

ELECTION PROGRAM OF THE LIBERALE HOCHSCHULGRUPPE

ELECTIONS TO THE 70TH STUDENT PARLIAMENT OF SAARLAND UNIVERSITY

PREAMBLE

Dear fellow students,

The Liberal University Group Saar is expressly committed to student co-determination. Therefore, we resolutely advocate the exercise of all competences already granted to students and demand the expansion of these co-determination opportunities. However, this can only be successful if the representation of the students (namely the Student Parliament and the General Student Committee) deal responsibly and transparently with the trust placed in them by the students and the resources made available to them. Apart from contentwise demands the liberal university group Saar uses itself therefore also massively for a structurally futureable and fairly set up student agency.

In addition, the Liberal University Group Saar considers the freedom of student learning to be an essential feature of university teaching. Therefore, we resolutely oppose excessive regimentation in studies and life.

DRIVING DIGITIZATION FORWARD

MAKING HYBRID LECTURE MODEL THE STANDARD

Every student should be free to decide for themselves whether face-to-face or online teaching leads to the best success in their studies. Life circumstances and learning styles are individual, so everyone should be free to choose the optimal teaching format for themselves. If an exceptional situation such as the corona pandemic should occur again, the quality of teaching can be guaranteed.

ENABLE PAPERLESS COMMUNICATION

We demand the creation of digital communication channels between university administration and students. Specifically, it should be possible to send certificates for examinations, internship certificates, etc. to the examination offices in digital form. Furthermore, it should also be possible to send sickness reports and certificates digitally to the relevant secretariats. In the long term, we call for the conversion of all paper applications to digital forms.

SET UP PAPERLESS TEACHING

Students should be made aware of the advantages of PDF versions of textbooks, and lecture notes and lecture slides should be made available online completely in digital form as well. The same applies to the documents required in lectures and seminars. The holdings of the university libraries are to be gradually digitized via scans in order to soon make copies and out-of-print book copies a thing of the past.

INCREASE SOCKET AVAILABILITY

In the course of digitalization, many students use digital devices to prepare lecture notes. This necessitates the availability of power outlets. Therefore, we demand the installation of sockets at every seat in the lecture halls to ensure a smooth operation of the devices during lectures.

UNIFY REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

A single, uniform registration and information system is to be established across all degree programs. This is to combine the functions of LSF, SIM, ViPa, Moodle and CMS. This is to avoid the unnecessary use of different systems at the same time and to provide information for all students collected in one place.

CREATE DATABASE FOR STUDY DOCUMENTS

Old exams, transcripts, summaries, etc. make an important contribution to preparing for the performance assessments at the end of each semester. Especially in the first years of study, effective learning is still difficult. Examinations from the previous years of study take the pressure off the students and help them immensely

in preparing for the performance assessments. Such a database not only promotes successful studies, but also successful teaching at the respective faculty.

PAY EVERYWHERE WITH UDS CARD

Payments with the UdS Card are to be possible throughout the campus. Corresponding terminals for payment are to be set up in all stores. For easier handling, the credit should be both retrievable and rechargeable online via the app or website. To this end, structures must be created to enable recharging by means of common payment methods.

EXTEND VPN ACCESS FOR LEGAL RESEARCH TOOLS

Legal research tools such as Beck-Online are essential components of successful homework as well as successful studies. The Liberal University Group therefore calls for a permanent extension of the usability of these tools via the already existing VPN client. This would make it possible to perform research work from home via secure remote access and to use the necessary databases.

PUBLISH EVALUATION RESULTS ONLINE

The results of the evaluations of all courses at the end of each semester should be available online for all students. This creates transparency for the students as well as additional incentives for the teachers to maintain and increase the quality of their courses.

MANAGE STUDENT FUNDS WISELY

THE FUTURE OF THE SEMESTER TICKET

The semester ticket for public transport has so far been financed in a solidarity model: All students of the university pay - regardless of their need for such a ticket - a contribution of currently 133€ per semester. The new developments on federal level (49€-ticket) and state level (365€-ticket) cast doubt on the necessity of a semester ticket based on solidarity financing. In order to give the students of our university a direct say in this matter, we demand a ballot on every semester ticket contract that the General Students' Committee negotiates with the transport companies in Saarland.

REDUCTION OF THE STUDENT FEE

To finance the student body, all students pay a semester fee to the General Student Committee. The amount of the contribution has changed in recent years from 8 euros to 16 euros to 13 euros per semester. This corresponds to an average increase of about 60%. Nevertheless the increase of the contributions is further advanced.

We use ourselves as liberal university group for the fact that the general student committee learns to deal with the available financial means. We strictly reject further increases in student fees. We believe that a reduction in the size of the General Student Committee will allow for the possibility of a sustainable reduction in fees to a stable level.

TRANSPARENCY OF THE USE OF FUNDS

The constituted student body is financed by the students' contributions. Unfortunately, communication about the use of these funds is rather sparse. As a liberal university group, we strive for a drastic increase in transparency in the handling of student contributions. Therefore, we demand that the budget of the student body, in a sufficiently annotated version, be made public. Furthermore, we demand that the General Student Committee should make its expenditures accessible on its website in an orderly overview, even apart from the minutes.

EVALUATION OF ALL EVENTS

Despite many efforts by the General Student Committee to make students aware of a wide range of events, some of these events are very poorly attended. Often the members of the university groups make up a large part of the audience. As a liberal university group, we see the need to create a diverse range of events, but almost every event also incurs costs that are borne by the general public. We therefore advocate an evaluation of all events of the General Student Committee in the Student Parliament. To this end, we want to oblige

the General Student Committee to document the number of visitors and advertising campaigns in order to be able to carry out an appropriately substantiated evaluation after the event.

STRENGTHEN FINANCIAL RESOURCES OF THE STUDENT COUNCILS

The lion's share of the study-related events at our university is handled by the student councils of the individual disciplines. In particular, such events encourage students to get together and get to know each other. We see the greatest potential for organizing events for students in the student councils. In the spirit of subsidiarity, the Liberal University Group is therefore in favor of strengthening the finances of the student councils.

MODALITIES FOR JOB CREATION

The General Student Committee uses student employees to support its work. These employees are necessary to ensure the quality of the work. However, the procedure for establishing positions and advertising them is not specified. Therefore, the sole authority in this regard lies with the chair of the General Student Committee. The Liberal University Group is convinced that a transparent and regulated procedure for the establishment and advertisement of the positions of the General Student Committee is necessary for a broad acceptance within the student body. Similar to municipal bodies, we therefore demand that the student parliament alone be granted the authority to establish positions. Furthermore, we advocate for the creation of a transparent tendering and hiring process for the staff of the General Student Committee.

RENEW FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The student parliament issues the financial regulations on behalf of the students, which in particular contains provisions on the management of student contributions. Like many of the legal norms of the student body, however, it is quite outdated and allows those responsible a free hand in dealing with student contributions due to numerous loopholes. As a Liberal University Group, we are therefore advocating for an amendment to the student body's financial regulations that would provide strict safeguards and control mechanisms for the handling of student body finances.

STRENGTHEN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

STEADY ONLINE ELECTIONS

One of the biggest problems of student self-government is the low voter turnout for its bodies. In recent years, elections to the student parliament have only achieved a single-digit voter turnout. The low interest in student representation massively weakens the negotiating position of students vis-à-vis the university administration in our concerns. We see achieving a higher voter turnout as one of our central goals. In order to make the election process as accessible as possible to every student, we therefore demand the continuation of online elections for all elections to the bodies of the constituted student body.

ADVANCING DIRECT DEMOCRACY

Due to the low voter turnout in the elections for the student parliament, it is difficult to get a representative picture of the opinion of all students within the student parliament. Nevertheless, the student parliament decides on issues that have a high relevance for the students of our university. Therefore, we demand the strengthening of direct democratic measures in the student self-administration. In our eyes, the ballot, a binding vote on a specific issue, is a suitable means of involving all students in the decision-making process on the most important issues in student life. In order to reduce the high costs of organizing a ballot, these should generally be bundled with other elections.

INTRODUCE REGULAR PLENARY MEETINGS

For students who are not themselves active in student self-administration, access to information about the current work of the committees is often difficult. There is a lack of communication with the university public. In order to better communicate the work of the General Student Committee and the Student Parliament to the outside world, we would like to introduce regular general meetings of the student body. In addition to the communication of current information, these general assemblies also invite all students to active political participation.

ESTABLISH SURVEY PLATFORM

At our university, we have a kind of representative democracy with the student parliament as the supreme decision-making body. In most cases, students have to trust in the reasonableness of the parliamentarians to represent their interests in the deliberations. Nevertheless, there are some debates that can only be conducted in an unfounded way due to a lack of opinion in the student body. Therefore, we as a liberal university group would like to realize a platform which can be used for small non-binding opinion polls within the student body. Binding surveys in the form of ballots are unfortunately simply too expensive for regular implementation.

CREATING EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

MAKING BAFÖG INDEPENDENT OF PARENTS

In times of progress controls and increasing pressure to perform in their studies, fewer and fewer students are able to secure their financial livelihood through their own efforts. We therefore consider BAFöG to be a central linchpin of student financing. However, due to the administrative act associated with it, applying for BAFöG is increasingly tantamount to a sideline job, which runs counter to the original purpose of the funding. We further recognize that parental support for students is an important contribution to the functioning of the BAFöG system in its current form. However, by far not all parents show understanding for the situation in which their children find themselves and create additional pressure to perform. In addition, support beyond the standard period of study is only possible in a few cases of hardship. Also here it needs an extension of the hardship reasons, in order not to bring studying in the loading time briefly before their conclusion still into existential distress. For the liberal university group Saar a study should be coined by knowledge urge, character formation and self-determination, instead of failure fears, achievement pressure and money concerns. We demand therefore the permission of the BAFöG independently of the income of parents. For this purpose, a basic BAFöG amount of 400€ should be available to every student without bureaucracy. In addition, it should be possible to double this basic amount upon application. Furthermore, we demand an expansion and adaptation of the hardship regulation to today's realities.

CREATING ACCESSIBILITY IN THE MIND AND IN THE LECTURE HALL

For effective equality of opportunity, it is essential that all students are enabled to participate in free and self-determined study. No one may be disadvantaged due to individual handicaps or illness. Therefore, the LHG demands handicapped-accessible rooms, barrier-free entrances, automated doors as well as the use of technical aids and digitally available learning materials. Through technical retrofitting, targeted new construction and financial investments, it must be ensured that all students, with and without handicaps, can fully enjoy their studies and the associated activities around the campus.

MAKE REGISTRATION PROCESSES FAIRER

Registering for university sports, language courses or seminars sometimes requires quick reflexes from students, as the first registrations also receive the corresponding places. Freely following the motto "sweat at sports - not at registration", we demand to create a registration period for all registration processes at the university and to implement the allocation of places according to the lottery system.

ENABLING A BETTER BALANCE BETWEEN STUDIES AND FAMILY COMMITMENTS

In addition to their already stressful studies, some students cope with the challenge of parenthood or caring for relatives. In order to simplify the life situation of these students, we demand a better compatibility of studies and family obligations. To this end, this group of people should be released from attendance obligations as far as possible. In addition, these students would benefit from the resulting flexibilization of their studies within the framework of a completely hybrid teaching system.

LAUNCH MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

The effects of the corona pandemic and the resulting isolation did not leave students unscathed. In particular, the lack of social interaction between students led to an increase in mental stress. Therefore, we call for the launch of a Mental Health Initiative by the University. Specifically, the Psychological-Psychotherapeutic Counseling Center (PPB) should be further expanded for the benefit of students' mental health. This requires an increase in the PPB's available funding as well as an increase in staff capacity. We also call for the establishment of resilience workshops for students as a preventive measure.

THINKING BEYOND OUR UNIVERSITY

EXPAND CROSS-UNIVERSITY COOPERATION

Together with representatives from, for example, the HBK, HfM and HTW, we want to form a strong counterweight to education policy in the state. Ideally, this cooperation would take place within a democratically legitimized framework. In addition to the existing student parliament, we call for stronger cooperation with the other Saarland student bodies, e.g. in the form of an elected committee. Such cooperation would make it possible to focus on purely education policy issues across universities, while allowing the respective student bodies to place a greater focus on the issues that are relevant to them. This concept would also allow education policy demands to be discussed and, if necessary, improved at a higher level. The resulting broader basis of legitimacy would have a stronger impact on political decision-makers in the state than has been the case to date.

STRENGTHEN FOUNDER MENTALITY

At the university, there is not only teaching, but also research. Students and researchers develop ideas that can be made useful to the general public. However, the economic benefit and the resulting increase in prosperity can only be achieved if these ideas are brought to the free market within the framework of university spin-offs. Often spin-offs are not realized because our current society is too risk-averse or the option of a spin-off is simply not perceived as an option. The liberal university group demands to strengthen the start-up mentality of its students. Specifically, the module "Founder Management" should be anchored in every elective. Also, the possibility to take this module should be actively pointed out in the course plans.

DARE MORE EUROPE

The Liberal University Group advocates an increased internationalization of studies at Saarland University. In order to use the opportunities of the greater region efficiently, the view should not only be directed one-dimensionally towards France, but increased cooperation with all European states should be sought. The UdS, which is located on a geographical axis with the most important institutions of the European Union, could position itself as an ideal place of education for work in the European area due to this predestined location and thus attract students from all over Europe. In this context, we call for an expansion of international as well as interdisciplinary courses of study. Furthermore, the Liberal University Group advocates an expansion of the Erasmus+ program at Saarland University. Every student should have the opportunity to complete a semester/year abroad, which is integrated into the curriculum. The LHG therefore calls for the study regulations of subjects that do not currently guarantee this to be adapted so that the work done abroad is fully credited. The incentive for students to complete a semester abroad would then not be diminished by any "loss of time" in the regular study plan. In order to facilitate semesters abroad or general changes of the place of study

within Europe, the Liberal University Group demands the adjustment of the semester times of German universities to European semester times. According to the resolutions of the university rectors' conferences, the core periods in an autumn/winter semester, which covers the period from September 1 to February 28 of the following year, should begin on the first Monday of September and end no later than mid/late January. In a spring/summer semester, which covers the period from March 1 through August 31, these core hours are to extend from the first Monday of March through no later than the end of June. The fixation on a uniform beginning of the lecture periods and the open scheduling of the end are intended to leave the universities sufficient leeway to take local peculiarities into account. The shifting of the semester times must not mean an extension or shortening of the lecture times. Admission and selection procedures of first-year students shall be adjusted in terms of time.

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

MAKE GRADE CONVERSION FOR LAW MORE EQUITABLE

The different structure and the resulting different grading scale of the study program Business & Law and the minor in Law in the two-subject Bachelor of the Faculty of Humanities and in the study program Historically Oriented Cultural Studies (grading scale 1 - 5) compared to the diploma study program in Law (grading scale 0 - 18) leads to an unfair conversion for Bachelor & Master students. Bachelor's and Master's students are evaluated in their law-related portions, which can account for up to 63 CP, by the chairs of the Faculty of Law according to their grading scale (0-18). Subsequently, a conversion to the grading scale of the Bachelor's and Master's programs takes place. This grading scale, however, does not correspond to the performance achieved, especially in the upper grade ranges, and thus distorts the performance picture in this degree program. While a law student with a grade of 9 (fully satisfactory) is promoted to the predicate range and thus belongs on average to the best 10% of those examined, the result of the conversion of the exam points for bachelor and master students in no way corresponds to this performance picture. Students of the program receive 2.7 grade points after conversion in the same exam when reaching a score of 9, which is below average compared to other bachelor's and master's programs. An equal exam performance leads in the result thus in the course of studies jurisprudence to an above average, in Bachelor and master courses of studies to a below average performance. The Liberal University Group therefore demands a fair conversion of grade points for bachelor and master students with law-related components that corresponds to the performance pattern.

EXPAND THE RANGE OF COURSES OFFERED AT THE FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

Contrary to the trend, the Liberale Hochschulgruppe Saar demands that the current range of courses is generally maintained after the abolition and privatization of some departments means that there is no longer a full university. In addition, we want to expand the range of courses offered at the Faculty of Philosophy again. This could be done by drawing on an existing range of courses in all of the faculty's disciplines. In addition, the Faculty of Humanities should generally create the opportunity to study across faculties and in a more interdisciplinary manner. To this end, law and economics are to be integrated. In the case of "Gender Studies", we want to expand the range of courses offered by biology and psychology. The certificates "Gender Studies" and "Europaicum" should additionally be offered as supplementary subjects.

ESTABLISH LARGER ELECTIVES IN STEM SUBJECTS.

Skilled workers are urgently needed on the labor market. However, more and more companies are no longer focusing exclusively on pure technical knowledge, but also increasingly on so-called soft skills. These are already taught by the university, for example, in the form of language courses, key competencies or non-

specialist modules. The liberal university group demands the recognition of these competencies through an expansion of the elective range in all MINT subjects.

ALLOW EXTENSION OF DEADLINES DIRECTLY BY INSTRUCTORS

The Faculty of Philosophy is already a pioneer. Here, a request for an extension of the deadline for submitting homework can be made directly to the lecturer in an unbureaucratic manner. In this way, it is possible to react promptly to the individual circumstances and peculiarities of each student, especially in the case of spontaneous unforeseen changes in external circumstances. The Liberal University Group demands that this possibility be established in every course of study and for every teaching format.

MORE SPACE FOR LEARNING GROUPS

The living situation of many students does not permit a shift of learning times to private rooms, especially if the learning material is to be worked on in groups. The library cannot be the solution. At this point the university must create rooms for its students. The Liberal University Group therefore demands that rooms, if they are not currently being used for courses, be included in a directory that is always up to date. Through this directory, every study group could also spontaneously find a free room at the university to study.

SUSTAINABILITY

CONVERT FRENCH SQUARE INTO A GREEN SPACE

It has already been decided in the responsible committees that the French square in front of building B4.1 is to be converted. The parking areas are to disappear and the previously sealed area is to be landscaped again. It is to develop a place of the recovery between the stressful lectures for the students and lecturers. The liberal university group is vehemently committed to the prompt implementation of this resolution.

MAKING GREEN SPACES ATTRACTIVE FOR INSECTS

Insects make an important contribution to maintaining our climate. In recent decades, we have seen a dramatic decline in insects - even in separate protected areas. To stop this decline, current research recommends creating small islands in the general landscape in particular, where insects of all kinds can find shelter and protection during longer trips. The liberal university group therefore demands that when redesigning their public green spaces, compensation areas and beds of all kinds, they pay attention to the special insect-friendliness of these when selecting plants, herbs, perennials, etc.

STRENGTHEN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Liberal University Group is committed to strengthening public transport in the direction of the university and thus increasing accessibility so that the volume of traffic on campus can be reduced at the same time. For the negotiations of the semester ticket we consider it elementary that the bus service on the Meerwiesertalweg is prioritized and strengthened in order to achieve a strong connection between the university and the city center.

HOMBURG – NOT A SECOND-CLASS CAMPUS

EARNING A DOCTORATE EASIER THAN EVER

The LHG demands the introduction of a standardized online portal on which an overview of all currently available doctoral theses can be viewed. At the moment, the search for a suitable doctoral thesis is unfortunately very complicated and time-consuming for students. Without asking all suitable chairs individually, the desired thesis is rarely found. However, it is not only students who have problems with the search. Many chairs also complain about having hardly any opportunities to promote their upcoming projects. This means that most students hardly ever find out about advertised projects at smaller institutes. With a standardized overview, all students who want to do a doctorate could directly compare the work and find the most suitable offer for them. If unnecessary inquiries to chairs that do not have any papers available could be dispensed with in this way, both students and teachers would benefit from this concept.

EXPAND SPORTS OFFER

Unfortunately, Homburg students often lose out to Saarbrücken students when it comes to the range of sports on offer. Many courses are offered exclusively on the campus of the state capital. However, not only is the range of courses offered in Saarbrücken much greater, but the equipment for university sports in Homburg also leaves much to be desired. Therefore, the LHG advocates for the establishment of a trim trail, as well as a Unifit, based on the Saarbrücken model. Sports facilities that can be used individually would accommodate the tight schedule of medical students and would make the campus location much more attractive.

STUDY WHEN YOU WANT

School-like schedules and compulsory attendance to fill the lecture halls have nothing to do with independent study. The LHG is just as opposed to unnecessary attendance requirements as it is to the ban on bringing forward lectures. As long as there is enough space in the lecture hall, students in the lower semesters should always have the opportunity to bring forward courses in order to plan their studies independently. We consistently reject a compulsory free semester.