An interview with Prof. Pierre JADOUL

Vice-rector of UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles

What are the key numbers and areas of excellence in the field of research at UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles?

© UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles

UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles excels in social sciences and humanities: law, political and social sciences, economics and business administration, philosophy, history, literature, translation and European studies. UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles has resisted compartmentalization, which at times may lead to differences in methodology and subjects between the various disciplines, and has acquired a widely recognized expertise in interdisciplinary practice, even in research, the originality of which makes its excellence.

Whilst research contributes to opening new fields of knowledge, the interdisciplinary methods remain among the most efficient ones, due to their inherent creativity. The recent merger with UCLouvain does not change this dynamic in any way: the Saint-Louis campus will continue to develop these areas of excellence while enabling it to increase its international visibility.

The following key numbers translate the FNRS' recognition of our fundamental research. Over the last 5 years, an average of 34% of our FNRS applications were successful,

putting us regularly ahead of the global figures of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles. We are equally proud of our average 42% admission rate to the Humanities Research Fund (Fonds pour la Recherche en Sciences humaines – FRESH) launched 10 years ago, which is an essential tool in our field of disciplines.

Could you cite a few examples of the current research programs at UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles?

Like the other universities of FWB (Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles), UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles benefits from special research funds and manages to finance a great number of doctoral research fields. We have recently launched a new interuniversity research project (Action de Recherche Concertée or ARC), TAXFAM. This is the latest iteration of an ongoing fiscal micro-simulation research project funded by Innoviris (the Brussels Region Institute for Research and Innovation), which has been underway since January 2020.

Another Innoviris project also started recently: AUTOBLOC, a research aimed at analyzing the social and technical barriers to softer mobility policies.

What research partnerships have you developed at a European level?

At UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles, we are particularly proud of the European dimension of many of our research projects. We currently have three ongoing ERC projects (Coaching Rituels, DATAUNION, Bildung Learning), a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence (EUNMUTE), and four Jean Monnet Chairs (EUGENDERING, EU Indo-Pacific, Regulating Africa-EU Value Chains and EUGlobalGreen). Our research centres also develop international cooperation programs with a great number of European universities.

Several transnational research projects involving the UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles have been funded by the European Commission under its Erasmus+ program. Among them, “RE-VISUALIZE: Gender and Islam in the Francophone Digital World” and “ARIE,” “Arriving in Europe, Departing from Europe: Turkish and Moroccan Trajectories” are still ongoing. Our research administration has done a tremendous work in obtaining these grants.

How do you value the research work coming from UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles?

Our university has developed the valorisation of its research with the support of the Brussels (Innoviris) Region. Our Knowledge Transfer Office (KTO) ensures the link between research at the university and the non-academic world. Its task consists in taking care of the diffusion, the mobilisation and the knowledge transfer to society, and in creating collaborations and exchanges between society and the university.

In this regard, UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles recently launched a podcast aimed at promoting the research carried on by its researchers, with a special focus on Brussels. We are also an integrated member of the LIEU network, which gathers the KTOs from Universities within the FWB.

Although this type of research valorisation represents a quite recent development, let us stress that, for a long time now, some of our research centres have shown a keen interest in regional integration, particularly with regards to very advanced research on Brussels. Our Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Brussels (IRIB) gathers these centres and hosts centres from other universities. We play a leading role in the Brussels Studies Institute (an interuniversity research platform on Brussels) and in the online magazine “Brussels Studies”.

Thanks to our expertise, acquired through our research work on Brussels (particularly with regards to mobility issues), we have obtained many regional-funded research projects.

© UCLouvain Saint-Louis Bruxelles - St. Louis - Brussels University has fifteen research centers covering all the humanities field. A network and two institutes provide the interface between research centers: the Interdisciplinarity and Society Network (RIS), the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Brussels (IRIB) and the Institute for European Studies.