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What the Board has to say about the FSP



With a new Faculty Strategic Plan (FSP) and a Board that is back to full strength, the Faculty of Humanities is ready for the future. Not that our work will be taking a totally different approach, but the changing world certainly calls for different emphases. You can read all about our response to these new developments in this FGW.nu special.

The FSP is an instrument for formulating a clear vision of the future in a structured manner. The Faculty of Humanities has plenty of reasons to look forward to that future with confidence. The wealth of international academic knowledge about languages, cultures and societies of the entire world in the present and the past, makes our faculty unique. And now that the world is becoming increasingly complex through, for instance, globalisation, migration and cultural transformations, our work is even more valuable. With our knowledge, we can make a real contribution resolving societal issues that have great current relevance. Our added value has in fact been noted at national level.

The National Task Force for the Humanities (Regieorgaan Geesteswetenschappen) concludes that “the robustness of Leiden University’s Faculty of Humanities has substantially increased in recent years, and even to such an extent that it is also a success for the University as a whole.” Our financial position is also strong and our student numbers have increased over the last few years.

Building further

We therefore have a good starting position, but this does not mean that we can continue in exactly the same way. Students’ interests are changing, the student population is becoming more international

and diverse, and international competition is increasing. We also see that our position within national and international research funding can no longer be taken for granted, because the usefulness and value of the humanities is sometimes underestimated as a result of the growing tendency to think in terms of profits: know-

ledge is increasingly evaluated on the basis of its societal applicability. These are challenges for our

faculty that we cannot ignore. We must modernise and look further ahead. We have to ensure that we remain relevant for students and society, and continue to be one of the most important centres in the world for teaching and research in the area of the humanities. This does not mean, however, that we are changing everything. After all, in recent years we have already taken many steps and the unique qualities of our faculty deserves to be retained. The new Faculty Strategic Plan outlines how we

‘The FSP outlines how we will respond to new developments while still retaining our strong points’

will handle these challenges: responding to new developments while still retaining our strong points. →

Wim van den Doel

Dean

“It is important to me that the Faculty of Humanities is an inspiring place for study and research. So I want to ensure that Leiden is the place that everyone with an interest in languages, culture and society worldwide, past and present, gravitates towards. I am committed to creating just such an environment. Excellent library facilities, the Lorentz centre, laboratories for experimental linguistics: these are just a handful of examples. I also feel it is essential that our students have the opportunity to study anywhere in the world and that Leiden can welcome students and academics from all over the globe. I would like to see Leiden become an international hub for Humanities!”



Mirjam de Baar

Vice Dean responsible for Masters and Research Masters

“In the coming years I want to put my efforts into improving the range of master’s courses we offer. More and more often we see bachelor students make a conscious choice in favour of a specific master’s programme at a university of their choice. This means it is essential to deliberately position our master’s programmes and to act on shifting interests among students. The broad range of (often unique) research specialisations within our faculty opens up plenty of opportunities and possibilities. I also think it is vital to spend more time on community building and orientation towards the job market in our research-driven MA programmes. I would like to examine how to give them form and content, with the help of the department administration, the department teaching committee, alumni and the faculty careers adviser. I also feel it is important for us to take responsibility for training academics who can get to work in secondary education with a teaching qualification. The introduction of broad labels for two-year educational masters in different groups of school subjects offer new opportunities in this area. In collaboration with ICLON, subject tutors for diverse groups of students can develop an academic training programme for teachers. This is a very exciting development.”



Egbert Fortuin

Vice Dean responsible for bachelor programmes

“We have a wealth of different courses in our faculty that are taught with passion by our lecturers. My primary task is to keep it that way, and where possible, to strengthen this even further with help from students and lecturers. This could involve working on new programmes but also the use of ICT in education or further developing general academic skills. I also think it is important that our teaching is truly fed by our research. It is inspiring to be involved, for instance by contributing to the development of digital humanities within our faculty. Our courses should challenge students. We don’t want students falling between the cracks, which is why it is important that we do something about low success rates in the places where they occur. I have noticed that lecturers sometimes feel that bureaucracy in education has become far too important. As far as it is within my capabilities, I would like to take this into account. Lecturers need to feel they are in charge of their own course. A nice challenge for both students and lecturers is to keep promoting the important of humanities for our society.”



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Read more: **Onward to 2021**

→ The making of

Formulating a good future plan requires care and attention. We therefore chose a step-by-step approach for the new FSP, with ample room for the input of different internal parties: the Academic Directors, the academic staff, support staff and also students. Vision meetings were organised to obtain feedback on the proposal and the key strategic themes, enabling the Faculty Board to tighten up the draft FSP. It was then discussed in various research and teaching forums and submitted to the Faculty community. The end result, the sum total of the insights offered by many of us, was finally discussed with the Executive Board.

Clear vision

And now? It is naturally not the intention that the FSP should become a paper tiger that will eventually disappear at the bottom of the desk drawer. Especially because the Faculty Strategic Plan relates not only to the further professionalisation of teaching, research and the organisation, but more importantly to the further development of the qualities of our staff – the Plan concerns us all! Which is another reason for this FGW. nu special, to make sure that all Faculty staff are partners of the Plan. And as a back-up there has also been arranged to guarantee that the FSP is implemented, by incorporating its action points in the administrative planning & control cycle. In the coming years you will therefore see and hear much more of the Plan, so that we can continue to innovate our faculty and ensure that our activities remain future-proof.

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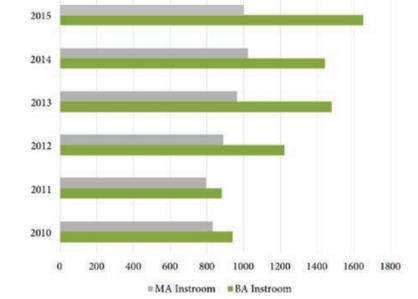


What lines are sketched in the Faculty Strategic Plan, what are the most important themes for our future and how will we implement them over the next few years? To learn about all the details, of course, you have to read the whole Plan. But as a convenient introduction, we present here an overview of the main aspects of the FSP.

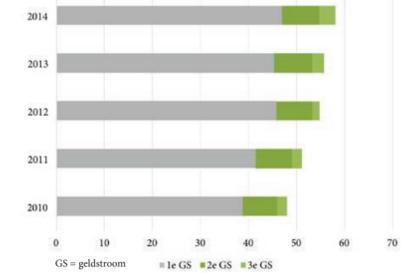


Humanities Leiden in figures

Studenteninstroom



Ontwikkeling van de baten



Number of study programmes



Our staff



Context and structure

Our Faculty Strategic Plan (FSP) is naturally inseparable from the ambitions of Leiden University as a whole, formulated in the Institutional Plan *Freedom to Excel* which was presented last year. Like all the other faculties, we play an important part in achieving those ambitions, such as:

- Retaining a market share of 10% of Dutch university students, with more focus on successful study performance and quality in the master's programmes.
- Further internationalisation of the study programmes, the staff and the student population.
- Further development of The Hague as the University's second location.
- Strengthening national and international collaborations, including via LeidenGlobal and the League of European Research Universities (LERU), but also local partnerships with such parties as the University of Applied Sciences Leiden and the universities of applied sciences and international institutions in The Hague.

Our FSP and *Freedom to Excel* are therefore clearly interrelated. To emphasise that connection, the FSP is structured around seven themes: the six ambitions expressed in *Freedom to Excel* plus the theme 'people, resources and organisation'.

Challenges for the Faculty of Humanities

Basically, the FSP is the translation of the ambitions from *Freedom to Excel* into the situation at the Faculty of Humanities, into opportunities and challenges that apply specifically for our faculty, such as:

- Market: the student population is becoming more diverse and international; the levels of interest in study programmes and themes are changing rapidly.
- Competition: international competition is increasing; we must continue to make efforts to remain an attractive 'hub' for students and academics from all parts of the world.
- Support and funding: society currently has a tendency towards superficial economic thinking about the 'usefulness' of knowledge; there is a risk that the importance of the humanities will be underestimated, potentially threatening our position in competitive national and EU research funding (the '2nd and 3rd sources of funding').
- Organisation: the great success of the BA International Studies makes the Faculty relatively vulnerable; a more evenly balanced distribution of students would be desirable.
- Results: for a truly robust Faculty, study performance in the BA programmes (including completion rates) and the intake of the MA programmes will have to further increase. However, it is not new for our faculty to respond to these opportunities and challenges: we have already done this with the initiatives arising from Sustainable Humanities 2.0, the report presented to Minister Bussemaker last year by the National Task Force for the Humanities (*Regioeraan Geesteswetenschappen*). You would therefore be right if you think that some elements of the FSP seem familiar to you.

The core and the whole Plan

The FSP makes it very clear that the Faculty of Humanities intends to offer a varied range of programmes, which match the increasing diversity of our students. We wish to equally serve students who are interested in a more liberal arts approach to their education and students who, already at the start of their studies, choose a more specialised track.

Another important connecting thread running through the FSP is multidisciplinary collaboration, especially within the profile areas Language Diversity in the World, Global Interactions of People, Culture and Power and Asian Modernities and Traditions. The explicit intention here is that these multidisciplinary collaborations will bring the Faculty's departments more into line with the important NWO themes and the societal challenges formulated by the EU, partly considering obtaining NWO and EU research funding ('2nd and 3rd sources of funding').

This article can only indicate the broad outlines of the FSP; there is insufficient space to do justice to all the nuances and details of the 23-page Plan. But the complete FSP, with detailed explanations of all the key strategic themes, is, of course, available to read online. You can find it on the Humanities website, under the heading 'About' > 'The future of our faculty.'

Menno Tuurenhout

Executive Dean



“Ik wil mij inzetten voor een evenwichtige begroting en realisatie daarvan. Niet alleen de gezonde reservepositie behouden die de faculteit de laatste jaren heeft opgebouwd, maar ook het toegekende geld nuttig besteden.

In mijn beleving biedt het Facultair Strategisch Plan daar een goed kader voor: speerpunten waarin we investeren zodat we bouwen aan een toekomstbestendige faculteit. Heel belangrijk vind ik de reducering van de werkdruk. Een project dat ik vorig jaar heb opgepakt toen ik bij deze faculteit startte en dat mijn volle aandacht heeft. Het is een ingewikkeld vraagstuk gebleken binnen deze mooie maar ook complexe faculteit. Een ander aspect dat mijn grootste aandacht heeft is de onderlinge verbinding en vertrouwen binnen de faculteit. In mijn beleving mogen deze meer versterkt worden, daar wil ik me graag voor inzetten. Tot slot probeer ik altijd de talenten en ambities van individuele collega's te koppelen aan de behoeften van de organisatie: dat levert vaak prachtige resultaten op.”

**Aurelie van 't Slot**

Assessor

“There are a few themes that are close to my heart as student member of the Faculty Board. One of them is creating an inclusive and diverse learning environment in which every student feels at home, regardless of gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity or disability. For example, I organise focus groups in which various aspects of diversity are discussed. An inclusive student community is also important for the growing number of international students. As I am studying on an international master's programme myself I know all about the problems that international students face, such as accommodation, finding work and social integration, to name but a few. Although these students are often very happy with their course, I believe that student support services could be extended further. Finally, I am looking forward to seeing how the implementation of the 21st century skills will unfold. I am convinced that our students will have a stronger position in the (international) job market with these skills and qualities. I hope the input of our students can contribute to the success of the Faculty Strategic Plan!”

FSP: work in progress

The Faculty Strategic Plan is ready, the Executive Board has given it its seal of approval. We can now start making the plan a reality. Of course we cannot realise all 93 (!) action points defined by the FSP at once. Below is a selection of the action points that will be tackled first, organised into the themes from the FSP.

An environment for excellent research

- Founding a hub for digital humanities

Status: in progress

What does it entail: The faculty is giving an impetus to education and research in the field of digital humanities. More and more research within the Faculty of Humanities is performed using ICT, such as text and image analysis, the building of databases and visualisation with GIS software. In the new hub, digital humanities research and education in the faculty will be coordinated and developed further. Through close collaboration with the UBL's Centre for Digital Scholarship and the Leiden Centre of Data Science (LCDS) support and expertise in digital humanities will be collated, joint research proposals for funding will be prepared and high quality infrastructure will be built. Engaging teaching programmes on digital humanities will also be developed for interested students.

Point of contact: Hilde De Weerd, Advisory Board Digital Humanities

Activating talent

- Setting up new 2-year MA programmes

Status: a pilot with a 2-year MA programme in German will start in September 2016; additional plans will be worked out in 2016.

What does it entail: the faculty is working on adapting particular MA programmes in the light of the coming broad BA programmes. For instance, an experimental 2-year educational MA programme in German will start in September

2016 for motivated students with a different background from the BA German Language and Culture. And if the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science grants its permission, work will begin on language-focused 2-year MA programmes in Arabic and Russian. The aim is to give students with a broad BA the opportunity to become specialists in a particular language and cultural area.

Point of contact: Mirjam de Baar, Vice-Dean and portfolio holder education MA.

Innovation in teaching & learning

- Further development of ICT&O applications

Status: in progress

What does it entail: We are working to increase the knowledge and application of ICT in education. Several projects are running within the faculty to make it possible for lecturers to experiment with digital study materials in their courses. Initiatives have been established to allow lecturers to share their experiences, so increasing the knowledge of new ICT in education across the entire faculty. ICT applications which have proven their worth so far are knowledge clips, online peer review and voting online during lectures.

Point of contact: Anna Benjamins, ExpertiseCentrum Online Leren, ecole@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Strengthening impact and innovation

- Development of the Netherlands Instituut Marokko (NIMAR: Netherlands Institute Morocco)

Status: in progress. The NIMAR

has been part of the Faculty of Humanities since the beginning of this year.

What does it entail: The NIMAR is the national expertise centre for Morocco Studies. It provides education to students, PhD candidates and professionals from the Netherlands, facilitates research and actively contributes to the knowledge of languages, culture and society in Morocco, the Arabian world and West Africa, in the Netherlands.

Point of contact: Léon Buskens, Director of NIMAR, nimar@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Research and education in an international environment

- Development of an English track within the BA in Philosophy

Status: taskforce started in 2015, the track starts on 1 September 2017

What does it entail: traditionally, the study of philosophy in the Netherlands (including in Leiden) has focused on the Western Tradition. In the 20th century philosophy defined itself largely in terms of a Euro-American tribal warfare between continental and analytical philosophy. In the 21st century, this approach is becoming increasingly untenable – especially at the Faculty of Humanities in Leiden, where our focus encompasses the entire world! The new English spoken track *Global and Comparative Perspectives* in the BA Philosophy will study Western and non-Western philosophy (for example Chinese, Japanese, Indian and Arabic) and the hermeneutic and other questions that a comparison between these traditions will pose

(*Comparative Philosophy*).

- **Point of contact:** Jan Sleutels, Chairman of the Department Administration, & Eelkje Meindersma, quartermaster *Philosophy: Global and Comparative Perspectives*

Campus The Hague

- Development of a course focusing on Urban Studies

Status: exploratory phase has just started

What does it entail: the Faculty of Humanities is developing a BA focusing on urban issues in collaboration with other faculties. It is expected that by 2025 more than half of the world population will be living in cities, making this kind of knowledge increasingly relevant. Humanities play an important part in this. The campus in The Hague forms a good base for the study of global urban issues.

Point of contact: Manon van der Heijden, quartermaster *Urban Studies*

People, resources and organisation

- Reducing work-related stress for academic and non-academic staff

Status: high on the agenda since last year, see the December issue of FGW.nu

What does it entail: Based on various conversations with staff (both in groups and individually) and the staff survey, a concrete plan is being drawn up which will be put into action around the summer of 2016.

Point of contact: Menno Tuurenhout, portfolio holder operations directorate & Miriam van Mulken, head of Personnel and Organisation



Last but not least: the development of a new WSD complex is also an important part of the FSP. We would love to develop a new Humanities Campus, preferably using the so-called 'Campus model' organised around a central square. But this means we need land currently owned by the City council,

which is the site of a council estate. We can only take over the land from the council if 70% of the tenants agree to the proposal put forward by Real Estate. The consultation process, during which Real Estate will be looking into the various options with the tenants facilitated by an independent

process supervisor, is due to start in the near future. The City council has meanwhile agreed to the framework for the redevelopment of the entire area of the current WSD complex.