In memoriam

Professor Koos Duppen (1953-2011)

Vice President of the Board of the University
Professor of Initial Education and Femtosecond Laser Spectroscopy
In the past year the University of Groningen suffered a great loss with the death on 27 May 2011 of Koos Duppen, the vice president of the Board of the University. For Rector Elmer Sterken and myself, this meant that our board lost not only an extraordinarily energetic and talented administrator, but also someone who was more than a colleague. Koos was an inspirational friend who went about his work with boundless enjoyment. The farewell ceremony organized by the University on 3 June demonstrated clearly how the death of Koos Duppen was felt as a personal loss not just for us, his immediate colleagues, but for so many others, from both inside and outside the University. When we think back on Koos Duppen, we remember not just an administrator who was immensely important for the university in so many areas, but also and above all a man whom we liked, who was good at building bridges between people and who inspired others to become involved.

The year 2011 was one in which the University of Groningen continued to grow rapidly. The number of students rose to over 28,000 (as at 1 October 2011), with first-year students increasing to more than 5,900. International student numbers are also still growing, by ten percent each year. At the start of the 2011-2012 academic year the University of Groningen welcomed 1,400 students and PhD candidates from 125 different countries. It is most encouraging to see that the University’s policy of attracting students from all over the world is working.

As a research university, the University of Groningen derives its right to exist from its researchers’ successes in the struggle to add to knowledge. Let’s begin with the day I opened the 10 November issue of the *Nature* science journal. On page 208 was a contribution by Ben Feringa’s research team on a nano-sized four-wheel drive, research that has been hailed worldwide as a new breakthrough in nanotechnology. The Chinese Academy of Sciences even classed the nanomotor as one of the ten most significant scientific breakthroughs of 2011. And on page 232 of that same issue of *Nature* was yet another contribution from Groningen, from Dr Bart van de Sluis of the department of Pathology and Medical Biology, in collaboration with our honorary professor Jan van Deursen of the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, and sponsored by our alumnus Paul Baan. The article, which looked at how the ageing process of body cells can be studied and perhaps delayed, was also chosen by *Science* as one of the top ten scientific articles of 2011.

That we are not simply dealing here with strokes of luck is demonstrated by the University of Groningen’s steady rise in international rankings. In the Academic Ranking of World-Class Universities of the Shanghai Jiaotong University in China, the University of Groningen climbed in 2011 from place 109 to 103, putting it in third place among Dutch universities. The rising quality of the University’s research is also reflected in many other international rankings. The growing number of publications appearing in reputable journals each year shows the University of Groningen to be one of the fastest growing universities.

Over the past year the research fields of healthy ageing, energy and sustainable society have emerged as the main societal focal points in the University of Groningen’s research profile. ERIBA, the European Institute on the Biology of Ageing of the University Medical Center Groningen and the University of Groningen, attracts top researchers from all over the world. It already has various major publications to its name, such as an article in *Science* by Liesbeth Veenhoff and others about the discovery of a new shortcut through the nuclear pore complex. Energy research at the University of Groningen is promoted within the Energy Delta Gas Research programme (EDGAR), the Dutch national research programme on CO\(_2\) capture, transport and storage (CATO) and the Hanse Energy Corridor.

In the coming decades society will have to resolve some big and important issues. Against this backdrop, I am convinced of the critical importance of excellent research and teaching, with the emphasis on the word ‘excellent’. Mediocre performance will count less and less in a world that has to stay on its toes in order to safeguard our quality of life. For this reason, it is encouraging to note that the past year has also been a growth year for the University of Groningen – not just in quantitative terms, but above all qualitatively.

Professor S. Poppema
President, Board of the University
Major demonstration in The Hague
A national protest against the government’s cost-cutting plans drew 15,000 participants. Toga-clad professors walked in procession to the Binnenhof. Nine hundred students and 130 professors from Groningen took part.

Evening for young people at University observatory
The Kapteyn Astronomical Institute organized an evening for young people in the Blaauw Sterrenwacht, the University of Groningen observatory. A wide range of activities were on offer and visitors were able to study the skies using the Gratama telescope, one of the biggest in the Netherlands.

Lecturer of the Year chosen
Rob den Otter of Human Movement Sciences won the 2010 Lecturer of the Year award. Nine nominees, one from each faculty, gave a brief lecture to a jury and the public. The award underlines the importance of teaching.

New Rector Magnificus
In the Martinikerk in the city centre, Frans Zwarts stepped down as rector magnificus of the University of Groningen. Elmer Sterken took over the office from Zwarts in a festive ceremony.

Groningen researchers in materials science world top 50
The Groningen solar cell researcher Prof. Kees Hummelen was placed seventh in the Times Higher Education’s international ranking of material scientists. His Groningen colleagues Professors Paul Blom and Dago de Leeuw were placed 31st and 47th.

The Netherlands has two top research schools – the Zernike Institute for Advanced Materials (ZIAM) and the Netherlands Research School for Astronomy (NOVA). They rank among the world’s best and have been awarded the accolade of ‘exemplary’ by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). While NOVA is an alliance of astronomical institutes in Amsterdam (UvA), Leiden, Nijmegen, Utrecht and Groningen, ZIAM is ‘100% Groningen’. ZIAM brings together physicists, chemists and biologists to work on interdisciplinary research into the materials of the future. Nanoscience plays a key role in this. Research of international calibre is conducted at ZIAM, a fact that is repeatedly confirmed by assessments from independent organizations. In 2010, Times Higher Education, the British educational magazine, ranked ZIAM in ninth place among institutes specializing in materials research. This ranking placed ZIAM ahead of prestigious universities like Princeton, Stanford and Cambridge. In 2011, ZIAM’s high rating was confirmed by Thomson Reuters’ Research Analytics, which ranked Groningen in fourth place in terms of the scientific impact of its publications. The nanomotor developed by ZIAM made the cover of the scientific journal Nature. And three staff members at ZIAM – Kees Hummelen, Paul Blom and Dago de Leeuw – were listed in positions 7, 37 and 47 respectively for the top 100 materials science researchers for the period 2000-2010, also published by Times Higher Education.
A true interest in history springs from your own time.

Klaas van Berkel

Historian Klaas van Berkel, who has held the Rudolf Agricola Chair since 2008, is writing a two-volume history of the University of Groningen.

‘What interests me most is what holds a university together. Why has this institution been so successful, over so many centuries? Apart from the Roman Catholic church, there are very few organizations that have managed to do so. Universities are in fact crazy organizations, where professors are expected not only to carry out research, but also to teach and to concern themselves with issues like patient care. And yet people do like studying and working at a university. Clearly, people find the idea of an academic community very attractive. That’s what this history is all about.

My great passion is the early seventeenth century, which is the period in which the fundamental characteristics of modern Western society developed. By this I mean dealing with differences between religions, between the sexes and between economic classes. I was surprised to discover the immense tolerance towards other intellectual standpoints at the University of Groningen, which at that time was a strong bastion of orthodox Protestant thinking. This is interesting, especially in our time. You realize that as a historian you don’t stand with your back to the present – you can contribute to present-day discussions by taking a detour through the past. A true interest in history invariably springs from your own time.’
Grant for research on highly efficient plastic solar cell
The Foundation for Fundamental Research on Matter (FOM) awarded €5 million for solar cell research to the Zernike Institute for Advanced Materials. The University of Groningen will contribute a further €1 million. The aim is to bring about large-scale application of this technology by 2020.

Women professors number 17 percent
Of the 456 professors at the University of Groningen, 78 are women (17%). In 2014 that figure has to be 25%. In national terms, the University scores high in this regard, thanks in part to the Rosalind Franklin Fellowship Programme designed to attract top female talent.

Launch of carbohydrates knowledge centre
State Secretary Henk Bleker gave the starting signal for the Carbohydrate Competence Center, a knowledge centre coordinated by the University of Groningen. It brings together research into green raw materials used in food, paper, textile, building materials and fuel.

Groningen student is European high bar champion
University of Groningen student of medicine Epke Zonderland won the gold medal for the horizontal bar and silver for the parallel bars at the European Gymnastics Championships in Berlin. He took fifth place at the World Championships in October.

International students rate University of Groningen very highly
A survey conducted among 1500 international students at the University of Groningen gave the University the highest recommendation score of all Dutch universities. At the European level, Groningen finished in 21st place. The Welcoming Ceremony was singled out for high praise.
‘The question that drives me is how did the universe come about?’

Thijs van der Hulst, professor of radio astronomy, was awarded an ERC Advanced Grant to concentrate on the role of hydrogen gas in the universe.

‘How did the universe come about? That’s the fundamental question that drives astronomers. In order to understand what’s happening in the universe and how the phenomena you see relate to one another, you need to understand many aspects of physics. This is what excites me. That’s why as a student I was quick to make the switch from physics to astronomy. I carry out research into hydrogen gas, the most elemental form of matter in the young universe. All stars and galaxies have evolved from this gas. Large quantities of hydrogen gas are still present in the empty space between the galaxies and within the galaxies themselves. This gas is in constant motion: it forms new galaxies and it continues to flow in and out of existing galaxies. What drives me is the question of whether we can discover any patterns in these processes and what this can then tell us about the evolution of galaxies. We get a little bit closer each time, which I find very exciting. You never know beforehand whether astronomy research will be socially relevant. For example, the Wi-Fi technology that everyone now uses owes its origins to radio astronomy. It is Dutch research into black holes in the centres of galaxies that laid the foundations for this technology. You simply can’t predict this type of application in advance.’
Premiere of musical ‘Jesus Christ Superstar’ by theology students
Twenty students from the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies rehearsed hard for their performance of the rock musical ‘Jesus Christ Superstar’. The sold-out premiere was held in the USVA, the student cultural centre.

Royal decorations for university staff
Seven people nominated by the University of Groningen received a Royal Decoration. Neurobiologist Paul Luiten and astronomer Thijs van der Hulst were appointed Knights in the Order of the Netherlands Lion, a very high distinction.

LifeLines welcomes its 50,000th participant
The LifeLines research project of the University Medical Center Groningen reached 50,000 participants. For thirty years it has been monitoring the health of some 165,000 people in the Northern Netherlands with a view to increasing knowledge about the development of illnesses.

Ben Feringa appointed KNAW vice president
Professor of Organic Chemistry and Academy Professor Ben Feringa was appointed Vice President of the prestigious Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), the association of pre-eminent Dutch scientists and scholars.

University community elects councils
Students and staff chose representatives for the University Council, faculty councils and employee councils. These councils are discussion partners of the administrative bodies of the University of Groningen, such as the Board of the University and faculty boards, and have participation rights.

Profile of the theological faculty
In 2011 the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies adopted a clear profile, centred on the interaction between religion and culture. This theme has been developed into three departments with clearly distinct profiles. The first is the department of Jewish, Christian and Islamic Origins, which looks at the dynamic interrelationship of the three ‘Abrahamic’ religions in the context of ancient Near Eastern, Graeco-Roman and late antique cultures. The second is the department of Comparative and Historical Study of Religion. Its focus is a methodological and comparative approach to religion, a key cultural phenomenon involving 89% of people worldwide according to the latest statistics. A further 9% are agnostics and 2% atheists. An informed and scholarly study of religion requires a comparative and interdisciplinary approach. Lastly, there is the department of Christianity, Philosophy and Culture, which analyzes the public role of religion in Western society. This new faculty profile of Religion and Culture is also perceived as being highly relevant by a wide range of social stakeholders. For example, the Protestant Theological University (PThU), the academic training institute of the clergy of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands, has chosen to transfer its degree programmes in Leiden, Utrecht and Kampen to Groningen and Amsterdam. Following a Bachelor’s degree programme at a public university, students can move on to the three-year Master’s programme at the PThU. With its analysis of religion from a humanities and social scientific perspective, the Groningen faculty contributes to a better understanding of the interaction between religion and culture.
Inge Hutter

Inge Hutter, professor of demography and a medical anthropologist, travels around the world studying culture, sickness and health.

‘Travelling is my great passion. For me, there’s nothing nicer than observing how other cultures operate, how people live. I even do this when I’m sitting on the bus here in Groningen. It’s fascinating to tell people in Malawi and Ghana how people in Winschoten look at health, and vice versa. As a demographer you look at how the population develops, at birth and mortality, sickness and health. What interests me most is the story of the people behind the numbers. In India, for example, people have quite a different approach to health than in the West. There it’s about a balance between bodily fluids that you can influence by what you eat and drink. If you provide health care information in India, you have to do so from their perspective, not just from ours. We have also adopted this participatory approach to health care in our ‘healthy ageing’ research in the northern Netherlands. We do so by studying the views of the people themselves and allowing these to be heard. The examples from developing countries can help us here. People there are a lot poorer than we are, but what they do have is resilience. We can learn a lot from them.’
Night of Arts and Sciences
The Night of Arts and Sciences drew thousands of visitors to Groningen city centre, where they were treated to music, dance, theatre, science, exhibitions, lectures and workshops on themes ranging from healthy ageing to chemistry and energy.

Farewell to Koos Duppen
The University of Groningen community commemorated Prof. Koos Duppen, who died at home on 27 May in Kropswolde at the age of 58. He continued to work in his position as vice president of the Board of the University until shortly before his death.

Students and staff make lipdub film
A lipdub was recorded in the University Library, with hundreds of enthusiastic participants miming the song ‘Mister Blue Sky’ by the Electric Light Orchestra. The You Tube film attracted more than 250,000 views so far.

Europeans grant for researchers in science faculty
The European Research Council (ERC) awarded the first three ERC Starting Grants to University of Groningen scientists. A further six Starting Grants were awarded during the year, as well as three ERC Advanced Investigator Grants. This is a remarkably high score.

Groningen professor appointed president of the Dutch central bank
Klaas Knot, University of Groningen Professor of Monetary and Banking Institutions and senior official at the Ministry of Finance, was appointed President of De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB). He is treading in the footsteps of another University of Groningen alumnus, Wim Duisenberg (DNB director 1982-1997).

ERC Grants
For the third year in a row the University of Groningen is one of frontrunners when it comes to ERC Starting Grants awarded to Dutch academics. In 2011 nine young top researchers at the University of Groningen (including two from the University Medical Center Groningen) were distinguished by the European Research Council (ERC). The ERC Starting Grant is a prestigious European grant for individual researchers who wish to set up their own research team or their own innovative research programme. The nine laureates each receive about €1.5 million. In addition to the Starting Grants, the University of Groningen/University Medical Center Groningen succeeded in securing three Advanced Investigator Grants from the ERC, each worth €2.5 million. Thijs van de Hulst, professor of extragalactic radio astronomy, received the grant for his five-year research project ‘The HI Story of Galaxy Evolution in the Nearby Universe’. Prof. Peter Lansdorp, professor of the biology of ageing and scientific director of the European Research Institute on the Biology of Ageing (ERIBA) of the University Medical Center Groningen/University of Groningen, was awarded the ERC Grant for his research project on the role of telomeres and stem cells in ageing processes. A third ERC Advanced Investigator Grant was awarded to Liesbeth de Vries, Professor of Medical Oncology at the University Medical Center Groningen. Her research project is aimed at the development of anti-cancer drugs.

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I’d like to enrich the present-day discussion.

Pauline Kleingeld

Pauline Kleingeld, professor of ethics, has an endowed chair, which has freed her to spend five years researching the big issues in philosophy.

‘You mustn’t think that I spend the whole day thinking profound thoughts. But it is fantastic to now have the time to make progress in my research and to explore issues more deeply. I’ve just completed a study of the theories of world citizenship. The nice thing about that was discovering that an old discussion on this subject in eighteenth-century Germany is still very relevant for our times. It seemed important to me to explore this and thereby enhance the present-day discussion. I’m now working on the question of why and when we attribute moral status to others. This brings me to the very foundations of ethics, such as the question of whether we have free will. Are our responses completely determined, as brain researchers claim? And if so, does this mean that we can’t act freely? I started studying Kant more or less by chance, but I find that he has a particularly interesting approach to ethical questions. I want to use these five years to think through some big ethical issues in the Kantian tradition, and I hope to make a meaningful contribution to the international philosophical discussion.’
**Close of the academic year: prize for Stine Jensen**

Rector Elmer Sterken officially closed the 2010-2011 academic year during the annual Summer Ceremony. On this occasion publicist Stine Jensen, alumna in philosophy and literary studies, received the University of Groningen Alumnus of the Year award for 2011.

**Funding top research schools ZIAM and NOVA**

The Dutch government’s Strategic Agenda made provision for ongoing funding of the two top research schools in the Netherlands – the Zernike Institute for Advanced Materials of the University of Groningen and the Netherlands Research School for Astronomy, in which the University of Groningen takes part.

**Arab European University Association meet in Groningen**

The University of Groningen welcomed 75 presidents of Arab and European universities for the Presidents’ Meeting of the Arab European University Association. Other participants were ambassadors from Arab countries and representatives of companies, the EU and partner universities.

**New dean for Honours College**

Hanny Elzinga took up the position of dean of the Honours College, which offers top students a study track outside and alongside their regular degree programme. Only the top ten percent of students are eligible.

**Opening of the Academic Year**

Rector Elmer Sterken officially opened the 2011-2012 Academic Year. Sibrand Poppema, President of the Board of the University, presented cabaret artist Herman Finkers, a former student of psychology at the University of Groningen, with the Ubbo Emmius Medal for his contributions to society.
‘Does a stem cell have eternal life?’

Peter Lansdorp, professor of the biology of ageing, is Scientific Director of the new European Research Institute on the Biology of Ageing (ERIBA).

‘To what extent does heritable material, DNA and damage to DNA play a role in ageing? That’s my focus. This interest springs from research into stem cell biology, where one of the questions is whether a stem cell has eternal life. Or do stem cells differ in the number of times that they can divide? If a stem cell has a finite life, is this important for ageing, or for the development of cancer? What can we learn from the differences between stem cells for gametes, embryonic stem cells and adult stem cells? Is there a limit to the number of times that an adult stem cell can divide? How is the clock set and how is it read? These questions are what interest me. The speed at which we age differs from one person to the next. If we gain a greater understanding of what happens at the cell level of individuals during the ageing process, we’ll be better able to inform people about things like behaviour and diet. At ERIBA we’re seeking to bring together researchers working on different aspects of cellular ageing so that they can talk to and learn from each other. This allows a brain researcher, for example, to come into rapid contact with someone studying cell division in worms. It’s my expectation that this will enable us to make new discoveries about ageing.’
Students rank Groningen as best university
According to a survey of 80,000 students, the University of Groningen, together with Radboud University Nijmegen, is the best university in the Netherlands. Sixteen degree programmes at the University of Groningen obtained the highest score in the survey by Elsevier magazine.

Al Gore opens annual conference of Faculty Society
Al Gore attended the EBF Conference of the Economics and Business Faculty Society. The former US vice president and winner of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize spoke about climate change, sustainability and responsible leadership.

Groningen publication on climate research in Nature
The Centre for Isotope Research at the University of Groningen has spent thirty years monitoring the proportion of oxygen isotopes in carbon dioxide in order to measure its absorption by plants. This led to an article published in the journal Nature.

IgNobel prize for research goes to Groningen marketing expert
The light-hearted IgNobel prizes were awarded in Harvard for research that ‘first makes you laugh and then makes you think’. One of the prizes went to University of Groningen business administrator Debra Trampe for her article on how a desperate need to pee affects thought functions.

Opening of Centre for Valorization and Entrepreneurship (CVO)
Minister Verhagen of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation presented a cheque for €5 million to CVO Groningen. The University of Groningen, the University Medical Center Groningen, the Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen, the municipality, province and many businesses have contributed a further €10 million.

Centre for Valorization and Entrepreneurship
On 6 October 2011 Minister Maxime Verhagen of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation (EL&I) presented a symbolic cheque of €5 million to the Centre for Valorization and Entrepreneurship (CVO) Groningen. This marked the official opening of CVO Groningen. The CVO is supported by a consortium, at the heart of which are the three Groningen knowledge institutions – the Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen, the University Medical Center Groningen and the University of Groningen. Other partners closely involved are the city and province of Groningen, NOM, the Rabobank, Friesland Campina, Triade, Samenwerkende Bedrijven Eemsdelta and over fifty SMEs. The Groningen partners have collectively contributed €10 million, over and above the €5 million from the valorization programme of the Ministry of EL&I. This brings the total to €15 million for the period 2011-2016. The CVO aims to encourage valorization (finding commercial applications for scientific research). It will also put considerable effort into education relating to knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship. The CVO will alert students at the start of their degree programmes to the possibilities of entrepreneurship, as professionals within a company or as independent entrepreneurs. The CVO will actively track and supervise research, students and entrepreneurs and will bring together the supply and demand for innovative knowledge. Finally, the CVO will earmark funds to finance the innovation and growth of enterprises.

www.rug.nl/tlg/innovatievalorisatie
‘My dream is an elegant theory about the building of the cosmos.’

Elisabetta Pallante

Elisabetta Pallante, professor of theoretical physics, is Italian by origin. Her research focus is the theories of fundamental forces between elementary particles.

‘I’ve always been looking for something new. Since the 1970s we have been working with a physics model that successfully describes all the fundamental forces, with one exception – gravity. In order to find out more about this, I’m working on particle physics, which involves building theoretical models and calculating with supercomputers. I explore things like extra spatial dimensions and the speed of light. The experiments with the particle accelerator in Geneva are very relevant for my research. What I do is pure, fundamental science. It is a discipline for which you have to feel a passion; otherwise it would be very hard indeed, pure torture! My dream is that of every physicist in this field – to find a successful, elegant theory that sheds light on how the cosmos is constructed. We haven’t got there yet, although we are taking small but significant steps. My heart lies in abstract research, but most of the funding goes nowadays to research aimed at social or industrial applications; this means less money available for giving brilliant PhD and other students the opportunity to do research with us. This is unfortunate, because those young people do not get a chance to do what they really want to do.’
Completion of Groningen partial report on academic fraud
Enquiry committees from the universities of Tilburg, Amsterdam and Groningen produced a joint report on the academic fraud committed by Diederik Stapel. Elmer Sterken, Rector Magnificus of the University of Groningen, called Stapel’s actions ‘inconceivable’.

Groningen research makes cover of Nature
The cover of scientific journal Nature featured an article on the ‘nanomotor’ by Ben Feringa and his research group. A nanomotor is a molecule that moves like a four-wheel-drive vehicle.

Launch of Energy Academy Europe
With the launch of the Energy Academy Europe, Groningen has gained an institution for teaching, research and innovation in the field of energy. An initiative of the University of Groningen and the Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen, the Academy aims to bring together activities and to generate knowledge.

Annejet van der Zijl ends stint as writer-in-residence
Writer Annejet van der Zijl gave tutorials and public lectures at the University of Groningen. Van der Zijl, known for Sonny Boy and biographies of Annie M.G. Schmidt and Prince Bernhard, was the 25th writer-in-residence.

Skolkovo
The partnership between the University of Groningen and Russian researchers was given a significant boost in 2011. A delegation from Groningen led by Prof. Sibrand Poppema, President of the Board of the University, paid a visit to Russia in autumn. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Moscow State University on 19 October and an upgraded partnership agreement was signed with Saint Petersburg State University on 21 October. Of special significance was the signing of the Memorandum on Cooperation with the Skolkovo Foundation on 20 October. Skolkovo is a high-tech scientific project currently under construction near Moscow, a location also known as Russia’s ‘Silicon Valley’. Skolkovo was launched in 2001 at the initiative of the Russian president Dmitri Medvedev. Taking part in the project are many top American and European companies, such as Microsoft, Boeing, Siemens, Nokia and Philips. The celebrated Massachusetts Institute of Technology is also involved. Signing the partnership agreement means that the University of Groningen will be able to submit research proposals for the project. The signing ceremony was attended by the Russian deputy prime minister Viktor Zubkov and the Dutch prime minister Mark Rutte, who led a trade delegation of some 70 Dutch companies.

www.skolkovo.ru
Berend Roorda

Each year the University of Groningen awards a GUF-100 prize to nine top students. Law lecturer Berend Roorda, the Netherlands judo champion in 2010 and 2011, is a past recipient.

‘I’ve always combined my studies with top-level sport, which has given me immense benefits. As a sportsman, you need structure to be able to achieve, which means not staying out at the pub till all hours. Also, if you feel good physically, you can study better. I kept up pretty well with my studies – it just took me a little longer to graduate. That’s because in 2010 I was Dutch champion in my weight class. During my degree I became interested in constitutional and administrative law. My final paper was a study of the maintenance of public order and preventing disorder in Germany, including in demonstrations. I am now lecturing Dutch law and I would like to do my PhD on public order law. I probably owe the GUF-prize to the fact that as a top sportsman I also performed well academically and worked on various research projects during my degree. Because I find both aspects of my life equally important, sport isn’t my sole focus. It remains to be seen whether this attitude will bring me international sporting success. Now, I think it’s important to further improve my academic skills; I hope that I can also continue to do judo as a sideline.’

‘I’d like to develop my academic career further, and keep judo as a sideline.’
February 2012

University among the best employers in the Netherlands

 Интермидиар ranked the University of Groningen among the best employers in the Netherlands. In a repeat of 2010, the University was the only educational institution to rise a place in the top 50. The University rose from 15th to 10th place in the non-profit category.

Opening of Confucius China Light Festival

A cultural festival about China was held in the Botanical Gardens at Haren, with the support of the Groningen Confucius Institute. This partnership between the University of Groningen, the Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen, the municipality of Groningen and the Communication University of China was opened on 28 May.

DNB president once again a Groningen professor

Klaas Knot, President of De Nederlandsche Bank since 1 July 2011, has been appointed professor of Economics of Central Banking in the Faculty of Economics and Business. Until 1 July he held the chair of Monetary and Banking Institutions.

Theme announced for 400th anniversary

In 2014 the University of Groningen will celebrate its 400th anniversary, an occasion which will naturally be marked in a spectacular fashion. The theme to celebrate this centuries-old university was announced: it is 4∞, or in other words, ‘For Infinity’.

Groningen research among top 10 scientific breakthroughs

Science ranked the results of healthy-ageing research by the Mayo Clinic in Rochester (US) and the University Medical Center Groningen among the ten most significant scientific breakthroughs of 2011. In this research, mice were shown to have fewer age-related complaints after old cells were removed.

AACSB accreditation

The Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) is by far the largest of the nine faculties at the University of Groningen, with more than 6,000 students out of a total of 28,000. The Groningen faculty is ranked among the top five percent of business schools in the world, according to AACSB, the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. AACSB is a US-based organization that awards accreditation to business schools that satisfy its stringent criteria. AACSB assesses the quality of the degree programmes, students, staff, teaching, research and the various facilities through in-depth self-study reports, a visit by a panel of experts and interviews with stakeholders such as students, alumni, researchers, lecturers, support staff, as well as business contacts and employers. AACSB accreditation is a hallmark of excellence. The FEB also scored very highly in the Elsevier survey on education in the Netherlands, which questioned 60,000 students. The economics and business programmes at the University of Groningen that received the highest ratings were Business Economics, Business Administration and Economics of Taxation. The fact that the Notary Law programme of the Faculty of Law also ranked at the top makes the University of Groningen the best university in the field of economics and law.

> www.rug.nl/feb
‘What motivates people to behave in an environmentally conscious way?’

Linda Steg

As professor of environmental psychology, Linda Steg is fascinated by how people interact with their environment. Her special focus is the problem of energy.

‘As a student I was one of the first to study the subject of environmental psychology, which appealed to me right from day one. I’m fascinated by the use of psychological insights to promote sustainability and to help solve energy-related problems. My main focus at present is the question of what motivates people to behave in an environmentally conscious way and how you can encourage environmentally friendly behaviour. The good news is that people all around the world care about the planet and are quite prepared to make some sacrifices for the environment, such as recycling their waste, using their bicycles to travel short distances and insulating their homes. This is interesting because environmentally conscious behaviour often involves going to some trouble or paying that little bit extra. The government needs to take greater account of this in its environmental policy. I’m sometimes accused of thinking in old-fashioned terms because I believe that you shouldn’t only be guided in your environmental policy by factors such as pleasure, convenience and price, but should also respond to moral considerations. Whether people accept environmental policy depends not so much on possible negative effects for individuals themselves, but rather on the degree to which they consider the policy to be effective. In many cases they have little confidence about this. The government could do a better job of anticipating this than they do at present.’
Centered in Society

The University of Groningen is centered in society. Using its knowledge and abilities the University focuses on present important public themes, a sustainable development being one of them. In doing so there are all kinds of contact and cooperation with other parties. These pages will show just a few examples.

The University’s positioning in the field of research has three spearheads:

1. Healthy Ageing
   > cultural geographer Bettine van Hoven: research on how to enable the elderly living independently
   > LifeLines: population research in the North of the Netherlands (165,000 participants, 3 generations)

2. Energy
   > Groningen Energy and Sustainability Programme (GESP): oriented at energy transition
   > chemist Kees Hummelen: affordable plastic solar cells with high performance

3. Sustainable Society
   > The Institute for Integration and Social Efficacy: cohesion in a multiform society
   > legal scholar Aurelia Colombi Ciacchi: how to bring about good governance
And the University of Groningen continues working at the frontiers of knowledge in many other ways, for instance:

**fundamental research**
- *Nature* cover story: Groningen chemists led by Ben Feringa construct an electrically powered nanovehicle
- group led by biologist Theunis Piersma awarded a TOP-grant for research on migrating bird tracking tools

**market and problem oriented research**
- chemist Lubbert Dijkhuizen: looking for healthy sugars
- mathematician Jacqueline Scherpen: guarding dikes with space robots

**cooperation**
- Groningen Agreement Group: the University Medical Centre, the Municipality, the Hanze University of Applied Sciences, and the University of Groningen building a ‘City of Talent’
- Energy Academy Europe: uniting energy research and know-how

**participation in public debate**
- biotechnologist Bert Poolman with his colleague Arno Schrauwers: book publication about genetic manipulation
- virologist Jan Wilschut in nationally broadcasted TV programme about flu vaccination

**meeting the public**
- Studium Generale: three University professors lecture about pop music and video clips
- Discovery-truck: laboratory visiting high schools all over the Netherlands and abroad
- ‘Children’s University’: lecture given by University professor to 900 primary school pupils
- The Night of Arts & Sciences: grandiose event in Groningen City centre
Facts & figures

General
- Founded in 1614
- 28,000 degree students
- 1,000 guest students
- 5,000 Full Time Equivalent staff
- Annual turnover EUR 597 million
- 9 faculties, covering all academic disciplines

Research
- 399 PhD dissertations
- 2,883 Full Time Equivalent academic staff
- contract research: EUR 145 million
- 443 professors
- 74 associate professors
- 92 endowed professors
- 6,000 research publications
- 16 Research Master's programmes
- 9 graduate schools
- global top: Material Sciences/Nanoscience, Ageing Biology, Astronomy

International
- 3,700 Master and Bachelor students
- 800 of 1,500 PhD students
- 17.2% of academic staff
- 115 nationalities
- 9 English-taught Bachelor's degree programmes
- 85 English-taught Master's degree programmes
- of which 8 Erasmus Mundi programmes

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)
- America: University of California Los Angeles, University of Pennsylvania (USA); National Autonomous University (Mexico); University of São Paulo (Brasil)

International rankings
- QS World University Rankings: 115
- Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU): 103
- Essential Science Indicators (ESI) Citation Impact: 56
- Taiwan Performance Ranking of Scientific Papers: 90
- Webometrics: 152
- THE World University Ranking: 134

Renowned scientists and alumni
- Johan Bernoulli, pioneer in the field of calculus, 1700
- Aletta Jacobs, first Dutch female student in modern history 1871
- 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
- Willem Kolff, student in Groningen, later inventor of the artificial kidney 1943
- Frits Zernike, professor of physics, Nobel Prize for Physics 1953
- Wubbo Ockels: first Dutch astronaut 1985
- George Sawatzky, professor of physics, Spinoza Award 1996
- Wim Duisenberg, first President European Central Bank 1998
- 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 Daan, professor of ethology, Japanese Eminent Scientist Award 2008
- Klaas Knot, president of the Central Bank of the Netherlands 2011
Colophon

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