Honours Bachelor Programme
Faculty of Economics and Business
(HB-FEB)

Programme for 2014-2015

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Appendix 1: An overview of the HB-FEB programme
1. Objectives of the HB-FEB

The Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) offers students the opportunity to follow an Honours Bachelors programme (HB-FEB) in addition to the regular Bachelor programme. Honours students complete a 45 EC programme in addition to their standard 180 EC Bachelor Programme. The HB-FEB is developed for ambitious and motivated students who are interested in a more challenging study programme than the standard Bachelor Programme. The programme lasts about 2.5 years, starting in Semester 2.2 of the first year of study.

The HB-FEB is part of the Honours College (HC) of the University of Groningen, which started in September 2009. The language of the HB-FEB is English.

By offering an Honours Bachelor programme the FEB aims to achieve several objectives:

- To attract more talented and motivated students to FEB
- To give students the opportunity to develop their talents to the full;
- To give students the preparations for prestigious programmes at the RUG (e.g. the Research Master) or other universities within or outside The Netherlands;
- To stimulate students to participate in international exchange programmes;
- To strengthen the faculty’s image to (future) employers and other third parties.

The HB-FEB has a range of learning objectives that students can achieve by participating in the programme. Since the FEB attracts students who are interested in theoretical knowledge and its applications, the HB-FEB is designed to incorporate both research and real-world oriented learning objectives.

**Research-oriented objectives:**

Conducting and evaluating research is one of the most important skills of an academically trained professional. The knowledge that is created by means of research can be used to inform business or policy decisions, but only if the research produces knowledge that is valid and relevant. Whether you want to become a professional - such as a manager, a business consultant, a policy maker - or a scientific researcher, it is important that you develop your research skills. For these reasons, research skills are an important element of an academic education in general, and more specifically for an academic Honours programme.

The HB-FEB has the following research-oriented objectives:

- To develop a critical view on relevant academic research that contributes to our knowledge of specific managerial and economic issues. Students will acquire more in-depth knowledge of certain subject areas in which they are interested.
- To acquire knowledge about how academic research results in international peer-reviewed publications.
- To acquire skills in the field of research methodology;
- To learn to communicate about research-related topics and problems.
- To learn to assist in ongoing research projects of faculty members and PhD students.
To design, execute, analyse and report on a research project that has the potential to be published in an academic journal.

We aim to reach these objectives by letting students actively participate in different qualitative and qualitative research projects on subject areas of their own choice. We hope that students will see the practical relevance and the joy of doing research by actively participating in research.

**Practical/professionally-oriented objectives:**

In addition to the abovementioned research skills, academically trained professionals need professional skills. The HB-FEB therefore also has the following professionally oriented objectives:

- Develop the skills that are needed to function in a professional or academic environment;
- Acquire knowledge about and gain personal experience in the professional field;
- Learn to apply scientific knowledge to organisational and/or societal problems, and also to recognize and translate applied issues to relevant scientific research questions;
- Develop a personal network, within and outside the University of Groningen.

We aim to reach these objectives by letting students build a portfolio of a range of activities, such as organization forums or fieldtrips. Additionally, students will follow courses that help them in developing their skills, such as academic writing, and debating in an interdisciplinary context, and that help them in their personal development.

### 2. Overview of the programme

#### 2.1 General overview

The total programme consists of 45 additional ECs. The programme consists of one basic part and two possible subsequent tracks:

1. A basic FEB part that advances the student’s knowledge in the student’s own subject area within Economics or Business (25 EC). Students will learn more about their fields’ core topics and trends and current research themes. The courses in this part are offered by the FEB.

2. A subsequent broadening HC track that advances the student’s knowledge beyond its own subject area (20EC). In this part Honours students will learn how to approach a problem relevant to science or society from different perspectives and how to find their own way of dealing with it, with vision and an eye to the future. At the same time, students are taught skills, and attention is paid to their personal development. The courses of this part are developed and offered by other faculties or external parties, and coordinated by the University of Groningen Honours College (HC).

3. Or, a subsequent *specialised* FEB track that advances the student’s knowledge within its own field even further. The set-up of the broadening and specialized track are essentially the same, however, in the specialized track Honours students can follow 7 EC more deepening courses instead of broadening courses (see section 2.4). The specialized programme is open to all students.
2.2 The FEB basic part

The FEB basic part offers 25 ECs of courses that are related to the field of Business or Economics. To enable cross-learning and to offer activities that interest as many students as possible, the HB-FEB offers one combined stream for business-oriented students and for economics/econometrics oriented students. Although some of these Bachelor Programmes are in Dutch, the language of HB-FEB is English.

The 25 ECs consists of:

A. **FEB Courses**: Three obligatory courses specifically developed for Honours students in which Business and Economics students work together on one or more specific subject areas.
   a. The first course, called Topics and Trends in Business and Economics (5 EC), provides students with a broad overview of topics and trends that are studied by FEB staff members.
   b. The second and third course, Seminar I (5 EC) and Seminar II (5 EC) respectively, are designed to follow up on the existing courses in the curricula of Business and Economics students and focus in depth on topics of relevance in these streams.

B. **FEB Research Practical (3EC)**: a course in which students form small teams and are linked to a researcher and participate in a research project. Students can indicate their preferences for a specific topic/supervisor.

C. **FEB Portfolio (2EC)**; portfolio of additional activities usually aimed at developing skills and stimulating interaction with the academic, policy, and professional field. For example, students form teams that are responsible for organizing field trips, guest lectures/forums and social activities.

D. **FEB Thesis Extension (5EC)**; a more in-depth and advanced thesis than the standard bachelor thesis. The Honours Bachelor thesis is an individual project with an individual supervisor, so students have more opportunities to tailor it to their own needs. Such an approach will be a good practice for writing for example, a master thesis which is also usually an individual project.

The courses of the FEB basic part are summarized in Table 2. More detailed descriptions of all courses are available through the university’s electronic education catalogue Ocacys (www.rug.nl/ocacys).

### Table 2: Overview of FEB basic Part

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year + semester*</th>
<th>EC</th>
<th>Business Stream</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.Ilb</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Topics and Trends in Business and Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.Ia</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Seminar I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.Ib</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Seminar II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.IIa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Research Practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 or 3.1I</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bachelor Thesis Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,2,3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Honours Portfolio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The number indicates the study year (1, 2 or 3). The roman number indicates the semester (I or II). The letter represents the block (a or b).
2.3 Follow-up option 1: The HC broadening track

After finishing the basic FEB part, students are allowed to enroll in broadening courses offered by the Honours College (HC). Any Honours Bachelor student of all nine faculties of the University of Groningen can enroll in these broadening courses. This means that you will work with students from different backgrounds on a variety of courses and projects. The broadening Programme consists of 20 EC in total, which are divided among the following modules;

- Two broadening courses of each 5 EC supplied by the nine participating faculties of the HC. Each faculty offers one or more broadening courses. Since the content of these courses is related to state of the art research and/or to societal current affairs, they are regularly updated. The most recent list of courses is available at the website of the Honours College (www.rug.nl/honours).

- Petrus Camper Track of 10 EC. This is a collection of activities named after Petrus Camper, a famous Dutch scientist who made contributions to diverse fields such as medicine, anthropology mathematics and architecture. Honours students learn to study a recent scientific or societal issue from various perspectives and relate it to their own future-oriented vision. Also students learn and practice various skills (such as presenting and debating) which are intended to contribute to their individual personal development. The various components (knowledge and understanding, skills and personal development) are integrated in various forms during the entire HB-FEB. The Petrus Camper Track culminates in the Petrus Camper Finale; a yearly event that is open to the public in which all 3rd year honours students from the same cohort participate. More detailed information is available at the website of the Honours College.

2.4 Follow-up option 2: The FEB specialised track

Some students may find the HC broadening track too scattered and prefer to learn more in depth knowledge on several aspects of Economics and Business. For those students we offer the possibility to do the FEB specialised track instead of the HC broadening track, which essentially means they may replace some of the broadening course offered by the Honours College with a so-called ‘FEB Specialization’ of 7 ECs.

The FEB Specialization is organized around six different subject areas or ‘research themes’ that are researched within FEB. Students have to select one of the following themes:

1. Economics, Econometrics and Finance
2. Human Resource Management & Organisational Behaviour
3. Innovation & Organization
5. Marketing
6. Operations Management & Operations Research

For more information on these themes, see the following website: http://www.rug.nl/som/researchProgrammes/index.

Many FEB staff members are engaged in research projects in addition to their teaching activities; this is how they keep their knowledge on a specific subject area up-to-date. The research of FEB staff members is organized by a separate institute named SOM. Each of the abovementioned six subject areas has its own group of SOM-researchers. Students that follow the specialization track will
closely cooperate with these researchers and other Honours students in the subject area of their choice. Through this cooperation students increase their understanding of the latest issues, theories and methodologies in the subject area, and they become more of an ‘expert’ or ‘specialist’ in this area. Additionally, students will experience what it is like to do research in the specific area, which is useful for students who are considering to follow one of the Research Master Programmes that are offered by SOM.

Each subject area has its own activities in which students should participate and which will eventually be graded. Such activities may include for example, following a specific elective in the subject area, participating in seminars/forums/conferences, participating in reading groups, or writing a bachelor thesis proposal with your own supervisor.

3. The selection procedure

Since our goal is to put together a group of talented and motivated students, students are selected to be part of the HB-FEB depending on academic performance. For the Faculty of Economics and Business a total of about 75 students (i.e. about 40 Business students and about 30 Economics students) can be admitted this study year.

The selection of students is done through the admission committee of the HC and is centralized. Students in the top of their Bachelor Programme (calculated on the basis of exam scores until Semester 2.1) are invited to apply. Students who have been invited to apply should submit a dossier (see components below). Students who do not fulfill these criteria, but who have demonstrated their talents elsewhere and who are very motivated, may apply as well. However, these students will have to fill out a form (‘request access selection procedure’ through the Honours College website) to get access to the Nestor page where they can upload their documents.

The application process occurs electronically, and will be open for letters around mid February (Deadline: March 2, 4 pm). More information is available on the Honours College website. Students who apply for the HB-FEB should submit the following:

1. A completed registration form (in English)
2. A CV (in English)
3. An overview of course grades available until then
4. A motivation letter (in English, not exceeding 500 words) on: why you would like to be part of the HB-FEB, which track you would like to follow (regular vs. specialized) and why, your expectations and ambitions and your unique skills and characteristics.
5. The name and contact information of a person within the FEB who the selection committee could consult about your performance (i.e., a teacher), and one reference letter from somebody outside the FEB (for example from a high school teacher, or a (former) employer). If it is not possible to have this reference letter in English, Dutch language is acceptable.
   Grade list from secondary education/high school diploma
6. Any other documents you think would help you in your application.

All students should have proficiency in English. Being admitted to an English Bachelor Programme at our faculty is sufficient proof. Students admitted to a Dutch Bachelor Programme should have a 6 or higher for English on their VWO diploma or present proof of equivalent skills.
On the basis of the above documents a selection of students will be invited for an interview with two FEB staff members. After the interviews, the Honours admission committee will make a decision as to whether or not the student is admitted to the HB-FEB. The selection interviews are always held in the beginning of March. The acceptance decisions are made by the end of March and the HB-FEB starts on April 6th.

4. Concluding remarks

Costs
There are no extra tuition fees to be paid; however, students that are admitted to the HB-FEB are expected to pay some additional costs related to normal expenses, such as books, copying, travel costs, etcetera. For the international trip in the final year (Petrus Camper track), students have to pay an amount of about 500 Euro. In exceptional circumstances where financial limitations prevent a student being able to follow the HB-FEB, the Honours College will support the student in trying to find a solution for this problem.

Honours Certificate
Students who complete the HB-FEB receive a special Honours certificate. Note that when you are admitted to the HB-FEB, but you do not finish the whole Programme, you will not receive this certificate. You will however receive a certificate describing the courses you participated in.

Special facilities for Honours students
The University of Groningen and the FEB are very interested in stimulating talented students to reap the full benefits of their academic education. Therefore, various supporting facilities have been developed:

- HB-FEB students, together with Research Master students and PhD students, have exclusive rights to use the work and meeting rooms at the 9th floor of the Duisenberg-building. In these rooms there are also computer facilities available.
- HB-FEB students are also encouraged to apply for student assistant jobs in order to develop their personal skills, but also to stimulate them to gain research experience and/or to facilitate interaction between Honours and non-Honours students.

The coordinators of the HB-FEB Programme are:

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Economics Stream Dr. Lammertjan Dam l.dam@rug.nl

The administrative support of the HB-FEB is provided by SOM, the research school of our Faculty: Mrs. Hanneke Tamling, email: h.g.tamling@rug.nl
Figure 1: FEB HC programme

- **FEB Basic HC Program**: 25 EC (mandatory to all HB students)
- **HC Broadening Track**: 20 EC
- **FEB Deepening Track**: 20 EC

**Mandatory HC Courses**

- FEB Bus & Ec. Topics & Trends 5 EC
- FEB Bus & Ec. Seminar I 5 EC
- FEB Bus & Ec. Seminar II 5 EC
- FEB Research Practical 3 EC

**Optional Courses**

- **HC PYOT Portfolio**
- **HC Writing**
- **HC Debating/HC Skills**
- **HC Summer/Winter School**
- **Atelier 5 EC** (available in each module)

Select 4 ECs

Select 12 ECs