

education matters

FHML 2020

Teaching Career
Policy FHML

Problem-Based
Learning in times
of corona

The tutor: coach,
facilitator, and the
devil's advocate



Maastricht University



Maastricht UMC+

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The silent force behind the Institute for Education

Together, they make sure that the Institute for Education is running like a well-oiled machine, the secretaries of the Institute for Education.



Pre-departure training

Unique preparation for internships or study abroad. FHML established the 'Pre-departure training'. It's a unique training for FHML students who go abroad for their studies.

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Welcome to the sixth edition of our annual magazine

The academic year 2019-2020 has been unprecedented; it was a viral year! After being confronted with a cyber attack at the turn of the year, the COVID-19 crisis struck us only a few months later. Especially the COVID-19 crisis has had -and still has- a great impact on each and every one of us, both personally and professionally. The fact that the end of this crisis is not yet in sight also makes the situation uncertain and sometimes stressful for both students and staff.

Education will have to be offered as a mix of on-campus and online formats for at least the remainder of the current academic year. We will have to find ways to deal with this in the best possible way. As can be read in this magazine, the educational taskforces support the teaching staff in dealing with this new reality in every possible way. They also help us to reflect on and learn from our experiences. This way, we have already learned that most students still prefer on-campus education, where they can meet with their colleagues, make friends, and get to know teachers in a more personal way. In addition, we have also discovered that working online offers possibilities that were largely unexplored up to now. At the same time, we have to keep an eye out for individual problems students and staff may be facing, e.g., feeling lonely, being ill or going into quarantine, or having concerns about family and friends. Dealing with these contrasting conditions is not a simple task.

Keeping all this in mind, I would like to emphasise that the current situation clearly exposes the great dedication, creativity and resilience of our staff and students. Our education is still running, and all people involved are working very hard to keep the quality at the required, high level. In this edition of Education Matters, several students and staff members share their personal stories about studying and working under the current circumstances. It is of great value to both FHML and UM that we have such devoted staff and motivated students! On behalf of the entire Board of Directors of the Institute for Education, I would like to use this opportunity to express my appreciation and gratitude to everyone that contributes to the continuation of education in these challenging times!



This magazine offers a variety of interviews on other timely and relevant topics as well. As you all know, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is still at the heart of education at our university. In PBL, the tutor fulfils a crucial role, guiding the students to reach their learning goals. This does not allow for a one-size-fits-all approach. Six tutors take the floor and tell about their experiences in this multifaceted role, and about how they connect with students. Connection is also a key word in the conversation between the new and former dean of FHML. Connection with our own staff and students, but also with partners within and outside of UM. A warm word of welcome to Annemie Schols. Another example is the fact that, although the current situation complicates matters considerably, many of our students travel abroad each year for their studies. Last year, 654 students took the chance to widen their horizons. To be fully prepared for the challenges they may encounter and to make the most out of this precious time, FHML established a so-called pre-departure training. This initiative is unique to the Netherlands and attracts attention from other educational institutes in the country. I do hope that reading about these and other topics will provide you with an insight in current developments in our education and in the personal experiences and motivation of the people involved!

Mirjam oude Egbrink

Scientific director of the Institute for Education FHML

I want to be on the frontline

STUDENT
IN THE
PICTURE

I want to be extremely good, in both research and education

One thing Samuel Luchsinger Morcelle certainly is not lacking is ambition. No more than perseverance.



Ever since he was a teenager, Samuel has been dreaming of a career in scientific medical research. Due to the political landscape in his native country Venezuela, he decided to move abroad in 2015. He relocated to Vlissingen for his studies in Chemistry & Life Sciences at the HZ (Hogeschool Zeeland) University of Applied Sciences.

“I graduated cum laude for my propaedeutic year and was accepted into the Analytical Sciences Talent Programme. However, I realised that a scientific career demands a university degree.” Samuel opted for Biomedical Sciences in Maastricht. “I want to be a scientist on the frontline, fighting diseases and viruses, by increasing knowledge. I was attracted to this study specifically, because the educational system in Maastricht provides the tools to become a critical thinker; one that asks the right questions.”

Pub quiz

Samuel: “Maastricht is a very internationally-oriented city; I felt right at home. People tend to be friendly and, of course, I put myself out there, meeting people and making friends. I enrolled in the Study Association Helix. In my first year as a member, I organised extracurricular activities, such as a job fair, company visits and lectures by guest speakers. In my second year, I was named president of the Education Committee. One of our most enjoyable accomplishments was organising a pub quiz in the Irish Pub, one week before our first exam. A most remarkable quiz, with only questions about the exam material, and as such, a general rehearsal for the students. We developed the pub quiz in collaboration with our teachers and professors. Afterwards, we received many thanks.”

Out of his comfort zone

“Since the beginning of my third year, I’ve been working as a student assistant in the wet lab. I support students in preparing practical experiments, asking critical questions about their work and I explain the matter at hand to them. That is when I discovered I have a passion for teaching. I’ve also been a tutor in the course ‘Molecular Toxicology’ at the Faculty of Science & Engineering. A challenging position, because first, second and third-year students participated in this course, all with different backgrounds, levels of understanding, and acquired knowledge. An inspiring experience for me, and an extra confirmation of my talents in the field of education and teaching.”



Since then, Samuel has been busy completing his bachelor’s degree. In doing so, he never takes the easy way out. “I’m an intern in the D-lab, where I study machine learning. I’m focussed specifically on the mammography machine. I have a dream in which -by employing so-called convolutional neural networks- the quality of any given mammogram is guaranteed. Not only does it drastically cut the expenses for the hospital, it also greatly diminishes the levels of uncertainty for women undergoing treatment. Machine learning is a field about which I knew nothing. However, I feel it’s healthy to step out of my comfort zone, since that way I’ll learn the most. Furthermore, data science is a skill I’m going to need in my future doctoral research. Therefore, I decided, a few months before the official start of the internship, to spend a day a week to master data science basics. By courtesy of my professor.”

To Rotterdam

After graduating -and attaining his bachelor’s degree- Samuel’s next step is the two-year Research Master Molecular Medicine at the Erasmus MC in Rotterdam. He is one of the only twenty students admitted to the programme.

Homesick

“I will miss Maastricht; I’ve come to call this city my home over the past three years. When I travel through Europe with my girlfriend, I even feel homesick. Who knows, perhaps I’ll be back in a few years time.”

Cyber attack at Maastricht University

Just before Christmas, a cyber attack hit Maastricht University, affecting almost all Windows-operated computer systems. For security reasons, UM took all systems offline. René Nijssen, head of the Education Office, remembers exactly the moment he received the phone call. “It was 27 December and I was on the market in Maastricht, just biting into a tasty ‘oliebol’. From that moment on, the holidays were over.”

Nijssen hurried to the library, to find the heads of the Education Offices of the other faculties present. “We were informed about the situation. At UM-level, a crisis team was already in place and it was decided to set up a crisis team per faculty. Top priority was to make sure the educational programmes could start on 6 January, just as they normally would have. The Institute for Education’s crisis team was composed of people who should make that happen.”

Crisis team

In addition to René Nijssen, the crisis team consisted of Linda Veenhof (team coordinator Educational Affairs), Jan van Emmerik (software developer and administrator of several servers), Ellen Kerkhoffs (Master admission officer), Astrid Peters (secretary Board of Examiners for Medicine) and Sonia Froidmont (functional information manager). Nijssen: “The Management Team of the Education Office had already made an initial action plan together with Jan Emmerik and Toine Volkerick (ICT). The MT was closely involved during the whole process and there was constant communication between the UM and FHML crisis teams. Within FHML, we had to set priorities because it was impossible to get all systems up and running at the same time.”

Love for paper

Van Emmerik: “It was a blessing in disguise that the cyber attack took place during the holidays, which gave us about two weeks to fix things. A tight schedule for sure, but think of what would have happened if the attack had taken place two weeks earlier or later. Another stroke of luck was that the UM website

wasn’t affected and could be used for communication with the outside world.” Nijssen: “The Institute for Education wasn’t hit that hard; the main problem was communication. Information wasn’t lost, we just couldn’t reach it as all systems were down for security reasons.” “What hit me most is how dependent we are of our systems”, Froidmont says. “We didn’t even know how to reach all employees. We had to compare the contacts in our telephones to gather all the names and contact information.” Veenhof: “We were especially happy that in our digital world some people still love paper and print out documents. For instance, one colleague had a schedule of the exams on her desk, which was extremely helpful.”

Questions and answers

To effectively communicate with students, employees and external parties, a FAQ-list was drafted and updated daily. Kerkhoffs: “That way, we dealt with many general questions. For individual questions -and there were plenty- a special email address and telephone number were created, as AskFHML was down as well. In addition, a UM information desk for all faculties was set up in the University Library, but the amount of students that came by was minimal and the questions were mainly IT-related.”

EleUM back online

Fortunately, it did not take too long before the learning management system EleUM was back online, an important step forward. Veenhof: “Before the cyber attack happened, we had already prepared everything for the new courses. Once EleUM was accessible again, we knew for sure education





ELLEN KERKHOFFS, JAN VAN EMMERIK, SONIA FROIDMONT AND RENÉ NIJSSEN

Astrid Peters and Linda Veenhof are missing in the picture

could start on 6 January.” Froidmont: “Still a lot of challenges though. All students, employees and external parties had to reset their password. People abroad were particularly difficult to reach and that cost a lot of time. Deadlines for assignments were postponed and everything had to be adjusted in EleUM.” Veenhof: “Students with exams in the first half of January got an extra exam opportunity. This put a lot of pressure on the teaching staff as they had to correct all exams and make the extra exam in a very short period of time.”

Solidarity

“We learned a lot from this event”, says Van Emmerik. “As I always assumed something like this could happen, I had important data stored on a separate server, apart from the UM systems, which came in quite handy.” Nijssen: “We learned quickly: communication

channels were set-up immediately and decisions were made swiftly.” Veenhof: “It was stressful, but on the other hand I experienced a great deal of solidarity. We were in this together, there was an atmosphere of ‘we can do this’ and that felt great.” “This crisis called upon our creativity and collective memory and in a way, that was nice”, Froidmont laughs. “There was no email, so WhatsApp groups were formed instantly. With less communication means, I think we have communicated more effectively than we did before.”

On 6 January, when students returned to the university, everything was (almost) back to normal. “That was an exciting day”, Nijssen concludes. “Were students going to know where to go and what to do? But it turned out to be a day like any other; there were hardly any questions. What a relief!”

Connection *is the keyword*



A CONVERSATION WITH THE CURRENT AND FORMER DEAN OF FHML

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On 1 June, Annemie Schols started her new position as dean of FHML. It seemed the next logical step in a long and flourishing career at Maastricht University. Together with her predecessor, Albert Scherpbier, she reflects on the past and future and talks about the challenges posed by the coronavirus.

“Obviously, it’s an awkward time to start a new job. But it must have been even more bizarre for Albert to leave.”

“Yes, it was definitely a weird experience,” says Albert Scherpbier, who was dean since 2011. “I had some time to mentally prepare myself, as it soon became clear that organising a farewell speech in June was not a likely option.” On the day he quit his job, he got the keys to his new house. “That offers a lot of distraction. I’m actually doing very well.” Laughing, he adds: “According to my wife, the biggest difference is that I don’t repeat meetings in my sleep nowadays!”

Annemie Schols feels comfortable in her new position. “I’m meeting most colleagues online instead of in-person, which works surprisingly well. It helps that I know the organisation well and already know a lot of people personally. Of course, a lot of things are new to me. But it’s all very interesting and I have the feeling that I’m staying on top of it.”

Facilitate and connect

Schols is Professor of Nutrition and Metabolism in Chronic Diseases and previously was the scientific director of NUTRIM School of Nutrition and Translational Research in Metabolism. “Here in Maastricht, I’ve always had great opportunities to develop myself as a researcher,” she says. “In the role of scientific director I was busy facilitating and stimulating others. Now, as dean, I believe there’s even more room to serve. This gives me a lot of satisfaction, especially at this point in my career.”

That is exactly what the current and former dean share: the drive to be a facilitator and connector. “The past nine years we have increasingly forged new connections, both within FHML and with partners outside the faculty,” Scherpbier states. “Collaboration between disciplines and across borders is crucial for the future, and I believe we’ve made a good start with that.” Schols completely agrees, yet she is also aware of the current challenges. “The faculty has grown strongly under Albert’s lead. Preferably, we’d like to consolidate this growth, but we have to be realistic. The impact of the coronavirus will last for years.” Nonetheless, there is no need to despair; Schols sees opportunities for new developments, such as the innovation of education. “The rapid transition to online teaching has proven that there’s a lot of willingness to look for new ways and solutions. This gives confidence for the future.”

Make a difference

Looking back on his time as dean, one thing stands out for Scherpbier: the ability to really make a difference. “It’s possible, but it takes time. Change happens slowly. You’ll need to invest in convincing others, and make them enthusiastic for your plans.” Yet there is no need to always be at the centre of attention. Like Scherpbier, Schols carefully listens to the input she receives. “Nevertheless, if it’s necessary, I’ll take responsibility and act. Assuming a rather serving role doesn’t mean you can’t make tough decisions.”

Whereas Schols expects her predecessor to give a call “if he thinks I’m getting it wrong”, Scherpbier is convinced this won’t be necessary. “Yes, things will be different now that I’m gone,” he says. “That’s the natural course of things and I’m totally fine with that. And I’m very sure Annemie will do a great job.”



Annemie Schols

“I would love to talk with Albert about the challenges for future education, a topic that I was less involved in as scientific director. He actually gave me a bottle of wine, so I propose we’ll enjoy it while having a good conversation about education.”

The tutor: *coach, facilitator, and the devil's advocate*

Tutors are central in Problem-Based Learning. What does the function entail, and how do tutors do their jobs?

What should they do - or not? How do they keep students focused and how do students keep them on their toes?

Six tutors share their views on tutorship: Daniel van den Hove (professor on Psychiatrics & Neuropsychology), Adriana Solovei (PhD candidate), Ben Janssen (associate professor of Pharmacology), Tim Snijders (assistant professor of Human Biology), Julie Staals (vascular neurologist) and Bart Spaetgens (internist).

What is a tutor's role?

"Our main task is guiding the learning process of students," says Staals. "We safeguard the idea behind the course and ensure that end-terms and students' learning goals are sufficiently and properly covered. Other than that, it's mostly a question of giving the students the freedom to do what they need to do." "That does not entail adopting a passive attitude towards the process, by the way," Van den Hove adds. "On the contrary; you're actively involved in the learning process and stimulate students to take the lead." "Furthermore, you sometimes play the devil's advocate", Solovei says, "asking critical questions and assuming dissident points of view, which forces students to think deeply, and facilitates the learning process."

Should the tutor be an expert in the given field?

"Opinions continue to differ on that matter", says Staals. "Personally, I do think so. Simply because it better enables you to steer the discussion, to identify gaps in reasoning or to be able to properly answer questions." A thought Snijders affirms. "As an expert in the field, it's easier to outline the broader context." Janssen: "I've been a tutor for nearly thirty years, so you could argue that I've grown into the role. At first, I was quite a dogmatist; the seven-jump approach was leading in Problem-Based Learning. Now I tend to trust more on content and expertise, and focus more on the group. I think it's important that a discussion has a certain depth. Students tend to disregard their books more and more and find what they

need to know on Google, which is not a good development.

To challenge them, I sometimes ask: 'reproduce for me what you have read,' or 'draw a kidney on the whiteboard, or a heart.' So that they understand what it is they are talking about."

Spaetgens: "Although you do have to make sure you don't end up giving a lecture. A short explanation is fine, but don't give them the answers. Students need to work!"

What defines a good tutor?

Janssen: "I always start by making the agreement that everything we talk about is strictly confidential. This enables us to really get to know one another and to share stories. In the end, this is beneficial to the learning experience." Van den Hove holds humour, and the ability to mock yourself, in high regard.

"Showing them you are not perfect, and that you don't know everything yourself. It creates a connection and a sense of trust, both with and between students." "If you radiate a love for your field, it radiates back - most of the time", is what Solovei experienced. "Furthermore: ensuring that everything important is discussed during the group sessions, providing clarifying examples and encouraging them to come up with their own examples. Sometimes, students have a hard time doing that, but in retrospect I often hear they found it to be quite enjoyable and useful." "We want our students to become critical thinkers", Snijders says. "That means we have to teach them to critically judge scientific articles and assess source references."

Spaetgens: "As a tutor, you have to be approachable. In doing





Tim Snijders



Ben Janssen



Julie Staals



Daniel van den Hove



Adriana Solovei



Bart Spaetgens

so, one must be careful not to become the ‘best friend’ though. When the group dynamic is good, you can let students be in the lead and act more like a coach. In my experience this works well for 95% of the students.” “Still, you always have to take the somewhat slower learners or outsiders in the group into account”, Janssen adds. “Carefully monitoring the group process remains vital in preventing you from finding out at the end of the course that something went wrong. I also make sure that the collaboration between the students themselves is going well.”

What is the impact of COVID-19 on the role of tutors?

“Stressful and enriching”, says Van den Hove. “Now and again I have been pulling my hair out, being the coordinator of three separate courses and a father of three children at home. Blackboard Collaborate Ultra worked properly in the beginning, but after a while we switched to Zoom, which I found to be a much more pleasant experience. It was more important than ever to stay enthused and to take students with you in your enthusiasm.” Staals: “Especially now, the role of a tutor is more important than ever. Particularly to keep students motivated.” Snijders adds: “Group dynamics are different online. A good discussion, in which everyone is involved, is harder and requires more effort from the tutor.”

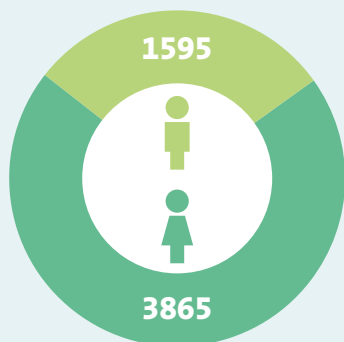
What has the tutorship given you personally?

“I find it to be enormously enriching,” says Spaetgens. “I regard it

as free education for myself. I enjoy working with young people. Sometimes they ask provocative questions that make me think as well, which I find fantastic.” Snijders: “It’s fun! As I am also a course coordinator, the tutor role gives me direct feedback about teachers’ and students’ needs and experiences, which helps me in improving education.” Staals: “The students always come up with something new, something I didn’t know. In that respect, tutorship keeps me sharp and focused.” “You see young people leaving with a lot more knowledge and a much more critical attitude than when they came in. That is very satisfying”, adds Solovei. “If you compare education and research, the reward for research tends to be in the long haul”, says Van den Hove. “For that reason alone, I find it valuable to be a tutor. The chemistry with students, their personal stories; it enriches me. After a good session, I feel like a different person.”

Janssen: “I have a beautiful anecdote: in a session about gases for chemical warfare, a Syrian student from Aleppo started crying, and started to tell us what she had been through; a deeply personal and gripping story that had the whole group holding its breath. At the end of the course she came to me, with coffee and cake, to thank me. It had been the first time she had dared to share that story. When that happens, you know you’ve done alright in the trust department. You can’t get a greater compliment than that.”

Figures 2019-2020



Students 5460

Male: 1595
Female: 3865
76 different countries of origin.

New intakes 2107



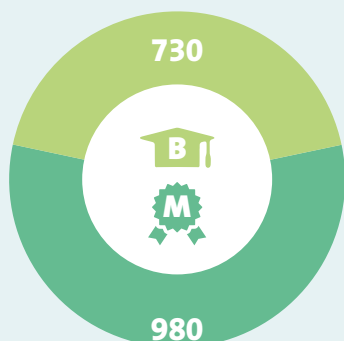
Bachelors
1035



Masters
1072



International internships
654



Degrees* 1710

Bachelor: 730
Master: 980

Educational staff 275 FTE

and over 2500 staff members
Staff with University Teaching Qualification (BKO): 574



4 Bachelors

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



15 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. Mental Health
- M.Sc. Physician-Clinical Researcher (Research Master)
- M.Sc. Work, Health and Career
- M.Sc. Affective Neuroscience**
- M.Sc. Health Sciences Research (Research Master)***

*Degrees issued in 2018-2019.

The data for the academic year 2019-2020 are not final yet.

**This post-initial programme will be terminated. The last cohort of students commenced the programme at the start of the academic year 2018-2019.

***This programme will be terminated.

The last cohort of students commenced the programme at in the academic year 2019-2020.





COVID-19

Personal stories

The COVID-19 crisis demands a lot from all of us, both in our private and in our professional lives. Staff and students share their personal experiences in this special period.

Blessy Charles

“I developed a strict routine and stuck with it.”

“COVID-19 made me understand the importance of organisation and structure”, says Blessy Charles, master’s student of Global Health. “At the beginning of the crisis, I developed a strict routine and stuck with it. For instance, if you ask me what I did on 11 May at 11 o’clock, I can look it up and tell you. I kept myself busy the entire time and consequently got a lot of work done.”

“Because I worked so focussed and structured, I had a lot of spare time, even more than before COVID-19”, says Blessy. “I spent it on cooking new dishes, watching movies, listening to music, and face-timing with friends and my parents who live in New Delhi. Also, despite coming from India, the land of yoga, I had never practiced yoga before. I’ve been wanting to try it out for a long time, but never thought of it as a complete workout. It was during the initial few weeks of the lockdown that I started to practice it every day. I think it is fair to say that I am quite into yoga now and finally understand the hype that surrounds it!”

No delay

Blessy’s master’s research is about the association between diabetes distress and increased risk of cardiovascular disease within the Maastricht Study. “Contrary to some of my fellow classmates, I was fortunate that my internship was not cancelled or delayed. I could work from home and communicate with my supervisor online once a week. In August, I was able to finish my thesis successfully. I’m already looking for a job, and I’d like to stay in Maastricht.”



Dinner with fellow students

Despite her great efficiency and productivity, Blessy sometimes felt low. “But I did not allow myself to stay in bed and do nothing for long. I just knew that I had to stay focussed, and my faith helped me to stay determined and hopeful. I was really happy when we could physically meet people again. One of the first events we held was a dinner with a few of my classmates, taking into account the COVID-19 regulations.”

Blessy Charles

“We all came from different nations, diverse cultures, and different professional backgrounds. We surprised each other by bringing typical food from our home country, which made for an exciting, enjoyable, and delicious dinner.”

Daan Westra

“I danced with joy when childcare centres opened up again.”

When asked to characterise his time during the COVID-19 period, Daan Westra refers to the song ‘Opzij, Opzij, Opzij,’ by Herman van Veen. “Especially the line: ‘run, jump, fly, dive, fall, get up and move on.’ In other words, these past few months were unprecedentedly hectic. We had to switch to a full online curriculum practically overnight.”

Daan Westra is an assistant professor and coordinator of the course Strategic Management, Leadership and Organisational Change in Healthcare within the Master Healthcare Policy, Innovation and Management. “Mark Rutte’s press conference was held on Thursday 12 March. As fate would have it, we were expecting 130 students

on campus on Friday, plus a group of external speakers. Immediately after the press conference, I started emailing and making phone calls like crazy. At eleven o’clock at night I was still on the phone with our external guests. Some of them had never worked with Zoom or Skype before! By employing a little improvisation and whimsy we turned the day around and into an online event. The day didn’t turn out how we had envisioned, but it was a great day nonetheless.”

Nothing but understanding

“The Monday afterwards, my colleagues and I discussed the remaining Fridays of that course. We already finished the theoretical part of the course, so these remaining Fridays were meant for group work on a real-life assignment with several youth care organisations. We were able to preserve the original assignment by making use of instruction videos recorded at home, online interviews with external stakeholders, and multiple interactive feedback sessions. Fortunately, we received a lot of positive feedback from our students. On the upside, the whole situation allowed us to explore and utilise the various tools and infrastructure the university provided for online education.”

Not a question of copy-paste

“The start of the COVID-crisis was characterised by a lot of last-minute, ad hoc solutions,” says Daan. “That was fine for the time being and students understood this, but the next year needs to be different. We strive for high-quality education, also online, and that will require a lot of tinkering to the way courses are currently set up. It’s not a matter of copy-paste. In an online environment, you need to have a fundamentally different outlook from which to design your course. My colleagues and I have been - and are - busy working on that. Though we hope that there will be room for interpersonal communication on campus again.”

Working in turns

“The last few months have been hard,” says Daan. “I have two young children, aged two and four. Schools and childcare facilities were closed and my wife had to work from home too. In the first week I immediately set up a workspace in the attic, in which my wife and I took turns working. There was no time to relax. My research, too - which normally accounts for fifty percent of my time - has received virtually no attention. I danced with joy when childcare centres opened up again.”



Floris Vanmolkot

“I missed my students.”

Floris Vanmolkot is an internist and assistant professor at the Maastricht UMC+. “COVID-19 had an enormous impact on everyone. Our junior doctors were generally put to work in various COVID departments. That’s also where I worked as a supervisor. Unfortunately, most of our medical students were sent home, as in the rest of the Netherlands. I was not happy, even disagreed with that decision, as I believed they can still learn a lot in such an unusual period.”

Floris: “I was asked to work in a COVID department; I am used to caring for seriously ill patients, and I wanted to do my part. On top of that I wanted to be close to the junior doctors who were working in the vanguard. My role was that of a supervisor. It may sound a little weird, but I actually liked the way we were working: with more focus and fewer interruptions and more time for our patients; it was all about one thing only.”

Missing learning in the workplace

“After those initial few weeks we tried to restart our educational programme step by step. For example: we took to discussing patients online. We even had a Zoom session with a patient present. I’ve noticed that Zoom provides a lot of new possibilities. I tend to employ mini roleplaying exercises, which is definitely a hurdle for some students. In an online environment, that hurdle turned out to be non-existent. I participated in educational Zoom sessions from various locations, at home or in the hospital. In the end, naturally, nothing can compare to the real deal, if only because there is less laughter during online sessions, which is something very important to me as a teacher. Looking back, our medical students were unable to work in the hospital for twelve weeks. Everyone was over the moon coming back to work, and students told us they had missed learning in the workplace. I had missed them too. Training interns gives me a lot of satisfaction. It’s fun, and by training interns I also learn a lot and become a better doctor.”

New insights

“When I wasn’t on call, I just worked from home,” Floris says. “That was very pleasant. The entire family was in lockdown, having lunch together, helping each other with study or work.” When asked what



he has learned from the COVID crisis, Floris names: “In the event of a second wave, I will make an even stronger case for not sending the medical students home. Everything beats staying at home for our interns and, moreover, it is our duty to train and educate the next generation of doctors. We are now working hard on having students catch up on missed internships. To prevent a delay in their studies, students will make up for the time they missed in an elective rotation. As it turns out, organising this is quite a puzzle. I particularly enjoyed the collaboration between doctors from various departments in our COVID teams. This has provided new insights on the importance of knowing one another and learning from each other. We should integrate these insights into our curriculum as well. Another insight is that video calls with a patient may be just as effective as a consultation in the hospital, and as such the personal preference of the patient should be leading in the future.”

Jonathan van Tilburg

“I missed the informal, personal contact very much.”

Working at the kitchen table. Online education. Virtual coffee breaks. Coaching students. Walking the dog. This pretty much sums up the COVID-19 period of Jonathan van Tilburg, senior lecturer of Human Biology. **“When, after the first few weeks of working from home, it became clear it would last a while, I made myself adhere to a time schedule. Even though that worked fine, I am more than happy to be working at the office again for two days a week.”**

Jonathan remembers he was in a meeting with an English publisher, the day the lockdown started. “He made it home just in time. Before I knew what was happening, I was sitting at the kitchen table at home. After picking up my computer screen and desk chair, I decided to maintain my normal working rhythm. My day used to start with an early walk with the dog, setting up my workplace and then working until about five o’clock. To avoid staying in work mode, I decided to clear away my workplace every evening, so that I could enjoy my free time.”

Online education

“It was quite a search, making online education attractive. After feedback from students, I bought the programme ‘Explain Everything’, an interactive whiteboard. That alone enlivened it. I created breakout rooms, making sure that everyone was actively engaged. My role in relation to the students has changed during this period, as I became more of a coach. I stayed in touch as best as I could with my mentor and A-KO students. As manager of the OBP (support staff) in my department I also had a responsibility towards those colleagues. With a weekly, virtual coffee break we maintained contact to the best of our ability.”



Jonathan van Tilburg

“Even though large parts of education will still take place online, the idea is to work on projects in small groups, both at the university and on the campus in Venlo, making sure that students -especially those in their first year- do have the feeling of actually studying at a university.”

Social interaction

“What have I learned? You don’t have to physically go places to solve problems; a lot can be done online. However, the thing that truly stood out to me is that social interaction means a great deal. I very much missed the informal, personal contact. The virtual coffee breaks were valuable, but in the end a surrogate nonetheless. I’m glad to be working at the office two days a week again. There is a lot less distraction and a lot more focus here. What I found to be a problem with working from home is the lack of rest; when my kids came home in the middle of a Zoom session and the dog started barking loudly, I was unable to hear myself, let alone someone else. Privately, I missed my frequent visits to the cinema.”

Marcel Koelmann

“The corona period allowed me a first look into my future.”

“Metabolism in critically ill patients’ was the original research topic of Marcel Koelmann, third- year bachelor’s student in Biomedical Sciences. The coronavirus changed everything, including the topic of Marcel’s thesis. “Around the time the university closed, I was afraid that my internship would be stopped. But luckily my supervisor joined a research group investigating the patients infected with the coronavirus. So when he asked me if would be willing to change my research topic and join this group, I immediately said yes.”

“While my peers picked up new habits and hobbies during the lockdown period, I had a regular working week. I also had the luxury of having a desk in a student office at the Maastricht University hospital, so no home-office experiences for me either. I was very lucky to be given this chance, but also thankful and happy for the given opportunity to work in this context. My job was to gather data -inflammatory parameters for instance- from the electronic patient files. I also searched for available literature. I started writing my thesis in the beginning of the second month. It was kind of challenging since I had to constantly switch my focus from gathering data to writing the thesis. I actually prolonged my internship by two and a half weeks to help finish the database, include other databases, and complete everything.”

Confirmation

“You could say we watched the pandemic unfold. I realise I was fortunate to not have lost someone and -with no patient contact- did not have to experience the constant loss of patients as the health professionals did. From a researcher’s perspective, I consider the corona period as extremely interesting. Before the crisis, I had already applied for the four-year Master A-KO (Physician - Clinical Researcher) after my bachelor’s degree.”



Marcel Koelmann

“This past period has allowed me a hands-on look into what my future may look like, and it has confirmed that the A-KO is the right choice for me. Therefore, I am very happy that I’ve been admitted to this master’s programme.”

Marjolijn Tinnemans

“I’ve never been this stressed before.”

“The first weeks of the COVID crisis were actually quite fun and pleasant,” says Marjolijn Tinnemans, exam coordinator at the Education Office. “On a regular working day, I used to be away from home for a minimum of ten hours. Now I was working at the table in the living room, alongside my daughters. I am responsible for the digital exams and my two colleagues for the written exams. In a normal situation, 1500 students take these exams simultaneously at the MECC. Initially, all exams in the MECC were cancelled. Compared to what was to come, those first weeks were easy-going.”

It all changed after the decision to move part of the period 4 exams to period 5, taken 100 percent online and from home. Marjolijn: “In taking online exams, there’s a lot to take into account. For example: entering exams into the digital testing software TestVision, matching students to the right exam, making schedules, instructing teachers how to use the software, finding (a lot of) invigilators and instructing them, instructing students, and holding training sessions with students. Thankfully, we were assisted by colleagues. However, I don’t think I’ve ever been this stressed before, considering the huge amount of exams that had to be prepared, as well as a lot of last-minute decisions. One of the things we learned is that we have to optimise the surveillance system. It’s far from optimal to delegate this task to colleagues, as it takes too much time and comes at the expense of other tasks. Because it looks like exams will at least partly take place online and from home in the next academic year, UM decided to contract an external provider to support online surveillance.”

Marjolijn Tinnemans

“For the near future, it seems like my living room will remain my home office for the most part of the working week. No problem for me, but I do hope to include exercise in my working day again after the summer break.”

More exercise please!

“Personally, I experienced the crisis up to now as hectic. At first, I was very determined to keep exercising, but that unfortunately failed as soon as the working hours increased to extreme proportions. I miss taking a walk during break time and walking to the printer or the train station. Furthermore, it’s a lot harder to wind down when you work from home. I miss personal contact with colleagues too. It’s just a lot easier to quickly take care of something when you can walk into your colleague’s office.”



Twan Voncken

“Minister De Jonge walked into my office to have a little chat.”

Twan Voncken is a first year student in the Master of Medicine. “I had just finished my internship at the Internal Medicine department at Zuyderland in Heerlen when the COVID-19 crisis burst out. A week later, I was supposed to start at Cardiology, but that was cancelled. Looking at the global developments at that time it wasn’t surprising, but annoying nonetheless. The worst part for me was the insecurity. Nobody knew how long it would last, whether my studies would have to be delayed or what exactly I was going to have to catch up on. At that time, the university was not able to provide me with a lot of information, so I had no other choice than to sit and wait.”

Sitting still is not a part of Twan’s nature, so when he got a chance to work in the Corona Hotel in Urmond, he did not have to think twice. “I worked as a doctor’s assistant at the Corona Hotel. I did things like taking a patient’s temperature, doing blood and urine tests, making cardiographs and sitting at the reception on occasion, directing patients to the right wing of the hotel. It took a little getting used to, because we had to wear full protective gear. Not what you’d call pleasant, but after a while you just don’t know any better.”

Valuable experience

Twan worked long weeks of nearly fifty hours, in irregular shifts. “I was fine with it. My studies were halted anyway, and this way I at least acquired some valuable experience. It was an educational period, during which I got to train certain skills, such as communicating with doctors and supporting personnel and patients. Moreover, I met a lot of colleagues in the region.” Meanwhile, life has started to return to normal. After the Corona Hotel shut down in mid-May, Twan worked for a general practice centre. Now, he has resumed his internships.



Twan Voncken

“One day, Minister De Jonge visited the hotel and coincidentally walked into my room. He was most interested in our work and how we managed to do it. He even asked me about my studies. Quite a fun experience.”

Prizes

EDUCATION PRIZES FHML

On 20 November 2019, the Institute for Education FHML awarded the annual Education Prizes FHML.

With these prizes, the IfE recognises staff members who excel in and contribute to the development of education within FHML.

The education prizes 2019 were awarded to:

Medicine: Marian Weert and colleagues (best course: Programmatisch toetsen klinische vaardigheden) and Richel Lousberg (best tutor)

BMS: Sander Verheule and course planning group (best course: Allometry, BBS2062) and Yvonne Oligschläger (best tutor)

Health: Jolanda van Haastregt and course planning group (best course: Kijken in de zorg BMZ2023) and Rok Hrzic (best tutor)

There is a special prize called the **Honours Award**. This prize is passed on each year from peer to peer. The Honours awards 2019 were awarded to:

Medicine: Muriel Fillers, **BMS:** Lars Eijssen, **Health:** Matt Commers.

The Great Education Prize was awarded to Albert Scherpbier.



WYNAND WIJNEN EDUCATION PRIZE 2019

At the Dies Natalis on 3 February 2020, **Professor Leo Köhler** was awarded the UM Wynand Wijnen Education Prize. This prize is awarded to staff members who have made an exceptional contribution to education at Maastricht University. Prof. Kohler coordinated the bachelor in Biomedical Sciences for several years and was one of the driving forces behind the recent curriculum redesign of the bachelor. She is also recognised for her enormous support for students, both academically and personally.



CATHARINA PIJLS PRIZE

The Catharina Pijls Incentive Prize is awarded to recent Health Science graduates for an excellent scientific performance during their studies, i.e. an excellent Master thesis. This year's Prize was awarded to Mrs. **Sasha Khomenko** (M.Sc. Global Health). The title of her Master thesis is 'Is a livable city a healthy city? Health impacts of urban and transport planning in Vienna, Austria, the most livable city in the world.'



ASPIRE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

On 7 September 2020 the FHML taskforce Faculty Development was awarded the ASPIRE Award for Faculty Development during the AMEE 2020 Conference. The members of the ASPIRE Board were impressed with the breadth and depth of the work relating to faculty development and with the innovative and creative activities in this area. Specific strengths mentioned are that the FHML faculty development programme:

1. is rooted in robust theoretical framework and research;
2. is linked closely with the education programmes in the faculty;
3. supports the vision of the faculty and is supported very well by the faculty;
4. integrates the needs and development of individual staff members and human resource policy;
5. has been evaluated consistently and reflected upon, hence supports a continuous improvement, including attempts to create a community of practice and further organisational change.



2019 STUDENT AWARDS

FHML students **Johanna Bödder** (Biomedical Sciences) and **Floor Pinckaers** (Medicine) were presented the 2019 Student Award during the Dies Natalis. Johanna Bödder received the award for her thesis: "The potential role of XL1 as a tumor escape mechanism" and Floor Pinckaers for her thesis: "Risk factors predisposing to psychotic symptoms during levetiracetam therapy: A retrospective study thesis."



News in brief



Biologists of the Netherlands 2019

On 3 October 2019, a team competing on behalf of Maastricht University won the first prize in the national Biology Battle of the Universities, earning them the title: 'Best Biologists of the Netherlands 2019'.

The team consisted of Willem Voncken (Biomedical Sciences teacher), Nadja

Verspagen (MSP alumna) and Selien op den Kamp (MSP student). UM competed against teams from biology programmes of Leiden University, Utrecht University, University of Amsterdam, Wageningen University and VU Amsterdam.

Show the importance of public health, especially now!

Fanny Goel, Elize Zantema and Rebekah Ferguson, students of the FHML master's programme in Governance and Leadership in European Public Health (GLEPH), launched an inspiring 'This is Public Health' campaign on 7 September 2020. Their goal? To showcase what public health is and why it is vitally important for promoting and protecting the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Maastricht University was awarded a grant from the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) and the GLEPH students rallied together to run the campaign. A number of key local partners supported and endorsed the campaign, including university authorities, the municipality, and various student organisations.

The creativity, ambition and knowledge of the students proved to be a perfect fit with their different academic and cultural backgrounds, resulting in a variety of campaign outputs. A central tool was the use of blue 'This is public health' campaign stickers, which were placed on various health-promoting initiatives throughout the city, to increase the visibility of public health in the local community. The students also interviewed various public health professionals, researchers and policy makers to highlight the diverse range of public health projects happening in Maastricht.

In addition to promoting their campaign activities on social media, the students highlighted their activities and interviews in an overarching film project. The filming overlapped with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, which offered a unique opportunity to demonstrate the importance of implementing public health measures to keep people safe during these times. The final product of this campaign is an engaging video, sparked with humour and enthusiasm of the students showcasing the dynamic and exciting field of public health.



Societal Impact Projects in Biomedical Sciences

The Comenius project Learning and Teaching Communities started last spring with a first round of so-called Societal Impact Projects.

Six teams consisting of five or six first-year bachelor's students in Biomedical Sciences and a coach developed their own societal impact project. The teams worked on topics varying from alcohol-induced DNA damage and optimal quarantine models for COVID-19, to lifestyle to combat stress among students. The projects started in February with a lively, plenary kick-off meeting, but shortly after the start coronavirus measures transformed all live meetings into a series of group or plenary Zoom meetings. In spite of these restrictions, students appreciated the autonomy to design their own project and a better understanding of the societal relevance of studying biomedical sciences. This first run of projects aimed to explore the impact of autonomy and ill-defined projects on students' and staffs' motivation to participate. A second round of projects will start in November. These new projects will mimic the duration and the structure will start in November 2020, intracurricular implementation of such projects. More info: hans.savelberg@maastrichtuniversity.nl



Graduation first cohort of the revised bachelor Biomedical Sciences

On 7 November 2019, 180 students received a BSc-degree for Biomedical Sciences.

These students followed education in the revised bachelor programme in Biomedical Sciences (BBS). In the years preceding 2016 BBS was redesigned. The new programme is taught in English, focusses on the development of a series of competencies and has a mentor system and portfolio to support students in obtaining the

competencies. The diploma ceremony was not only attended by the graduates and their family and friends, but also by many of the mentors, with whom students had close contact during the three bachelor years. A special moment was when the students spontaneously started an almost endless applause for the bachelor coordinator, Leo Köhler. For many students, Leo was the beacon and Q&A desk for all kinds of questions.

A day at the desk

The silent force behind the Institute for Education

Together, they make sure that the Institute for Education is running like a well-oiled machine. They organise, improvise, prioritise, and keep their heads cool in every situation. Usually, they operate behind the scenes. This time, however, it is different. Please roll out the red carpet for the secretaries of the Institute for Education.

Support

“Although we work for different persons and have different tasks, we share the same goal; to facilitate our colleagues who ensure the quality of education at our faculty,” says Nathalie Baltus. It is up to her and her colleagues to support the Institute’s board members and enable them to do their work effectively. A good secretary, in other words, always has your back.

Unexpected

“We schedule meetings, prepare agendas, collect and send out relevant documents, and take minutes,” Janine Speetjens adds. That may sound fairly straightforward, but do not be misled. A working day almost always turns out differently than expected, as last-minute requests are an essential part of the job. “When I manage to complete two out of the five tasks that I’d planned to do, it was a good day,” Larisa van Heeswijk laughs. Her colleagues agree. Nathalie Baltus: “You have to be flexible and constantly adjust your priorities.”

Never a dull moment

The key to handling these unexpected tasks? “I’m always the first to arrive in the office in the morning, which gives me the opportunity to deal with the most urgent matters first,” says Lilian Martin. “After that, I’m up for anything.” And do not forget that secretaries just love to improvise. Britta Jacobs: “There’s never a dull moment, which is one of the best things about our job. I actually cannot imagine a secretary who would enjoy performing just scheduled tasks.”

Trust

The willingness to take initiative, for that matter, is another trait the secretaries share. Reminding board members about

upcoming meetings or events, preparing the paperwork for the next day, or arranging a location for an external meeting; after you have done it once, it becomes an unwritten rule.

“The longer you work here, the more responsibilities and the more freedom you get,” says Janine Speetjens. “It’s a matter of trust,” Yvonne Sinsel agrees. “We definitely enjoy a great deal of autonomy. You run your own business so to say, and how you do it is up to you. It’s like piecing together a puzzle each time - and in doing so, you can make others happy.”

Appreciation

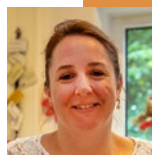
There is no doubt about it: the secretaries of the Institute for Education seem to be very happy where they are. “It’s good to know that you can make a valuable contribution to your team,” says Larisa van Heeswijk. “I think we all feel appreciated. Sometimes that’s explicitly expressed - on our birthdays or on Secretaries Day - and sometimes implicitly.” Nathalie Baltus: “My colleagues are always very happy when I return from my holiday. That means I must be doing something right.”



“My day has been successful when, despite all chaos, everything runs smoothly in the end.”

Nathalie Baltus

Secretariat Scientific Director and Vice Director Institute for Education & Department of Strategy & Policy



“A day never goes as planned.”

Larisa van Heeswijk

Secretariat Management Team Education Office



"A good day at the office consists of 2 things: a pile of work to sink my teeth into, and a cappuccino together with my colleagues."

Britta Jacobs

Secretariat Education Office & Management Team Biomedical Sciences



"Busy? I'm just on a roll."

Lilian Martin

Secretariat Management Support Office



"The secret of getting ahead is getting started."

Yvonne Sinsel

Secretariat Education Office & Management
Team Health & EPC Health



"Don't wait for a good day, make one."

Janine Speetjens

Secretariat Education Office & Management
Team Medicine




Teaching career policy

FHML

Education is at the heart of the universities' existence. Yet, teaching as a profession has long been undervalued. Herman Popeijus, associate professor in the department of Nutrition and Movement Sciences and enrolled in a teaching career: "Teaching was something you did 'on the side'. No matter if you loved to teach, and were good at it, you were discouraged to develop in this field."



CHRISTINE WILLEKES, AGGIE PAULUS AND HERMAN POPEIJUS



The turnaround came about ten years ago. FHML started promoting teaching careers by offering career prospects to staff members who wanted to develop in this field. Christine Willekes, associate professor in the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and also enrolled in a teaching career: “The reason for this paradigm shift was that achievements in education were underexposed. The consequence being that qualified and motivated teachers did not prioritise their teaching tasks, at the expense of the quality of education.” “In the past, you only could have a successful academic career by being a good researcher”, adds Aggie Paulus, who was appointed as professor of Economics of Education & Healthcare on 1 July. “Naturally, that’s still important, but it’s no longer the only thing that matters. There is more of a balance. Teaching skills and competences are equally important now and more valued than ever before. In that sense, FHML’s teaching career policy is kind of unique and regarded as a best practice, also according to The Association of Universities in the Netherlands.”

High standards

“To be eligible for a teaching career, high standards have to be met”, says Paulus. “First of all, a PhD degree in your own field. Next to that, a master’s degree in education, for instance the Master in Health Profession Education (MHPE), or a comparable qualification. Candidates have to fulfill a variety of leading teaching roles and must have a clear vision and ambition regarding their future educational career. In addition, they are required to actively and continuously participate in educational research. Management qualities are also a prerequisite.”

Willekes: “In return, FHML facilitates us in every possible way, as does the MUMC+ for that matter. For instance, two scholarships for the MHPE are awarded each year, including 0.1 fte time compensation. My own department compensates me with an additional 0.1 fte.”

No escape route

These high requirements serve a purpose. “Education might very well be seen as an alternate career path, but it is by no means a ‘fall-back route’. After all, Maastricht University has a reputation to uphold when it comes to innovative and qualitatively high standards of education”, says Willekes. “The FHML teaching career policy provides support therein. By providing motivated teachers with career opportunities and a thorough education, you not only reward their input, but you also improve the overall quality of the education you provide

and facilitate.” Popeijus reaffirms the necessity of an education in the field of teaching. “It provides you with the necessary tools to shape education. If you understand the way people learn, you can better facilitate them in their learning process. That way, you make learning fun. For both teacher and student.” “Because we do scientific research into multiple educational concepts, we always operate on an evidence-based principle,” Paulus joins in. “And by occupying different roles in both teaching and the development of education, we keep in constant contact with students and teachers alike. We learn on the go, and that translates to improvements and innovation. We do so in collaboration with our students; they are our target audience and our frame of reference.” “I think it’s vital to fulfil various roles,” says Popeijus. “I am a tutor, a course coordinator, and I supervise both practicals and internships. That way, I keep in touch with the general sentiment among students and I know what works and what doesn’t. A proper education can’t be developed from behind a desk, but only by actually getting hands-on experience.”

Herman Popeijus

“If you understand the way people learn, you can better facilitate them in their learning process. That way you make learning fun. For both teacher and student.”

Acknowledgment and recognition

Willekes: “Recently I was selected as co-chair of the personal development track for the curriculum redesign of the International Track in Medicine. My experience in education, as well as my master’s degree in HPE definitely contributed to that appointment. This provides me with the opportunity to be of even greater importance to the professionals of the future. I find inspiration and guidance in my experience as a clinician and I translate that to my role in education. This way we’re able to deliver more ‘complete’ professionals.” Popeijus: “I am an advocate for a mixed profile, since research improves education, and vice versa. This not only brings diversity into the organisation, it also takes its education to the next level.” “The teaching career policy is an acknowledgement of dedication, competence, and skills”, Paulus concludes. “But primarily, it offers you the freedom to do what you love, get better at it, and be recognised and valued for the effort.”

Pre-departure training

Unique preparation for internships or study abroad



PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING

The pre-departure training is coordinated by a planning group, consisting of Nynke de Jong (associate professor and minor coordinator European Public Health and Health Sciences; chair of the planning group), Dietbert Neumann (associate professor and minor coordinator Biomedical Sciences), Xavier Keuter (plastic surgeon and chair of the planning group Elective Education Abroad Medicine) and Albertine Zanting (policy officer Institute for Education and researcher cultural diversity).

Discover other cultures, gain new insights into your field and forge international friendships. Studying at a foreign university or an internship abroad is an enriching experience. And it looks good on your CV too! “Experience abroad enriches you as a person and as a professional”, confirms Nynke de Jong. “Provided the preparation is done right. For that reason, FHML established the ‘Pre-departure training’ in 2014. It’s a unique just-in-time training for FHML students who go abroad for their studies.”

For all FHML students going abroad

The idea behind the training is twofold. De Jong: “First of all, the university has the duty of care. We want our students to be well prepared and able to hold their own, even if something unexpected or unpleasant happens. Secondly, we want to prepare them for global citizenship by raising awareness of cultural differences and being able to deal with them.” The training originates from the ‘Tropenblok’ for Medicine students. Keuter: “This course used to take place at a fixed time in the year, the downside being that some students did not actually go abroad until one or two years later. So there was a need for a ‘just-in-time’ training.”

Laury de Jonge (general practitioner, specialisation in Tropical Medicine), Gerard Majoor (advisor Educational Development & Research), Marijke Kruithof (lecturer Health Profession Education), Astrid Oude Lashof (MD Internal Medicine/infectiologist), Simone Gorter (MD Internal Medicine/rheumatologist), and later on Paul van Eekeren (Safety & Security Consultant) started working on the development of the training in 2014. From the very start, they turned to the Taskforce Instructional Design & E-learning, of which De Jong was a member. Initially, the newly developed training was also exclusively for Master in Medicine students.” Neumann: “But since bachelor’s students in Biomedical Sciences and bachelor’s students in the Health domain also go abroad for their education, the pre-departure training also became mandatory for them.”

Online and face-to-face

The training consists of four online modules: Logistics & Safety, Global mindset module, Infectious diseases, and Community-based healthcare. Only Master in Medicine students who go to non-Western countries have to take all four modules. Medicine students with internships in Europe and bachelor’s students in Biomedical Sciences and the Health domain take only the first two. During the online modules, the students do assignments that they discuss and reflect upon in a face-to-face meeting with a group of 10 to 15 fellow students. When the bachelor’s students in Biomedical Sciences and the Health domain return, they have to complete the pre-departure training with assignments and a second face-to-face meeting.

Global Mindset

Zanting: “In the Global mindset module, the students are facing a

variety of topics, such as dealing with hierarchies, differences in perceptions of time, dealing with competition, cultural values and social etiquette. They also answer questions about their own flexibility, adaptability, openness, cultural competences and language skills. In the group meeting they reflect on the results.” Keuter: “It doesn’t matter whether you are going to do an internship in Kenya, study in Sheffield or work in a lab in Aachen. You will find cultural differences everywhere. When going to the tropics, students expect that. But they are surprised that they also have to deal with it 50 km across the border. Sometimes there is discussion if e.g. a student from Aachen, who is going to do an internship in Aachen, has to follow the training. We think they should because it has added value, makes students aware of their own culture and always yields new insights.”

Starting document

Keuter: “Medical students have to do something extra in addition to the online modules and group meeting. As with any internship, they have to draw up a starting document in which they record their learning goals, and discuss these with a member of the planning group Elective Education Abroad. The learning objectives for an internship abroad differ; in addition to acquiring competences, we want to encourage students to take a good look around. What is happening in a different country, with a different health system? How are guidelines and protocols handled? What can they learn from the situation abroad? The students will extensively reflect on the internship upon return. Experience shows that students return with new insights that also offer a different, more appreciative and more in-depth look at the Dutch healthcare system.”

Unique in its kind

The pre-departure training is unique in its kind. Neumann: “The just-in-time principle in particular works perfectly. Students leave with the information still fresh in their minds.” Other universities are showing interest in the training. “At the moment, the University of Amsterdam is performing a pilot with our pre-departure training”, says De Jong. The training is as solid as a rock, but since the world is constantly changing, so does the content of the training. Zanting: “We want to be as up-to-date as possible. So we constantly keep an eye on new developments such as changing political situations or, like now, the coronavirus, and integrate these into the training if necessary.”

Problem-Based Learning

in times of corona

What happens when physical tutorial groups, lectures, and practicals -the building blocks of everyday life at our university- suddenly become impossible? The answer to this rather bizarre question became clear the past months.

At FHML, four taskforces support teaching staff in dealing with the new reality of online education.

“If there’s one positive thing the corona crisis has foregrounded, it’s the dedication of our course coordinators, tutors and other teachers to make the best out of the situation”, says Renée Stalmeijer, who chairs the taskforce Programme Evaluation. “They made and are still making an enormous effort to shape education in the best way possible. They absolutely have a heart for education, which I deeply respect.” Together with her fellow taskforce chairs, Renée Stalmeijer supports FHML in offering excellent education. Obviously, in the last months of academic year 2019-2020, their focus has completely shifted to online teaching.

Go-to source

“The faculty is like a multi-headed monster”, says Peter van Rosmalen, chair of the taskforce Instructional Design & E-learning. “It’s a place where a variety of needs and questions exist. A practical skills training for medical students is, for instance, very different from an academic writing training for Health Sciences students. Whereas the former couldn’t take place online, the latter could.” The point is clear: there is not one solution that fits all, especially not during these challenging times. Therefore, in addition to the abundant information offered by the central website and webinars, the combined taskforces opted for a tailor-made approach. “We are now serving as the go-to source for course coordinators,” states Herma Roebertsen, chair of the Taskforce Faculty Development. “They can email their individual questions to us and we’ll try to provide them with an answer. It’s often a matter of translating existing guidelines to a specific situation. For there’s an overload of information out there, but it’s not always clear how to apply it, or what the best option is for a given situation.”

Problem-Based Learning

When the coronavirus pandemic turned the world on its head at the beginning of March, the transition to online teaching needed to be made overnight. Nonetheless, it was clear from the beginning that the core principles of Problem-Based Learning -that learning should be collaborative, constructive, contextual and self-directed

(CCCS)- should remain intact. “What we’ve witnessed is that, when challenged to adapt to constantly changing circumstances and guidelines, people started to become creative and think outside of the box, without losing sight of the key principles”, Herma Roebertsen says. “As of September, for example, first-year students in Biomedical Sciences will have one tutorial group on campus and one online. Instead of using the traditional 7-Jump approach, they will work in smaller subgroups and use online learning tools and platforms to encourage interaction and collaborative learning. There’s a boost in the variety of educational methods used.” The assessment format has also drastically changed, adds Marjan Govaerts, who leads the taskforce Student Assessment. “The traditional way of doing it - a large group of students simultaneously taking a test on-site - is not possible anymore. This forces you to think about what you actually want to assess, and how you want to do it. We now see that assessment is becoming increasingly embedded in the course, and used as a learning tool.”

Finding your strengths in challenging times

It cannot be denied that the ongoing COVID-19 crisis creates enormous challenges for both teachers and students. “There is, however, also a positive side-effect of this crisis”, says Peter van Rosmalen. “As an organisation we are forced to critically evaluate our common practices and come up with new, creative solutions.” His fellows agree, while being aware that the biggest challenge lies ahead. Renée Stalmeijer: “We should really take the time to properly reflect and evaluate, and think about the long term. What if the pandemic comes to a halt? Does a return to normality also mean a return to our pre-corona way of working?” “That would be a pity,” says Marjan Govaerts. “I do believe that everything we learn now, combined with what we know from educational research, can bring us forward. For a crisis like this not only shows the vulnerability, but also the strength of our organisation.”



MARJAN GOVAERTS, PETER VAN ROSMALEN, HERMA ROEBERTSEN AND RENÉE STALMEIJER

Why join a Study Association?



MSV Pulse

MSV Pulse is the Medical Study Association of Maastricht. MSV Pulse supports, facilitates and represents you as a medical student. Its many committees organise fun and educational activities, events and workshops throughout the year. Pulse Education represents you in education and is always there for you in the case of complaints or feedback.

Nienke Vosma

President MSV Pulse



AsKlepiOs

A study association is indispensable in student life. Study association AsKlepiOs is important for students to support them in their educational and their social needs. We organise supportive educational organise, connect students and offer them the recreation they need besides studying.

Berdel Akmaz

President AsKlepiOs



MSV Santé

We as a student association, offer a place for students to develop extracurricularly on a social, societal and educational level. We offer a place to forge friendships for life, and the opportunity to start building networks within a given discipline, to be used later in a student's professional career.

Lieve van Woerden

President MSV Santé



SA Helix

Helix is an association that will be the backbone of your student life! We are a **Hardworking** association that improves your **Education** but also organises **Lively** events. We welcome all international students and we hope to see you **relaXing** in the Helix room or at our fun events.

Lieke Troost

President SA Helix



EUnitas

European Public health is an international study that brings people from all over European countries and the world together. It adds a feeling of inclusivity and togetherness, and values such as respect and understanding. EUnitas, the European Public Health Study Association, helps people from the study to connect with each other and form friendships.

Ines Aoufi

President EUnitas



COLOPHON

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