

Description of Ongoing Activities of the Student Union of Tampere University

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Introduction

The Student Union of Tampere University (TREY) is an advocacy and service organization, as well as a statutory corporation. The members of TREY include all students who are studying for a Bachelor's or Master's degree at Tampere University, as well as those doctoral and exchange students at Tampere University who have chosen to join the student union.

The Student Union supervises the interests of its members at Tampere University and offers a wide range of services both to its members and to associations operating with its association status. The Student Union organises events and does its part in maintaining student culture and community in Tampere.

The activities of the Student Union are governed by the Universities Act (24.7.2009/558). Section 46 of said Act provides a further definition of a student union. The duties of student unions are described in the Universities Act and the Student Union's Main Rule.

This document describes the ongoing activities of the Student Union of Tampere University, and it has no political guiding role. The annual priorities are determined by the Action Plan, which is approved yearly by the Council of Representatives.

Services

The most significant member benefit of the Student Union is the student card, and the student discounts it brings. The student card is also available as a mobile student card, which can be downloaded to a smartphone through service providers that cooperate with the Student Union. In addition to the student card and student discounts, TREY offers its members a wide range of services, such as advocacy and counselling, as well as rental services and vans. A member can borrow a variety of games, kyykkä sets and tools, among other things, from TREY's Service offices.

TREY's Specialists provide counselling on questions and problems related to studying and student life. The Specialists can be contacted in confidence in questions related to, for example, studying, student income, housing and association activities.

One of TREY's major counselling services is harassment contact person work. TREY's trained harassment persons advise and support students who have encountered harassment, harassment, bullying, discrimination or other forms of unequal treatment. You can contact the harassment contact persons even if you are unsure of your situation or want to discuss ways to intervene in cases of harassment. If needed, the harassment contact persons will guide you to further assistance.

Association activities

There are more than 160 associations within the student community that have been granted the Student Union's association status. An association that has been granted TREY's association status is entitled to all association services provided by the Student Union: annual operational grants, project grants, trainings, counselling services and rental services. In addition, the Student Union grants association facilities when suitable premises are available on campus.

The associations are divided into four categories: subject associations with student intake, other subject associations, faculty and umbrella associations, and hobby associations. All associations with TREY's association status are presented on the Student Union's website.

Association activities are brought together in councils, the most established of which are Hovi, a council for those responsible for their associations' tutoring, as well as Syndikaatti, which gathers the Chairpersons of subject associations with student intake as well as those of faculty and umbrella associations. The councils act as peer-to-peer support platforms and low-threshold channels for discussion and sharing information. Events are organised for the councils to maintain their sense of community.

The guidelines related to the association activities are specified in more detail in the Association Standing Order approved by the Council of Representatives.

Advocacy

The supervision of students' interests is a statutory duty and one of the most important tasks of the Student Union. The Student Union has a duty to participate in the implementation of the educational mission of the university, as stipulated in the Universities Act, by preparing students for an active, informed and critical citizenship.

TREY's advocacy work includes influencing policy-making that affects students, following and participating in public discussion, and bringing attention to important student matters. TREY engages in advocacy work locally at the University and within the city of Tampere, as well as on a national level. In advocacy work, the most important stakeholder groups include Tampere University, the City of Tampere, The Wellbeing Services County of Pirkanmaa, the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS), TOAS, POAS, SportUni, and Tamko. TREY also engages in active advocacy work through national student organisations, the National Union of University Students in Finland (SYL) and the Finnish Student Sports Federation (OLL).

TREY's primary methods of advocacy are meetings with key partners and participation in working groups. TREY's Board and staff members also influence student matters by issuing statements. TREY's statements are approved by the Board, and they are available on the Student Union's website.

TREY's advocacy work is guided by TREY's Strategy, Policy paper, the annual Action Plan, as well as other steering documents, such as the Equality plan, the Language Principles and the Election program for the county and municipal elections. All steering documents of the Student Union can be found on its website.

Tampere University

TREY does extensive advocacy work at Tampere University in matters related to students. The advocacy themes include matters of teaching and education, campus facilities and students' ability to study. TREY's Board and staff members contribute to the development of the University by participating in working groups and different planning and development meetings, as well as meeting with the University's management and other key persons. Additionally, the Student Union issues statements and encourages students and associations in their own advocacy work.

The efforts to develop education and teaching at Tampere University involve discussions with teaching staff, participation in the education coordination group, and active involvement in the Education council. TREY's educational affairs sector engages in active discussion about education-related matters with students, student representatives, and student associations' educational affairs actives, and passes their feedback on to the University. In regard to the development of education and teaching, one of the key partners of the Student Union is the University's Education and Learning Services (K&O), with which TREY holds regular meetings. Student counselling and guidance, as well as students' legal protection, are also part of TREY's education development work.

Student associations and student representatives, who are nominated by the Student Union, ensure that students' voices are heard by decision-makers on the different levels of university administration. The duty of the Student Union is to nominate student representatives to the University's administrative bodies referred to in Chapter 3 of the Universities Act. TREY also nominates student representatives and Student Union representatives to other administrative bodies upon request (e.g. working groups). Matters related to the selection of student representatives in the University administration are specified in the Standing order on the election of student representatives, which is approved by the Council of Representatives.

Student representatives in the University's administration are referred to as hallopedes, which comes from a collection of letters from the Finnish term "*hallinnon opiskelijaedustajat*". TREY organises the search for student representatives in the University's administration every two years when the terms of previous representatives end. Supplementary searches are organised when needed. The Specialist in Educational Affairs oversees the searches, prepares the decisions of the selections of representatives, as well as coordinates the activities of student representatives.

City of Tampere and the Wellbeing Services County of Pirkanmaa

TREY influences the City of Tampere and the Wellbeing Services County of Pirkanmaa in student matters. Advocacy themes include student health, public transportation, urban planning, promotion of walking and cycling, and student services, such as free contraception.

The City of Tampere is one of the founders of the Tampere University Foundation. The Student Union collaborates with the city in the same way as with all the other founding members. TREY participates actively in working groups related to promoting the student friendliness of the city. TREY influences the City and the Wellbeing County in cooperation with the Students' Union of Tampere University of Applied Sciences (Tamko). For

example, TREY and Tamko drew up a joint advocacy programme for municipal and county elections.

In addition to the City of Tampere, TREY influences other key organisations that operate in Tampere, such as the Tampere Student Housing Foundation (TOAS), Pirkan Opiskelija-asunnot Oy (POAS) and the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS).

Nationwide advocacy

SYL, the National Union of University Students in Finland, carries out national advocacy work to improve the position of university students, and TREY takes part in this work by influencing SYL's operations. SYL's national advocacy work is guided by its Policy paper, Election platform, and Action plan. TREY contributes to the contents of these documents in SYL's annual General Assembly, and this work is a key element in TREY's national advocacy work.

In addition to influencing the SYL and doing advocacy work through it, TREY and other Student Unions influence national entities on their own. Such national entities include the Ministry of Education and Culture, the FSHS, and Kela, which possess strong and comprehensive decision-making power in student matters. Sometimes TREY is involved in joint advocacy projects and campaigns in cooperation with other Student Unions. In themes related to

sports and student well-being, national advocacy work is carried out by the Finnish Student Sports Federation (OLL), whose activities TREY also participates in and influences.

Internationality

TREY's personnel work to improve the study conditions of international students and integrate international students into the student community. TREY provides international students with counselling, influences the development of the University's international services and strategy, supports the international activities of associations, advocates for the linguistic accessibility of the University's activities, and promotes the internationalization opportunities of students.

TREY also does advocacy work at the European level. The ECIU Student Council promotes the voice of students in the ECIU and has representation from the Student Unions of all ECIU universities. The University of Tampere, and thus TREY, are part of the ECIU network. In addition, TREY is a member of the association of European Society for Engineering Education and participates, when possible, in its General Assembly every year.

Tutoring

Tampere University has the main responsibility for tutoring at Tampere University. The Student Union contributes to tutoring activities by, for example, coordinating the tutor application process, producing support material for tutors, and assisting the University with the organisation of tutor training. Tutoring affairs are coordinated by TREY's Specialist in Tutoring and the tutoring organiser of the Board.

The purpose of tutoring is for tutors to give peer support to new university students. Tutors have a key role in helping new students navigate the campus environment and the university community at the beginning of their studies. Tampere University has both Finnish and international tutors. The Student Union engages in active dialogue with student associations about the development of tutoring, and one of the channels for this dialogue is the tutoring council Hovi.

Events

TREY organizes several events each year, ranging in size from major community events to smaller events. The most visible event of the Student Union is the Biggest Wappu in Finland, organised in cooperation with the Teekkari Union of Tampere. Wappu is traditionally an event that lasts for more

than two weeks and includes more than a hundred Wappu events organised by student associations.

In addition to Wappu, TREY's traditional events include Associations' Kick-off, a collective training and networking event for all association actives at the beginning of the year; Newcomer's Orienteering, which is organised for new students in the early autumn; as well as the Well-Being Week, which is held with Tamko.

TREY maintains an event calendar for the university community in Tampere, which can be found at treykalenteri.fi.

TREY has its own event section called Kollektiivi, which organises, among other things, overall badge markets and urban city adventures. The members of the Kollektiivi are identified by a kiwi bird plush animal attached to their overalls.

Communications

The Student Union's communications are student-oriented, easy to approach and promote a sense of community. The role of communications is to make TREY's services, activities and events visible to students and to convey important information about themes that concern students.

Communications also strengthen the Student Union's visibility and advocacy

effectiveness. The Specialist in Communications and communication organisers of the Board are responsible for coordinating the communications of the Student Union, but all TREY staff and Board members carry out communications from their own theme sectors.

TREY's main communications channels are social media (especially Instagram), the instant messaging service Telegram, websites, email lists, and on-campus table tents and toilet advertisements. In addition, TREY communicates on University's channels, such as the Intranet.

Student magazine Visiiri

The student union magazine Visiiri is a magazine published six times a year by the Student Union of Tampere University. Visiiri is a journalistically independent publication that writes about themes of interest to university students in Tampere.

Administration

In the Student Union, the highest decision-making power belongs to the Council of Representatives. The Council is elected via elections every two years amongst the members of the Student Union. The Council appoints the Executive Board, which holds the administrative and executive power in the

Student Union and manages its daily operations. Each year, there are separately appointed bodies under the Board, while there are three established committees under the Council, which are the Committees of Finances, Administration and Honor. The Student Union employs several staff members to implement the daily service functions and long-term advocacy work of the Student Union.

There are 49 elected representatives and their deputy representatives in the Council of Representatives. The Council of Representatives meets regularly during the academic year, about once a month, to decide on the activities, finances and strategic goals of the Student Union. More information on the Council can be found in the Student Union's Main Rule and the Rules of Procedure for the Council of Representatives of the Student Union.

The Student Union Board members each have one or more sectors for which they are responsible of. The Board decides on its own division of labour at its constitutive meeting. Traditional sectors include educational and social affairs, internationality, association affairs, events, tutoring, communications, corporate cooperation and member services. The members of the Board work together with the employees of the Student Union in these themed sectors. Much of the work of the Board, despite the sector division, is done together to develop the Student Union's operations.

TREY's Board members are responsible for the following tasks:

- Managing advocacy work
- Policy issues and defining new topical policies
- Managing the implementation of the Action Plan
- Formal duties
- Stakeholder work
- Organisation of working groups and councils

More information on the Board can be found in the Student Union's Main Rule and the Rules of Procedure for the Executive Board of the Student Union.

TREY employs a team of student life specialists, whose tasks include advocacy work, organising events and trainings, as well as doing their part in promoting the better life of university students in Tampere.

TREY staff members are responsible for the following tasks:

- Maintaining the knowledge and competence of the Student Union from year to year
- Supporting the decision-making and policy-making of the Board and Council
- The preparation of meeting matters
- Working group and stakeholder work
- Orientation of the Board

- Counselling

Steering documents

TREY's activities are governed by the Universities Act and the Government Decree on Universities. TREY's activities are also guided by its own rules, guidelines, programmes, and agreements. These documents are decided by either the Board or Council according to the Student Union's rules. Public documents are available on the Student Union's website.