



ANNUAL REVIEW
2014

UVH | UNIVERSITY
OF HUMANISTIC
STUDIES

FOREWORD

The University of Humanistic Studies celebrated its fifth lustrum in 2014. In these 25 years, our humanist-inspired education and research programmes have come to fulfil an important niche in the domestic and international academic arena. Our interdisciplinary mix of social sciences and humanities, within a context of developing theory to support professional practices, and combined with a critical commitment, makes us a unique university.

In 2014, this unique position was acknowledged at several occasions. To name just three:

- With the award of honorary doctorates to Amartya Sen, Joan Tronto, and Carol Ryff we consolidated our bond with the international humanist worldview. It was perceived as a particularly encouraging recognition of our work that Amartya Sen was willing to come and accept the award personally (undaunted by a snowed-in airport along the way...).
- Professor Evelien Tonkens joined our ranks in 2014 as professor of Citizenship and Humanisation of the Public Sector. Her research group's work on the relationship between government and citizens in the public domain reinforces theory development on the conditions for a humane society. This contributes significantly to achieving the mission of our university.
- In 2014 we completed the research review with a positive assessment. This was a fitting occasion to jointly reflect on the core of the research, to strengthen internal connections, and to consider the future.



Photo: Arnoud Mooij

We can look back on a fine year. I realise that these results could not have been achieved without the efforts of our scholars, supporters and students. I hereby wish to thank them again for their fantastic dedication to this very special university. And for those who are curious to know more about the colourful history of the institute, I heartily recommend a visit to our lustrum website: www.25jaaruvh.nl.

Professor Gerty Lensvelt-Mulders, rector of the University of Humanistic Studies

DIES NATALIS 2014: A MEANINGFUL LIFE IN A JUST SOCIETY: INVESTIGATING WELL-BEING AND DEMOCRATIC CARING

The University of Humanistic Studies aims to contribute to a meaningful life in a just society. In celebration of its 25th anniversary, the University bestowed honorary doctorates upon professors Amartya Sen (Harvard University), Carol D. Ryff (University of Wisconsin) and Joan C. Tronto (University of Minnesota).

Professor Amartya Sen is an internationally renowned intellectual and recipient of the 1998 Nobel Prize in Economics. His collective work has been highly inspirational and relevant in the ongoing development of Humanistic Studies. Sen is characteristically optimistic about the human condition and motivated by deep personal and professional concerns about democracy, justice, poverty and inequality across the world.

Professor Carol Ryff has developed a theory of psychological well-being which comprises elements that are also part of the concept of meaning in life. This theory of well-being is used in a large body of multidisciplinary empirical research on well-being, (biopsychosocial) health, resilience and optimal aging. An important research project led by Ryff is a longitudinal study following behavioural, psychological, social and biological aging of U.S. adults and elderly (called MIDUS).

Professor Joan Tronto has developed an ethics of care which tries to remedy some of the shortcomings of well-known ethical theories. Her interdisciplinary concept of



Photo: Arnoud Mooij

care not only refers to health care but conceives of care as a political concept linked to the very core of democracy: caring is construing living together in an ordered way. Her concept of care corrects a gender bias in care theories by stressing the fact that all human beings are both care-givers and care-takers.

In honour of the doctorates, the University organised the international conference, *A meaningful life in a just society: Investigating Well-Being and Democratic Caring*, on 30 and 31 January 2014. Keynote speakers were professors Carol Ryff and Joan Tronto.

EDUCATION

In 2014, 562 students were enrolled in the Bachelor's programme of Humanistic Studies and the two (pre)Master's programmes of Humanistic Studies and Care Ethics and Policy. At the core of these programmes is the 'Bildung' of professionals who are equipped to address existential and ethical questions in the practical field at an academic level. The scientific education encompasses a broad range of disciplines including philosophy, psychology, pedagogy, sociology, religious and cultural sciences, scientific theory and methodology.

In addition, students engage in practical activities such as group discussions, and in exercises that aim to refine their reflection skills. The Master's programmes educate students in the areas of counselling, education, organisation and policy, and science and research.



Photo: Lilian van Rooij

ACCREDITATION

An in-depth assessment of the Bachelor's and Master's programmes of Humanistic Studies was conducted in June 2013. As a result, the programmes have again been accredited in 2014 for the next six years. The visitation committee offered a very positive assessment. Students achieve the education targets through a well-structured curriculum that is didactically designed on the basis of principles derived from the university's mission. According to the committee,



they are supervised by lecturers in possession of excellent teaching skills.

STUDY CHOICE CHECK

In 2014, the University for the first time organised a study choice check for prospective Bachelor students, allowing them to get better acquainted with the study before making a definitive choice. The programme was received well.

NATIONAL STUDENTS' SURVEY (NSE)

Once again in 2014, the University of Humanistic Studies ranked high in the national students' satisfaction survey (Nationale Studenten Enquête). For fifteen out of seventeen themes, varying from scientific skills to study burden, our students assign the education programme a higher score than the national average. On a 5-point scale, the score came to a 4.26 overall with a 4.64 for the general ambiance at the university.



SUMMER SCHOOL ON PLURALISM

From 6 - 21 December 2014, the Kosmopolis Platform of the University of Humanistic Studies organised the annual International Summer School on Pluralism, Development and Social Change in South Africa. It brought together activists, academics and social practitioners from South Africa, India, the Netherlands, Indonesia and Kenya, who exchanged knowledge about pluralism and social change

and reflected on its implications for social practices and academic research.

The Summer School was organised in cooperation with HIVOS (Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries), the Institute for Reconciliation and Social Justice at the University of the Free State (South Africa), the Global Centre for Pluralism (Canada) and Glocal University (India).



Photo: Caroline Suransky

OPENING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR



Professor Trudy Dehue (Photo: Arnoud Mooij)

On Monday afternoon, 1 September 2014, Rector Gerty Lensvelt opened the new academic year at a festive event in Ottone.

Professor Trudy Dehue, lecturer in the Theory and History of Psychology at Groningen University, was invited as guest speaker. Professor Dehue recently published a book titled *Betere mensen. Over gezondheid als keuze en koopwaar* ('Better people. Health as choice

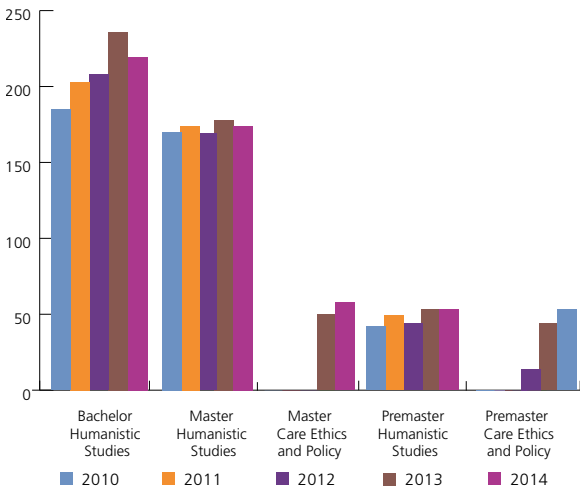
and commodity'). In this book she investigates the remarkable increase in the number of people diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder, to conclude that any kind of deviation from the standard is strongly stigmatised.

Dehue seeks to resolve social issues not through further attempts to direct the individual person, but through the humanisation of institutions and organisations.

FACTS AND FIGURES

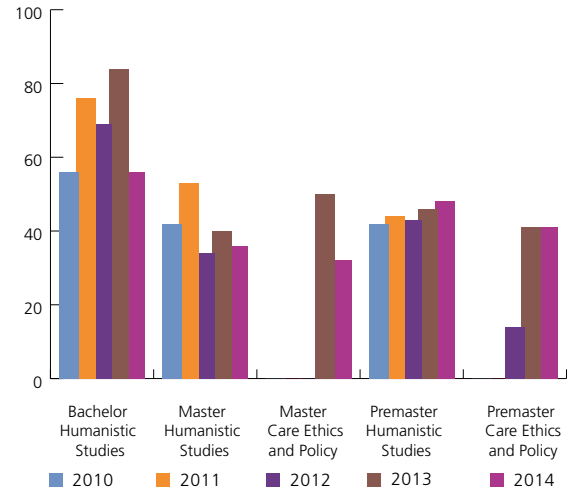
STUDENT ENROLLMENT (2010-2014)

Total number of students



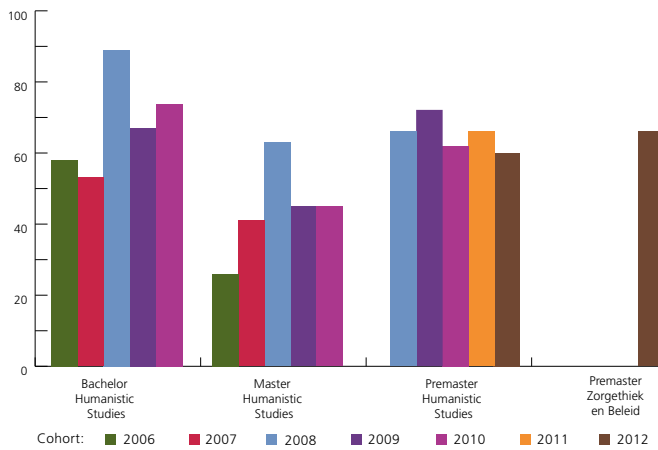
STUDENTS ENTERING THE UNIVERSITY (2010-2014)

Total number of first year students



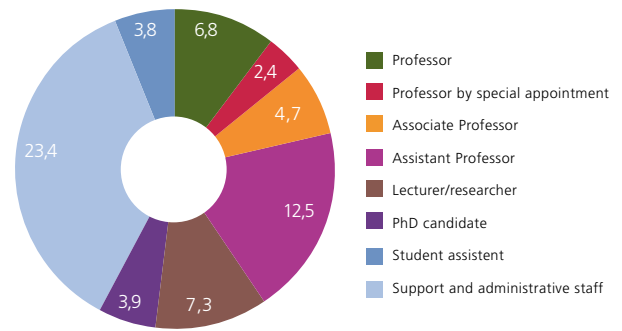
STUDY RESULTS PER COHORT

Percentage of degrees awarded (with less than one year delay)

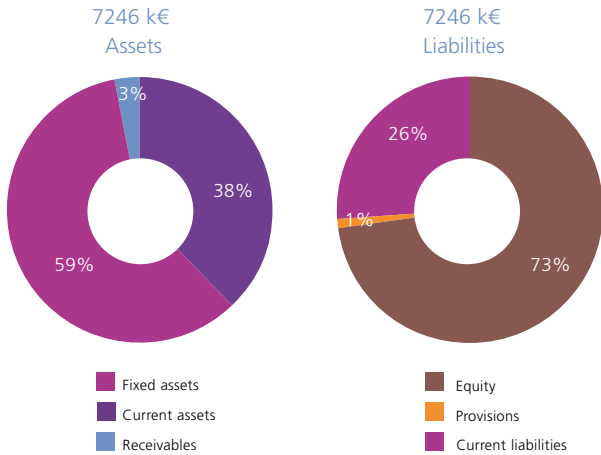


STAFF

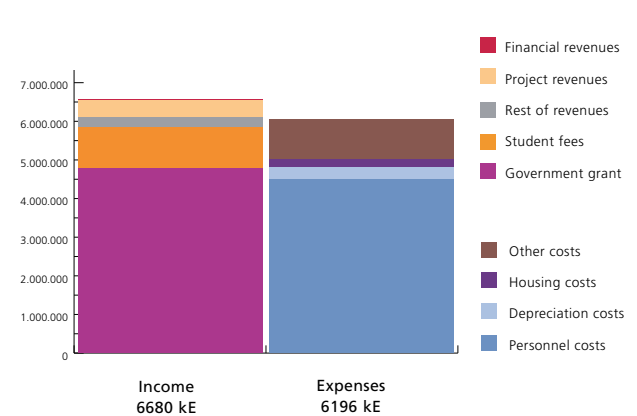
Total 64,7 fte



BALANCE SHEET 2014



OPERATION 2014



RESEARCH AND VALORISATION

FAVOURABLE ASSESSMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME AND GRADUATE SCHOOL

In 2014, an international review committee assessed the research and graduate education at the University of Humanistic Studies. The assessment process was organised by Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities (QANU). The committee assessed the quality, productivity and relevance of the research as 'good' (3) to 'very good' (4). The committee moreover confirmed the relevance of the graduate school and acknowledged that it contributes significantly to strengthening our research in general, and to building our network with important societal fields in particular. The committee supports the University's plans with regard to a further internationalisation of the research and the intensification of collaboration with a selection of academic and societal partners.

PUBLICATIONS

In 2014, scholars of the University for Humanistic Studies (with 14.6 FTE available for research) published 68 articles, 10 PhD



Photo: Arnoud Mooij

theses and 11 (edited) books or special issues of journals.

For a full list of publications, see www.uvh.nl/annualreport2014.

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Established in 2010, in 2014 the graduate school counted 64 participants receiving supervision for their PhD research. After a joint first year in which they elaborate their research proposal, their education and supervision is subsequently clustered into five groups that each form a separate learning community. On 24 and 25 September 2014, on behalf of the graduate school, Professor Frans Vosman organised the international conference titled *An Inquiry into Theories of Practice: Rethinking Actors, Materiality and Organisations*. Keynote speakers were Professor Davide Nicolini (University of Warwick) and Professor Robert Schmidt (Katholische Universität Eichstätt-Ingolstadt).

Professor Frans Vosman (Photo: JK Images)



PRACTICE CENTRE MEANING & PROFESSION

The Practice Centre for Meaning & Profession contributes to processes of meaning and humanisation in professional practices and within organisations. The Centre pursues its mission through training and teaching programmes, workshops, theatre, conferences, and coaching. In 2014 the centre launched the inspiration programme 'Begeleiding bij Levensvragen' ('Counselling existential questions'). The programme offers various creative working methods that humanist counsellors, coaches and denominational practitioners can use when counselling clients with questions concerning meaning in life.



PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

In 2012, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science established performance agreements with all publicly funded universities and colleges. The agreement made with each institution sets out what the organisation aims to achieve with regard to the quality of education, the educational success of students, the profile of the education package offered, the training focus in research, and societal relevance (valorisation). In September 2014 the Higher Education Research and Review Committee determined that the University of Humanistic Studies is well on its way to fulfilling the agreements, and accordingly advised the minister to award the second instalment of the selective budget. The graph shows our steady progress towards these goals. A value on or outside the grey line means 'goal attained'.

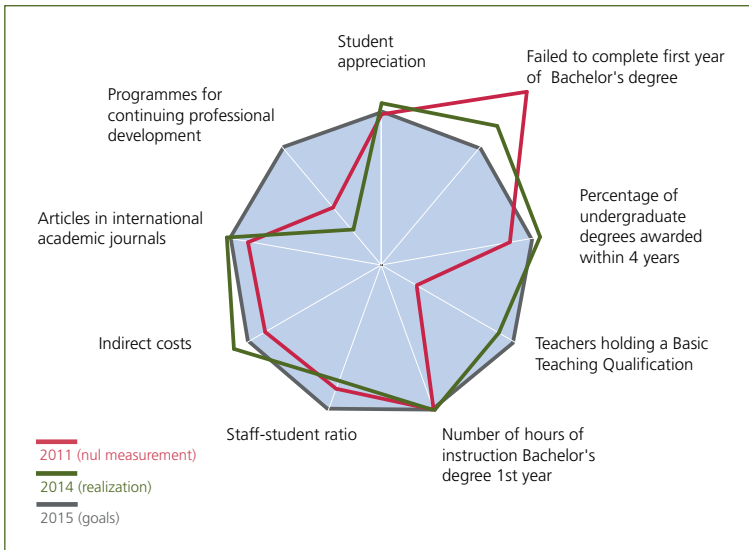


Photo: Willem Mes

MISSION

The University of Humanistic Studies is devoted to high-quality scientific research and education on the basis of its humanist inspiration and thereby contributes to a humane and sustainable society in which all people can lead a meaningful life.

WORKING VISIT BY THE KING'S COMMISSIONER

On Thursday 4 December 2014, the King's Commissioner in Utrecht, Mr W.I.I. (Willibrord) van Beek, honoured the University with a working visit. It was a very animated visit that yielded various opportunities to consolidate the relationship with the Province of Utrecht.



Students and King's commissioner.



Photo: JK Images



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The complete Annual Report of 2014 can be found on our website (in Dutch): www.uvh.nl/annualreport2014