

UNIVERSITY OF HUMANISTIC STUDIES

SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

RESEARCH 2014-2019

THE UNIVERSITY OF
HUMANISTIC STUDIES
ESPOUSES A HUMANISTIC
WORLDVIEW AND
PURSUES QUALITY
RESEARCH AND
EDUCATION DEDICATED
TO PROMOTING
MEANINGFUL LIVING
IN A JUST AND CARING
SOCIETY.

University of Humanistic Studies

**Self-evaluation report
Research 2014 – 2019**

Adopted by the Executive Board on 8 October 2020

Preface

This report contains the self-evaluation of research conducted at the University of Humanistic Studies (UHS) in the period 2014–2019 for the purpose of assessment. The contents, structure, and length of the report follow the Strategy Evaluation Protocol (SEP, 2021–2026). As the SEP invites research units to formulate additional criteria that speak to their own research priorities, we ask the committee to consider the following additional criteria:

1. Interdisciplinary research:
 - How does the committee evaluate the UHS research program and output in terms of cooperation between disciplines, in this case between the humanities and social sciences?
 - Does the committee perceive: (1) notable strengths? (2) a need and/or possibilities to strengthen the conditions for fruitful interdisciplinary research and cooperation?
2. Our mission in relation to our academic and societal environment:
 - Does the committee perceive: (1) notable strengths? (2) a need and/or possibilities to improve this relation?
 - How does the committee evaluate the UHS research program and output in terms of the relationship between our humanistic vision and: (1) our responsiveness to societal changes and challenges? (2) developments within the academic humanities and social sciences? (3) responsiveness to and cooperation with other academic and societal partners that do not explicitly share our humanistic view?
3. The balance between academic and societal output:
 - How does the committee evaluate the UHS research program and output in terms of balance between academic and societal output?
 - Does the committee perceive: (1) notable strengths? (2) a need and/or possibilities to improve the balance?

We look forward to discussing these and other questions with the committee.

We wish to express our gratitude to our researchers, PhD students, and support staff who contributed to our research during the past six years. We also thank the chair group leaders for their contributions to this report. Special thanks are due to Nanske Wilholt, Leander van der Spek, Irene Abbenhuis, Annelies van Velze, Jannemarie van den Brand, and Yamit Gutman for their valuable contributions, David Hymans for his excellent text-editing and Nanske for professionally managing the whole process.

Prof. dr. J. van Saane, rector

Prof. dr. E. Tonkens, academic research director

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1. Introduction: about the University of Humanistic Studies

The University of Humanistic Studies, situated in the city of Utrecht in the Netherlands, espouses a humanistic worldview and pursues quality research and education dedicated to promoting meaningful living in a just and caring society. With this mission, the UHS since its founding in 1989 has occupied a unique position among Dutch universities as well as in the international academic landscape. In the Netherlands, public, state-funded institutions of higher education can be founded on a specific—religious or non-religious—worldview. The UHS belongs to this group.

UHS is a Foundation with a Supervisory Board, whose members are formally appointed by the Main Board of the Dutch Humanist League (*Humanistisch Verbond*). The daily management of the UHS lies with the Executive Board, consisting of the rector/president and a second member. Academic staff are divided into chair groups, supported by the departments of management & facilities, education, and research & valorisation. Academic directors are responsible for the departments of education and research & valorisation. The current academic director of research was appointed in June 2019. Appendix 21 contains an organizational chart.

Research at UHS addresses public issues with a normative component. We ask both empirical and normative questions and answer them through interdisciplinary social science and humanities research. Our research focuses on three themes: (1) Humanism; (2) Meaning in Life; and (3) A Just and Caring Society. Our shared research program (see appendix 1) is built around these themes, which guide our strategic choices, encourage us to collaborate both internally and externally, and augment our visibility to peers and societal partners. For example, a project like *Dignity among Vulnerable Groups of Citizens in Utrecht*, carried out with the municipality of Utrecht, combines philosophical analysis of the concept of dignity and the empirical analysis of experiences of (violations of) dignity among Utrecht citizens.

As can be seen in Table 1, UHS has grown substantially over the past six years:

Table 1. UHS key facts & figures: 2014 and 2019

Category	2014	2019	Sub-category	2014	2019
BA and MA students	563	530			
PhD students	116	86	Employed PhD students	5	14
			External PhD students	111	72
Fte staff total	64,7	81,2	Academic staff	37,5	54,1
			Non-academic staff	27,4	27,1
Fte for research	14,64	22,95	Academic staff	10,96	15,43
			Endowed professors	1,16	1,28
			PhD students employed by UHS	2,52	6,24
Research expenditure in €	1.630.087	2.675.219	Government funding	1.231.496	1.712.744
			Research grants	27.063	639.311
			Contract funding	371.528	323.164

Details on staff and funding can be found in the SEP Tables E2 and E 3 (appendices 4 and 5).

2. Mission and strategic goals 2014–2019

2.1 Mission

UHS pursues high-quality academic research and education for both academic and societal audiences on the basis of its core humanist values, aimed at contributing to a humane society in which all people can lead meaningful lives. While the *humanization of society* and its institutions and *meaningful living* are perennial concepts in our research, both are amenable to debate and contestation. In our research, we deliberately leave these concepts open to interpretation. Instead, we study the many manifestations and understandings of a humane society or meaningful living in specific times, places, and contexts—as well as how they may best be achieved. Due to our focus on meaning, most of our empirical research is conducted by way of qualitative and narrative methods.

2.2 Strategic goals

Before we turn to the goals that were formulated for the period 2014–2019, we wish to emphasize three underlying principles.

First, we aim to create in a *cooperative culture*. We work closely with our societal partners to frame questions for research and believe that good research is the product of collective effort. We encourage researchers to invest time and effort in ‘organizational citizenship’—activities that support colleagues and our research community as a whole. We have been critical of the increasingly competitive academic culture of the past decades—one that went too far in focusing on individual excellence.

Second, we pursue a fruitful *alliance between academic quality and societal relevance* and aim to share our research findings with groups in society. This endeavour has more recently been supported by the societal turn in Dutch academia.

Third, we endorse diversity in terms of both *identity* (diversity among staff) and *multivocality*—of giving voice to many different (ethnic, religious, and other) societal groups and points of view.

Our four strategic goals need to be considered with these underlying principles in mind. They were developed in response to the findings of the previous external evaluation committee in 2014 (appendix 22.a). Following the midterm review of 2017 (appendix 22.b), they were fine-tuned and included in the University’s Strategic Plan for the period 2017–2021 (see appendix 23).

1. ***Strengthen the focus of our research.*** The committee of 2014 advised us to invest in a recognizable, interdisciplinary program to improve the quality of our research, to make us more attractive for structural partnerships, and to gain visibility in the academic and outside world. We took this advice to heart and have developed a shared, thematic research program (appendix 1).
2. ***Reinforce the alliance between academic quality and societal relevance in our research.*** As the societal relevance of our research is already well-established, we focused on increasing our academic output in international refereed journals with above-average impact factors. We did so to buttress the academic quality of our work and to reinforce our

reputation as a reliable, attractive, and visible partner for our academic peers and societal partners.

3. **Increase the research budget.** We doubled down on our efforts to compete for research grants to increase our research volume, academic output, and opportunities for international academic collaboration. From 2018 on, we targeted at an overall yearly income from research grants and contract research of at least € 400.000.
4. **Strengthen PhD education and raise the PhD success rate.** We have always attracted a large number of external PhD students. Many are public sector professionals who work in care, social work, local government, or education. Their presence has allowed us to bridge academic quality and social relevance. We also have a smaller - but increasing - number of employed PhD students financed by research grants. Following the advice of the 2014 review committee, we enhanced our efforts to strengthen the quality of our PhD education program, attract more employed PhD students, and increase our PhD success rate, with a target of, on average, 9 PhD graduates per year.

3. Strategic interventions

3.1 Strengthening the focus of our research

In 2014, our research was organised in six chair groups, each with its own profile. To strengthen the focus of research, the corpus has been adapted over the years. The chairs *Globalisation Studies* and *Humanist Counselling* were merged in 2015 to become *Globalisation and Dialogue Studies*, chaired by Hans Alma. When Alma left the university in 2016, the group was gradually dissolved. *Humanism and Philosophy*, led by Joachim Duyndam, was renamed *Humanism and Social Resilience* when Anja Machielse took over its leadership in 2019, ahead of Duyndam's retirement in 2021. *Education* was taken over by Doret de Ruyter following Wiel Veugelers' retirement in 2018. *Research Methodology and Theory of Sciences*, led by the former rector Gerty Lensvelt-Mulders, was dissolved after 1 January 2020, as Lensvelt-Mulders continued her career elsewhere. The legacy of this chair is secured by the five remaining chair groups. Currently, our corpus consists of five chair groups:

1. **Care Ethics**, led by Carlo Leget since 2016
2. **Citizenship and Humanisation of the Public Sector**, led by Evelien Tonkens since 2014
3. **Education**, led by Doret de Ruyter since 2018
4. **Humanism and Social Resilience**, led by Anja Machielse since 2020
5. **Humanist Chaplaincy Studies for a Plural Society**, led by Gaby Jacobs since 2018

With the objective of gaining focus in our research, a bottom up process was started to develop a shared research program. This resulted in the program *A meaningful life in a just and caring society* in 2018. To improve its consistency and its interdisciplinary character across the chair groups, in 2019 the new research director had a working group installed, whose recommendations formed the basis for the current version, which was adopted in 2020 (appendix 1). It focuses on three themes: 1. Humanism; 2. Meaningful living; 3. A just and caring society. All chair groups contribute to these themes.

3.2 Reinforcing the alliance between academic quality and societal relevance

We have taken the following measures to reinforce the alliance between academic quality of our work and societal relevance, thus to reinforce our reputation as a reliable, attractive, and visible partner for our academic peers and societal partners.

Publication strategy. We took four measures to increase the number of relevant academic publications and at the same time enhance our visibility to society.

1. Since 2015, we have organized monthly research seminars where we discuss research proposals and papers that are almost ready for submission. The chair group leaders leading the seminars ensure that staff members give critical but supportive feedback on each other's work in a collegial atmosphere of solidarity.
2. Since 2017, we have focused on publishing articles in international refereed journals with above-average impact factors. At the same time, we also formulated indicators and set targets on societal relevance (elaborated in section 4).
3. We formulated HR policy targets and time-lines for academic output (elaborated below).
4. All staff members and PhD students can now have their academic English language publications turned open access, which the UHS subsidizes on a per-article basis.

Promoting a lively, open, and diverse academic culture. We took five measures to further promote a lively, open, and diverse academic culture at UHS, where the ambition for academic excellence and societal relevance goes together with cooperation and solidarity.

1. The research seminar series and the bottom-up development of our research program have aimed at encouraging cooperation across the chair groups as well. We have organized annual Graduate School conferences with distinguished national and international scholars, where PhD students and staff present work in progress. Themes have included "Resilience" (2014), "Dignity and Emotional Labour" (2017), and "Resonance" (2018).
2. As the 2014 review committee recommended, we invested in national and international cooperation with academic and societal partners to strengthen our position as an (inter)national platform for interdisciplinary research on the humanisation of society and meaningful living. We have attracted new endowed chairs that strengthen our bonds with societal partners. Our Centre for Meaning and Profession has supported external cooperation by organizing trainings and lectures for societal partners. To stimulate international academic cooperation, each chair group was encouraged to have at least one cooperation agreement with a university abroad. We also set up a special fund in 2017 to facilitate international activities for promising female assistant professors.
3. We adhere to The Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, as adopted by all Dutch higher education institutions in 2018. We fine-tuned our policies for research integrity and data management (appendix 24) in 2016. A confidential adviser for academic integrity has been appointed. In 2020 UHS installed an ethical review committee that monitors the integrity of empirical research involving human subjects. The committee assesses each and every study involving human participants in advance. UHS participates in a committee for academic integrity shared by a group of universities, that handles questions and complaints about academic integrity.
4. We made changes to our HR policy. Between 2016 and 2018, we updated our procedures for appointing, assessing, and promoting academic staff. All new staff members are now expected to develop a research proposal for competitive funding. Since 2015, we have

been working with three-year personal development programs (PDP) that inform decisions for tenure and promotion. Staff members who repeatedly fail to reach research output targets are offered opportunities to focus on teaching. (Younger) ambitious staff see the PDP as supportive of their careers. Chair group leaders, together with the University Board, are committed to create opportunities for talents (appendix 25). Some (older) staff who expect to stay in their current positions have experienced the PDP as a bureaucratic hassle. Since 2019, the PDP has been voluntary. To break from the idea that teaching and societal relevance are of secondary importance, we have also cautiously begun to experiment with different career paths that variously emphasize research, teaching, or societal relevance.

5. We have started to strive for a more diverse composition of our staff in terms of age, gender, and migration background. A baseline measurement in 2019 (Table 2) shows that our staff is diverse in terms of age and that women are over-represented in all academic positions. Four out of five chair group leaders are women. More problematic is that white people of Dutch descent are massively over-represented:

Table 2. Composition of the academic staff according to three diversity criteria in 2019

Gender	Total	M	F
	71	23 32,4 %	48 67,6 %

Age	Total	<30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60>
	71	9 12,7 %	19 26,7 %	18 25,35 %	15 21,12 %	10 12,08 %

Origin	Total	NL	Europe	Other
	71	61 85,9 %	7 9,85 %	3 4,25 %

We recognize this latter over-representation as irreconcilable with our mission to contribute to a humane society in which all people can lead meaningful lives. With the appointments of the new rector and the research director in 2019, diversity among staff has been placed much higher on the university's agenda.

3.3. Increasing the research budget

In the past years, UHS has made great efforts to increase its research budget through research grants (*2e geldstroom*) and contract research (*3e geldstroom*). Since 2018 we work with indicators that are frequently monitored (see section 4). We took three measures to improve the overall success rate when applying for funding.

1. We introduced additional training, led by an external expert, for candidates competing for funding. This coaching sparked a collective learning process that eventually made his presence redundant.
2. We appointed a grant advisor in 2018.
3. Since 2015, we have intensified our peer review of pre-submission research proposals, through the monthly research seminar as well as through ad hoc grant support groups led by one or two professors. These provide critical feedback on proposals for competitive grants such as NWO personal grants.

3.4 Strengthening PhD education and raising the PhD success rate

We implemented eight measures to professionalize our Graduate School in order to strengthen PhD education and raise PhD success rate, particularly for external PhD students.

1. Following the advice of the 2014 review committee, we reformed the management structure of the Graduate School in 2019 by bringing it under the responsibility of the UHS research director.
2. Also based on the recommendations of the committee, we improved the recruitment and selection of external PhD students in 2016. The recruitment and selection of new students is now aligned with the main themes of the UHS research program and the expertise of its staff. We have also introduced a course on academic English; taught by an external language institute, it focusses on publishing in international peer reviewed journals.
3. We increased the number of employed PhD students who, on average, perform better. We introduced a matching principle: each chair group can appoint two employed PhD students, funded 50% by the university, on condition that the other 50% is externally funded.
4. Since 2015, we have a peer review assessment procedure at the end of the first year of Graduate School. Each proposal and article is assessed by three internal reviewers, after which the full UHS Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees decides on admission to the continuation of the Graduate School training.
5. In 2019 we decided to drastically cut student tuition fees from € 4200 per year (twice the regular student fee of € 2100) to € 500 to reduce the dropout rate, as many self-financed students were experiencing difficulties. The measure was implemented in September 2020.
6. Based on input from a working group of PhD students and staff in 2019, we improved the educational program. After a period with two coordinators, each responsible for separate parts of the program (appendix 20.a.), one coordinator was appointed at the beginning of 2020, responsible for the quality of the overall educational program (appendix 20.b.).
7. Since 2020, the program has been compulsory—although adaptable to personal needs and wishes—and students are now required to earn study credits. All students develop a personal portfolio of assignments based on the courses they follow. When expedient, students are encouraged to complement their tailor-made academic training at external research institutions.
8. To improve the quality of supervision, since 2015 all PhD students should have at least two supervisors. In 2019 we decided to set up a peer support system for supervisors to exchange experiences and strategies. We also intend to allocate professors more time for PhD supervision.
9. To better include PhD students in evaluation and decision-making, we decided to install a PhD Student Board which will be operational in 2020.

4. Evidence

This section gives a brief overview of the sources of data and the indicators we chose to demonstrate our accomplishments. The accomplishments themselves will be discussed in section 5. The full, detailed data are presented in the appendices.

In line with SEP Table E1, we distinguish between research quality and societal relevance. We measure products, use, and marks of recognition for both. We have formulated targets for academic articles and dissertations, products for societal groups, research grants, and cooperation with academic and societal partners. For each, we set minimum as well as maximum values to limit the workload and focus on quality. Here below the targets for 2019.

Table 3. Overview of indicators and targets for research for 2019

	1. Research quality	2. Relevance to society
Demonstrable Products	a. Research products for peers 2-3 articles in leading international academic journals per fulltime staff member (with 0,45 fte research time) (<i>see 5.2 and appendix 8.b</i>) 4- 5 dissertations per chair group every 3 years (<i>see 5.4 and appendix 17.a</i>)	a. Research products for societal groups 1-2 articles in journals for professionals or the general public per chair group per year (<i>see 5.2 and appendix 9.b</i>)
Demonstrable use of products	b. Use of research products by peers 1-2 collaborations with academic partners per chair group (<i>see 5.2 and appendix 11.a</i>)	b. Use of research products by societal groups 1-2 collaborations with societal partners per chair group (<i>see 5.2 and appendix 11.b</i>)
Demonstrable marks of recognition	c. Marks of recognition from peers € 20-40k research grants per chair group per year (<i>see 5.2, 5.3 and appendix 16.a</i>) 3-6 memberships of academic bodies or editorial boards per chair group (<i>see 5.2 and appendix 12.a</i>) 1-2 fellowships abroad per chair group per 3 years (<i>see 5.2 and appendix 12.b</i>)	c. Marks of recognition from societal groups € 60-120k contract research per chair group per year (<i>see 5.2, 5.3 and appendix 16.a</i>)

Quantitative data on the research time of research staff (SEP Table E2), on funding (SEP Table E3), and on PhD students (SEP Table E4) are presented in appendices 4, 5 and 6 respectively.

Appendix 1 presents our thematic research program. Appendix 2 presents a case study for each theme. A selection of publications for each theme is available for the committee in Appendices 3.a-h.

5. Accomplishments

5.1 Strengthening the focus of our research

To strengthen the focus of our research, we have developed a research program centred around three themes: (1) Humanism; (2) Meaning in Life; and (3) A Just and Caring Society (appendix 1). Within each theme, there has been a consistent stream of publications over the years, both for academic peers and for professionals and the wider public (appendices 7.a-c).

To showcase our thematic research and its academic and societal impact, we have selected three case studies which are presented in appendices 2.a-c.

Within each theme, our research addresses topical challenges. One example is “social injustice and social trauma”, studied in Nicole Immler’s project *The Dialogics of Justice: Assessing Recognition as a Process of Resonance*. With a € 1.5 million grant from the Dutch Research Council in 2020, Immler leads a team studying what victims of violence and abuse need to feel socially recognized, focusing on the dialogue between prosecutors and defendants.

Our focus on societal challenges also allows us to respond to urgent and topical issues, as can be gleaned from our involvement in projects and activities focused on the impact of Covid-19. We are taking part in a national project on how Covid-19 impacts local governance and in an international research project on the impact of Covid-19 on individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their caregivers.

About diversity. Diversity is assumed in all themes of our research program. An inventory by our working group on diversity, presented in 2019, shows that we address diversity mostly in terms of multivocality, closely followed by (dis)ability and age.

Table 4. Peer reviewed articles 2014–2019, coded and quantified on the basis of keywords & titles (dataset 19/11/2019)

	Number	
Multivocality	98	Perspectives of: - patients, including parents of underaged children (31) - multiple actors (patients, clients, citizens, healthcare professionals, policymakers, researchers, others) (26) - caregivers, family (9) - social workers (6) - nurses (5) - teachers (2) - people with a migration background (18) (see migration background)
Disabilities	83	Multiple sclerosis (28) Psychiatric (19) Developmental disorders (8) Other groups (17)
Age	77	Elderly (43) Youth (26) Children (8)
Nationality	22	Iran, Finland, Estonia, Philippines, Indonesia, Belgium
Migration background	26	Turkish-Dutch; Moroccan-Dutch; Antillean-Dutch, Iran, South Africa, Philippines
Religion / spirituality	7	Religious pluralism (5) Islam (2)
Methodological diversity	3	
Gender / LGBT	7	

This table also shows that our research pays scant attention to diversity in terms of migration background, religion and gender.

5.2 Reinforcing the alliance between academic quality and societal relevance

Increasing the number of articles in refereed journals. The target of 2 to 3 articles in leading international academic journals per full time assistant, associate, and full professor per year was reached in 2018 and nearly reached in 2019 (indicator 1a; see also appendix 8.b).

Table 5. Trends in publications for academic peers 2014–2019

Publications for peers	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Articles in refereed journals	51	41	58	57	62	79
Book chapters	15	11	26	10	25	25

In 2016 and 2017, we experimented with lists of preferred high impact journals for each chair group (appendix 15: 12). This policy has gradually been abandoned in favour of including a broader range of journals.

To better reach our academic peers, all our academic staff members and PhD students could have their academic English language publications turned open access, which UHS subsidizes on a per-article basis (appendix 10).

Table 6. Percentage of open access articles in refereed journals 2015–2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Open Access	17 (41,5%)	20 (34%)	15 (27%)	29 (47%)	35 (44%)

A lively, open, and diverse academic culture. Internal and external cooperation is growing, as can be seen in the number of co-authored publications with researchers based at UHS and other universities (appendix 15: 13). Our university is well-placed within international academic networks. In 2019 15 cooperating academic partners were reported, exceeding the target (indicator 1b, appendix 11.a). In the period 2014 – 2019 more than 60 academic partners from different countries were involved in projects with UHS participation (appendix 11.c). 43% of academic publications by UHS researchers have been cited by peers in journal articles, book chapters, or books indexed by Google Scholar (appendix 15: 18).

The quality of our research is increasingly recognized. Our income from competitive research grants in 2018 and 2019 exceeded the targets (indicator 1c, appendix 16.a). Both senior and younger members of staff have received peer recognition in line with where they are in their respective careers (appendix 12.a-g). Four dissertations by young academics were awarded (appendix 12.c). For instance *Ready to Give Up on Life: A Study into the Lived Experience of Older People Who Consider their Lives to be Completed and No Longer Worth Living* by Els van Wijngaarden, who received the prestigious Dissertation Prize by the Foundation Praemium Erasmianum in 2017.

Senior staff are well represented in academic bodies, examination committees, and editorial boards of Dutch and international journals. We exceeded the target of 3–6 memberships in academic bodies or editorial boards per chair group over the previous six years. There were 70 such memberships, averaging 14 per chair group (indicator 1c, appendix 12.a). UHS staff held 6 international fellowships in 2018 and 4 in 2019; our target was 2 such fellowships each year (indicator 1c, appendix 12.b).

Societal cooperation, impact and interaction. The target of 1 to 2 forms of cooperation with societal partners per chair group for 2019 was realized, given the list of partners reported on that year (indicator 2b, appendix 11.b). The list of projects of the period 2014 – 2019 indicates a vast range of partners, including ministries, hospitals, NGOs and voluntary organizations (appendix 11.c.). In 2018 and 2019 we also met our annual targets for generating funding through these partnerships (indicator 2c, appendix 16.a).

As for societal impact and interaction, we see that:

1. Examples of interactions leading to impact are abound. For example, Anja Machielse's typology of isolated adults, published in a academic article in 2015, came to inform policy in the City of Rotterdam, including trainings for social workers and policy advisors (see appendix 2.a for further examples of impact).
2. Among our societal partners, UHS researchers interact the most with public sector professionals (appendix 15: 41-50).
3. Our research appeals to different publics. Sometimes there is little overlap, for example between those who make use of our research on ageing and our research on end of life (appendix 15: 49). In other cases, publics overlap. Our research on ethical professionalism, for instance, is used by a range of public organisations, including municipalities, housing corporations, and professional training organisations for geriatrics and chaplains. Our research on humanist philosophy speaks most to organized humanists, such as local chapters of the Dutch Humanist League.
4. Some of our societal partners are interested in the full range of our research spanning care and disability, humanism, professionalism and citizenship. Others are interested in research anchored within specific chairs (appendix 15: 50).
5. Lectures for broader publics show that our societal partners repeatedly turn to specific UHS researchers for advice or teaching (appendices 7.a., 7.b. and 7.c.).
6. UHS researchers communicate with our societal partners through numerous channels, including professional publications, lectures, talks, brainstorming sessions, reports, conferences, television appearances and interviews. We easily met our annual goal of 10 to 20 articles in journals for professionals (indicator 2a, appendix 9.b).

UHS staff also interact with our societal partners through the UHS Centre for Meaning and Profession (see appendix 14 for an overview of activities). We are currently repositioning this centre—temporarily called the Centre for Expertise—to strengthen its ties to our research program and to develop a more systematic, open science approach to our valorisation policies.

5.3 Increasing the research budget

Our efforts to attract funding—research grants from NWO (the Dutch Research Council) and ZonMw (The Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development) as well as from ministries, municipalities, provinces, social funds, and other public and private organizations—have been highly successful. UHS staff have recently acquired highly competitive VENI and VICI grants from NWO, widely considered the most prestigious grants for innovative research in the Netherlands.

Funding from research grants has risen dramatically over the past six years, especially in 2017, 2018, and 2019, easily surpassing our target of € 20.000 to 40.000 per chair group (indicator 1c, appendix 16.a). The average rose from about € 8000 per chair group per year in

the period 2014 – 2016 to € 67.000 per chair group per year in the period 2017 - 2019. Funding from contract research rose as well; the targets for 2018 and 2019 were easily met (indicator 2c, appendix 16.a).

5.4 Strengthening PhD education and raising the PhD success rate

We see the first results of our efforts in improving our PhD success rate. The average of 6,5 degrees per year between 2008 and 2013 increased to 9,5 degrees per year between 2014 and 2019 (indicator 1a, appendix 17.a).

Of the PhD students who began their trajectories between 2011 and 2015, 50% eventually discontinued their studies (18% graduated and 33% are still working towards their degree). Since 2016, firmer recruitment and selection procedures for external PhD students have led to the rejection of 50% of the applicants (appendix 18.a and b). More rigorous selection following the first year is intended to further reduce drop out in later years. Of the PhD students who began their trajectories between 2011 and 2015 and were admitted to the second year, 41% eventually discontinued their studies. Among those who started between 2016 and 2018 and were admitted to the second year, up till now only 7% discontinued their doctoral research.

Measures to appoint more PhD employees led to an increase of 2, 3, and 4 employees in 2017, 2018, and 2019. The dropout rate of employed PhD students is 17% (appendix 19).

6. SWOT analysis

Over the past six years, we have made steady progress towards living up to our mission. Our current situation is summarized in this SWOT analysis—a starting point for formulating our goals for the coming six-year period.

Table 7. SWOT analysis

Strengths (internal)	Weaknesses (internal)
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Contributions to society: equipping (future) professionals to consider normative questions in their work, including themes surrounding meaning in life and chaplaincy.2. Unique combination of a strong normative (humanist) foundation and academic openness, objectivity, methodological rigor.3. Rising academic output, in quality and quantity, leading to societal impact.4. Extensive academic and societal networks in which we successfully collaborate.5. A cooperative and supportive organizational culture at all levels; short lines of communication; increasing collaborations and co-authorships.6. A graduate school taking shape in dialogue with societal partners; increased focus in our thematic research program; improving quality of education and supervision.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Staff composition in terms of disciplinary background. The social sciences have been more successful in acquiring external funding than the humanities. This is a risk to our interdisciplinary approach, which requires the humanities and social sciences to work in tandem.2. Diversity among staff.3. Financial fragility due to our small size: limited financial resources to support sustained research, library access, and licensed software.
Opportunities (external)	Threats (external)
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Numerous, pressing academic and societal challenges to which we can readily contribute (see research program).2. Large, untapped pool of strategic partners and target groups to work with and to set up research activities.3. Our size means that within research consortia, we are often seen as a complementary party rather than a competitive one.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Growing policy and funding focus on the life sciences and technology, at the expense of the social sciences and humanities.2. Covid-19 lock-down measures that prevent in-person meetings.

7. Looking forward to strategy 2021–2026

Our mission has lost none of its urgency. Now, and in the years to come, academic and societal challenges in the Netherlands and around the world will require scholars and professionals who are able to address normative questions and questions of meaning while pursuing empirical academic research or their professional work within public institutions. To meet

these needs, we will focus on developing a robust, coherent strategy for research and valorisation. Its ingredients include:

1. ***Develop our transdisciplinary humanistic profile.*** We have successfully developed our profile as an interdisciplinary university that combines the humanities and social sciences to study meaningful living in a just and caring society. We wish to build on this profile and to further it in a *transdisciplinary* direction. The humanities and social sciences are not just the two pillars of our university; our specific research focus on *public issues with a normative component* requires scholars to combine empirical and normative questions and approaches. As the combination of the social sciences and humanities is more than mere addition, our approach is transdisciplinary rather than interdisciplinary. In the coming years, we wish to further develop this nascent transdisciplinary approach to our research.
2. ***Reinforce our position in academic and societal networks.*** We believe that our standing and influence among our academic peers and in broader society will increase as we strategically knit ourselves into networks with partners. We plan to tighten our relations with academic and societal partners in structural partnerships and in joint open science programming. For academic partners, we will focus on critical friends with whom we can fruitfully debate our profile and program; for societal partners, we will focus on parties who can best help us to fine-tune our research questions and further the societal impact of our research.
3. ***Tune into our users.*** We have identified the main beneficiaries of our research as professionals who require a normative knowledge base for their work—including but not limited to chaplains, teachers, medical doctors, and policy advisors. We wish to systematically enhance our knowledge of the groups who make use of our research as well as how to most effectively reach out to them. Avenues here include publications, courses, activities, and debates in the UHS Centre of Expertise. The aim is to improve research impact and to ensure lively exchange on questions to be addressed and researched.
4. ***Turn our shared research program into a lively cooperative practice.*** We will further develop, discuss—and if necessary, adapt—the main themes and discuss the key texts, authors, and concepts underpinning our research program. Within each of the three research themes, we will develop—together with our (inter)national academic and societal partners—at least two new, large research projects over the next six years. Our research seminars are already organized around the three themes of our research program. Our research program will likewise guide our efforts to strengthen structural cooperation among colleagues, PhD students, and with external academic and societal partners. We will establish a UHS-wide internationalization fund for workshops and seminars that better embed our research internationally, strengthen our contacts, and raise our visibility. We seek to become a nationally and internationally recognized centre of study for themes surrounding meaning in life in a just and caring society and a 'place to be' for researchers on these subjects.
5. ***Further shape the graduate school.*** We seek to further shape the graduate school into a lively place of informed debate and learning. Towards this end, we will develop a training and peer consultation system for supervisors and continue to improve the quality and

efficacy of our educational program. We will further raise the bar for selection following the first year to increase the success rate for PhDs. To better monitor the quality of our PhD education, we will develop a consistent system of quality assurance. We will further develop and support the PhD board to give students greater voice in their education. We aim to increase the number of endowed chairs to three per chair group to increase the number of staff who can supervise PhDs.

6. ***Strengthen research capacity by expanding our educational programs and stimulating excellence.*** We aim to further expand our research capacity to realize the promises of the transdisciplinary approach outlined above. We hope this will also allow us to integrate more adjacent disciplinary perspectives—such as law and economics—into our transdisciplinary approach to public issues with a normative component. First, we aim to develop new educational programs. We have already developed a proposal for a new Master’s program on citizenship, education, and professionalism, which is currently being reviewed by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO). We further hope to develop two new Master’s programs: a Research Master’s to better prepare students for the PhD, and a thematic Master’s, possibly on human rights, social change, and/or transitional justice.
7. ***Adapt our HR policy to our ambitions.*** To do justice to different talents, we aim to develop different job descriptions for researchers who variously excel in academic research and publishing, generating societal impact, or teaching. All researchers will have to keep publishing in specialized academic journals as well as in outlets for broader audiences, but not all have to do this in equal measure. To reduce work pressure among academic staff, we will invest in internal and external training and revise the system of ascribing time to research, education, and valorisation. We seek to more accurately acknowledge the time staff invest in PhD education and supervision, and to institute internal funds to support extra research time for key grants and valorisation projects.
8. ***Adapt our administration and support structure to our ambitions.*** We aim to increase the number of externally funded projects for which we will set new and ambitious targets. We will further support academic staff to apply for external funding through the following measures:
 1. A UHS-wide *research incentive fund* to support writing time for promising proposals for funding, for fundamental research, and for academic publications based on contract research.
 2. Training sessions for writing successful proposals, including their visual design and presentation.
 3. Strengthen the innovative capacity of the organization by promoting continuous education in internal and external training programs.
 4. Find new ways to give our PhD students and staff members full access to academic literature and databases.
 5. Intensify financial cooperation with other worldview-based universities to realize efficiency gains such as joint licenses, the pooling of expertise, and the sharing of facilities.
 6. Develop a housing plan that underlines the identity of the university and meets the requirements of a professional academic organization with sufficient workplaces, adequate ICT facilities, and full access to digital libraries.

9. ***Improve our quality assurance cycle on research policy.*** We will improve our quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that our goals are sustainably met. We will install project teams on sustainability, societal impact, and diversity. The diversity team will operate over a five-year period to give teeth to our diversity policy and to monitor its development. The societal impact team will develop a monitoring instrument to assess the societal impact of our research and how parties in society make use of our research.

We are convinced that these steps will help us to realize the mission of the University of Humanistic Studies to its full potential in the years to come.

Appendices

All appendices are available via the platform set up by the secretary of the committee. The most important appendices are provided in print as well.

1.	Research Program UHS	(in print - 20)
2.a.-c.	Case studies	(in print - 27)
3.	Key publications made available to the committee	(in print - 47)
4.	SEP table E 2. Research staff	
5.	SEP table E 3. Funding	
6.	SEP table E 4. PhD students	
7.a.-c.	Output themes	
8.a.-b	Publications for peers total	
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11.a-c.	Cooperation	
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14.	Centre for Meaning and Profession	
15.	Response Analysis of the research of the UHS	
16.a.-b.	Realisation funding targets and success rates applications	
17.a-b.	Dissertations	
18.a.-b.	Recruitment and selection PhD students	
19.	Employed PhD students	
20.a.-b.	Graduate school program	
21.	Organization chart	
22.a-b	Research review 2014 and midterm review 2017	
23.	University Strategic plan 2017 – 2021 (outline in English)	
24.	Research data management policy: outline	
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Appendix 1. Research program

A meaningful life in a just and caring society

Research Program of the University of Humanistic Studies

Adopted by the Executive Board on 17 September 2020

Introduction: our research mission

The University of Humanistic Studies is an independent, government-funded university. Inspired by the worldviews and traditions of humanism. Our research focuses on *public problems with a normative component*, oriented towards building humane societies in which all people can lead meaningful lives. Our *transdisciplinary* approach integrates philosophy, history and the social sciences. Philosophical perspectives inform our conceptual and ethical analyses of public problems; historical study traces how problems emerged and evolved; empirical social scientific research examines how contemporary public problems are framed, understood and acted upon by individuals and institutions. By critically analysing current practices, we seek to contribute to practical improvements that foster meaningful living in a just society.

We typically pursue our research together with stakeholders—clients, students, professionals, managers and others—and seek to improve research methods as well as communication, evaluation and monitoring tools to study public problems with a normative dimension, including research on hard-to-reach populations. Our empirical research often makes use of qualitative or mixed methods. We privilege interpretative approaches including narrative research, shadowing, focus-groups, photo-voice and in-depth interviewing as well as responsive and participative approaches such as action research, participative interviewing and flexible surveys—all tailored to specific populations and their concrete circumstances.

Our research program, outlined below, is built around three themes that animate our mission: humanism, meaningful living and a humane society. Within these perennial themes, we pursue quality transdisciplinary research on contemporary social and scientific challenges.

1. Humanism

For the University of Humanistic Studies, humanism is both an object of study and a frame of meaning. As an object of study, we analyse how humanism—with special attention to Dutch humanism—has developed as a social and intellectual tradition. We study the foundations of humanism, its core concepts and values, its historical manifestations, and its significance for the present and for our common future. Drawing on insights and expertise from philosophy,

history, and the social sciences, we critically evaluate humanism and its constituting concepts and ideals.

Humanism as a *frame of meaning* upholds standards for human welfare, human progress, social justice, dignity and relational autonomy for all. Humanism holds that life is shaped by both human agency and by social, political and ecological circumstances. We therefore understand autonomy as relational and relative. We further distinguish between humanism as moral agency and humanism as a moral-political endeavour to contribute to humane institutions.

Humanism as *moral agency* is guided by the key values of liberty, responsibility, human flourishing and openness (or scepticism towards all dogma). All people must enjoy the freedom to choose their own goals in life, to develop themselves and to flourish—a freedom that comes with responsibility for the consequences of one's decisions. We must be open to new knowledge and insights, while rejecting dogmatism that blocks the advancement of knowledge. Humanism welcomes fundamental uncertainty and disagreement over knowledge and values, and thus places great value in scientific methods and argumentation.

Humanism as a *political and social endeavour* is guided by the values of social justice, equality, solidarity, democracy, the rule of law, human rights, human dignity and equal participation in society—values crucial for the creation of just institutions that safeguard moral agency. To enable human flourishing, we need institutions that strive for social justice and give people equal access to knowledge and services. To contribute to personal freedom and responsibility, we need institutions that foster openness and anti-dogmatism, respect for the rule of law and free democratic public debate. To guarantee personal freedom for all, we need institutions that protect this freedom and promote active tolerance and solidarity with members of out-groups and which encourage people to champion the freedoms of others, including the freedoms of people who hold different values and opinions as ourselves. Finally, human flourishing requires possibilities to be full, empowered members of society and local communities.

A key concept in contemporary humanism is *social resilience*, understood as the individual and collective capacity of people to permanently realise dignity and relational autonomy in thinking and acting, with oneself and others, when facing vulnerability, adversity and social pressure. We understand humanism as a moral responsibility to use our freedom to further personal development—our own and that of others—and to shape our world together. Our research program aims to advance our understanding of the complex interplay between the humanist ideal of being an autonomous person, gifted with moral agency, and being part of social, political, cultural and organisational structures. We are conscious of the tensions between these agential and institutional aspects of humanism: personal fulfilment can clash with moral-political aims such as social justice; equality can clash with individual freedom. Our research includes the study of such clashes and concomitant dilemmas.

Challenges to contemporary humanism

We discern three pressing contemporary challenges to humanism. The first concerns globalisation and the concomitant diversity of and confrontation between worldviews. Humanism can be studied as a worldview among other worldviews, but also as a mediator between them. We ask how humanism as a worldview is related to other worldviews: what is the meaning and value of an inclusive humanism that strives for reciprocal respect and dialogue between different worldviews? How can humanism engage in constructive dialogue with different worldviews and traditions such as Islam, Buddhism and animism? What can humanism, with its primarily white roots, learn from Afro-American black humanism? Should humanism join forces with world religions to criticize transhumanism, or should transhumanism be understood (and maybe even welcomed) as a form of humanism?

As a mediator between worldviews, what can humanism with its values of anti-dogmatism and dialogue contribute to respectful exchange in a globalizing world? What visions of a desirable shared future are at stake in dialogues between different (religious and secular) groups? What would a constructive and respectful dialogue between different worldviews—concerning for example human rights and the rights of sexual minorities—look like?

The second challenge concerns criticisms of anthropocentrism in the face of the ecological crisis. Is a non-anthropocentric humanism desirable or even conceivable? And if so, how? Can we (re)interpret humanism and humaneness in ways that acknowledge other animals and plants as equally valuable forms of life? How can we develop an ethics of care that includes other species? New technologies raise new questions. How should humans relate to robots? Do robots and artificial intelligence transform our understanding of what it means to be human? What are the consequences for our understanding of human dignity?

The third challenge concerns social resilience in the face of societal forces that isolate people and pit them against each other. What can individuals and communities do to become more resilient? Can humanism encourage resilience in the face of growing loneliness and isolation, for instance among the elderly? How can social resilience be promoted in the face of growing discrimination, intolerance and anti-democratic tendencies that trample on the key humanist tenets of rationality, logical reasoning, reasonable doubt and self-criticism? What resources are available in humanist traditions for promoting social resilience in the face of adversity?

2. Meaningful living

Our second research theme revolves around *meaningful living* in a just society. By meaningful living we refer to the moral dimension of the good life, distinct from social-psychological constructs such 'well-being', 'quality of life' or 'happiness' that shy away from normative theories

about the good life. Meaningful living in our view necessarily has a moral dimension: it requires active engagement in ‘projects of worth’ (Wolf 2010: 53).¹

We seek to understand meaningful living conceptually and theoretically as well as empirically: how people pursue meaning over their life course and how meaning is lost and found through major and minor experiences and through life’s transitions. We explore through an empirical ethics of care how meaning in life changes through life events such as pregnancy and birth, ageing, loss and dying. Is there an art to dying? What can meaningful living be at the end of life?

Humanism has traditionally attached great importance to finding meaning in life through the arts and in rituals. In line with this tradition, we explore the relationship between meaningful living and the arts and other aesthetic resources, as well as how rituals for birth and death can contribute to meaningful living.

Our research also focuses on situations in which meaningful living is threatened, including situations of moral distress, moral injury and trauma. We ask how meaning is lost and how it can be regained, and how social resilience plays a role in regaining meaning in life. How can social practices such as civic participation, civic friendships and community building, organised or informal encounters, contribute to meaningful living? To what extent does a good, meaningful life presuppose participation and engagement in society? We strive to understand and strengthen the contributions of (humanistic) chaplaincy and other healthcare practices to find meaning in life for individuals, groups and communities.

Challenges to meaningful living

Our research focuses on three major contemporary challenges to meaningful living. First, rising life expectancy in the affluent world is raising questions about meaning in old age. While more and more people continue living for many years in relative health following retirement, they also often have to contend with loss—of their social roles, of loved ones, of their health, of control over decision-making and their own lives. These losses can lead to social isolation, feelings of loneliness and loss of meaning. The pressing question is how to age well and to retain or rediscover meaning in life in the face of these challenges. While academic research and public opinion often equate successful aging with remaining healthy and active, our research adds a humanist perspective to the largely biomedical and sociological debate by focusing on meaningful ageing.

There is a further dimension to meaningful ageing. A growing number of older adults are reporting that their lives are effectively over; without sufficient meaning to continue living,

¹ Wolf, S. (2012). *Meaning in Life and Why It Matters*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

many wish to end their lives. Our research seeks to understand the stories behind such assessments. Are they related to social circumstances? To how our society understands and organises meaningful ageing? Our research aims to contribute to an inclusive society in which older people can continue to meaningfully participate in society for as long as possible.

A second pressing issue concerns rediscovering meaning in life in the wake of social injustice, moral injury, or social trauma. While the past decade has witnessed growing interest in recovery and repair following social injustice, research has largely addressed psychological and legal issues without a focus on meaning. How can colonial wrongs be repaired in a way that grants proper recognition to victims? How can people live meaningful lives after postcolonial trauma? How can people rediscover meaning after experiencing ecocide, war crimes or sexual assault? What is the role of mourning, shame, and guilt in restoring meaning to life? How can communication about traumatic or otherwise far-reaching life experiences be improved? How can narratives and rituals support repair?

A third contemporary challenge concerns constraints on meaningful education due to how schooling is organized. Education can be a significant source of meaning in life and plays a crucial role in children's opportunities to flourish, now and in the future. Yet, how schooling is currently organized—with an emphasis on testing students and holding teachers accountable for meeting bureaucratic goals—is neither attentive nor conducive to the pedagogical dimensions of education. What does meaningful education entail? Where do pupils find meaning in life? Does it include (the well-being of) others, fulfilling civic roles and engagement in society? Do teachers believe they can contribute to students' possibilities to lead meaningful lives? How do teachers perceive their pedagogical roles?

A similar challenge to meaning in life is at stake in other public service organizations, in for example (health) care, welfare, social support, and prisons, where questions of meaning in life have been marginalized by bureaucratization, marketization and growing workloads. This in turn has undermined finding meaning in work for many professionals. How can we place questions of meaning back on the agenda? Chaplains working in public services are well-placed for this task. How they do so—and how their work could be rendered more effective—is an urgent question in our research.

3. A just and caring society

Our third research theme addresses issues surrounding the creation of a socially just and caring society. We approach social justice through the lenses of redistribution, recognition and representation. *Redistribution* concerns the fair distribution of, and equal access to, goods and services. *Recognition* concerns being seen and treated as full citizens with equal rights, deserving of dignity, respect and social inclusion. *Representation* involves having a voice and being listened to. We understand *care* as the response to the acknowledgement of vulnerability in human life, and *caring* as an organised institutional and professional activity that involves ways of addressing this vulnerability.

Combining the ideals of care and social justice, we seek to advance knowledge about how best to promote caring, quality public services that contribute to social justice. We do so in three ways. The first strand of research is conceptual: the historical and philosophical study of how understandings of care and social justice have changed over time. How does recognition relate to human dignity? How have conceptualisations of recognition evolved over time? What can an ethics of care mean for understanding sustainability and democracy?

The second strand of research addresses the role of institutions and public organisations in promoting a just and caring society. How do our institutions and organisations contribute to and/or undermine social justice? How can (humanist) chaplains contribute to more humane interactions within public organisations? We pursue both social scientific and empirical ethics research on how ideals of (humane) public services work out in practice.

The third strand of research focuses on the role of public professionals in promoting a just and caring society. In contrast to most social scientific studies of professionals and their interactions with the public, we privilege the moral dimension. How can professionals contribute to a just and caring society? What does ethical professionalism entail? How can it best be promoted? We empirically study the ideals and practices of professionals working in public services including in healthcare, long-term care, welfare, social work, public administration and (humanist) spiritual chaplaincy. We study how professionals cope with conflicting values and discourses, moral dilemmas and moral injury.

Challenges to a just and caring society

Our research focuses on two obstacles to achieving a just and caring society. The first is how to best respond to the deepening divides between groups in society: between the rich and poor, between the formally more and less educated, between the securely and precariously employed or unemployed, between young and old, between the healthy and sick or disabled, and between people from different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. As social inequality has risen over the past decades, contacts between unequally positioned social groups have withered. How do people experience these pervasive inequalities? What supports or hinders people in regaining dignity? What does ethnic and religious diversity imply for professionals in public organisations? How can teachers prepare children for a multicultural society? Can (humanist) chaplains play a bridging role? If so, how can this role be researched, evaluated and nurtured?

People from different walks of life hardly share social space anymore. They increasingly live in their own bubbles—in separate neighbourhoods, attending separate schools, being informed by different media. Membership in institutions that previously provided opportunities for contact between different groups—so-called ‘bridging social capital’—such as churches, political parties and trade unions has plummeted. Do we witness new, emergent forms of bridging social capital and solidarity? Can public professionals play a role? Can humanist chaplaincy be

developed to promote understanding and dialogue across groups in contemporary society? And if so, how?

A second challenge concerns the future of public organizing in the post-neoliberal era. Public services over the past three decades were organised around the principles of marketization, output-steering, retrenchment and 'personal responsibility'—often lumped together under the banner of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism in turn was based on an image of humans as self-interested, competitive, independence-seeking and motivated by (financial) incentives. In education, neoliberalism has consigned pedagogical concerns to the backseat.

Criticisms of neoliberal theory and practice—of seeing humans as primarily competitive, money-driven and self-reliant—have prompted demands for alternatives more in line with a view of humans as cooperative, community-seeking and moved by aspirations and ideals. What this means for how we organise the promotion of social justice is an urgent question in our research. What might post-neoliberal ideals of professionalism and citizenship look like? Can an ethics of care offer a compelling alternative? How can we develop moral deliberation within multidisciplinary healthcare teams? Or strengthen the pedagogical dimension of education? What strategies and methods would strengthen moral competence and development? What kind of citizenship education could we all support despite our different worldviews?

We also study practices that aim to promote civic engagement and citizen participation in society—from local governments promoting participatory democracy to care organisations promoting societal participation and the social inclusion of people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. In contrast to much research in this field, the moral dimension that underpins our research informs normative questions such as on the conditions under which participation can contribute to a just and caring society. How does the pursuit of (conflicting) ideals of citizenship in guidelines such as the United Nations' declaration on social inclusion for people with disabilities contribute to a just and caring society?

Appendix 2.a. Case study 1. Foundations of humanism

Research on the foundations of humanism is fundamental to all UHS research and education, and is mainly hosted by the chair Humanism and Social Resilience, which bears an important responsibility for the humanist identity of the university. Although the humanist tradition has a non-religious and anti-religious current, its core convictions do not exclude humanist currents in 'other' religions; we also see forms of liberal Christianity and liberal Islam as part of the humanist tradition. Our research on the foundations of humanism has addressed two themes:

- 1) The history of *humanism as a worldview*, a tradition and frame for meaning that sets standards for human welfare and progress. We pay special attention to Dutch humanism. In our research, we understand humanism to be an open-minded worldview that relates critically to religious, political, philosophical, scientific, and other ideas and traditions in Western culture, in which humanism itself is rooted.
- 2) The (history and) foundations of *key concepts and values* in contemporary humanism, such as social resilience, autonomy, and sustainability.

Collaboration and the sharing of ideas with humanist organisations in the Netherlands, Europe, and the United States demonstrate the impact of this research strand.

Research projects

Ad 1

See publications.

Ad 2.

Funded PhD projects: “Community Resilience” (2018-2021), funded by Humanitas and Municipality of Rotterdam (€ 120.000, Yke van der Schoor); “Growing Old and Volunteering” (2019-2023), funded by NOV (€ 100.000), Laurine Blonk).

Key UHS researchers

Ad 1: Prof. Joachim Duyndam (full professor), Drs. Bert Gasenbeek (assistant professor and director of the Humanist Historic Center), Dr. Abdelilah Ljamai (assistant professor), Dr. Fernando Suárez Müller (assistant professor), Prof. Anja Machielse (full professor), Dr. Caroline Suransky (associate professor), Prof. Peter Derkx (professor emeritus), Prof. Harry Kunneman (professor emeritus).

Ad 2: Prof. Joachim Duyndam (full professor), Prof. Anja Machielse (full professor), Dr. Hanne Laceulle (assistant professor), Yke van der Schoor, PhD student, Laurine Blonk, PhD student.

Output

Ad 1. Peter Derkx on the future of humanism (*reference 2*). Joachim Duyndam penned a critical reflection on Harari's criticism of humanism, as articulated in his magnum opus *Homo Deus* (*reference 5*). In 2019 we organized in collaboration with the New York Society for Ethical Culture an international conference—"Humanism across the Atlantic: Looking for Common Ground"—at which four UHS researchers participated presenting keynote lectures. These lectures as well as a panel discussion with the four UHS researchers at a meeting for a wider public interested in humanism were recorded and widely shared via an internet channel (*source 11*).

Ad 2. Machielse's studies on social resilience as a response to loneliness and social isolation are an important complement to the social-psychological tradition of research on loneliness and the sociological tradition of social network analysis. The concept of social resilience—the individual and collective capacity of people, within their specific contexts, to realise dignified autonomy in thinking and acting, with oneself and others, in the face of vulnerability, adversity, or social pressure—offers a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between the humanist ideal of being an autonomous person, gifted with moral agency, and being a part of social, political, and cultural structures.

Hanne Laceulle's dissertation on autonomy and cultural narratives about ageing is another example of the application of humanist ideas to current social problems—of drawing on the humanist tradition and insights and expertise from philosophy, history, and the social sciences to address topical issues in modern life. This is precisely where we cooperate with the other UHS chair groups.

Our research on social resilience as a humanistic ideal has received project funding. We have pursued this research largely at the request of government bodies and societal organisations in the Netherlands, rendering the utilisation of research findings quite natural and almost guaranteed. Recent examples include funding to conduct PhD research.

Peer reviewed publications

1. De Nutte, N. & Gasenbeek, B. (eds.) (2019). *Looking Back to Look Forward: Organised Humanism in the World: Belgium, Great Britain, the Netherlands and the United States of America 1945-2005*. Brussels: VUB Press.
2. Derkx, P.H.J.M. (2015). The future of humanism. In A.C. Grayling & A. Copson (eds.) *The Wiley Blackwell Handbook of Humanism* (pp. 426-439). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.
3. Duyndam, J. (2017). Humanism as a positive outcome of secularism. In Ph. Zuckerman & J.R. Shook (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Secularism* (pp. 706-720). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
4. Duyndam, J. (2017). Resilience beyond mimesis. Humanism, autonomy, and exemplary persons. In B.E.J.H. Becking, A.J.A.C.M. Korte & L. van Liere (eds.) *Contesting Religious Identities: Transformations, Disseminations, and Mediation* (pp. 175-193). Leiden: Brill.
5. Duyndam, J. (2019). Het humanisme ten einde? *Tijdschrift voor Theologie*, 59 (1), 53-63. doi: 10.2143/TvT.59.1.3285794.

6. Ljamai, A. (2015). Humanistic thought in the Islamic world of the Middle Ages. In A. Copson & A.C. Grayling (eds.) *The Wiley Blackwell Handbook of Humanism* (pp. 153-170). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.
7. Suransky, A.C. (2017). [Humanistic education for teaching in a globalising world](#). In M. Walker & M. Wilson-Strydom (eds.) *Socially Just Pedagogies: Capabilities and Quality in Higher Education* (pp. 109-128). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
8. Machielse, J.E.M. & van der Vaart, W. (2020). Improving social quality in housing complexes for older adults: Professional support as a necessary condition. *Journal of Aging and Environment*, 1-14. doi: [10.1080/02763893.2019.1684414](#)
9. Machielse, A. (2015). The heterogeneity of socially isolated older adults: A social isolation typology. *Journal of Gerontological Work*, 58 (4), 338-356.
10. *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* 81 (2) (2019). Special issue on philosophy at UHS. Contributions: Duyndam, J., *Filosofie in een interdisciplinaire context*, pp. 223-232; Duyndam, J., *De fenomenologie van René Girard*, pp. 233-253; Machielse, A., *De cultus van het individu. Humanisme en de twee wetenschapsculturen*, pp. 255-280; Kunneman, H., *Het belang van normatieve professionalisering. Humanisme, Humanistiek en politiek*, pp. 281-313. Suárez Müller, F., *De historische betekenis van interdisciplinariteit: Over de humanistische omwenteling van het weten*, pp. 315-346.

Dissertations

1. Van Alphen, E. (2016). *Alles werd politiek. De verhouding tussen het politieke en het persoonlijke in de humanistische en de homoseksuele beweging in Nederland, 1945-1980*.
2. Van Goelst Meijer, S.L.E. (2015). *Profound Revolution: Towards an Integrated Understanding of Contemporary Nonviolence*.
3. Laceulle, H. (2016). *Becoming Who You Are. Aging, Self-Realisation and Cultural Narratives about Later Life*.
4. Schreijnders, R. (2017). *Rudy Kousbroek in de essayistisch-humanistische traditie*.
5. Stolk, V.J. (2015). *Tussen autonomie en humaniteit. De geschiedenis van levensbeschouwelijk humanisme in relatie tot opvoeding en onderwijs tussen 1850 en 1970*.

Impact

Our research on humanism as an intellectual tradition and as a frame of meaning also speaks to international humanist organisations such as the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU), the European Humanist Federation (EHF), and the American Humanist Association (AHA). At the 2019 AHA conference, we were the only invited speakers from Europe (*source 11*).

Our research on the foundations of humanism has addressed broader publics. Our book on the history and future of (international) humanism—published *with the International Centre for Academic and Secular Humanist Archives at Vrije Universiteit Brussels and the Dutch Humanist Historical Centre*—was written for a non-academic readership (*reference 1*). This book was covered by (among others) the website of the Nonreligion and Secularity Research Network, NSRN online (*source 1*).

Other examples of research valorisation include presentations at public conferences and festivals, interviews (*source 3*), and two national exhibitions, one on black role models (*source 4*) and one on transience (*source 5*). Rudy Schreijnders' PhD thesis on the humanist essay tradition (*reference dissertations 4*) has been discussed in the Dutch literary world (*source 7*). We have also published a book series (in Dutch) on humanism and Dutch humanists for a broader readership (*source 2*). This series addresses many of the perennial themes of humanism, namely critical reflection on religious authorities and dogmatic ways of thinking, the moral-political pursuit of social justice, and the ideal of personal development, self-realisation, and *Bildung*.

Our research on humanism and humanist traditions speaks directly to the activities, strategies, and contemporary self-understanding of humanist organisations such as the Dutch Humanist League (*Humanistisch Verbond*) and other organisations united in the Humanist Alliance (*Humanistische Alliantie*). We are regularly invited to give keynote lectures, advise on social issues and be interviewed for newsletters for members of the *Humanistisch Verbond*.

The societal impact of our research on social resilience as it bears on loneliness and isolation is evidenced by our many presentations at conferences for broader audiences and on radio and television (*source 9*) as well as by international invitations to present lectures, as in Copenhagen and Udine (*source 10*).

Hanne Laceulle's dissertation on autonomy and cultural narratives about ageing was covered by several Dutch media outlets. A presentation based on Laceulle's dissertation at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America was reviewed by journalist Barbara Peters Smith in the *Health Herald Tribune* and in Desmond O'Neill's blog for the *British Medical Journal* (*source 8*).

Sources

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 UHS Master course "Philosophy of Science": <https://www.uvh.nl/onderwijs/master-humanistiek/vakken-rooster-en-studiebelasting/m1-ondz1-wetenschapsfilosofie-19-20>
7. PhD thesis by Rudy Schreijnders: <https://www.literairnederland.nl/recensie-rudy-schreijnders-rudy-kousbroek-in-de-essayistisch-humanistische-traditie/>
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<http://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2014/11/18/desmond-oneill-a-gerontological-fear-ofmissing-out/>
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<https://www.maxmeldpunt.nl/uitzendingen/eenzaamheid/>
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 - IFOTES International Congress, Udine, Italy, July 3-9, 2019:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zk0dhyWeYXg&list=PLQ9e7mQ2OavcAq5OWDikT8qVU2yyIkY9u&index=4&t=31s>
 - Nationale eenzaamheidslezing 2018: [September 27, 2018](#)
 - Danish Society of Gerontology (Copenhagen, April 20, 2018): <https://www.egv.dk/om-fonden/konferencer/338-symposium-empowerment-of-socially-isolated-older-persons>
11. Invited lectures by Joachim Duyndam, Anja Machielse, Peter Derkx, and Marieke van den Doel at Conference "Humanism Across the Atlantic: Looking for Common Ground", New York Society for Ethical Culture (New York, September 6-9, 2019): <https://ethical.nyc/humanism-across-the-atlantic-looking-for-common-ground/>. These lectures, as well as a panel discussion with the four UHS researchers at a meeting for a wider public interested in humanism, were recorded and widely shared via an internet channel.

Appendix 2.b. Case study 2. Ethical and existential questions regarding the self-chosen death

The research line “Ethical and existential questions regarding the (wish for a) self-chosen death” within the Care Ethics chair group exemplifies our research within the Meaningful Living theme. This research line focuses on the trend towards managing and controlling the time and manner of death and dying, and explores how the emphasis on choice affects how we age, how we live towards the end of life, and how we die. We also aim to unravel the socio-cultural and relational dynamics underlying this changing sensibility about death and dying.

The new sensibility is radically altering the way we live towards the end of life as the quest to manage death leads to new options and practices. More and more elderly people in the Netherlands are asking for euthanasia. Requests for the ‘foreseeable future’ grew from 13,400 in 2011 to 17,900 in 2016, while requests ‘in due time’ almost doubled over the same period, from 33,900 to 67,700. Although the Netherlands is a frontrunner in self-directed dying, similar developments are taking place across the Western world.

While continuing to make one’s own choices at the end of life is valued as a way to accentuate one’s autonomy and authenticity, it can also lead to uncertainty and anxiety. By exploring the complexities surrounding choice and the unprecedented challenges posed by this new sensibility about death, our research speaks directly to scholars from different fields interested in death and dying. Alongside its academic relevance, our research also informs social policy makers, health professionals, and the broader public on how to address these complex choices.

Research projects

- A. Research project “Ready to give up on life: A study into the lived experiences of older people who consider their lives to be completed and no longer worth living”. Funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO), Jan 2012–Nov 2016, € 169.819.
- B. Research project “Perspectives on death wish in older people who are not severely ill”. Funded by the Netherlands Organization for Health Research and Development (ZonMw), Jan 2019–Jan 2020, € 360.000.
- C. Valorization project: “Het lastige gesprek: de ontwikkeling van een gespreksmodel en handreiking over lijden, tragiek en het verlangen naar de dood”. Funded by VPSB (Vrijzinnige Protestantse Stichting Bejaardenzorg) and PIN (Projecten in Nederland), April 2020–July 2021, € 33.500.
- D. Project “Memento mori revisited: unravelling the role of choice regarding death and dying in old age”. Funded by the Dutch Research Council (NWO), Sept 2020–Sept 2023, € 250.000.
- E. PhD projects:
 - Euthanasia in patients with psychiatric disorders. PhD student Mark van Iperen, co-supervisor Els van Wijngaarden, supervisors Carlo Leget (UHS) and Geert Smid (UHS), 2020–ongoing.
 - Death wishes in older people, follow up-1 PERSPECTIEF. The nature of a wish to die of older adults in the context of ageing. PhD student Vera van den Berg, co-supervisors

Els van Wijngaarden and Ghislaine van Thiel, supervisors Prof. Carlo Leget (UHS) and Prof. Hans van Delden (UMCU).

- Death wishes in older people, follow up-2 PERSPECTIEF. The role of suffering and loneliness in older people with a death wish. PhD student Margot Zomers, co-supervisors Els van Wijngaarden (UHS) and Ghislaine van Thiel (UMCU), supervisors Prof. Carlo Leget (UHS) and Prof. Hans van Delden (UMCU).
- Values in old age, in search of a new semantic space. PhD student Suzanne Biewinga (UvA), co-supervisor Els van Wijngaarden (UHS), supervisor Prof. René Boomkens (UvA).
- Completed life & conceptions of humanity. PhD student Andre Poortman (AMC), co-supervisor Els van Wijngaarden (UHS), supervisor Prof. Damiaan Denys (AMC).

UHS researchers

- a. Dr. Els van Wijngaarden (associate professor, Care Ethics), Prof. Carlo Leget (full Professor, Care Ethics), Prof. Anne Goossensen (full professor)
- b. Dr. Els van Wijngaarden, Drs. Iris Hartog (PhD student Amsterdam Medical Centre/Radboud University), Drs. Vera van den Berg (PhD student, UHS), Prof. Carlo Leget
- c. Dr. Els van Wijngaarden, Drs. Vera van den Berg, Prof. Carlo Leget
- d. Dr. Els van Wijngaarden
- e. Dr. Els van Wijngaarden, Drs. Vera van den Berg, Prof. Carlo Leget, Mark van Iperen (PhD student UHS)

Collaborating researchers from other universities

- b. Dr. Ghislaine van Thiel (UMCU, Medical Humanities), Drs. Margot Zomers (UMCU, Medical Humanities), Dr. Alfred Sachs (UMCU, General Practice), Dr. Cuno Uiterwaal (UMCU, Epidemiology).
- e. Dr. Ghislaine van Thiel, Drs. Margot Zomers, Prof. Hans van Delden (UMCU, Medical Humanities), Suzanne Biewinga (UvA, Department of cultural history and cultural philosophy), Prof René Boomkens (UvA, Department of cultural history and cultural philosophy), Andre Poortman (AMC, Department of Psychiatry), Prof. Damiaan Denys (AMC, Department of Psychiatry).

Nature of research and findings

Following the empirical turn in ethics, we complement empirical research with conceptual philosophical analysis. To do justice to the subject's complexity, we combine insights from different humanities disciplines—philosophy, thanatology, social imaginaries theory and social gerontology.

The initial project (A) was the pioneering study investigating the lived experiences of older people who considered their lives to be completed and ideated on a self-chosen death. It was also one of the first to advance empirical arguments in the discussion on rational suicide, which to date has largely remained a theoretical debate. The project was awarded the Praemium Erasmianum Foundation's prestigious Research Prize in 2017.

We were commissioned to conduct a one-year study of completed life (project B) by the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS), funded by Netherlands Organization for Health Research and Development (ZonMw). With an interdisciplinary team of medical and humanities researchers, we examined the prevalence, characteristics, and motives of Dutch older people who, while not (yet) severely ill, had a wish to die. The debate thus far had been based on flimsy empirical foundations; this project provided data to facilitate policy making and informed public debate.

Project C is a valorisation project that draws on projects A and B. It concerns the design and implementation of a conversation model that should help older people with a death wish, their close ones, and professionals to discuss the complexity and ambivalence of such death wishes. Project D deepens previous research through philosophical and sociological analysis, broadening the scope from individual experiences to a more contextualised investigation of socio-cultural and relational developments. The PhD projects (E) all elaborate on and further develop insights from projects A and B.

Stakeholders were closely involved in all projects. Over the years, we have established a robust societal network of organisations including:

- Centres of expertise: Coalitie Van Betekenis tot het Einde; Expertisenetwerk Levensvragen en Ouderen; Landelijk Expertisecentrum Sterven.
- Senior organisations: KBO-PCOB, NOOM. Interest groups: NVVE, HV, NPV.
- Associations for health professionals: KNMG, Verenso, NVvP, VGVZ, NIP, V&VN.

We regularly organize meetings with these stakeholders to generate input for research, discuss practical needs, collect feedback, and ensure implementation.

Output

Peer-reviewed publications

1. Van den Berg, V., van Thiel, G., Zomers, M., Hartog, I., Leget, C., Sachs, A., Uiterwaal, C., van Wijngaarden, E. (2020) Euthanasia and physician assisted suicide in patients with multiple geriatric syndromes: a content analysis of case summaries of the Dutch Regional Euthanasia Review Committees (accepted).
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15. Van Wijngaarden, E.J., Leget, C.J.W., Goossensen, A. (2014) Experiences and motivations underlying wishes to die in older people who are tired of living: a research area in its infancy. *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying*, 69 (2), 191-216.

Scientific report

1. Van Wijngaarden, E., van Thiel, G., Hartog, I., van den Berg, V., Zomers, M., Sachs, A., Uiterwaal, C., Leget, C., Mostert, M., Damoiseaux, R., Merzel, M. (2020) [Perspectieven op de doodswens van ouderen die niet ernstig ziek zijn: De mensen en de cijfers](#). [Perspectives on death wish in older people who are not severely ill: The people and the numbers]. The Hague: ZonMw.

Dissertation

1. Van Wijngaarden, E.J. (2016) Ready to give up on life: a study into the lived experiences of older people who consider their lives to be completed and no longer worth living. PhD dissertation, University for Humanistic Studies.

Book

1. Van Wijngaarden, E.J. (2016) *Voltooid leven, over leven en willen sterven* [Completed Life, About Living and the Wish to Die], sixth edition. Amsterdam: Atlas Contact.

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3. Van Wijngaarden, Els (30 October 2017) Geen probleem oplossen dat we nog niet begrijpen. Er is meer onderzoek nodig naar levenseinde. *Nederlands Dagblad*.
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Impact

This research has influenced debate in the Dutch Parliament. Since 2016, our publications have been object of debate several times. In September 2020, the Dutch government sent [a letter to the Parliament](#) in which they gave a formal reaction on our most recent report. Over the years, we have also been asked to advise politicians from across the political spectrum (e.g. VVD, CDA, D66, GroenLinks, SP, CU, PvdA) on end-of-life issues. In October 2017, Van Wijngaarden was invited to join the round table on the third evaluation of the Euthanasia Law in the Dutch Parliament. In December 2017, the Belgian Advisory Committee on Bioethics specifically referred to our research in its advice [Euthanasia in the case of non-terminal patients, psychological suffering and psychiatric disorders \(nr.73\)](#). The “Non-communicable diseases

and the challenge of healthy ageing” unit of the European Committee has also approached us for advice. Our research has been a catalyst for the [Manifesto ‘Dignified Ageing’](#).

Organisations of health professionals like KNMG, NIP and V&VN have based their policies and positions on “completed life” and the self-chosen death in old age partly on our research. Our scholars are frequently invited to deliver keynote lectures at conferences and seminars for health care professionals.

“Ready to give up on life” (project A) culminated in a major public symposium in November 2016 to share the study’s findings for policy and practice. About 250 people attended. Edith Schippers, the Dutch Minister of Health, was among the keynote speakers and received the first copy of the book *Voltooid leven, over leven en willen sterven*, written to make this research accessible to a non-academic readership. It has already seen six reprints.

Over the years, our research has generated extensive media coverage, including in *NOS Journaal*, *Nieuwsuur*, *PAUW*, the front page of *Trouw*, *NRC Handelsblad*, and *De Standaard*.

Sources

Political impact

- Brief levenseinde: kabinetsreactie onderzoek wens tot levensbeëindiging bij niet ernstig-zieke ouderen [Governmental reaction regarding research into death wishes in older people who are not severely ill], Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, September 25, 2020:
https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2020Z17316&did=2020D37466
- Presentation on policy management, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (January 2020).
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- Euthanasia in the case of non-terminal patients, psychological suffering and psychiatric disorders (nr.73), Belgian Advisory Committee on Bioethics (December 2017):
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- Roundtable meeting, “Third Evaluation of the Euthanasia Law”, Dutch Parliament (October 30, 2017). Position paper by Els van Wijngaarden: “Don’t solve the problem before understanding it”:
<https://www.tweedekamer.nl/downloads/document?id=f60a4339-083a-4ce0-ab2f-7cdf2da0122d&title=Position%20papers%20rondetafelgesprek%20Euthanasie%2030%20oktober%202017.pdf>.
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Impact on health care

Policy statements of health care organisations:

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- Van de Laar, M. & Allewijn, M. (2016) Hulp voor ouderen met een langdurig doodsverlangen. Reactie van Het NIP op de Kamerbrief 'Kabinetsreactie en visie Voltooid Leven' [Assistance for older people with a persistent wish to die. Considerations of the Dutch Association of Psychologists regarding the government's response and view on completed life]: <https://www.psynip.nl/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/nov-2016-reactie-op-kamer-brief-NIP-over-Voltooid-leven.pdf>
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A selection of lectures and keynotes for professionals. For a more extensive overview:

<http://www.elsvanwijngaarden.com/talks/>

- Lecture and discussion at the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports (VWS), Department of Public Health, February 2020.
- Keynote at the Symposium for Dutch Institute of Psychologists (NIP), Utrecht, June 1th 2018.
- Seminar at the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing, UK, 6th March 2018.
- Lecture at Leidse Ouderengeneeskunde Dagen, Leiden, September 27th 2017.
- Keynote at Expertisecentrum Waardig Levenseinde, Brussels, Wemmel (Belgium) June 9th 2017.
- Keynote at annual meeting of the Society for Old Age Rational Suicide, Conway Hall, London, May 6th 2017.
- Keynote at the Dutch Nursing Congress 2017, Reehorst Ede, February 7th 2017.
- Keynote at Symposium for Elderly Care Physicians and Social Geriatricians (LAEGO), Soest, February 2th 2017.
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- Lecture and discussion at the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports (VWS), Department of Ethics, October 3th 2016.
- Presentation and discussion at the International Euthanasia World Conference 2016 in Amsterdam, May 13th 2016.
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Public impact

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- Reviews of the public book: <https://www.atlascontact.nl/boek/voltooid-leven/>
- Overview of over 150 media appearances: <http://www.elsvanwijngaarden.com/media/>

Appendix 2.c. Case study 3. Ethical professionalism

What does it mean for public professionals to work ethically—to uphold professional values in the face of organisational and societal developments that constrain their work? This overarching question informs the research on ethical professionalism at UHS. While the first two cases focused on specific topics researched by a handful of scholars, the current case shows how a broader research theme is addressed by a larger group of researchers from across the chair groups. Ethical professionalism—under the guises of “normative professionalisation”, “democratic professionalism”, “the good professional” and “good work”—has been a core theme in our research since the very founding of the university.

Our research on ethical professionalism spans three sub-themes: the ethical aspects of professionalism; the ethical dilemmas that professionals face; and how societal transformations have changed what is considered good work. Below are select examples of our research on these three sub-themes pursued over the past six years.

Our research on the *ethical aspects of professionalism* has delved into the philosophical foundations of professional values and what their pursuit demands from professionals, organisations, and policy. It has also entailed sensitizing professionals to questions about meaning and meaningful living. How can (humanist) chaplains, social workers, and workers in the care sector promote dignity among vulnerable groups, or support repair and reconciliation in the wake of (social) trauma? What can professionals do to assist (young) people to become critical democratic citizens?

Second, we have researched the *ethical dilemmas* faced by professionals. These can arise from conflicting ideals—for example fostering both safety and independence, or from promoting dignity while acknowledging vulnerability. Other dilemmas can be traced to limited resources, when helping some comes at the expense of helping others.

Third, we have analysed *the impact of societal changes* on the possibilities of doing good work and what is considered good work. Societal changes can create new professional dilemmas such as how to reconcile the protection of clients’ well-being while promoting their autonomy.

Research projects

- a. *Teaching Common Values: Democracy and Tolerance*. Twenty eight EU academics analysed how educational professionals teach common values about democracy and tolerance in secondary education in their states, and the constraints they face when doing so. The consortium included the University of Barcelona, Bath-Spa University, the University of Helsinki, Charles University Prague, the University of Tallinn, and Aristotle University Thessaloniki (output 5, 8, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19)
- b. *The Promise of Proximity*, carried out with the University of Amsterdam and funded by the GAK institute, six municipalities, a ministry and a care organisation, analysed how welfare state reforms have influenced notions of good professionalism and good clienthood (output 4).

- c. *SamenZin*, a two-year participatory action research project of UHS and two Centres for Life Questions in the province of Utrecht, seeks to develop chaplaincy within the community alongside general health practice, integrating spiritual care within primary care.
- d. *ProSense*, a collaborative action research project of Fontys University of Applied Sciences, Utrecht University of Applied Sciences and the UHS, was funded by NWO RAAK Pro. It involved five primary schools and two schools for secondary special education, seeking to develop pedagogical sensitivity among teachers, especially moral learning about situations they encounter at school, including interactions with children (output 2, 7, 11)
- e. *Meaning Giving Care* addressed meaning in formal and informal elderly care and the role of chaplains in fostering and promoting the finding of meaning in care practices, both by educating and coaching care professionals and through their own work as chaplains (output 14, 15, 16).
- f. *CARE, on Obstetric Violence*. Research shows that many women look back at their experience of giving birth as disrespectful, even traumatic. They are unhappy with care practices that deprive them of their autonomy and threaten their dignity. By combining theoretical and qualitative empirical research, this project aims to facilitate a co-creative dialogue with all maternity care stakeholders to improve the ethics of maternity care.
- g. *Experiences of Dependency of People with Mental Disabilities*, funded by the Ministry of Health, analysed the professional skills, norms, and values of care workers working with people with disabilities who must grapple with dependence (output 20, 21, 22).
- h. *Dignity for Vulnerable Groups*, involving the chair groups Care Ethics and Citizenship and Humanisation of the Public Sector, and funded by Zon-MW, analysed what social workers can do to promote the dignity of clients (output 12).
- i. *Transitional Justice* examined how professionals can promote social justice after war trauma (output 6).
- j. *Social Justice in Social Assistance*, funded by the Gak Institute, analysed what social justice means for people on social assistance and how professionals can help (output 13).
- k. *Taking Care of Care Givers*, carried out with the migrant health organization Pharos and funded by Zon-MW, analyses how care workers can support care sharing (between family members and with care workers) among families of migrant descent (output 1).
- l. The endowed chair Pedagogical Dimensions of Education, held by Prof. Gert Biesta, is dedicated to explicating the aims and functions of education, especially what teachers can do to further the subjectification of their pupils, the central pedagogical dimension of their profession (output 3).

UHS researchers

- a. Prof. dr. Wiel Veugelers (emeritus professor since June 2019), Dr. Isolde de Groot (assistant professor) and dr. Vincent Stolk (assistant professor).
- b. Prof. dr. Evelien Tonkens (full professor Citizenship and Humanization of the Public Sector), Dr. Femmianne Bredewold (associate professor), Dr. Thomas Kampen (assistant professor).
- c. Prof. dr. Gaby Jacobs (full professor Humanist Chaplaincy Studies for a Pluralist Society)
- d. Dr. Gaby Jacobs, Prof. dr. Wiel Veugelers.
- e. Prof. dr. Carlo Leget (full professor Care Ethics), Dr. Vivianne Baur (assistant professor Care Ethics).
- f. Prof dr. Carlo Leget, Dr. Inge van Nistelrooij (assistant professor Care Ethics), Dr. Vivianne Baur, Rodante van der Waal MPhil (PhD student).

- g. Prof. dr. Evelien Tonkens, Prof. dr. Margo Trappenburg (endowed professor Foundations of Social Work), Prof. dr. Carlo Leget, Dr. Femmianne Bredewold, Simon van der Weele MA (PhD student Citizenship).
- h. Prof. dr. Carlo Leget, Prof. dr. Evelien Tonkens, Prof. dr. Margo Trappenburg, Dr. Femmianne Bredewold, Dr. Alistair Niemeijer (assistant professor Care Ethics), Jante Smidt MA (PhD Student).
- i. Dr. Nicole Immler (associate professor Citizenship).
- j. Dr. Thomas Kampen (assistant professor Citizenship), Dr. Melissa Sebrechts (assistant professor Citizenship), Prof. dr. Evelien Tonkens.
- k. Prof. dr. Sawitri Saharso (full professor Citizenship), Prof. dr. Evelien Tonkens, Menal Ahmad (PhD student).
- l. Prof. dr. Gert Biesta (endowed professor Pedagogical dimensions of Education)

Collaborating researchers at other universities and institutes

- a. Antoine Bevort (LISE-CNRS-CNAM, Paris), Gert Biesta (Brunel University, London), Maria Rosa Buxarrais (University of Barcelona), Emilian Colceru (University of Bucharest), Inken Heldt & Dirk Lange (University of Hannover), Pavla Karba (National Education Institute Slovenia), Anastasia Kesidou (Aristotle University, Thessaloniki), Barbara Malak-Minkiewicz & Jerzy Wiśniewski (independent scholars Poland), Dana Moree (Charles University, Prague), Heidi Paju (Tallin University), Kirsi Tirri (University of Helsinki).
- b. Prof. Jan Willem Duyvendak (UvA), Dr. M Kromhout and Dr. Mirjam de Klerk (Social and Cultural Planning Office, The Hague).
- c. Helma de Keijzer (PhD) and Karin Diemel (PhD) (Fontys Hogescholen; Dr. Anouke Bakx (Hogeschool Utrecht); Ritie van Rooijen, Dorine van Eijk, (PhD students); Dr. Loes van Houweling.
- f. Prof dr. Stella Villarmea (University of Alcalá, Madrid), Prof dr. Raymond de Vries, University of Michigan), Dr. Lianne Holten (Academie Verloskunde Amsterdam en Groningen), Prof. dr. Susan Crowther (Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen).
- g. Prof. Jason Rodriques (University of Massachusetts Boston).
- h. Dr. Hanneke Schreurs (Gemeente Utrecht).
- i. Atma Jaya Catholic University Indonesia (Jakarta), University of Pembangunan Nasional Veteran (Jakarta), Netherlands Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies (Amsterdam).
- j. Dr. Anja Eleveld (VU Amsterdam); Prof. Gijs Vonk (RUG).
- k. Dr. Jennifer van den Broeke (Pharos)

Output

1. Ahmad, M., van den Broeke, J., Saharso, S. & Tonkens, E. (2019) Persons with a migration background caring for a family member with dementia: challenges to shared care. *The Gerontologist*
2. Bakx, A., Jacobs, G., Bergh, L. van den & K. Diemel (2017). *Werken aan pedagogische sensitiviteit in je team*. Uitgeverij PICA
3. Biesta, G.J.J. (2018) Tijd voor pedagogiek: Over de pedagogische paragraaf in onderwijs, opleiding en vorming. *Pedagogiek*, 38, 49-70.

4. Bredewold, F., Verplanke, L., Duyvendak, J.W., Kampen, T. & Tonkens, E. (2019) The care receivers perspective: how care dependent people struggle with accepting help from family members, friends and neighbours. *Health and Social Care in the Community* <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/hsc.12906>
5. De Groot, I. (2018) Political simulations: an opportunity for meaningful democratic participation in schools. *Democracy and Education*, 26 (2). <https://democracyeducationjournal.org/home/vol26/iss2/3>
6. Immler, N. (2018), "Hoe koloniaal onrecht te erkennen? De Rawagede-zaak laat de kansen en grenzen van rechtsherstel zien". [How to acknowledge colonial injustice?] *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 133(4), 57–87.
7. Jacobs, G. (2016). 'A guided walk in the woods': boundary crossing in a collaborative action research project, *Educational Action Research*, 25(4): 575-593.
8. Keijzer, H. de, Jacobs, G., Swet, J. van & W. Veugelers (2020). Teachers' implicit moral values in their narratives about teaching practice. *Education & Society*.
9. Keijzer, H. de, Jacobs, G., Swet, J. van & W. Veugelers (2020). Identifying coaching approaches that enable teachers' moral learning in professional learning communities. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, DOI 10.1108/IJMCE-11-2019-0104.
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13. Trappenburg, M, Kampen, T. & Tonkens, E. (2019) Social workers in a modernising welfare state: professionals or street-level bureaucrats? *British Journal of Social Work* <https://academic.oup.com/bjsw/advance-article/doi/10.1093/bjsw/bcz120/5603659?guestAccessKey=7380e882-6e7d-4c38-83e0-88676e94ee05>
14. Van der Leer, N., (2016) De geestelijk verzorger als onderzoeker. *Tijdschrift voor Geestelijke Verzorging* 19, nr. 84; 42-47.
15. Van der Leer, N., et al. (2019), Het is ook zingevend voor mijzelf, over de waarde van actieonderzoek. *Tijdschrift voor Geestelijke Verzorging* 22, nr. 93, 44-49.
16. Van der Leer, N., (2020) *Zinvolle zorg in het verpleeghuis. Een onderzoek naar de samenhang tussen zorg en zin en de rol van de geestelijke verzorger*. Utrecht: Kok/Boekencentrum (400 p.)
17. Veugelers, W., De Groot, I., Llomovatte, S. & Naidorf, J. (2017) Higher education, educational policy and citizenship development. *Education and Society*, 35(1), 27-42
18. Veugelers, W., Groot, I., Stolk, V. & Research for CULT Committee. (2017) *Research for CULT Committee Teaching Common Values in Europe: Study*. Brussels: Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, European Parliament. <https://op.europa.eu/nl/publication-detail/-/publication/6f527dc2-3c40-11e7-a08e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

19. Veugelers, W. (2019) *Education for Democratic Intercultural Citizenship*. Leiden, Boston: Brill Sense. <https://brill.com/view/title/55956?lang=en>. The consortium continues with its own funding.
20. Weele, S. van der (2021) Opening the Conversation: 'Paradigm Cases' of Dependency in Eva Kittay and Judith Butler, *Bodies That Still Matter: Resonances of the Work of Judith Butler*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Accepted. Due at spring 2021.
21. Weele, S., Four paradigm cases of dependency, *Hypatia* (accepted)
22. Weele, S. van der, F. Bredewold, C. Leget, and E. Tonkens(2020) What is the problem of dependency? Dependency work reconsidered" submitted to *Nursing Philosophy*. accepted - <https://doi.org/10.1111/nup.12327>

Impact

- a. The report *Teaching Common Values in Europe* (Veugelers et al. 2017) was freely distributed through various European Union websites.
- b. Researchers wrote monthly pieces for a well-read journal in this field (*Tijdschrift voor Sociale Vraagstukken*), published a book that was sent to all readers of this journal, and organised a large (inter)national conference.
- c. SamenZin just started in June 2020 and does not have any societal impact yet.
- d. Researchers wrote a book for school leaders on how to foster pedagogical sensitivity within their schools, which was presented at a symposium. Helma de Keijzer and Ritie van Rooijen wrote a guide for a moral learning programme and the critical reflexive dialogue method as key part in it (VELON: *Tijdschrift voor Lerarenopleiders*). Karin Diemel developed a questionnaire for pupils to rate their teachers on pedagogical sensitivity (published in her thesis) and several conferences were organized for the >20 participating schools
- e. Resulted in a monograph, numerous popular publications, interviews, lectures and workshops. It helped fuel discussion in the professional field of chaplaincy by introducing a new role of chaplains in insitutional settings of care for older people: the chaplain as expert in meaning giving.
- f. Project f: [CL] Resulted in a monograph, numerous lectures, and professional and academic articles. Using the photo-voice research method, respondents took photos of meaningful situations in their lives which were exhibited in the famous Hermitage Museum as well as the entrance hall of the Ministry of Health. It proved a meaningful way to give back to our respondents, who invited friends and family members and were proud to see their own pictures exhibited.
- g. *Dignity for Vulnerable Groups* resulted in a report, articles in newspapers and academic journals, and a short online animation for professionals and clients.
- h. *Transitional Justice* led to numerous published articles. Immler (2018) (output 6) won the Low Countries History Award in 2019. This formed the basis of the successfully funded NWO Vici project *The Dialogics of Justice: Assessing Recognition as a Process of Resonance* (which has started in 2020).
- i. Researchers in *Social Justice in Social Assistance* wrote monthly columns and articles for the professional journal *Sprank*. At the end of the project, the columns and articles, together with an interview in the daily broadsheet NRC, were assembled and turned into a glossy magazine that was placed online [link] and sent out to all interviewees as well as other stakeholders.

- j. *Taking Care of Care Givers* has led to many articles. Pharos is working on tools that support professionals to promote care sharing.
- k. Biesta's publications for both scholars and professionals, addressing the normative aspects of the teaching profession, have had impact on both educational policy and practice. His description of the three-fold function of education and the role of teachers—qualification, socialization and subjectification—can be found in various Ministry of Education documents. His work informs the national curriculum.nu program for new primary and secondary school curricula and is used in teacher education.

Sources

1. For the use of Biesta's work on the functions of education, particularly in curriculum.nl, see interviews with Biesta as well as his own publications in *Didactief*, e.g. <https://didactiefonline.nl/blog/blonz/gert-biesta-over-de-voorstellen-van-curriculumnu>
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3. Bredewold, F., Kampen, T., Verplanke, L. Tonkens, E. & Duyvendak, J.W. (2018) *De verhuizing van de verzorgingsstaat*. Amsterdam: Van Gennep.
4. Photo-exhibition *An Eye on Difference* [Oog voor anders]: photos produced during the project, exhibited at the Outsider Art Gallery of the Hermitage Museum in Amsterdam, at the Ministry of Health and at various care organisations.
5. Schmidt, J., Leget, C., Niemeijer, A. Tonkens, E. & Trappenburg, M. (2019) *De waardigheidscirkel*. Rapport voor Zon MW/ gemeente Utrecht.
6. Schmidt, J., Leget, C., Niemeijer, A. Tonkens, E. & Trappenburg, M. (2018) *De Waardigheidscirkel: hulp bij hulpverlening*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxPVYj8o1Fk>
7. Schmidt, J. & Tonkens, E. (2019) Wijkteams voorkomen dat mensen zich een monster voelen. NRC 2 February 2019. <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2019/02/01/wijkteams-voorkomen-dat-mensen-zich-een-monster-voelen-a3652642>
8. Tonkens, E. & Bredewold, F. (2018) Beter luisteren aan de keukentafel is niet genoeg. *NRC*, October 1.
9. Van der Weele, S., Bredewold, F.H., Grootegoed, E.M., Trappenburg, M.J. & Tonkens, E.H. (2018) *De Kunst van Ambachtelijke Afstemming: een onderzoek naar ervaringen van afhankelijkheid van mensen met een beperking en hun verwanten*. (extern rapport), Rijksoverheid (Kamerstuk)
10. Van der Weele, S., Bredewold, F.H., Grootegoed, E.M., Trappenburg, M.J. & Tonkens, E.H. (2019) *Zorgen als Ambacht: afstemmen op afhankelijkheid van mensen met een beperking*. Utrecht: Uitgeverij de Graaff.
11. Van der Weele, S. & Bredewold, F.H. (2019) *De zorgverlener moet meer zijn dan een voorbijganger*. *Trouw*, January 22.
12. Van der Weele, S. (2018) *Afhankelijk zijn we allemaal*. In *Goed leven* (pp. 12-14). The Hague: Raad voor Volksgezondheid en Samenleving.
13. Van der Weele, S. (2019) *Afhankelijkheid hoort er in de gehandicaptenzorg gewoon bij*. (artikel). *Sociale Vraagstukken* (22 Feb 2019). <https://www.socialevraagstukken.nl/afhankelijkheid-hoort-er-in-de-gehandicaptenzorg-gewoon-bij/>

14. Van der Weele, S. & Tonkens, E.H. (2018). [Niet afhankelijkheid, maar onmacht is het probleem in de zorg - en er is iets aan te doen.](#) *Trouw*, May 23.
15. Van der Weele, S., Bredewold, F., Grootegoed, E., Trappenburg, M. & Tonkens, E. (2019) *Zorgen als ambacht. Afstemmen op afhankelijkheid van mensen met een beperking* Utrecht: de Graaff.

Appendix 3. List of key publications made available to the committee

Theme 1. Humanism

- a. Duyndam, J. (2017). Resilience beyond mimesis. Humanism, autonomy, and exemplary persons. In B.E.J.H. Becking, A.J.A.C.M. Korte & L. van Liere (eds.) *Contesting Religious Identities: Transformations, Disseminations, and Mediation* (pp. 175-193). Leiden: Brill.
- b. Machielse, A. (2015). The heterogeneity of socially isolated older adults: A social isolation typology. *Journal of Gerontological Work*, 58 (4), 338-356.

Theme 2. Meaningful living

- c. Van Wijngaarden, E.J., Leget, C.J.W., Goossensen, A. (2017) Ethical uneasiness and the need for open-ended reflexivity: The case of research into older people with a wish to die. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 21 (3), 317-331.
- d. Immler, Nicole, Stef Scagliola (2020), [Seeking justice for the mass execution in Rawagede. Probing the concept 'entangled history' in a postcolonial setting](#). *Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*.²
- e. Ruyter, D.J. de (2018). Well-being and the upbringing and education of children. In P. Smeyers (Ed.), *International handbook of philosophy of education* (pp. 937-950). Cham: Springer (ISBN 978-3-319-72761-5).

Theme 3. A just and caring society

- f. De Groot, I. (2018). Narrative learning for democratic citizenship identity: a theoretical framework. *Educational Review*, 70(4), 447-464.
doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2017.1344191
- g. Jacobs, G.C. (2016). A guided walk in the woods: boundary crossing in a collaborative action research project. *Educational Action Research*, (ISSN 0965-0792), 1-19. doi: 10.1080/09650792.2016.1203344

Trappenburg, M, Kampen, T. & Tonkens, E. (2019) Social workers in a modernising welfare state: professionals or street-level bureaucrats? *British Journal of Social Work*
<https://academic.oup.com/bjsw/advance-article/doi/10.1093/bjsw/bcz120/5603659?guestAccessKey=7380e882-6e7d-4c38-83e0-88676e94ee05>

² Since the prize winning article Immler, N.L. (2018). Hoe koloniaal onrecht te erkennen? De Rawagede-zaak laat de kansen en grenzen van (rechts)herstel zien. *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review*, (ISSN 0165-0505 & 2211-2898), 133, 57-87. (Low Countries History Award 2019), is in dutch and therefore not accessible to all committee members, we decided to send the article mentioned under 3. Both articles deal with the same case study, the dutch one reflecting on the debates in the Netherlands, and the English one embedding the Dutch case in the international debate on entangled history writing.

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