Annual Review
University of Groningen
2010
The University of Groningen is an internationally oriented research university, swiftly making its way to the world top in all its disciplines. This Annual Review of 2010 is an invitation to meet the students, researchers, administrators and everyone else involved in realizing the University’s growing ambitions. I invite you to discover astonishing facts about our University and read the portraits of passionate academics.

In this interdisciplinary institute, the various research fields continually influence one another, generating both energy and synergy. Building bridges between academics within and outside the University is essential in successful academic research and teaching. It comes as no surprise then that the Zernike Institute for Advanced Materials, being an outstanding example of interdisciplinarity, is in the global top ten in materials science.

Nowadays, all top universities are global in character, and so is the University of Groningen. An enriched study experience as a result of increased diversity is but one of the arguments in favour of internationalization. Universities are engaged in a global competition to attract the most talented students and staff. The University of Groningen has just the right offer for them: a challenging Honours College, ambitious career paths such as the Rosalind Franklin Fellowships, and prestigious Endowed Chair professorships.

I hope you will enjoy reading the Annual Review of 2010.

Prof. Elmer Sterken
Rector Magnificus of the University of Groningen
I want to innovate and create

Julija Babre

The University of Groningen Honours College started in 2010 and Julija Babre from Latvia is one of the first students to follow the programme for talented and ambitious students.

When I first got off the train in Groningen, I loved the city at once. Behind me was the old train station, before me lay the modern museum. Oddly enough I also felt at home straight away at Zernike, even though it was still a construction site at the time. Although I have a passion for literature and the theatre, I chose to study International Business and Management. Everything revolves around business, it’s the engine behind new products and trends. I really want to be part of that – I want to innovate and create. My ambition is to work as a manager at a publishing house. That would mean I could combine my passion and my job, which would make it much easier to work hard. I’ve been following Honours College deepening courses at my own Faculty and broadening ones in other fields since January. I really enjoy it because the students come from all the different faculties and are all highly motivated. Together with fellow students I organized an Honours Forum the other day and soon we will be doing a research assignment on innovation for companies. The programme means not only read about something but also get to put it into practice.

www.rug.nl/honours
Everyone wants to unravel the mystery of life

Eric Bergshoeff

Eric Bergshoeff, professor of Theoretical High-Energy Physics, tries to capture the world in physics formulas. In 2010 he was appointed an Academy Professor by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

‘My work deals with scales of distance that are remote from everyday life. I’m trying to combine the largest scale – that of the universe – with that of the very smallest particle. When the universe was created by the Big Bang, large and small came together. However, whenever we try to combine the laws of gravity which apply to the universe with those from quantum mechanics that govern small particles, the formulas turn into utter chaos. By considering the smallest particles as strings – which is what the string theory I work with does – the two scales can be combined much more effectively and this brings us closer to explaining how the world is constructed. The Ancient Egyptians and Greeks pondered this, and people will continue to ponder it long after I am gone. Everyone wants to unravel the mystery of life, yet it remains an impossibility. Even if we knew exactly what the universe looked like during the Big Bang, the question would then immediately be what exactly is the Big Bang, and what there was before it. Just imagine if string theory were proved to be correct and the story ended there. That would be terribly boring, wouldn’t it? The fact that there are still things we don’t yet know makes my work exciting.’

European Union awards EUR 2.7 million for science shops

The European Commission awards the University of Groningen’s Science & Society Group EUR 2.7 million to make scientific research easily accessible to citizens. The ‘Science Shops’, which are a Dutch invention, are now found everywhere.

Twelve million for LifeLines

The European Union awards a EUR 12 million grant to the University of Groningen and the University Medical Center Groningen to combine the data from several large-scale European population studies. This is a real boost for research into chronic age-related diseases.

LifeLines

LifeLines is a large-scale population survey that started in the three northern provinces in the Netherlands in 2000 on the initiative of the University Medical Center Groningen (UMCG). Recruitment of the first 45,000 participants is now underway. Eventually, the study will cover at least 165,000 people from three generations. Participants are asked to visit one of the research locations in Sneeek, Drachten, Bedum and Oude Pekela, and since 2010 Hoogeveen and Assen as well, once every five years. The scientific principle is that chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes and kidney disease develop due to a complex interplay of factors. A thorough understanding of these factors can only be gained by tracking the life and health aspects of a large group of subjects from several generations for a long time. Only then will we begin to understand why some people age healthily whereas others experience serious problems from an early age. LifeLines is the first study that incorporates such a large number of aspects of living, from heredity and lifestyle to psychological and social factors. The study aims to enable better prevention and more effective treatment. The year 2010 saw the 0,000th participant in the project.

Life Sciences building nearly finished

The new Life Sciences building for the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences is nearing completion. It portrays a body raising itself, forming an arch and then disappearing into the ground. The roof is covered with sedum plants.

Arctic Centre expedition returns

Researchers from the Arctic Centre of the University of Groningen return from an international expedition to the South Pole. One of their findings is that traces of human activity can be found everywhere and that the continent is no longer pristine.

www.lifelines.nl
Students ring alumni

The Alumni Desk is ready. Students of Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy have spent a number of weeks calling alumni to acquire funds for the Junior Scientific Masterclass and the Top Master in Medical and Pharmaceutical Drug Innovation. This fund-raising activity has yielded EUR 21,210.

Two Groningen professors become Academy Professors

The KNAW appoints oncologist Liesbeth de Vries and theoretical physicist Eric Bergshoeff Academy Professors. Four Academy Professors were appointed by the KNAW in 2010; they can devote all their time to research.

National election debate in the Aula

The leaders of seven national political parties debate in Groningen in the Academy Building Aula. The organization is in the hands of the three northern provinces and SNN (Samenwerkingsverband Noord-Nederland), the Northern Netherlands Assembly.

Research on ultrafast processes in plastic solar cells

Paul van Loosdrecht and Kees Hummelen of the Zernike Institute publish research on how plastic solar cells can produce electricity. Their research is the cover story of the American journal ‘Advanced Functional Materials’.

Duisenberg Building opens

The WSN Building, home to the Faculty of Economics and Business, reopens after remodelling with a new name – the Duisenberg Building. It is named after alumnus Wim Duisenberg (1935–2005), the former Minister of Finance and President of the European Central Bank.

Teaching and research at FEB

The building of the Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) was thoroughly renovated and beautifully modernized in 2010 – a symbol, perhaps, of the excellent results gained by the Faculty, which is the product of a merger in 2007 between the partner faculties of Economics and Management & Organization. The results of the quality assessment conducted by QANU (Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities) were very positive. All five programmes of the Faculty research school SOM, in which the Master’s and PhD programmes are integrated, scored very high marks. The five SOM programmes were assessed on the criteria quality, productivity, relevance and viability, and they all scored 4.4 or 5 (with only one exception) on a scale of 1 to 5. The Bachelor’s degree programmes in Business Administration and Economics of Taxation were ranked first in the annual Elsevier Education Survey conducted by the Dutch weekly journal ‘Elsevier’. Students assessed these programmes as the best in the Netherlands. The degree programmes in Econometrics and Economics also scored well and ended up in third and fourth place respectively. Finally, FEB’s teacher-training programme in Economics also received an extraordinary national award: The Professor Henk Peer Award for developers of innovative teaching material for economics in secondary education.

Aurelia Colombi Ciacchi

Aurelia Colombi Ciacchi from Italy is director of the Groningen Centre for Law and Governance and holds the Endowed Chair in Law and Governance at the Faculty of Law.

‘Basically, I’m always searching for ways to open up new possibilities. That means I cross all sorts of boundaries and borders, which keeps me on my toes. I love brainstorming, particularly with people who are not legally trained. My research concentrates on the protection of basic human interests by the law. If the state wishes to protect people from second-hand smoke, what is the best legal instrument to do so? Or how can family law be drafted in such a way that we are able to cope properly with international marriages and divorces? Someone without a “legally trained brain” can have very worthwhile things to say about such subjects. I also enjoy crossing the boundaries between legal fields. I am currently working on a book about law and governance with articles by legal scholars from every field, from private to public law, from criminal law to internet law. What I also cross are the borders between countries. I enjoy going to conferences, the more international the better. My personal mission is to create a wide-ranging network of legal scholars from all European countries to tackle the discussion about law and governance at an international level – and also to improve the protection provided in practice by the law to the less fortunate and able. If a proposal comes from an international group of academics, it is taken more seriously than one just from someone from Italy or the Netherlands.’
Douwe Draaisma holds the Heymans Chair and conducts research into the history of psychology. His books reach a wide, international audience.

“My life moves from book to book”

A true find can really make me happy. For instance, once I came across a book containing farewell letters from the Reign of Terror just after the French Revolution. The writers knew they were going to be executed the following day and wrote to their loved ones to let them know how they wished to be remembered. The letters greatly resemble the death notices and farewell letters of today. At moments like that I realize I’ve got a great book chapter within my grasp. I think in chapters and my life moves from book to book. Most of my books are about autobiographical memory, about remembering your own trials and tribulations. I take a historical approach because the best that can be said has often already been said long ago. The first generation of psychologists, from before the division into all sorts of specializations, was still able to speak fairly freely about the major issues. These larger issues are those that people ask themselves about every day. Why do we forget things? Or why do we find it difficult to recognize someone outside their usual context? I never provide cut and dried answers like some other psychologists often do. I play with the question and offer information to people who wouldn’t normally read academic literature.

www.rug.nl/staff/d.draaisma

Dealing with social needs

Making a contribution to social issues and needs – the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences gives a good example of how teaching and research can play a role in this. For example, the Academic PABO combines the vocational teacher training programme with the University degree programme in Pedagogical Sciences. The University of Groningen cooperates with Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen, NHL University of Applied Sciences and Stenden University in this programme. The ultimate aim is to improve the quality of primary education in the northern Netherlands. Another example is the guidance of families with children with a psychiatric disorder, such as ADHD or autism, by students of Orthopedagogics. This project was implemented in cooperation with Accare, the institution for child and youth psychiatry in the northern Netherlands. Again in cooperation with Accare – and with the UMCG –, the department of Clinical Psychology has initiated a project to study how anxiety and depression in children and adolescents can be prevented by means of a training programme. In addition, on 11 June 2010 the Research Centre on Profound and Multiple Disabilities, a centre unique in the world, was opened. Another institution that should be mentioned here is the Institute for Integration and Social Efficacy (ISW), established by the University of Groningen in cooperation with a number of other universities. The institute concentrates on research that may help create a ‘liveable society’, for example in problem neighbourhoods in the city of Arnhem.

www.rug.nl/gmw

Centre for Russian Studies opens
The Centre for Russian Studies opens at the University of Groningen and is consecrated by Archbishop Simon of the Benelux Russian Orthodox Church. The centre was founded on the initiative of the Russkoy Mir Foundation.

Elmer Sterken to become next Rector Magnificus
The University’s Supervisory Board chooses Elmer Sterken, professor of monetary economics, as the next Rector Magnificus. The current Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business succeeded Frans Zwarts on 1 March 2011.

Alumnus of the year election
Jelle Brandt Corstius becomes alumnus of the year for his extraordinary contributions to society. He is renowned as a journalist, correspondent and producer, and also as presenter of the Dutch television programme Zomergasten.

Computer scientist Johan Bos appointed Endowed Professor at Faculty of Arts
Via the Endowed Chair programme, the nine faculties receive funding to recruit top academics. In addition to Johan Bos, other Endowed Professors appointed in 2010 include medical doctor Peter Lansdorp, legal expert Aurelia Colombi Ciacchi and social psychologist Russell Spears.

Academic teacher training college starts
A group of 55 students embarks on a four-year programme leading to both a ‘regular’ primary school teaching certificate and a University of Groningen Bachelor’s degree in Pedagogy. The University partnered with universities of applied sciences to realize this.
Welcoming ceremony for foreign students
The Martinikerk is filled with over 1200 new foreign students who will begin studying or start their PhD research in Groningen in September. The Welcoming Ceremony is an important introduction for them.

Universities in Northeast Netherlands to collaborate
The universities of Nijmegen, Groningen, Twente and Wageningen agree to cooperate more closely. The four would also like to involve German educational institutions in the border area in the project.

Award for Groningen theologians
The Instituut voor Christelijk Cultureel Erfgoed (ICCE – Institute for Christian Cultural Heritage) receives the 2010 Medal from the Stichting Oude Groninger Kerken (Historical Groningen Churches Foundation). The ICCE focuses on the Christian service, in particular its musical, spatial and visual forms of worship.

Discovery Truck makes its 6000th expedition
The Discovery Truck takes its 6000th trip. The laboratory lorry first began its trips five years ago, in an attempt to increase interest in technological and natural sciences degree programmes. Numbers of students have since doubled, thanks in part to the truck.

The University Library has an anniversary
The University Library of the University of Groningen celebrates its 395th anniversary. Shortly after the ‘Hoogeschool’ was established in 1614, an academic library was founded. The Library celebrated its anniversary with a host of activities.

Christian Cultural Heritage
The Institute for Christian Cultural Heritage (ICCE) is part of the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies. It focuses on Christian worship, in particular its musical, spatial and visual aspects. The research into worship itself currently concentrates in particular on late medieval liturgical practice and the traditions of Dutch Protestantism, whereas the research in the field of hymns and church music focuses on Dutch hymns and psalms since the Reformation. An important component of the latter is the documentation of hymn texts, audio storage devices, books and journals. Research is also conducted into the construction, furnishing and use of church buildings. Particular attention is paid to the liturgical layout of medieval church buildings, the Protestant church interior, the refurnishing of churches and the relationship between the church and visual art. Finally, it should be noted that the ICCE has an extraordinarily extensive digitized collection of photographs of church buildings, which has been made publicly accessible via the internet. The ICCE (previously called the Institute for Liturgical Studies) started building up its photo archive of Dutch church buildings in 1985. Today, 3000 buildings, both Protestant and Catholic, are represented by a total of 60,000 photographs.

Amina Helmi
Amina Helmi, who was born in Argentina, has been awarded a Vidi grant for her research into the origin of the Milky Way, an ERC Starting Grant and the Pastoor Schmeits Prize.

‘I want to understand everything’
I was immediately enthusiastic when I was taught about astronomy for the first time in primary school. Simply by using your mind you can reason out what’s going on in the universe, tremendously far away and hence what feels so much as rather mysterious. I’m fascinated by that. I want to understand everything, to contribute to answering fundamental questions about the origin of the universe. These are the questions people are curious about. We think that the Milky Way was created by smaller galaxies melting together. I test hypotheses like these by observing stars. I discovered a group of stars during my PhD research – which was later named Helmi’s Stream – that were all moving at the same speed in the same direction. It appears to be a smaller galaxy that had been “eaten up” by the Milky Way and therefore proves our hypothesis. The GAIA satellite will be launched in 2012. It will enable us to see the movements of a thousand times more stars than we can at the moment. This is a real revolution in my field. You can compare it to someone standing in Groningen city centre – he can see the Grote Markt, but he doesn’t know what the rest of the city or even the country looks like. I think the Milky Way will prove to hold many more surprises most we can observe it better.”
Science is a social activity

Since 1986, the University of Groningen has appointed a guest writer each autumn to give a number of lectures for the general public and a series of tutorials for students. University guest writers have included Doeschka Meijsing, Gerrit Krol, Nelleke Noordervliet, Bernlef, Rutger Kopland, Joost Zwagerman, Thomas Rosenboom, Koos van Zomeren, Marjolijn Februari, Kader Abdolah, Arthur Japin and many others. A festive programme with pop musicians was organized on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the guest writer project in 2010. The programme’s title was ‘Bloedende Harten’ (Bleeding Hearts). Pop journalists Jan Douwe Kroeske and Leon Verdonschot led a discussion in the Aula of the Academy Building with seven famous Dutch song lyric writers: Typhoon, Spinvis, Huub van der Lubbe, Stef Bos, Freek de Jonge, Jan Rot and Ellen ten Damme. In addition, Typhoon, Huub van der Lubbe, Stef Bos, Freek de Jonge and Jan Rot organized a workgroup on lyric writing as a craft for a select group of twenty students. The guest writer project is co-organized by Studium Generale Groningen.

Bleeding Hearts

Work on ERIBA Building begins

Construction begins on the ERIBA Building (European Research Institute on the Biology of Ageing) on the UMCG/University of Groningen Healthy Ageing Campus. There are only a few institutes in the world focusing entirely on ageing.

Groningen legal expert joins board of De Nederlandsche Bank NV

Hélène Vietter-van Dort, professor of Securities Law at the Faculty of Law, is appointed to the Supervisory Board of De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB). In 2011, Jaap van Maanen, professor of Auditing at the University of Groningen, also joined DNB’s Supervisory Board.

Lecture series on writing pop song lyrics

Jan Rot and Ellen ten Damme give a lecture on writing song lyrics. Typhoon, Spinvis, Huub van der Lubbe, Stef Bos and Freek de Jonge have previously done so. The Studium Generale programme is a huge draw.

University recruits more female top talent from around the world

The University of Groningen embarks on a campaign to recruit 24 female researchers for the Rosalind Franklin Fellowship programme which provides career path opportunities towards becoming a professor. Thirty-six Fellows have previously been appointed, in 2006 and 2008.

Groningen student in second place in World Gymnastics Championships

University of Groningen medical student Epke Zonderland wins a silver medal on the horizontal bar at the World Gymnastics Championships in Rotterdam. He is also Dutch Sportsman of the Year 2009.

John Nerbonne

Professor of Humanities Computing John Nerbonne uses computers to investigate language. He wants to understand how languages spread and how to improve internet search engines.

‘According to philosopher of science Feyerabend, a scientist is morally obliged to solve the most important problems in his field he is capable of solving. I accept that obligation. For example, I would like to do research in the relatively uncharted territory of geographical variation in word morphology. Why is it that something is called huisje (little house) in one place, and huuske or hoesien a few hundred kilometres away? For me science isn’t just about the content; instead, science is also a social activity. Many people have a picture in their mind of a scholar alone in his study. The reality is different – I work a lot with others, I’m happy to say. I work with population geneticists, for instance, charting how Turkish peoples and their cultures spread in Central Asia. They analyse how the genetic material has spread, while we investigate how languages developed, and together we arrive at a much more complete understanding of history. I also greatly enjoy supervising PhD students. I’m proud when one of them writes a good article. And once I commit myself to a young researcher’s project, I feel committed to work hard with them even when things don’t go well. That might even contradict Feyerabend’s moral dictum for researchers, but as I gain in experience, I see better how important the interpersonal aspect of things is.’
A scientist must dare to take risks

Cisca Wijmenga

Why is it that people fall ill and what can we do to prevent this? Professor of Human Genetics Cisca Wijmenga is searching our DNA for the answers.

‘As a scientist you need to dare to take risks, otherwise you’ll just repeat the work of others. That’s the safe way of going about things – and it will always result in a paper. I want to explore frontiers, though, and that’s not always the easiest route to take. For example, in the 1990s I switched from studying diseases that could be explained by one gene to chronic diseases in which the relationship between origin and genes is much more complicated. No-one really knew just how complicated that would be, and if I had known I would never have begun working on it. However, I followed the advice of my erstwhile mentor which was to spend at least five years on the theme before giving up. They were difficult years, with our knowledge and technology proving to be insufficiently advanced. But in retrospect it was definitely worth it. We now have a better understanding of the genes that play a role in the development of chronic diseases. Things are now moving so quickly in our field that five years ago I could never have predicted what we know now or what we are capable of doing. So where will we be in another five years I’ve no idea. But I do hope that we will be able to predict by looking at their genes whether someone is at risk for developing a chronic disease, for instance, and do something to prevent it.’

www.rug.nl/staff/cisca.wijmenga

Outstanding performance in European research grants

For the second year running, the University is awarded four prestigious research grants by the European Research Council (ERC). This means that Groningen leads the field among Dutch universities.

Groningen Agreement

The Groningen Agreement is a partnership between the Groningen municipality and the city’s main knowledge institutions: the University of Groningen, Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen and the University Medical Center Groningen. Its aim is to invest in knowledge and innovation in order to strengthen Groningen’s position as the ‘City of Talent’ par excellence of the northern Netherlands. Groningen is sitting on a true gold mine of knowledge institutions, with a strong innovation potential that may benefit the entire northern Netherlands. The programme spearheads include ‘energy’ and ‘healthy ageing’. It was against this background that the Energy Delta Convention was held in Groningen for the sixth time in 2010, attracting over 1000 participants from all over the world. ‘Healthy Ageing’ was the theme of a children’s afternoon, a business day, several lectures and a debate organized in the city in September. In addition, the groundbreaking ceremony for the ERIBA (European Research Institute on the Biology of Ageing) building was held. Together with a number of third parties, the Groningen Agreement partners also invest in housing for young people, the Zernike Science Park, IT and internationalization. As talented, ambitious young people are the City of Talent’s ideal ‘citizens’, the introduction of a ‘youth forum’ on 25 November 2010 was a logical step. The municipality and the knowledge institutions aim to link highly talented people to the city and to each other via the Groningen Talent Group. The Group also functions as a high-quality think tank that can participate in discussions, for example about housing, entrepreneurship, city marketing and cutbacks.

Sirius Programme grant

The University of Groningen receives EUR 1.15 million to develop leadership in students in an interdisciplinary setting. The grant is part of a EUR 6.4 million government incentive as part of the Sirius Programme for stimulating excellence in education.

Information day for prospective students

Five thousand secondary school pupils arrive in Groningen city centre with or without their parents to see what the University of Groningen has to offer. They can also find out about student grants and loans, accommodation and student associations.

Collaboration with Oldenburg on medical degree programme

The University of Groningen, the University Medical Center Groningen and the Osnitzerk University in Oldenburg, Germany begin a medical degree programme together. The ‘European Medical School’ is the first medical degree programme in Europe to literally cross borders.

Start of Groningen Talent Group

There are over 50,000 Groningers between the ages of 20 and 30. The University, the Hanze University, the Municipality of Groningen and the UMCG have selected the hundred most talented to form the Groningen Talent Group, a thinktank for the city.
Leo van Wissen

Leo van Wissen is professor of Economic Demography and thus has a demographic viewpoint of economic developments.

“Demography counterbalances hypes”

It becomes natural for a demographer to put things into perspective and this is the perfect subject for that. Demography provides a much-needed counterbalance for all sorts of hypes. Take, for instance, the current tensions surrounding immigration. Just a decade ago we were desperate for immigrants to work in the healthcare system. So at the risk of sounding like a left-wing ivory tower academic, history shows us that everything passes. Every country has had periods of immigration and its related problems, but these vanish in two or three generations. I used to concentrate on the birth, death and migration of businesses; nowadays I tend to focus more on human demographics. I still tend to do this from an economics point of view though, and as good economic predictions require a thorough understanding of what a population is like, I’m studying a decreasing population along the Eems estuary. While some villages and towns are diminishing, others continue to flourish. This is why we are taking a very local-scale approach: who has moved to a particular neighbourhood or village, who is leaving, and how are they doing. There is a lot of data available, but that only becomes information when you connect it together, for instance using Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Although you can’t prevent a population from shrinking, you can cope with the consequences wisely – if you’ve properly informed, that is.

www.rug.nl/staff/ljgvwissen
Focus on Faculty of Philosophy

The Faculty of Philosophy celebrates its 45th anniversary

For the philosophers in Groningen, 2010 was a historic year. On 17 November, the Faculty of Philosophy celebrated its 45th anniversary and also the fact it is performing extremely well. Philosophy teaching in Groningen never fails to achieve high scores, whether in visitations or surveys among students and professors. The philosophical research is top-quality as well. Groningen philosophers have been awarded twelve Innovation Research Incentives Scheme grants. Add to that five Veni grants for recent PhD graduates, the same number of Vidi grants for more advanced researchers, and two Vici grants for experienced researchers, and the result is that the Faculty of Philosophy contributes nearly twenty percent of the University of Groningen’s total of NWO grants. This contribution is striking when seen in the light of the size of the whole University compared to the Faculty: the staff make up about one percent and the students just two tenths of a percent of the total University population. The excellent results act like a magnet, with student numbers doubling in the past decade from 25 to 50 and the number of professors rising from three to seven. This was one of the reasons the Faculty of Philosophy moved to larger premises in 2004, to a listed building in the city centre.

Collaboration

The Groningen philosophers collaborate with colleagues throughout the Netherlands and beyond. Plans for a Politics, Philosophy and Economics degree programme in conjunction with other faculties are at an advanced stage, as are plans for a joint Master’s degree programme with the London School of Economics and the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich.

Higher Education Guide

The Master’s degree programmes in Philosophy and in Philosophy of a Specific Discipline each achieved first place in the Higher Education Guide 2011.

QANU visitation

The Bachelor’s and the Master’s degree programmes in Philosophy were once again rated excellent by the QANU (Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities) visitation committee.

Elsevier Survey 2010

The University of Groningen’s Philosophy degree programme achieved first place in both the judgment of professors throughout the country and according to students across the Netherlands.

Two Endowed Chairs

Prof. Igor Douven and Prof. Pauline Kleingeld are the two new Endowed Professors at the Faculty. Since 2009, the University of Groningen has been making extra funding available to attract internationally renowned scholars for these Endowed Chairs. While every faculty can have one Endowed Chair, the Faculty of Philosophy has two.
Facts & Figures

General
› Founded in 1614
› 28,200 students
› 6,000 staff
› Annual turnover EUR 576 million
› 9 faculties, covering all academic disciplines

Strategic partners
› Europe: Uppsala University (Sweden); Ghent University (Belgium); University of Göttingen (Germany)
› Asia: Universitas Gadjah Mada, University of Indonesia, Bandung Institute of Technology (Indonesia); University of Beijing, Tsinghua University, Fudan University (China); Osaka University (Japan)
› Americas: University of California Los Angeles, University of Pennsylvania (USA), National Autonomous University (Mexico); University of São Paulo (Brasil)

Research
› 384 PhD dissertations
› 1,852 Full Time Equivalent academic staff
› contract research: EUR 134 million
› 443 professors
› 74 associate professors
› 92 endowed professors
› 4,500 research publications
› 16 Research Master’s programmes
› 9 graduate schools
› global top 10: Zernike Institute for Advanced Materials
› European top: Chemistry, Material Sciences/Nanoscience, Biology/Ecology, Astronomy

International
› 3,000 of 28,200 Master and Bachelor students
› 800 of 1,500 PhD students
› 18.2% of academic staff
› 115 nationalities
› 8 English-taught Bachelor’s degree programmes
› 83 English-taught Master’s degree programmes
› 20 Double Degree programmes (in collaboration with other universities)
› of which 8 Erasmus Mundi programmes

International rankings
› QS World University Rankings: 120
› Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU): 101
› Essential Science Indicators (ESI) Citation Impact: 56
› High Impact Universities: 91

Renowned scientists, past and present
› Johan Bernoulli, pioneer in the field of calculus, 1700
› Jacobus Kapteyn, discoverer of the evidence of galactic rotation, 1900
› Heike Kamerlingh Onnes, student in Groningen, later Nobel Prize for Physics 1913
› Albert Szent-Györgyi, researcher in Groningen, later Nobel Prize for Medicine 1937
› Fritz Zernike, professor of physics, Nobel Prize for Physics 1953
› George Sawatzky, professor of physics, Spinoza Award 1996
› Dirkje Postma, professor of pulmonology, Spinoza Award 2000
› Ben Feringa, professor of chemistry, Spinoza Award 2004
› Petra Rudolf, professor of physics, Descartes Award 2008
› Serge Dan, professor of ethology, Japanese Eminent Scientist Award 2008

Famous alumni
› Wim Duisenberg, first President European Central Bank
› Aletta Jacobs, first Dutch female student in modern history
› Willem Kolff, inventor of the artificial kidney
› Prince Bernard of Orange-Nassau
› Prince Maurits of Orange-Nassau
› Wim Pijbes, managing director Rijksmuseum Amsterdam
› Ernest Yonli, Burkina Faso Ambassador to the USA
› Hans Wijers, CEO Akzo Nobel