentivized or rewarded.

Our advice on the IVM elaborates on this further. It is important to keep in mind that a more policy-driven budget, in which the administration makes more active choices and sets priorities, is also an option.

2. *Educational Logistics*

The faculty intends to harmonize and centralize faculty-level educational logistics. To this end, an Action Plan was shared with the Faculty Council in 2025. The Faculty Council provided advice on this. The Action Plan was rewritten in part based on this advice: Action Plan 2.0.

Points of attention for the Faculty Council regarding the revision of educational logistics are:

1) Impact on the work experience and workload of educational logistics staff. A major concern among staff is that the new structure of educational logistics overlooks the unique character and associated expertise of the individual programs. The concern is that this will lead to a decline in the quality of educational logistics for these programs and result in less efficient operations.

2) Tailored support for individual students: Academic advisors are concerned that adequate support can no longer be provided to students who are experiencing difficulties with their studies due to unforeseen (personal) circumstances.

3) Communication to educational logistics staff: There are many concerns because the exact implementation and the frameworks within which educational logistics is being revised have not been clearly communicated. People do not know what to expect and are concerned about their work experience and workload (see also point 1). The communication plan regarding this has not yet been announced (minutes of the FR-FB meeting, October 2025). Recommendation to inquire about this.

3. *Maintaining a balance between central and decentralized*

As the Faculty of Science, we differ from the other faculties in many ways, which means that harmonization from the central level does not always contribute to progress. It is therefore important that the Council continues to critically examine the decisions made at the central level and their potential consequences for the faculty.

4. *Role of the Director of Education*

Several crucial questions regarding the role of the Director of Education still need to be answered. It is important to clarify how this role functions in practice. A key point of attention is the situation in which the role of Director of Education is combined with that of Program Director.

Do adjustments need to be made to the job description, the appointment procedure, or other formal frameworks? The intention was to evaluate this role one year after the introduction of the role of Director of Education—in addition to the role of program director(s)—; at the time of writing, the results of this evaluation have not yet been shared with the Faculty Council. The new Faculty Council is advised to inquire about this, discuss it within the Faculty Council as well as with the Faculty Board, and formulate recommendations where necessary.

In addition, it must be clear what the “grassroots”—the faculty and other education stakeholders within the institute—need to function optimally, and how the demands of the position are perceived. Finally, attention should be paid to how institutes structurally develop experience and expertise in education and leadership, so that future administrative and leadership positions can be filled sustainably.

5. *Diversity in Board Positions*

Currently, within the eight institute boards, out of a total of 24 board positions, seven are held by women (less than 30%). This appears to be in stark contrast to UL’s intention to proactively promote gender equality in accordance with the European Commission’s Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025. It would be good for the new Faculty Council to monitor this and, when making new appointments, to ask how UL’s diversity policy has been applied.

<https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/dossiers/diversiteit/gender-equality-planHerijking>

6. *Recognition and Appreciation*

In 2025, the Faculty Advisory Committee issued a recommendation regarding career prospects in research and education and the role of leadership in this context. This recommendation was adopted by the Faculty Board. The recommendation for the new Faculty Council is to monitor and discuss its implementation: request evaluation results and a practical implementation plan within the Career Policy for Academic Staff.

13. Visibility of the Faculty Council

To further increase the Faculty Council’s visibility, we recommend actively and consistently managing the Instagram account; by sharing what is discussed at meetings and asking if our account can be shared (for example, via the Leiden Science account), Instagram can serve as an effective way to communicate to our constituents what is happening at the faculty level. It is advisable to draw up an Instagram plan at the beginning of the year to increase the Faculty Council’s visibility.