

education matters

FHML 2021



Lessons learned from
the corona crisis

I teach, what is
your super power?

Towards a new
vision on assessment



Maastricht University



Maastricht UMC+

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Maartje Cox (20) is on a mission to get giftedness on the agenda of teachers and students.



Staying sane during the corona crisis

The corona crisis has challenged students in unforeseen ways. Studying from home, the absence of social events and uncertainty about the future may create major stumbling blocks towards a happy and healthy student life. How to stay sane? FHML's student advisers have worked diligently to help students make the best of it.



We wear our love for education on our sleeves

Research and education are the core business of every university. Traditionally, the first was viewed as the most prominent and prestigious. The times are changing, however, as is proven every day at the department of Health Promotion and the department of Family Medicine. Here, education is just as important as research.

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Effective 1 September 2021, Hans Savelberg, Director of Education of Biomedical Sciences, has handed over the baton to Jan Theys. Savelberg, who held the position for 8 years, is considered a major innovator of biomedical education. In a field traditionally focused on knowledge, he succeeded in giving skills and competences a firm place in the curriculum of both the bachelor and master of Biomedical Sciences.

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Welcome to the seventh edition of our annual magazine

We are looking back on another remarkable academic year. After the start of the COVID-19 crisis in spring 2020, and the sudden switch from on-campus to online education, we assumed we would be able to return to 'normal' somewhere during the recent academic year. This turned out to be too optimistic. Large parts of our education had to switch back and forth between on-campus and online in the academic year 2020-2021 as well. Now, in September 2021, it seems as if we can finally come back together on-campus as usual. When walking through our buildings, I can feel the positive vibes coming from students that are excited to see each other again (or for the first time...) after one and a half years, and from staff that enjoys providing education face-to-face again. And that is a great feeling!

The COVID-19 crisis presented us with a great number of challenges, not just in organising and providing education, but also in staying healthy and sane. Especially the students faced serious problems, being forced to study alone at home and lacking social contacts with their colleagues and friends. In this magazine, you can read about the experiences of some of them and the way our student advisers have supported them. In the upcoming two years, additional budget will become available thanks to the National Programme for Education, a special measure of the Dutch government to invest in the wellbeing of students that suffered the most.

Just like the students, our teaching and support staff were confronted with serious challenges. They had to transfer education and assessment to online formats wherever possible, while dealing with stressed students at the same time. This asked for substantial extra effort from many, and resulted in high work pressure, in spite of the fact that the Faculty Board provided extra means to attract additional workforce. Nevertheless, we still offered high-quality education and students were satisfied and understanding. Altogether, this is a major achievement and both the Faculty Board and the Board of Directors of the Institute for Education would like to express their gratitude and appreciation to everybody involved in education during this pandemic!

Fortunately, we also learned a lot during the crisis, for example about alternative, online or blended ways to organise education. Our Strategy & Policy team interviewed all programme coordinators to identify positive experiences and best practices. A summary of the results and experiences of some of the coordinators is presented in this magazine. The information obtained provides us with valuable information about the preferences of our staff and the technological needs to further improve and innovate education at FHML.



People are at the heart of our education. Stories, opinions and achievements of a selection of our students, alumni, scientific and support staff, and departments are presented in this magazine. They illustrate their energy and motivation, their performance and contributions, and the way education adds to their future. Reading all of this makes me proud; I do hope this also holds true for you!

Enjoy reading this 2021 edition of Education Matters!

Mirjam oude Egbrink

Scientific Director of the Institute for Education FHML

There is no shame in asking for help!

Maartje Cox (20) is on a mission to put giftedness on the agenda of mentors, teachers and tutors, as well as students.

STUDENT
IN THE
PICTURE

“Approximately 5-10% of university students is highly intelligent. I want to raise awareness about the characteristics of giftedness, so that it will be recognised sooner and dealt with appropriately. I am positive that this will make for many more happier students. Believe me, I speak from experience.”

It is an understatement to say that Maartje is a busy bee. She recently obtained her bachelor's degree in Biomedical Sciences and will start the Master in Sports, Exercise and Human Performance at the University of Münster, Germany, in October. In the past year, she did two internships and an extracurricular course about climate, social justice and gender equality. In her spare time, she studies Spanish and immerses herself in the psychology of giftedness by means of a higher vocational study. She cycles about one and a half hour every day and runs about 30 km in the weekend, just for fun. How does she manage all this?

Sky-high expectations

Maartje laughs. “Indeed, it seems like a lot! And to be honest, I couldn't have managed such a full programme a few years ago!” So, what happened? Maartje: “I came to the university with sky-high expectations. I considered myself the perfect student; eager to learn, disciplined and motivated. I was really looking forward to going to university, to make a fresh start. But things turned out differently. Although I studied extremely hard, I just didn't get the grades I expected of myself. I couldn't prioritise and struggled with the preparation of the tutorial groups. I was afraid of failure, was letting myself down and ended up in a downward spiral.”

Strict routine

Coincidentally, Maartje read an interview with Laura Groebbé, founder of La Luna in Maastricht. “Laura counsels gifted children and adults. Reading the article, it felt like it was about me. I contacted Laura and started a counselling programme with her. It didn't take long before I started to feel better. I could concentrate better and managed to get more done in less time. My grades were improving as well. I started to feel much happier. Instead of studying every day, every night and every weekend, I learned to stick to a strict routine; study 40 hours during the work week and have spare time in the evenings and weekends.”

Grant Diversity & Inclusivity

“It hit me that the problem I had encountered is probably also something that other students struggle with. I got in touch with study advisor Anke Smeenk, expecting that the university would offer support and counselling for gifted students. After all, the number of highly intelligent and gifted people at university is relatively high. But to my surprise I learned that specialised support is not available. Both Anke and I agreed that this is a big omission and something should be done about it. We both immersed ourselves deeply in the topic. Anke suggested we'd apply for a grant of UM's 'Diversity & Inclusivity' fund and use this money to raise awareness of giftedness and help teachers, tutors, mentors and of course students, to better recognise it and deal with it. I am proud to say that 21 teams submitted their applications and that we were one of seven teams that won!”

You are not alone!

“Thanks to this grant, giftedness will be high on the agenda in the academic year 2021/2022”, Maartje says. “Our project team will organise workshops, lectures and peer-to-peer sessions to learn and share experiences. I hope that a lot of students will participate and feel that they are not alone. That there's no shame in asking for help. I went through a rough patch and came out stronger. Things have worked out really well. I wish the same for every student.”

More information

For more information about the giftedness programme, please contact anke.smeenk@maastrichtuniversity.nl or take a look at the webpage www.maastrichtuniversity.nl/about-um/diversity-inclusivity/your-di-vision-um > '2021 Winners' > 'Giftedness and increasing inclusion - About not being an Einstein'.

Staying sane *during the corona crisis*

The corona crisis has challenged students in unforeseen ways. Studying from home, the absence of social events and uncertainty about the future created major stumbling blocks for a happy and healthy student life. How to stay sane? FHML's student advisers have worked diligently to help students make the best of it. Below, they share their experiences.

"For me, distinguishing between work and free time has been the most difficult thing," says biomedical student Jan Venne. "When everything happens in your room, time just feels like a blur." It is a problem that a lot of students have been struggling with, knows student adviser Anke Smeenk, one of the go-to persons for guidance at FHML. "Next to having difficulties with structuring their day, many students experienced feelings of loneliness and motivation problems," she says. "In the first months of this year, this was aggravated by a lack of perspective; no one knew if and when the situation would improve."

It all sounds pretty familiar to medical student Claire Vienerius, who chaired the medical study association Pulse last year. Especially the curfew was tough for her. "I don't have any roommates, which means that I was alone a lot," she explains. "I can only imagine how the first-year students must have felt, who missed out on

the introduction period and therefore didn't know a lot of people. With Pulse we tried to involve them in our online activities, yet it was difficult for us to reach them."

Vulnerable students

The group hit hardest by the corona crisis were the vulnerable students: those who already struggled with anxiety, panic attacks, or depression, and, therefore, are more susceptible to increased psychological distress.

"At the onset of the corona crisis, we could only meet with students through Zoom," Anke Smeenk says. "Although it went surprisingly well - the only thing I cannot offer online are tissues - we wanted to be able to do more." As soon as the corona safety measures relaxed, Anke Smeenk and her six colleagues made sure that it would be possible to have face-to-face meetings, if necessary.



“Especially, vulnerable students require our full attention and support,” says student adviser Marjo Boumans. “For instance, if there’s a student that I’m worried about and I don’t hear anything from him or her anymore, I will try to get in touch. We are very aware of the fact that we should make clear arrangements with those who seek our help, and that we need to keep in regular contact with them.”

Social network

FHML’s student advisers, furthermore, have actively promoted the university-wide mental health initiatives developed by the UM psychologists. It is indeed easy to figure out where to find support, says Health Sciences student Annemarie Säger. Last year, she was one of the board members of the study association MSV Santé. “Personally, I have been doing quite well, since I could rely on my fellow board members,” she states. “I have come to appreciate my social network so much more than I did before.”

Jan Venne and Claire Vienerius wholeheartedly agree. First and foremost, you need others to stay sane. Besides, as they know now from experience, activities such as taking walks, biking, and jigsaw puzzling can also help. They hope that the students who started their studies during the pandemic will still get the chance to meet each other, make friends, and build a social circle. Annemarie Säger: “Creating possibilities for social contacts is the most important thing that can be done right now.”

Back to the student advisers; what about their own well-being during the corona crisis? Their personal experiences don’t seem to differ an awful lot from those of the students. “We encountered the same problems with maintaining a healthy work-life balance,” Anke Smeenk states. Marjo Boumans: “Yes, also our well-being was at stake. Nevertheless, we did our utmost best. Our philosophy is that a student is more than his or her ECTS. The corona crisis has again stressed the importance of this holistic approach.”



MARJO BOUMANS, ANKE SMEENK, ANNEMARIE SÄNGER, CLAIRE VIENERIUS AND JAN VENNE

I am the Chief **Troubleshooter**

Fighting HIV/AIDS is not just about providing information and condoms to girls and women. It demands a much more holistic approach. It has to be about empowering women, fighting gender inequality and improving the position of women in society. “It all starts with good education”, Marijke Wijnroks states. “Education is the most effective tool to reduce social and economic vulnerabilities that make girls and women more prone to becoming infected.”

Marijke talks passionately about her job. When asked to describe a regular working day, she laughs. “Regular days don’t exist. My days are filled with meetings with our internal teams and with external partners; talking, discussing and negotiating a wide variety of topics, ranging from combating fraud and corruption to human rights and gender equality. Sometimes I call myself the ‘Chief Troubleshooter’. The Global Fund finances health programmes all over the world. Our partners are UNICEF, the World Bank and the WHO, but also (local) governments, NGO’s, the private sector, civil society, UN agencies, foundations and communities. Before Covid-19, I travelled 25% of the time.”

Out of the comfort zone

Marijke is an alumna of Maastricht University. “I started medical school in 1980. Going to Maastricht University was a deliberate choice for Problem-Based Learning (PBL). Back then, Maastricht University was the first and only university in the Netherlands that offered PBL. I still remember the first weeks. As an introduction to various medical professions, we had to spend a day with a family doctor, a social worker, on the ambulance and at the emergency room. It was fun and inspiring and I immediately knew that coming to Maastricht was the right choice.” Marijke graduated in 1986. Not sure yet about which medical specialisation to pursue, she decided to follow-up on a childhood dream: working in Africa. She moved to Antwerp to study tropical medicine and in the following year, she went to South Sudan for Medicines Sans Frontières (MSF; Artsen zonder Grenzen).



MARIJKE WIJNROKS IS THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE GLOBAL FUND

Based in Geneva, Switzerland to fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria. She has held this position since 2013. “The Global Fund is an international financing agency, active in over 100 low and middle-income countries and with an annual budget of over 4 billion dollars”, Marijke explains. “Since its foundation in 2002, the Global Fund has saved over 32 million lives. Our 750 staff members represent over 100 nationalities.”



"I feel incredibly lucky that I have such a rewarding and inspiring job that allows me to make a difference."

"Since I had never travelled further than London and Paris, this was way out of my comfort zone. But it was a remarkable learning experience; practicing medicine with very limited means in very difficult and often dangerous circumstances. It taught me that I was much more resilient than I thought. And also, that life is precious and you should make the most of it."

A new professional passion

Following her first assignment for MSF, Marijke did two more assignments in South Sudan and then went to North Uganda to run a community health programme. There she met her future husband. After a short stay in Maastricht, where their first child, a daughter, was born, they moved to Bangladesh. After two-and-a-half years, they went to El Salvador where Marijke started working in a Primary Health Care Programme for the Pan-American Health Organisation. "After the bloody war that had just ended, we used health to rebuild cohesion; working with opposing camps to address the most pressing health needs." Marijke, her husband and their three children moved back to the Netherlands in 1998. Marijke joined the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a senior health advisor. "The start of a new passion: fighting HIV/AIDS. At that time, Sub-Saharan Africa was the epicentre of the pandemic. A positive HIV test was not only a huge stigma but, in most cases, also a death sentence. I will never forget the group of HIV positive women in Nairobi who were making memory books to leave behind for their children. Or the couple in Zambia who could afford treatment for only one of them. But it was also an inspiring period in which I met many fierce fighters for justice wanting to make a difference. They keep me motivated until today. Luckily, over the years, things have changed. The Global Fund to fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria, my current organisation, was deeply involved, just like myself. I am really proud of what the Global Fund has achieved: mortality has been more than halved and HIV treatment has become much cheaper and accessible to millions of people."

Courage

And now there is this new challenge called corona. "The Global Fund has made funding available for the procurement of tests and personal protective equipment. We are also working closely with partners, under the leadership of the WHO, in the Access to Covid Tools Accelerator (ACT-A). ACT-A aims to accelerate the development of tools and make them available to low and middle-income countries. Although the speed in which tests, therapeutics and vaccines are developed is breathtaking, it also makes the global inequities painfully visible. Whereas many high-income countries are reopening societies now that vulnerable groups are protected, less than one percent of people in Sub-Saharan Africa is vaccinated. No one is safe until everyone is safe."



"In a way, Covid-19 resembles the early years of HIV. It's new and causes fear, stigma, discrimination, it is surrounded with fake news and exposes failing political leaders. However, the intense collaboration and energy in fighting this pandemic gives me courage. I know for sure that Covid-19 will keep me busy for a while."

News in brief



Tutorial Rooms upgraded

The request of the government to develop a back-up scenario in case the Covid-19 pandemic worsened again, has led to the decision to equip all tutorial rooms with a camera and microphone to allow online participation of students if needed. In the long term, these facilities can be used for various purposes, for example to consult (international) experts on a certain topic, to optimise the preparation and integration days for our medical master's students or for planning group meetings.

Stories of lockdown

Pulse Education and the Student Council HLS look back together on a year of living in lockdown and describe what this has meant for a number of students and staff members in a beautiful booklet.

This gives us insight into how different people in our faculty have been doing over the past year. The booklet is available on the FHML intranet: https://intranet.maastrichtuniversity.nl/en/system/files/fhml_covid_stories.pdf

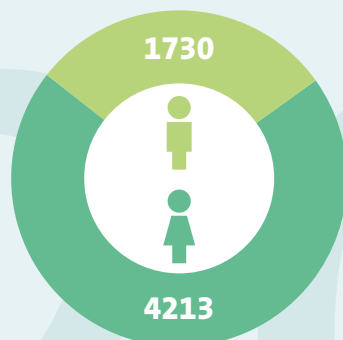


New Projects for the Quality Agreements

In spring 2021, a FHML-wide call for proposals related to the Quality Agreements was issued. All FHML staff and students could submit project proposals contributing to the quality and/or innovation of education.

A total of 22 project proposals was received. After careful evaluation, in which around 60 people, many of which students, were involved, 16 of the 22 projects were granted. The projects vary and range from a project allowing students to walk through a cell using VR-techniques, to a further expansion of the extracurricular course offer for students and a complete redesign of the faculty development offer for teaching staff in the Master in Medicine.

Figures 2020-2021



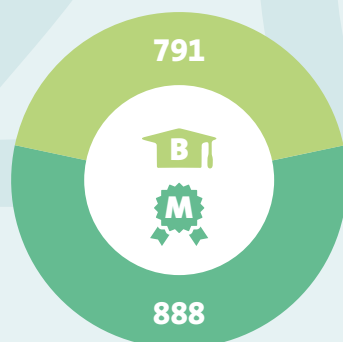
Students

5943

Male: 1730

Female: 4213

57 different countries
of origin.



Degrees*

1679

Bachelor: 791

Master: 888*

New intakes

2236



Bachelors

1197



Masters

1039

Educational staff

307 FTE

Staff members

& >2500

Staff members with University
Teaching Qualification (BKO): **657**



4 Bachelors

- B.Sc. Biomedical Sciences
- B.Sc. European Public Health
- B.Sc. Health Sciences
- B.Sc. Medicine (incl. the International Track in Medicine)



12 Masters

- M.Sc. Biomedical Sciences
- M.Sc. Epidemiology
- M.Sc. Governance and Leadership in European Public Health
- M.Sc. Global Health
- M.Sc. Health and Food Innovation Management
- M.Sc. Health Education and Promotion

- M.Sc. Health Professions Education
- M.Sc. Healthcare Policy, Innovation and Management
- M.Sc. Human Movement Sciences
- M.Sc. Medicine
- M.Sc. Physician-Clinical Researcher (Research Master)
- M.Sc. Work, Health and Career



* Degrees issued in 2019-2020. The data for the academic year 2020-2021 are not final yet.

I Teach *what is your super power?*

Effective 1 September 2021, Hans Savelberg, Director of Education for Biomedical Sciences, has handed over the baton to Jan Theys. Savelberg, who held the position for eight years, is considered a major innovator of biomedical education. In a field traditionally focused on knowledge, he succeeded in giving skills and competencies a firm place in the curriculum of both the bachelor and master of Biomedical Sciences. Why is that so important?

“International labour market research shows that employers find the so-called ‘21st century skills’ increasingly important”, Hans Savelberg explains. “They are looking for experts in a certain field, but they also want team players and strong communicators. People who are independent, know what they want and are inquisitive. Of course, those competencies, as well as skills such as writing and presenting, were already part of the curriculum, but just not explicit enough. So, when we designed the new curriculum of the bachelor’s programme in Biomedical Sciences, we gave those competencies a strong position by including them in the learning outcomes of the programme, supported by a mentor system. Students keep track of their progress in mastering competencies by means of a portfolio. A few years later, we did the same with our master’s programme. It has become a unique selling point of Biomedical Sciences in Maastricht.”

Getting to know various cultures

Another change made under Hans’ leadership is that both the bachelor’s and master’s programme are taught in English. “The result being that one-third of our student population now comes from abroad. I think that’s important because our students learn from day one to communicate and cooperate with various nationalities and cultures. There is also an additional effect: students who make the effort to come to study in Maastricht - even from as far as Vladivostok - have an attitude that is enriching and stimulating for other students as well.”

Authentic education

How does Hans look back on the past eight years? “Overall, I am proud of what we achieved, but of course there are things that I didn’t get around to. One of my ambitions, for instance, was to create more room for practical training. Plans for that are ready, but corona has delayed implementation. I also had planned to focus more on implementing constructive alignment in our exams and assessments, meaning that the learning outcomes determine the way we assess. A hobby horse of mine is that I want to make education more authentic. Meaning that students should work on actual problems, starting immediately in their first year. It makes studying more fun, it stimulates team work and it shows the added value of biomedical science in society. We’re already doing some interesting pilots, and next year we will start a randomised trial to evaluate the impact of authentic education.”

Empowerment of teachers

“I teach, what is your super power?”, is the motto that Hans Savelberg lives by. “For me, this is an acknowledgement of teachers. At the university, the focus lies primarily on doing research and much less on teaching. With the result that many colleagues consider teaching a chore. They don’t enjoy it or even find it stressful.”



Hans Savelberg

"I think it is important to create a community of people who enjoy being a tutor, and are good at it. Frankly, I think students deserve that."



Lessons learned *from the corona crisis*

No, the pandemic is not over yet. Nevertheless, with more than one-and-a-half years of experience in online education, it makes sense to take a moment to pause and reflect. What lessons can be learned from the challenges and opportunities the corona crisis has presented us with?



Mariëtte Cruijssen, head of the Strategy and Policy team of the Institute for Education, is well aware that this is a question with many answers. “We are a broad faculty,” she says. “The different programmes have each dealt with the situation in their own way.” Together with her colleagues, she made an inventory of best practices when it comes to FHML education in times of corona. It was the first attempt at getting a structured overview of the positive experiences that are also part of this crisis. “We are in a transition phase. At this moment, it’s important to know: what do we want to keep for the future, and what is needed for that?”

Looking back

When asked to look back on the past period, ‘intense’ is the word that best seems to capture the mood. “At the onset of the pandemic, it was a matter of improvising and coming up with temporary solutions,” says Marion van Lierop, programme coordinator of the Master in Medicine. “It soon became clear that all clinical rotations would stop until further notice, which eventually lasted for three months. It took a great deal of effort to figure out how to make up for the lost time, and inform our students about it. Obviously, they were quite worried about the implications for their studies.”

According to Matt Commers, coordinator of the bachelor in European Public Health (EPH), it took substantial extra effort from both staff members and students to continue the programme online, both partially and fully. “Above all, we experienced difficulty with online assessment,” he explains. “There were many signs that students were quite stressed by online studying, assessments, and the limited opportunities to go abroad for excursions, the minor period, or thesis placements.”

Matt Commers

“We had positive experiences with online guest lectures, thesis groups, supervision and group work among students.”

Leo Schouten, programme coordinator of the one-year master’s programme in Epidemiology, recognises the increase in work pressure for staff members. His students however, were satisfied with the online teaching they received. “Because of the theoretical character of our programme, it was relatively easy to make the transition to online education,” he states. “Furthermore, our student population consists of two groups; those who have just finished their bachelor, and those who already started their career. The latter group appeared to benefit from online education.”



MARIËTTE CRUIJSSEN, LEO SCHOUTEN, MARION VAN LIEROP AND MATT COMMERS

Best practices

Which lessons can be learned from these rather diverse experiences? The bottom line is: when used in the right context, online tools can be very helpful and efficient.

“Last year, our new curriculum happened to be launched in the midst of the corona crisis,” Matt Commers says. “We’d have a fifteen-minute online staff meeting, which we called a huddle, every morning. This greatly helped the implementation process under very unusual circumstances. Similarly, we had positive experiences with online guest lectures, thesis group supervision, and group work among students.”

Leo Schouten and Marion van Lierop agree, adding that recorded lectures, followed by an online Q&A session, also proved to be working well. “It’s even possible to do certain practicals online, and I can very well imagine that we’ll keep organising them in this manner,” Leo Schouten says. For him personally, there’s another advantage to online meetings. “I’m terrible with names,” he laughs. “In that respect, Zoom comes in very handy.”

Marion van Lierop: “Of course, not everything can be replaced by Zoom. I missed the atmosphere, and the creativity that can be the

result of a spontaneous meeting at the coffee machine. However, based on our recent experiences, we can now deliberately choose the best option. Training courses for teachers, for instance, were much more successful online due to a higher attendance rate. Similarly, we are now asking ourselves, how we can best organise the university-based preparation and integration days for our clinical rotation students: are we going back to physical meetings at the university or can we continue some of them online?”

Future

It all sounds familiar to Mariëtte Cruijssen: “With so many different programmes, it’s clear that we need tailor-made solutions,” she states. The basic infrastructure, for that matter, has been taken care of. “As of this academic year, all tutorial rooms are equipped with the appropriate technical facilities, such as microphones and cameras. Lectures can be recorded and streamed from all lecture halls. The inventory also provided valuable information regarding the future needs for FHML education and the preferences of our staff. This helps the Board of Directors to represent FHML in discussions about UM-wide facilities in the best possible way. Whatever might happen in the future, we are better prepared than we were in March last year.”

We wear our love for education on our sleeves

It is a telling anecdote: a junior researcher, hesitant about his or her teaching abilities, joins the department of Health Promotion. Fast forward a couple of years, and a passionate teacher has been born. “That is not a coincidence”, says department chair Stef Kremers. “In our team, having a heart for education is the norm.”

Research and education are the core businesses of every university. Traditionally, research was viewed as the most prominent and prestigious of the two. Times are changing however, as the department of Health Promotion and the department of Family Medicine prove every day. There, education is just as important as research.

“From research assistants to professors, virtually everyone in our department contributes to the education we offer,” says Kathelijne Bessems, who works as education coordinator at the department of Health Promotion.

“There’s a positive vibe. Education is a joint effort, with room for personal preferences. When someone joins our team, I always try to find the right match between their expertise, ambition, and teaching activities. Fortunately, we are active in several programmes, which means there is actually something to choose from.”

The situation is somewhat different at the department of Family Medicine, where education is open to anyone who aspires working in it. “Many of our employees are general practitioners who, next to their work as a doctor, deliberately choose for a teaching role because they want to gain a new experience,” says education coordinator Laury de Jonge.

“The positive side-effect is that they function as a role model for the medical students they teach.” He wants to emphasise that FHML offers a career path in education, which means that there are plenty of opportunities to grow and develop.

Enthusiasm

When it comes to breeding enthusiasm for education, the role of the department chair cannot be overestimated. “Several of our staff members - including myself - wear their love for education on their sleeves, so to say,” Stef Kremers states. “We also regularly organise seminars and workshops to further improve our team’s teaching skills and expertise.”

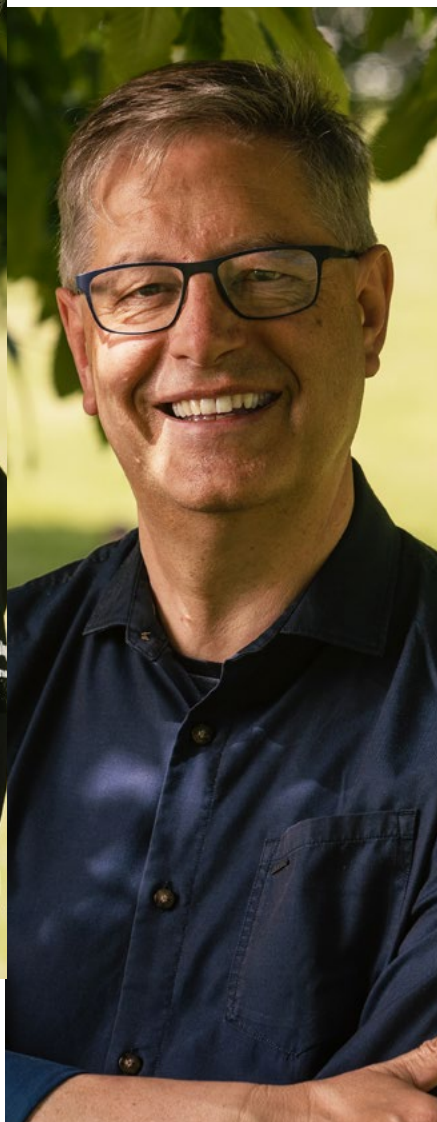
Likewise, at the department of Family Medicine, all staff members are stimulated to enrol in the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ or BKO) programme. According to department chair Jean Muris, one of the biggest challenges is to make sure that assistant professors find the right balance between research and teaching. “Research is challenging and competitive, which makes it tempting to write a proposal during the time reserved for teaching,” he explains. “It’s important to be aware of this and to regularly evaluate the situation. There’s no one-size-fits-all solution; we should strive to find the right mix of activities for each individual staff member.”

Kathelijne Bessems

“When someone joins our team, I always try to find the right match between their expertise, ambition, and teaching activities.”



Stef Kremers



Jean Muris



Kathelijne Bessems



Laury de Jonge

Students

Sometimes, a staff member wishes he or she had more than twenty-four hours in a day. “I would definitely like to teach more,” Laury de Jonge says. “Because the cliché is true: being active in education means that you keep close to the students.” Kathelijne Bessems agrees. “Besides, I’m just very passionate about health promotion and the difference it can make,” she says. “It’s great to be able to share my enthusiasm with the students.”

There is, however, a flipside to this student-centered approach, Stef Kremers admits. “Our teaching activities usually cost more time than budgeted. This is an investment we are willing to make, since we want the best for our students. But the corona

Jean Muris

“One of the biggest challenges is to make sure that assistant professors find the right balance between research and teaching.”

crisis has made us go way beyond our mental and financial limits. Obviously, this can’t go on forever.” On a more personal level, he is eagerly looking forward to better times. “Lecturing and tutoring are things I greatly enjoy, on campus, that is. I feel at my best surrounded by students getting their teeth into some problem.”



Towards a new vision on assessment

Imagine a large room, packed with students writing their exam - the only sound you hear is pens touching paper.

This is what assessment traditionally looks like: a test at the end of a course, resulting in a grade. Maastricht University, however, has recently published a new vision on assessment. It aims for a culture of feedback and development instead of a culture of testing.

Jascha de Nooijer, director of Education for Health, was involved in drafting the new, university wide vision on assessment and the corresponding implementation plan. Together with her colleagues, she identified several criteria for assessment.

“First, assessment has to be meaningful,” she says. “Where in the past the emphasis was on the reproduction of knowledge, we now believe that assessment should help students in their learning process. Second, it needs to be based on the core principles of Problem-Based Learning; learning should be collaborative, constructive, contextual and self-directed. This cannot be realised, finally, without a programme-wide assessment plan. We are well aware of the fact that skills,

Suzanne Schut

“What is needed, in short, is a more holistic approach,” she says. “It’s a far cry from the more traditional way of testing, where exams are, in a way, snapshots in time.”

competencies, and expertise are developed over time, not in a single course.” According to Suzanne Schut, staff member of the Department of Educational Development and Research, this new vision on assessment means nothing less than a cultural shift.

Best practices

In some cases it's not necessary to reinvent the wheel altogether. The curriculum of the master in Medicine, for instance, is already organised around the achievement of several competencies. "Throughout their studies, students collect all sorts of feedback information in their portfolios," says Kitty Cleutjens, chair of the Board of Examiners Medicine. "The Master Assessment Committee evaluates these at three moments in time." Suzanne Schut: "Here, the underlying idea is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."

Unit coordinator Gerry Nicolaes has another fine example of how learning and assessment can be integrated. In the course Engineering the immune system, treatment of disease in the master in Biomedical Sciences, students dive into a different topic every week, being coached and assessed by a tutor who is an expert on the matter. "The tutorial group is divided in subgroups, who each work on a certain part of the problem," he explains. "They all write a short paper that they present to and discuss with their peers, in order to get everyone on the same level. In addition, each student works on an individual thesis, which is due at the end of the course."

Because of corona, the whole course took place online last year - with surprising results. "Overall, the students were very content and performed well," says Gerry Nicolaes.



Gerry Nicolaes

Suzanne Schut

Gerry Nicolaes

"We do realise, however, that we ask tutors to go the extra mile. They are not only teaching, but also continuously evaluating and assessing."



Kitty Cleutjens

Jascha de Nooijer

Kitty Cleutjens

"It's clear that we need more than just a knowledge test at the end of a course. But what exactly is needed depends on the specific programme and its end goals."

Jascha de Nooijer: "I think it's great that students get the opportunity to work with the feedback they receive and, hence, are able to show how they grow and develop. That's exactly what we're talking about when saying that assessment has to be meaningful."

Seize momentum

There's, however, no one-size-fits-all solution, Kitty Cleutjens emphasises. The new university wide vision on assessment has been translated into an implementation plan for FHML. It differentiates between new programmes that will fully integrate the vision on assessment, existing programmes that will be revised and therefore will also be able to integrate, and existing programmes that are not under revision, but that could integrate step by step.

Perhaps one could call it a positive side-effect of the corona crisis, which initially led to quite some troubles in the field of assessment. "Without online surveillance, exams based on the reproduction of knowledge were almost impossible," Jascha de Nooijer explains. "It soon became clear that we needed to come up with alternative ways of testing. We have seized the momentum and used the pandemic as an accelerator for innovation."

The Sherlock Holmes' of Student Portfolios

They call themselves the Sherlock Holmes' of student portfolios. Margriet Schoonbrood, Margie Thehu, Tamara Boerma and Ilse Bougie go to great lengths to check and double check digital student portfolios. They have short lines of communication with the final examiners of the portfolios and are the point of contact for mentors and students. The team also organises mentor trainings, monitors sub-results after every course, calculates results and acts as a troubleshooter as well.

Margriet Schoonbrood: "Although we all have our own main tasks and responsibilities, we constantly communicate with each other so that we all know what is happening and what the priorities are. Every week starts with a Monday morning meeting, to discuss what lies ahead. We used to work together in one room, so everyone automatically knew what was going on. Because of Covid-19 we had to work from home, but we often had MS Teams open. This helped us to stay connected and it's more fun too! Working from home did not really negatively impact our job thanks to Zoom and MS Teams."

Evaluation, progress monitoring and archive

But first things first. What is a portfolio exactly and why is it important? Margie Thehu: "The (digital) portfolio has multiple purposes: evaluating students' learning progress and determining whether they have met the learning standards and other academic requirements for courses and graduation. It also helps students to reflect on their academic goals and progress. Last but not least, is it an archive of accomplishments and other relevant documentation." Margie Thehu: "The students themselves are responsible for updating their portfolio. Also, the mentor plays an important role in monitoring the student's progress via the portfolio."

Four mailboxes full of questions

Tamara Boerma, who is also a part-time translator: "We manage the portfolios of all master's and bachelor's students in Medicine, bachelor's students in Biomedical Sciences and master's students in Physician-Clinical Researcher (A-KO). Over 3,000 portfolios in total! We have four mailboxes in which questions keep coming in all day long. What makes things extra complicated is that every programme has its own portfolio requirements. We constantly have to switch between programmes to adequately answers questions and help students."

Diving deep into the portfolios

Margriet Schoonbrood: "When a student has completed all courses, assignments and internships, and the portfolio is approved, he or she is ready to graduate. It's our job to check if a portfolio is complete. That may sound easy, but sometimes it's quite a puzzle; many portfolios need adjustments. If something is not right, we discuss the issue with the review committee of the programme. It regularly happens that students start to panic, because they think they have completed something that is not in their portfolio. We then dive deep into it and try to figure out what happened, together with the student. If it turns out that the student needs to do something over or extra, we'll take care of the planning. If everything is alright, we inform the Board of Examiners."

Corona

"It is no exaggeration to say that corona has had a major impact, and not just because we had to work from home", says Tamara Boerma. "For instance, all clinical rotations of the Master in Medicine were halted immediately, so there was a lot of catching up to do afterwards. Also, terms and conditions of assessments of internships of other programmes had to be evaluated and adjusted according to the new situation. All in all a lot of work, for which our team temporarily received more hours." Margie Thehu adds: "2020 was also the year in which we started preparing the transfer of the portfolio system for the Bachelor in Biomedical Sciences to a new system."

Demanding and rewarding

"Summarising, the job is hectic, complex and demands a lot of flexibility and willingness to go the extra mile", Margriet Schoonbrood laughs. "Luckily, it's fun too!" Margie Thehu: "I think we are a great team. The job is demanding, but it's very rewarding to help the students. Every day is different and I love that." Tamara Boerma agrees: "Sometimes it's really complex, but experience shows that we'll always work it out together."

A photograph of four women on a modern staircase. Two women are standing on the upper steps, smiling and looking at each other. Two women are sitting on the lower steps, also smiling. The staircase has a dark metal railing with a wooden handrail. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

A day at the desk

MARGRIET SCHOONBROOD, MARGIE THEHU, TAMARA BOERMA AND ILSE BOUGIE

Prizes

PFIZER LIFE SCIENCES AWARD 2020

On 30 November 2020, **Louis Boylan** received the Pfizer Life Sciences Award 2020 (1st Prize). Louis, who is now a PhD-candidate at MERLN, completed the Master in Biomedical Sciences at FHML and received this award for his master's thesis concerning the restoration of tissues in the rapidly emerging field of regenerative medicine. The Royal Holland Society of Sciences and Humanities (Koninklijke Hollandse Maatschappij der Wetenschappen, KHMW) grants the Pfizer Life Sciences Awards annually to three students for exceptional achievements at a Dutch academic institution. Important criteria for these awards are the innovative character of the research, the theoretical foundation and the significance for society.



CATHARINA PIJLS INCENTIVE PRIZE

The Catharina Pijls Incentive Prize is awarded annually to a recent Health Sciences student for an excellent master's thesis. This year's prize was awarded to: **Maud Daemen** (MSc. Health Education and Promotion). The title of her master's thesis is "Sedentary behaviour; The relationship between sedentary behaviour, physical activity and perceived health among adults and elderly in the Netherlands: using a mixed-methods approach".



UNILEVER RESEARCH PRIZE 2020

On 26 November 2020, **Elena Sendino Garvi**, MSc. Biomedical Sciences, received the Unilever Research Prize 2020 for her master's thesis carried out at FHML. This prize is awarded each year to 13 students from universities in the Netherlands who have done exceptional work on topics that are relevant to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The title of her master's thesis is: Adult granulosa cell tumors of the ovary (aGCT): systemic drug screens show cell growth inhibition and synergistic effect of Carboplatin, Paclitaxel and Alpelisib treatment in patient-derived material.



WYNAND WIJNEN EDUCATION PRIZE 2020

At the Opening of the Academic year, on 6 September 2021, the Heads of Education UM, were awarded the Wynand Wijnen Education Prize 2020. This prize is awarded to staff members who have made an exceptional contribution to education at Maastricht University.

The Heads of Education UM are:

Judith Buddenberg (FSE)

Joel Castermans (SBE)

Roel Gilissen (LAW)

Catharien Kerkman (FPN)

Rene Nijssen (FHML)

Collin Prumpeler (FASOS)

A well-deserved recognition of their efforts to keep education going in a year where one crisis succeeded another and where they repeatedly had a crucial role to play.



STUDENT PRIZES (SWUM) 2020

Six FHML students won the SWUM student prizes 2020 for their excellent theses.

BACHELOR STUDENT PRIZE WINNERS:

Evi Groenhuijzen

Bachelor in Biomedical Sciences for her thesis
"Fetuin B in white adipose tissue associates with insulin resistance"

Johanna Tassot

Bachelor in European Public Health for her thesis
"Risk of oocyte donation for donors: a systematic literature review"

Gijs Bongaarts

Bachelor in Medicine for his thesis
"Biomarkers of oxidative stress"

Esther Schouwenaar

Bachelor in Health Sciences for her thesis
"Defining the influence of miR-30d-3p on the angiogenic capacity of cardiac endothelial cells in vitro and in vivo"

MASTER STUDENT PRIZE WINNERS:

Michael Teske

Master in Biomedical Sciences for his thesis
"Stability of the Germ Cell lineage in vivo and in vitro"

Tom den Ridder

Master in Medicine for his thesis
"Evaluation of clinical implementation of continuous monitoring in post-operative patients at the general ward"

WINNERS



Home office: *here to stay?*



Yes, but in combination with working at the campus office. In this way you can have the best of both worlds. The flexibility of being able to work at the campus office or at the home office gives me a feeling of freedom. The campus office is needed for social contacts and social cohesion.

Anke Oenema

Associate professor of Health Communication



Research shows that answering the question above is far from easy. Circumstances can be different for every employer and employee. For me the weakest point of working from home is that I miss a direct and optimal communication in a F2F-live-setting with colleagues and/or students about complicated legal problems. Please note that legal problems are mostly caused by prior indirect/ suboptimal communication! Therefore, I prefer working from the faculty workplace or at least in a hybrid situation.

Marcel Hukkelhoven

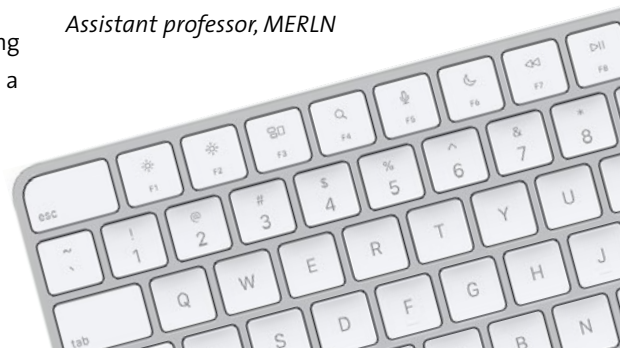
Lawyer/ Legal advisor and advisor Policy and Strategy Education



As an outdoorsy person I was very happy to work from my garden during the lockdown. I found this not only more comfortable but also more efficient when you need to read or write. Meetings with colleagues, however, I find more efficient and fun in person. I hope we keep the flexibility to combine both models.

Jurica Bauer

Assistant professor, MERLN



COLOPHON

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