



Maastricht University

*Leading
in Learning!*

University for the future

Interviews



**Opening academic year
2010/2011**

University for the future

Opening academic year 2010/2011

Content

| | |
|---|----|
| Programme opening academic year 2010/2011 | 4 |
| Introduction | 5 |
| “This university has every opportunity” Jo Ritzen | 6 |
| Looking back on the future Bettany Hughes | 10 |
| The future we expected 20 years ago Peter van den Besselaar | 14 |
| The need for a fifth freedom Anette Braun | 17 |
| “We make plans, but it’s God who decides” Guido Rojer | 20 |
| On curiosity, complexity and flexibility Paul Iske and Marijk van der Wende | 22 |
| Five disciplines, five visions André Knottnerus, Rein de Wilde, Pim Martens, Rainer Goebel and Luc Soete | 26 |
| Sustainability, respect and governance: vital parts of the toolkit Evelyne de Leeuw | 32 |
| Kick-off: The UM Green Office | 36 |
| Edmond Hustinx scholarship and Student Award | 38 |

University for the future

Programme

Opening academic year 2010/2011

06.09.2010

Morning programme

Scientific symposium 'University for the future'

Location: Aula Minderbroedersberg, Maastricht
10.30 - 13.00

- Opening of the seminar
Dr Jo Ritzen, President of Maastricht University
- Visions for 2030: perspectives, worries and expectations
Dr Anette Braun, senior policy and technology consultant at VDI Future Technologies Center in Düsseldorf
- Health, horizons and hemispheres, a global future for academia
Prof. Evelyne de Leeuw, Chair in Community Health Systems and Policy at Deakin University, Australia, alumna Maastricht University
- Next generation university
Prof. Paul Iske, endowed professor of Innovation and Business Venturing at Maastricht University
- The future of the University – continuity and change
Prof. Peter van den Besselaar, professor of Organisation Science at VU University Amsterdam and research leader at the Rathenau Institute
- Confronting global challenges: Go Maastricht, go green. Student Initiative: The UM Green Office, kick off
Students Felix Spira and Ardjan Vermue
- Panel discussion chaired by Dr Jo Ritzen
Panel list: the speakers, Prof. Knottnerus, Prof. de Wilde
- Concluding remarks

A look ahead to 2030: How will Europeans live in twenty years? What will the life expectancy be? What health and social risks will we face? What should our graduates know in order to meet European and global challenges in 2030 and beyond?

The opening of the academic year 2010/11 is themed *University for the Future* to remind us that universities manufacture the future; in their teaching of young people and their contributions to research and innovation, a university has the power to shape the world of tomorrow. This is especially true as we enter the age of the *Knowledge Society*. Said the writer and futurist Alvin Toffler, "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read or write; they will be those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn."

Predicting the future is difficult; forecasts and scenarios are merely extensions of what we already know. Unexpected events beyond our imagining can, at any time, change the context of the present and the future. The coming decades – whether filled with transcendence or hardship – require academic rigor, creativity and imagination in foreseeing what lies ahead and in preparing new generations to face it.

Dr Jo J.M. Ritzen

President of the Executive Board, Maastricht University

Afternoon programme

Opening ceremony

Location: Theater aan het Vrijthof, Maastricht

15.00 - 16.45

- Opening: A chance for Maastricht University
by Dr Jo Ritzen, President of Maastricht University
- Keynote speech: Ta Erotika – the Socratic Future of Education and of Society
by Bettany Hughes, historian, author and broadcaster
- Edmond Hustinx scholarship and the Presentation of the Student Award
by Prof. Gerard Mols, Rector Magnificus of Maastricht University
- Official opening of the 2010/2011 academic year

www.maastrichtuniversity.nl



**“This university
has every
opportunity”**

Text: Femke Kools

Photo: Herman van Ommen

With only six months left as president of Maastricht University's Executive Board, Jo Ritzen (65) does not plan to sit on the sidelines once his term ends. "The 65-year age limit is just talk; it's really nothing to be concerned about." Not to him, in any event: Ritzen plans to continue promoting international higher education in other social arenas over the next 20 years, and is confident that he'll still be professionally involved in 2030. "Universities should be at the heart of society, especially in 2030. English-language education will be a major trend over the next 20 years and universities will really have to distinguish themselves from one another. You should never just follow the pack."

For Ritzen, the decision to leave Maastricht University after two terms in office was not an easy one. "You're leaving a community. That was the hardest part of this decision. But I'll have more time to think about issues that interest me." Issues such as the further development of European universities over the next two decades; a topic that also happens to be the theme for the Opening of the Academic Year. In his book *A Chance for European Universities* and the accompanying manifesto he submitted to the European Commission along with 20 politicians, scientists and university directors, Ritzen advocates more extensive, cross-border profiling of universities. He is also campaigning for better academi-

ic funding. "Because every cent you invest in higher education will give you a 10% to 15% percent return", he explains. Together with these 20 associates, Ritzen has launched an NGO that he hopes will play an important role in European education strategy over the next 10 years.

Anti-intellectual atmosphere

"Europe is experiencing an anti-intellectual atmosphere at the moment. There's a vast rift between what experts find essential and empirical – what can be confirmed by numbers – and the general mood within substantial sections of society. These sections believe that differentiation is unnecessary because everyone should be considered equal. But over

the next 20 years it will be extremely important to establish your position within the world of higher education; to discover your niche. With this in mind, we plan to launch 'centres for interdisciplinary studies' in Maastricht during the upcoming strategic planning period. Interfaculty research and education will be classified per theme, and will strive to answer societal questions. Food and nutrition, the brain, ageing – these are just some of the many themes that will be involved. Our societal mission is to contribute to the level of talent, with the intention of creating an appealing and open society that stands in harmony with globalisation. This automatically means that, as a university, >>

“Universities should be at the heart of society, especially in 2030”

you have to become even more international. You have to offer more English-language education in order to attract prospective students from abroad.”

Graduates

The choice of theme for the Opening of the Academic Year aims to fuel an internal discussion on the question: What do universities have to do to produce well-qualified graduates? “Our programmes are outstanding, but maybe our graduates can do even better. The strategic programme focuses on this more than ever; on carefully examining what is expected of individuals. In addition to an exceptional level of academic knowledge, I believe that graduates should also have strong moral backbones and be able to work in international teams that aim at problem solving. Experts should also want to contribute to a better world. I feel that as a university, you should think more about how to convey these ideas to your graduates.”

Universities should play a more active role in societal issues, too, such as: How do you achieve social cohesion in a world that is increasingly globalising, and 70% of the population is extremely unhappy about this? Ritzen: “A large proportion of the population feels threatened by this development – which, incidentally, cannot be reversed. Innovation is also widely perceived as a burden. Most people live in the present and past, and feel intimidated when it comes to thinking about a future that extends beyond the end of the year. I don’t have answers to these kinds of problems, but I do think that universities will play a role in addressing them over the next 20 years. At the moment, however, we’re not organised enough to deal with them.”

And then there’s the sea of opportunities to strengthen and better organise the ties with alumni. “A powerful Maastricht University will have a much closer relationship with its alumni in 2030. Never before

have our graduates and their talents played as central a role in our strategic programme as they will over the next four years. They are our future.”

Beneficial?

So is it even possible, or useful, to look 20 years into the future? Not with any certainty, Ritzen knows from experience. Yet broad social trends are indeed discernable. Twenty years ago, Ritzen was Minister of Education, Culture and Science. He sparked controversy with his innovative ideas, which included more English-language education and his belief that universities should link their missions with those of the government in order to promote diversity. In 2010, he can see that his visions have largely been realised.

“I think we can predict with some accuracy where we’ll be in terms of technology and the economy 20 years from now”, Ritzen says. “But making social predictions is more

difficult. The Rand Corporation published a study in 1965 which predicted that a United Nations army would maintain world peace in 1980. World peace may not exactly have been achieved, but the prediction was based on solid considerations.” Although not always accurate, Ritzen believes it is still beneficial to base current policies on future scenarios. “Companies and institutions that do so – with a generous helping of serendipity, of course – perform considerably better than those that don’t. And it’s particularly important to establish many feedback loops, so you can gain a faster and better understanding of how your ideas are being translated.”

Every opportunity

Final question: Is Maastricht University ready for the future? Ritzen beams. “This university has every opportunity to excel. We’re known for this in terms of both quality of education and internationalisation. And the latter has nothing

to do with the fact that we’re on the border – so is Saarbrücken University. All European universities are, in fact. I dedicated my book to Maastricht University, which is unique as far as I know. I’m extremely pleased with my time here, but a lot can still happen and we need to put in 150% to make changes. You shouldn’t be too easily satisfied with yourself, and you

need to be constantly aware of what you’re doing. We need to create more room to think. We should look to our alumni far more often. In a manner of speaking, we should go to bed each night and ask ourselves the question: How are our recent graduates doing? What will they be doing in 10 years? Did we help them along, or could we have done better?”

Before assuming his current position in February 2003, Jo Ritzen was Vice President of the World Bank’s Development Economics Department and Human Development Network. Prior to working at the World Bank, he was Minister of Education, Culture, and Science in the Netherlands. During his term, he enacted a series of major reforms throughout the Dutch education system. Over the years he has also made significant contributions to agencies such as UNESCO and the OECD, especially in the field of education and social cohesion. Prior to his appointment as Minister in 1989, Ritzen held academic appointments with Nijmegen University and Erasmus University in the Netherlands, and the University of California-Berkeley and the Robert M. LaFollette Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the United States.

Ritzen obtained a master’s degree in physical engineering in 1970 from the University of Technology in Delft, and a PhD in economics in 1977 from Erasmus University in Rotterdam. His dissertation on education, economic growth, and income distribution earned him the Winkler Prins prize.



Text: Femke Kools

Photo: Wingspan productions

Keynote speaker Bettany Hughes

Looking back on the future

“On the face of it, it might seem illogical to invite a historian of the distant past as keynote speaker, the theme being ‘University for the future’. But in a way, I think it’s both very broad minded and inspired to ask somebody who deals with the story of human life on Earth to talk about how we can project that experience forward by 20 years.” Bettany Hughes’s Oxford degree in ancient and modern history trained her to do so right from the start of her own higher education. One week after accepting the invitation to be a keynote speaker in Maastricht, she offers us a glimpse of her vision of the university for the future.

“There was a moment in our recent history, at the end of the 20th century, when we thought that all the answers lay in the future. Homo sapiens is a creature of memory, and it’s actually very dangerous if we as a society try to downplay the importance of remembering what happened in our collective pasts. Although of course we shouldn’t live *in* the past, we’re fools if we don’t admit that we live *with* it. I look right

back to the origins of human civilisation over 7000 years ago. It’s going to be very challenging for me to see how I can depict my observations of humanity over an extended period of time, and I think that’s why Maastricht University has invited me. I take a very broad view of human experience and try to apply it to some possible solutions for the future.” >>

“From academic papers to paper clips; it’s going to need to resonate throughout the world.”

Hughes is an eloquent speaker at all sorts of events, but also in her television programmes about ancient and social history, which over 100 million people watch worldwide. This popularity came as a pleasant surprise, given that she was told years ago that nobody would be interested and the work would have no mass-market appeal. “The popularity of the programme has nothing to do with me, but everything to do with the fact that after the millennium passed, people realised that we needed more of a holistic view of society.”

Academic culture

And this holistic view is also what she expects from research and teaching in the future. “Large corporations and universities too, in a way, delight in specialising in niches, but a huge number of studies are now pointing out that that’s a very inefficient way of operating. The culture of academia in the UK and US is that of a sort of pride in the narrowness of one’s field. That’s an unhelpful attitude to have about your work, because if you’re going to be the best specialist in the world, you should have such overwhelming enthusiasm that you’re spilling over the narrow confines of your field.”

Instinctively, we are polymaths, Hughes argues.

“In both commercial and intellectual terms, I think it would be really interesting for research if we were to think about its external applications in a very holistic way. The students who embrace this attitude are the ones who are going to be eminently employable in a global market. They’re going to have to understand how to communicate what they do, and how to follow through with the long-term implications of what they do. Otherwise you just become part of a chain, but you don’t really know where that chain is. Studies show that that’s not the way to get the best out of a workforce.

“So I mean *holistic* in its Greek sense. Imagining your research process not as being in the shape of a finely sharpened spear that’s heading in one direction, but rather more circular. Thinking of what it is that your research does and imagining, as it travels around the circle, who it’s going to impact and, when it comes back to you, what it’s done on that journey.

“Ideally each individual should think about the point of their learning, teaching, research, and imagine the ripples that they create, rather than just looking at the moment when the stone plops into the water. You can be a niche university, but the purpose of research and teaching will increasingly have to be more holistic. And I think it will be, because it’s going to have to apply in so many different geographical territories. From academic papers to paper clips; it’s going to need to resonate throughout the world.”

Rosier future

Looking back, Hughes sees how in the 1960s and 70s, people looked forward to the future in a more optimistic way. “Today, we seem to have this rather anxious vision of our future. Some people imagine that democracy will be redundant or at least under threat in a few decades. People are very worried when they talk about the rise of China, India and the Middle East. But if you look at the Middle East for instance, of all regions in the world it has enjoyed the longest stretches of peace in human history. So I’ll be talking quite a bit about the relationship between East and West and what that might be by 2030. But I’m going to spend a good few weeks thinking on that very seriously, so my better answers will be with you in September.”

Along with the concerns about religion and economics, Hughes also sees a softer development. “A very deep-rooted understanding that the golden

ages of those Eastern areas came about when there was very vigorous collaboration between East and West – and I think there’s going to be a will to make that happen again in those regions.”

Grateful to Oxford

One of Maastricht University’s aims, to intensify the connections with its alumni in the future, is something that Hughes places great value on. “I feel immensely connected to Oxford and grateful for what it gave me. Intellectually I had an incredibly stimulating time at university. We were very lucky at Oxford that the Ashmolean Museum has an amazing collection of drawings from the old masters and the Renaissance, and we were allowed to handle these originals every Thursday evening. I remember holding up a page from Michelangelo’s sketchbook; a unique opportunity, me on my own with this page. It was his study of hands and probably 45% of them were really rubbish. Terrible images, exactly like what children do when they’re drawing hands. But then there were piece of absolute genius, so you could see that he’d really gone through something to get to that pinnacle of world-class achievement. That was hugely nourishing for me as a young person: to allow yourself to fail, to admit there will be times of disappointment in yourself, but not to let that be the be all and end all.

“When you’re 20 it’s one of the things you need to learn. In developmental terms those are probably the most important four or five years in a person’s life. As a result I think that your experience during those undergraduate days is very keen, almost as if the contrast has been turned up on a television: everything is brighter somehow. So it’s important to harness the memories of that time and the relationships that are built, and to benefit from those once people have moved on.”

Perhaps the best illustration of her loyalty to Oxford was her participation in the publicity campaign after the museum’s recent £60 million redevelopment. Not only did she speak at the opening; she also agreed to having her picture – wearing a leather jacket and holding an ancient Greek pot – splashed across the back of all London-to-Oxford buses. “Personally I’m quite shy, but for the cause of the Ashmolean I was happy to cooperate. Holding that Michelangelo has really shaped how I approach my professional and personal life: that one moment in the back of the Ashmolean Museum.”

Bettany Hughes studied Ancient and Modern History at the University of Oxford, then continued her post-graduate research while travelling through the Balkans and Asia Minor. In recognition of her contributions, she has been awarded a Research Fellowship at King’s College London. Hughes has also written and presented a number of documentaries for television and radio both in the UK and internationally, is frequently asked to serve on academic and cultural jury panels, and gives lectures around the world.

*Hughes’s book, *Helen of Troy* – the first serious and wide-ranging book ever to have been written about Helen – was published in 2005 to great critical and popular acclaim. She is currently writing a book on Socrates. She is also a member of the Innovation Committee of the UK’s National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) and an adviser to the Foundation for Science Technology and Civilisation. Finally, she was recently awarded the Naomi Sargent Education Award for Broadcast Excellence.*

Text: Jules Coenegracht

Photo: Sacha Ruland

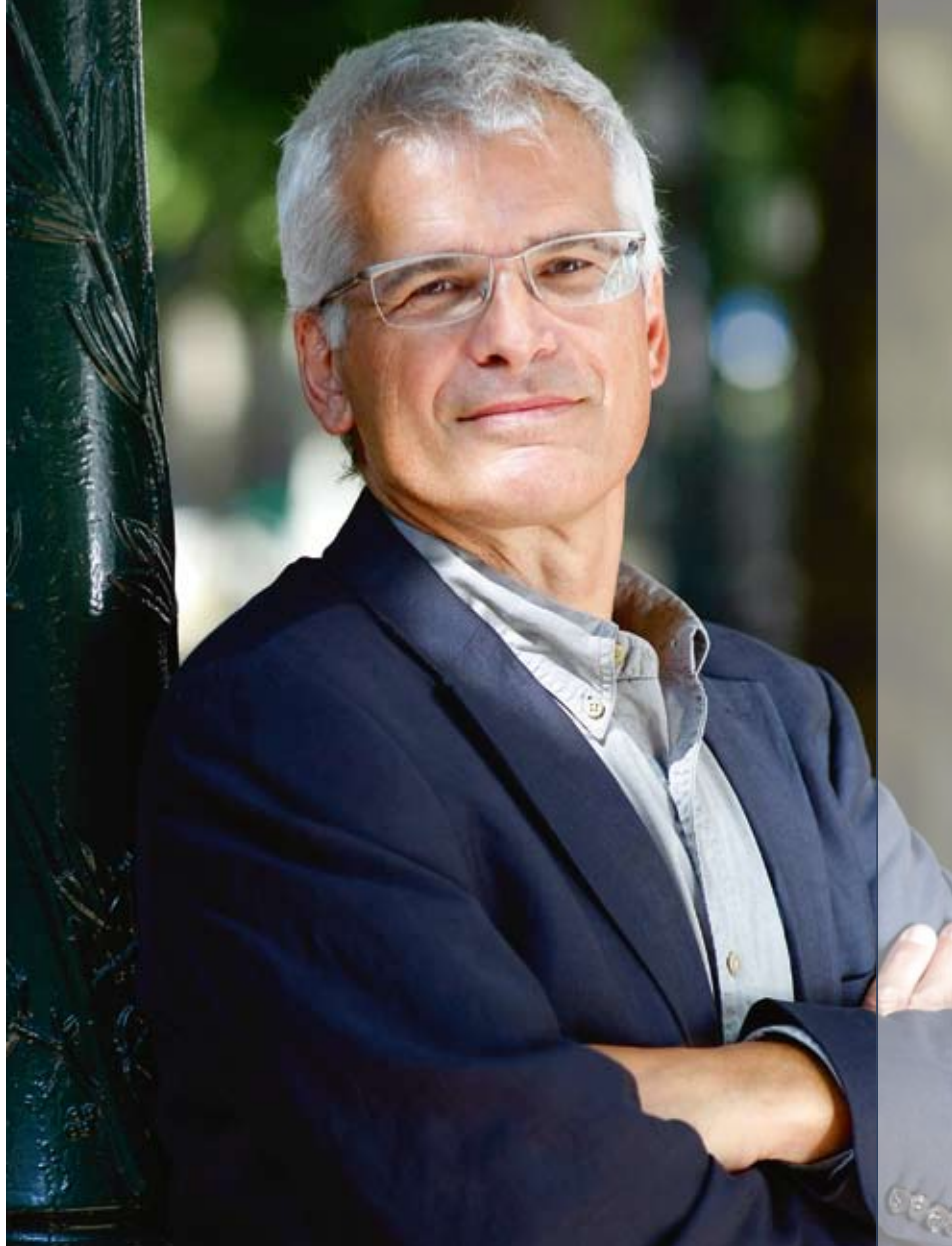
The future we expected 20 years ago

It's a nice idea. You pick 'University for the future' as the theme for the opening of your academic year, invite some academic ladies and gents to say a thing or two, and *et voilà*, you have a lovely blueprint for the future. Reality, of course, is more unruly than that. Yet every mystery has its clues.

“You can’t predict events”, says Peter van den Besselaar, professor of Organisation Science at VU University Amsterdam and research leader at the Rathenau Institute. “Twenty years ago, nobody predicted that in 2010 an oil disaster would take place right at the American coastline. You shouldn’t look at it at that level. If someone asks me what the world will look like in 20 years, my first instinct is to look 20 years back in time. What did we expect then about how the world would look 20 years later? You can often learn from these things, and by looking back at such a period in time, you quickly see where the continuity lies and what’s changed. For instance, I don’t think that 20 years ago Dutch people had any idea what the internet and email was. But you can also see what was predicted then, and why those predictions haven’t come true.”

Spectrum

“One of the changes I feel will persist in the long term is that highly educated people and academic knowledge will become more and more important in the world. This, of course, has consequences for the position of the universities in society. What will a university look like in 2030? I think that it will vary from one end of the spectrum to the other. On the one hand, universities are very stable organisations. When you compare universities around the world, you see that they’re all very similar. Universities are made up of faculties, and those faculties are usually based on traditional disciplines. And the changes over time are also the same everywhere; they mostly show that some



disciplines have become more important, while others less so. On the other hand, you see an enormous variety of universities, and I think that this will only increase further.”

What kind of variety, precisely?

“To understand this, you just need to look at the United States, where you have a huge number of universities. There are the renowned, top universities with a strong focus on research. Their students are often master’s and PhD students, and the number of bachelor’s students is

relatively small in comparison. But there are also the big institutions with mostly bachelor’s students.”

This sort of differentiation, suggests Van den Besselaar, is something we might also start to see in the Netherlands. And this raises two questions. First and foremost: To what extent does the idea of a top university with comparatively few students clash with the Dutch egalitarian tradition? And: What steps do you as university – as Maastricht University – take to anticipate such a development? >>

“Maastricht University has a distinct position”

To start with the last question: “Universities will have to choose what kind of university they want to be. The ideal research university? Or an ideal teaching university, where students are able to get their bachelor’s? A research university looks very different from a broader teaching university. It’s organised differently, and it needs different people.” And as for the Dutch penchant for egalitarianism: “It’s true that we have an egalitarian tradition in the Netherlands. But you can already see this changing. Just look at the honours programmes and the university colleges that are popping up here and there. What’s more, research is always selective – including in the Netherlands. There are many people who would like an academic career, but many of them fall short of this goal.”

In Europe

It’s also possible, according to Van den Besselaar, that the variety described above will develop at

the European level. Looking at the US again, we see that the research universities are concentrated in certain states, such as Massachusetts, New York and California. “From the European perspective, the Netherlands could develop into one of those areas in the EU which have many research universities. Currently, we have quite a few universities that are scoring well in international rankings. This could also be a challenge for the government’s higher education and research policy.”

And Maastricht

“I expect that you could get a further concentration of universities within the Netherlands, stronger collaboration. As far as that’s concerned, Maastricht University has a distinct position, because the most obvious collaboration partners seem to be located in Belgium and Germany rather than elsewhere in the Netherlands. Because distance really does play a big role: it’s hard to imagine intensive collaboration between

universities that are very far apart, despite all the new media that’s around these days. Although new media is becoming more and more important in education and research, I still think that physical proximity will remain important.”

It’s an old discussion, says Van den Besselaar: how far the new media limit the importance of physical distance. Having said that, that discussion was about ‘old new media’, such as email. “The first predictions about physical location losing importance due to the internet are already 20 years old. And it’s nice to look back on those predictions and see that very little has come true: location and physical presence are still very important. This is something universities have to realise when they’re drawing up their strategies. Being close to one another is essential for top-level education and research.”

Peter van den Besselaar is professor of Organisation Science at VU University Amsterdam, and department manager and research leader of the Department of Science System Assessment at the Rathenau Institute. His current research focuses on the organisation of science and its effects on the dynamics of science and interaction with society and economics. He has also conducted extensive research in the field of technology assessment, particularly on the social implications of ICT. This research focuses on the use of ICT for e-democracy and e-government, and on the effects of ICT on work and employment. Van den Besselaar is a former professor of Communication Science at the University of Amsterdam (2004-2009), and previously worked as manager of the Department of Social Sciences and director of the Steinmetz Archive at NIWI-KNAW (2002-2005).



Text: Margot Krijnen
Photo: Andreas Jung

The need for a fifth freedom

“Europe’s intellectual economy is not sustainable”, says Dr Anette Braun, senior policy and technology consultant at VDI Future Technologies Center in Düsseldorf. “If we seek for high quality education for all in the future, we need to re-engineer the finance mechanisms and the architecture for education.”

Trends and trend breaks

Anette Braun knows what she is talking about. She was involved in important European foresight studies and takes part in expert discussions on megatrends and drivers for Europe and the world in the next forty years. “You see, we study trends and trend breaks which are extremely diverse in scope, objectives, horizon, involvement, and dimension. There is, for instance, the social dimension, that has to do with the consequences of our demographic trends, such as an aging society, fewer young people, changing health care and pension systems, and higher unemployment. Then we have the geopolitical dimension on global power shifts and security issues. There is the economic dimension, on the future of our labour markets for instance, or the international development of the Euro. And there is a technological dimension which is about emerging and converging technologies. Last but not least there is the ecological dimension regarding the critical trends of depletion, degradation and disruption and our behaviour towards scarce resources such as water, oil, food, etc.”

EU education systems under pressure

“The theme of education would pertain to the socio-economic, as well as the technology dimension since education systems in the EU member states are under multiple pressures due to a series of factors. Demography, changes in family structures, technological progress, further EU integration and enlargement, higher people mobility and expectations are the most important drivers here. At the same time, constraints on national financial resources allocated to education call for a re-engineering of the finance mechanisms and the architecture for education”

Limits to collective financing

“The debate on the future of education in our society is dominated by the fact that education is not a sector



of economic activity. It has its own particular characteristics, which make that the market economy cannot operate here in the same way as in other sectors of the economy. Education cannot be left simply to market forces, which by their very nature would provide services according to the consumers' ability to pay. The basic market mechanism, according to which demand goes up when prices go down and vice versa, seems not to work, or work in the opposite way, when it comes to education. However, broad and equal access to information does not imply unlimited free access to any form of education that one can imagine. More and more this is being acknowledged. There are limits to what can be financed collectively and self-care and self-responsibility in this area is being promoted.”

Cost-effective education

“What applies to the financing of social systems, such as the health sector, pensions, unemployment benefits, is also applicable to the funding of the

“We need new approaches for the assessment and measurement of the Learning Society”

education system. It is now the time to take the decisions and actions to accelerate the cost-effective education system of tomorrow. In a globalised world, this would be more of a European than a national objective, since Europe's intellectual economy is currently not sustainable, as is frequently shown, for example in OECD statistics. What is required is a redesign of financing schemes for education cycles that involve private and public sources from local and international provenience. Beyond this, we need new approaches for the assessment and measurement of the Learning Society that are able to address 21st century skills. Furthermore, it will be compelling to – globally share educational resources between universities and other tertiary institutions.”

‘Fifth freedom’

“Today's Europe is built on the four freedoms of goods, services, capital and people. This is by far not enough! The knowledge society of tomorrow needs a ‘Fifth freedom’, the freedom of movement of knowledge, information, and education. This requires from the EU Member States and the European

Commission a dialogue and cooperation into implementing higher education reforms, including modernising universities with stronger emphasis on life-long learning and cross-border learning opportunities.”

Open minds

“The curriculum of the future should contain new innovations and technologies (think for example of nano as a teaching subject) and room for unconventional and disruptive thinking. A framework to enable – rather than hinder – creativity should be on the agenda, and not only at universities, but also in schools, as early as possible. In which way might we empower people for a sustainable intellectual economy? I would also suggest to positively motivating kids and young people to independently thinking about and debating on potential ways and values of future living. They have open, non-systematic minds and might come up with very smart and innovative ideas. After all, they are the future – let's support them to shape it.”

Dr Anette Braun is a macro-economist and political scientist (PhD). Since 1997, she has been a senior policy and technology consultant at VDI Future Technology Center in Düsseldorf, where she coordinates various European Prospective Research Studies (2005-2008 Trend and Issue Analysis of the European Foresight Monitoring Network, 2007 the foresight programme of the Luxemburg Government). She is responsible for the performance of socio-economic analyses of global trends, drivers, emerging issues (roadmaps on health, e-health, biotech, nano, converging technologies), their exploitation, combination, synthesis and translation into discrete S&T policy priorities.

Anette Braun has acted as a Member of the High Level Expert Group for DG RTD in 2010 on “EU and the World in 2030-2050” and in 2005 on “Foresighting the New Technology Wave” and has published various articles and papers on RTD and foresight.

Text: Femke Kools
Photo: Jonathan Vos

“We make plans, but it’s God who decides”

After his bachelor’s programme in Curaçao, Guido Rojer (22) followed two master’s degrees at Maastricht University. This year he will start his PhD research. Here, we ask him – as an experienced student and member of the University Council – for his vision of the ‘University for the future’. By email, actually, because at the time of the interview he was still at summer school in Berkeley, California.

Why Maastricht?

“Maastricht was always my first choice, because of Problem-Based Learning: I just felt that that was my thing. Maastricht was also one of the few internationally oriented universities. And that really appealed to me.”

And your membership in the University Council?

“At first because I thought it would be really interesting to take part in the dialogue with the university board. I enjoy being able to combine my fellow students’ frustrations with my own experience and to offer recommendations based on this. I wanted to point out to the board what the alternative solutions to certain problems might be. I also hoped to leave behind a little piece of ‘Guido’, and I could do that by joining the council. After my experi-

ences abroad, including a student exchange in Miami, I wanted to give UM an even more international focus. All in all, it was a great experience. You get to know the university better and this helps you to understand more of what goes on.”

What do you think that universities in general (and Maastricht University in particular) should do over the coming years to make sure that graduates are well prepared for the ‘world’ in 2030?

“First of all, universities need to realise that their work goes beyond the national level. Maastricht does quite well at this, but not all staff members fully get it yet. And international students are quick to notice that.

“I’ve seen quite a lot of criticism, and have dished out some myself, on the campus plans for Belgium, India and

China. But the more I see of these plans, the more I realise that we need three more: one each in the US, South America and Africa. This would be great for the university’s profile.

“Also, I sometimes got the feeling that the university, Maastricht included, was a sort of degree factory. By this I mean that many students don’t start developing their character until after their university career. That’s a real pity, because you can’t know what possibilities are out there for you until you really know yourself. So, we need more courses and more diversity in, for example, the fields of economics, business administration and behavioural sciences, as well as a greater variety of teaching methods.”



Guido Rojer is not pictured here

What does your ideal university look like, now and in the future?

“Student oriented like in the United States, highly integrated with ICT and ‘cosy.’”

The year 2030: Do you even look that far ahead?

“El hombre pone, pero Dios dispone: We can make all the plans we want, but in the end it’s God who makes the decisions. Twenty years ago I wouldn’t have had the faintest idea of what my life would look like today, and although I’m now older and wiser, I don’t want to make plans. The great thing about life is that you can step off the path and discover new and amazing things. But I have sketched out my life, including holidays, up until 2015. I definitely want to go the FIFA World Cup in Brazil in 2014 and also take a big trip around Asia while I’m still young. In the long

run, I’d like to move back to Curaçao, where the weather report is always ‘lots of sun, little chance of rain.’”

What’s your message for the guests at this year’s Opening of the Academic Year?

“Market orientation! The students are the customers and what they say goes, within certain limits of course. More freedom and more possibilities, perhaps in collaboration with a strong alumni community, which shouldn’t be too difficult to strengthen for a young university like Maastricht.”

How do you think a university should handle its alumni in the future?

“All Dutch universities should, from the very start, build up a strong relationship with their students and, later, with their alumni. It’s essential

for their own survival among Dutch students, but also for financing.”

Do you yourself expect to stay in touch with the university?

“For sure. I expect my PhD project with the ICIS research institute to leave its mark on my life. In the future, I hope to be able to work together with UM to export Problem-Based Learning; it’s a great system. And I’ve got lots of other ideas for joint cooperation in the future.”

Text: Graziella Runchina
Photo Paul Iske: Arjen Schmitz
Photo Marijk van der Wende: Gerrit Schreurs

On curiosity, complexity and flexibility

Paul Iske, endowed professor of Innovation and Business Venturing at Maastricht University, and Marijk van der Wende, dean of the Amsterdam University College and professor of higher education at VU University Amsterdam, are not interested in making concrete predictions. What the ideal student or university will look like in 20 years is as clear as mud, as far as they're concerned. Yet the two do agree that major developments can be expected. "The graduates of the future will have to handle themselves differently than today's graduates – and so will we."



Van der Wende finds it difficult to make any explicit predictions for 2030. “I obviously can’t predict the future, and that’s a good thing. I wouldn’t dare try. Just look at the times we’ve tried to do that in the past – we’ve fallen well short of the mark sometimes.” Van der Wende gives the second half of the 1990’s as an example. The new economy was on the rise and the internet had just burst onto the scene. “Online distance learning seemed to be the educational model of the future. At least, that was the prevailing view at the time. The ‘brick university’ was no match for the ‘click university’.

But as for 2010? We’re all still sitting

in classrooms and lecture halls, and today’s students are no different than they were in the past.”

Nonetheless, Van der Wende is convinced that future graduates will face different challenges than the generations who preceded them – though this doesn’t necessarily mean we need to constantly revise our approach to education. Van der Wende sees Hannah Arendt, the Jewish-German-American philosopher, born at the turn of the 20th century, as an important scholar in this field. “She argued over 50 years ago that education has the task to prepare the next generation for undertaking some-

thing new. And that their potential to renew the world requires that they are educated to understand the world as it is. Education must therefore pass on the existing for the benefit of the new – a statement I agree with wholeheartedly. With the potential that new generations of students have to change the world, and perhaps even improve it, they’ll be able to face a whole swag of new challenges, including economic ones.”

Optimism and curiosity

Van der Wende sees an extraordinary amount of optimism and curiosity in today’s generation, especially >>

“We need to ensure that future leaders will be morally responsible as well”

when it comes to economic and scientific questions. “I think that universities should take full advantage of these qualities in the coming years, and work on developing them in the future”, she says. “Curiosity forms the ideal foundation for knowledge acquisition, but we should also ensure that this broad interest is not stifled within educational concepts that are overly narrow and monodisciplinary.” Knowledge is obviously important in a knowledge economy. But as Van der Wende explains, “We need to be cautious. You don’t graduate simply to generate economic output. You study to better understand the world around you; to grow as an individual and as a citizen in relation to others and to the world as a whole. The education of the future should therefore focus on helping young academics to understand the world as it is. And how it became that way. We’re all facing a major crisis at the moment,

and are leaving behind to them a world that’s increasingly complex and very far from perfect.”

Diversity

The ideal world does not exist, according to Van der Wende. Neither does the ideal student or university. “Today’s society is so diverse that I wouldn’t be able to identify just one ideal. Nor would I want to. Diversity is something to be cherished.” When it comes to what the education system will look like in 20 years, Van der Wende is confident that our globalised knowledge economy will only expand in the future. “In an increasingly complex society, we need qualified individuals with outstanding social insight, language and communication skills – individuals who can handle diversity. This is in addition to the more traditional qualities such as courage, perseverance and the keen analytic skills necessary to effectively participate

in our complex society. Basically, I’m suggesting that being skilled at reading spreadsheets or calculating profits and losses is not enough. We need to ensure that future leaders will be morally responsible as well. And universities certainly play an important role in this.”

Unpredictable

Paul Iske, endowed professor of Innovation and Business Venturing at UM, is equally apprehensive about making concrete predictions about the future. “Let me make one thing clear”, he says. “The future is unpredictable – the future in general, as well as the future of the university and the next generation of students. Unpredictable and different. But different in what way? Exactly: In an unpredictable way!”

There is one thing that Iske is confident about: flexibility is the buzzword of the future. This flexibil-

Marijk van der Wende started her career in education combined with her studies in pedagogy. After spending time abroad, she continued to study educational sciences, and became a researcher and then a professor at the University of Twente and the VU University Amsterdam. Van der Wende currently chairs the Programme for Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) at the OECD. She is also dean of the Amsterdam University College, which was established in September 2009 by the VU University Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam. Its three-year Liberal Arts and Sciences bachelor’s programme offers a broad interdisciplinary programme, taught exclusively in English.

Paul Iske is endowed professor of Innovation and Business Venturing at the Maastricht University School of Business and Economics. He is involved in the Service Science Factory and is a board member of the Network for Social Innovation at UM. He is also Chief Dialogues Officer at ABN AMRO, director/founder of the Dialogues House (a centre for open and sustainable innovation at ABN AMRO) and director of the Dialogues Incubator. Further, Iske consults and gives lectures on topics such as open innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity. He holds a PhD in theoretical physics and worked for several years at Shell in Amsterdam, where he initiated and led research projects in varying fields at universities throughout the Netherlands and abroad.

ity lies primarily in predicting trends but also in detecting the 'weaker signals' that could potentially foreshadow these trends. These trends are the result of the driving forces in society and it is important that we can identify, explain and understand them. "If I were forced to predict what the ideal university will look like in 20 years, I'd say that it will fit seamlessly with the next generation of students and with the rest of society. To achieve this, we need to make sure that the university's organisation is strong but agile, and remains so. That's easier said than done. Fortunately, we're increasingly aware of the importance of this and are beginning to understand how organisations can develop this flexibility. The decisions of today should be the right ones for a complete set of scenarios for the future."

Entrepreneurship

According to Iske, it is particularly important that universities create open lines of communication for the dialogues with their environment and their stakeholders. This allows them to remain constantly informed of the latest developments. "A good example is the Service Science Factory, a platform that facilitates collaboration between UM and other organisations. It is a great initiative to create value out of the knowledge of the UM, but it also gives access to different environments. Know what's going on around you and be responsive to any changes that occur. It teaches you to observe and understand forces in the world around us.

Just consider the social networking boom or the advent of new technologies, particularly in the fields of ICT, materials, energy and biotechnology."

According to Iske, in order to take advantage of these technological developments, we also need to be socially innovative – which means applying new work and organisational methods. Entrepreneurship plays an important role in this. To Iske, entrepreneurship means identifying and exploiting opportunities. "Universities are essentially arsenals

of intellectual capital in terms of both knowledge and relations. We're increasingly focused on valorisation: how can we create value from this intellectual capital? We should focus on exploiting this potential while making room for open innovation and social innovation. This 'Next Generation University' involves passion, flexibility and risk-taking, and applies both to the next generation of universities and to the university for the next generations, of students and other stakeholders, as well."



Text: John Ekkelboom
Photos: Sacha Ruland

Five disciplines, five visions

What will their field look like in 2030? What ideas do they have about the impact on education and research, now and in the future? We asked these questions to five UM lecturers from various disciplines.



The GP as navigator

5



Things are really on the move for patients at the moment: new technologies and care professions; all sorts of information easily accessible online. At the same time, patients want to make more decisions about treatment themselves. GPs, then – as generalists – need to maintain a broad overview and be able to separate the wheat from the chaff. They are set to develop increasingly as ‘navigators’ in healthcare, who help chart the course for patients. At least, this is the expectation of André Knottnerus, professor of General Practice at the Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences.

General practice is standing at the precipice of many important changes. To start with, Knottnerus mentions the ‘double’ ageing of the population. The group of older people is steadily expanding, yet at the same time is becoming on average older. Because elderly people more often suffer from chronic illnesses, the demand for care is also on the rise. “We have to pay a great deal of attention to prevention in older people”, explains Knottnerus. “Through exercise, healthy eating and societal participation, they can stay in good health for much longer.”

Along with this ageing, the proportion of young people is also decreasing, which means that their societal burden could increase. The professor emphasises that given all the attention paid to older people, care and prevention for young people – for example when it comes to combating obesity and mental problems – should not be forgotten. “In the care for young and old people alike, the GP plays an important role, in close cooperation with many other disciplines in first- and second-line care [generally accessible medical care and specialist care for which a referral is needed, respectively]. The GP is then not so much a gatekeeper but more of a navigator in healthcare.”

GPs are becoming more and more involved with new technologies, such as imaging equipment and genetic tests, which are now particularly available in second-line care. What’s more, they are facing a rising flood of scientific knowledge. In order for patients to continue being treated in an evidence-based manner, Knottnerus emphasises that Maastricht’s students must learn how to deal with this exponentially increasing knowledge, and how to inform patients about it (using the internet, for instance). “Because patients increasingly want to have more of a say, to make their own decisions. For this purpose, Problem-Based Learning offers an ideal starting position. But in research, too, we have to make a big effort to focus on first-line care, ageing, healthy behaviour, participation and technology assessment. And via top-quality biomedical and clinical-scientific research, we can help give shape to the latest developments.”

According to Knottnerus, European integration brings with it many opportunities, but also extra challenges for his field. In the Netherlands, first-line (i.e. generalist) care has developed enormously and can deal with 95% of all health problems, while in various other European countries, increasingly direct demands are being placed on specialists. “This leads to superfluous and ineffective care”, says Knottnerus. “The Netherlands should not head in that direction. Europe should be guided not by the lowest but the highest standard, as we know it. We’ve got something good here that we can disseminate abroad.”

“Making predictions is useless”

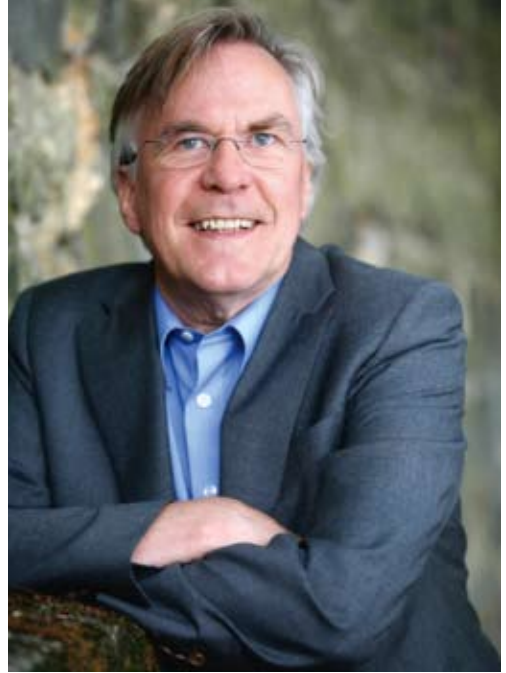
5

Rein de Wilde, professor of Philosophy and dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, is not interested in making predictions. To him, these are just shots in the dark. Instead, he'd rather discuss what would be desirable for the academic world of the future.

That De Wilde refuses to make predictions on the future of Maastricht University is hardly surprising. In 2000, he published his book *The Predictors (De Voorspellers)*, in which he describes the history of futurology. Two mistakes are frequently made when trying to predict the future, he explains: “People overestimate the pace and nature of change. When the League of Nations was founded after the First World War, people truly believed that a global government would quickly follow. Yet people also underestimate change. This is a result of the limitations of our powers of imagination. Years ago, no-one could have imagined that the telephone would evolve into mobile phones with messaging capabilities, internet and games.”

De Wilde does believe, however, that the university should investigate future scenarios, because anticipating potential developments allows you to respond better to future situations. “Suppose we have to economise because the government requires us to cut funding for non-Dutch students. Seen from today’s perspective, this is not a very likely scenario – but you never know how the political situation will unfold in 20 years. That’s why it’s a good idea to think now about how you’d respond to a case like that.”

The ideal academic situation that De Wilde would like to pursue is European in nature, but closely resembles the American model, which ranks universities according to the Carnegie Classification System. Students and researchers can use this system to make educated choices about where they want to study or work. And further: “As a university, we should also take the new family unit into account, which increasingly has two working partners. If you hire a good professor or researcher, you should also offer their partner a good job”, De Wilde explains. “What’s more, universities should no longer confine themselves to



research and education alone. Our students and staff come from all over the world, so we should create a sort of ‘village green’ where they can meet one another and make friends. In this scenario, the distinction between university and city would quickly fade.”

“Integrated approach, on all levels”



Questions of sustainability are increasingly requiring a more integrated, multidisciplinary approach. Pim Martens, professor of Sustainable Development at the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences, is enthusiastically anticipating this much-needed development within UM’s International Centre for Integrated assessment and Sustainable development (ICIS).

“You shouldn’t assume that issues of sustainability can only be analysed and resolved from a scientific perspective. The natural and social sciences are working independently of one another with regard to this issue at the moment”, explains Martens. He is campaigning for more cooperation: not just between the various academic disciplines, but also including the governmental and business sectors as well. “We shouldn’t focus on one specific perspective, but rather on an interdisciplinary approach. Only then can you address the issues in an integrated way. Incidentally, this doesn’t mean that the various academic disciplines will disappear. We’ll still need them to gain deeper insight into these topics.”

Martens believes that over the coming 20 years, the university should become more socially oriented, and take a more thematic approach to its research that transcends faculty boundaries. His discipline, for instance, will necessarily become more international; after all, global problems increasingly require a global approach. He is now working more closely with foreign colleagues than their Dutch counterparts, and is convinced that this trend will continue. One logical consequence is that the internet will play an even more important role in the communication between them. To Martens, communication is the key to the future. As many of the world’s social parties are likely to involve themselves in this debate, qualified scientific intermediaries with broad knowledge in the field of sustainability will be indispensable. He is interested in training such individuals; preparing them for the future.

In Martens’s experience, many students already feel they know what sustainable development is. “They think that if they just ‘google’ it they can find out all they need to know. But there’s so much more to it. You need to know how to select the right sources and how to deal with conflicting information. Just consider the recent debate on climate change following the IPCC report. Students in our field in particular need to have strong communication skills in addition to the necessary knowledge. And this is not for everyone.” Martens is keen to take the lead now in order to produce the right students in the future – students who will be capable of handling issues involving sustainability. To this end, the recently launched ICIS – Maastricht University Graduate School of Sustainability Science (MUST) is a step in the right direction.

Brain training at the gym

5

In the future, we'll be able to train our brains to function more efficiently using fMRI neurofeedback. And not only healthy people will benefit from these techniques; so, too, will people with brain injuries or psychiatric disorders. Rainer Goebel, professor of Cognitive Neuroscience at the Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience, is busy laying the groundwork for these possibilities.

Using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), Goebel and his team have been trying to fathom the workings of the human brain for years. This imaging technique allows scientists to map neuronal activity: they can see which areas of the brain are activated when someone speaks, thinks or feels certain emotions. Goebel studies both healthy people and patients with brain injuries or abnormalities. "First I want to figure out what's happening in healthy brains", he says. "That way, I'll be able to see what's going wrong in patients with schizophrenia, for example, or depression. And fortunately, modern scanners are providing an ever-more detailed image of our brain processes. In the future, we won't be talking about brain areas in terms of emotion or language centres. Instead, we'll be able to observe individual thoughts and feelings."

Goebel is not only attempting to unravel the mysteries of the human brain. He is also developing neurofeedback devices and software with which to study it. This technology will allow people to see their brain activity, and learn how to actively influence it. The professor relates this to what Buddhist monks do during meditation: consciously activating certain brain regions and relaxing others. According to Goebel, neurofeedback can help patients combat their psychiatric disorders and healthy people train their brains to function more efficiently. In the future, he predicts that people will go to the gym to train not just their bodies, but also their minds, using neurofeedback.

The research conducted by Goebel's team has already had some interesting consequences for patients with locked-in syndrome. This is a neurological condition in which patients are almost completely paralysed,



have virtually no means of communication, and essentially appear to be comatose – but they are in fact fully conscious. Goebel has developed software that allows patients to communicate with the outside world using only their thoughts. They are asked to perform certain mental tasks which are then interpreted and analysed by the fMRI, and converted into words on a screen. Goebel: "This is a very slow process at the moment – letter by letter. But someday, it will get closer to normal human speech."

“The university is becoming more international”

5



Maastricht University is internationalising faster than any other university in the country, according to Luc Soete, professor of International Economic Relations at the School of Business and Economics and director of UNU-MERIT. He expects that in 20 years' time, Maastricht will be even more international.

Soete is an expert in the field of research into innovation and technological developments, and the resulting economic and social consequences. He is convinced that his field will continue to play an important role in the future. In a world economy that is undergoing fundamental changes, new analyses will be crucial. “In the West, we’ll be faced with a shrinking economy, more so than we’ve seen so far”, he explains. “Growth in Europe is slowing down, which means the average income per head of population is hardly likely to improve. By contrast, the economies of countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa will show strong growth.” Soete believes this will lead economists of growth dynamics to shift their attention in the direction of the up-and-coming countries, while in Europe the focus will lie on maintaining prosperity.

In the coming decades, Soete expects Maastricht University to internationalise even further. This development was set in motion some time ago, giving the university a head start on other Dutch institutions. In this regard, Soete feels that the university will move in the direction of UNU-MERIT, the research institute of United Nations University which he directs, and which is affiliated with Maastricht University. Only very few of the UNU-MERIT researchers are actually Dutch; the remainder come from all corners of the world. Soete: “Just like our institute, the university as a whole will attract more talent from beyond the Netherlands to come and work in Maastricht. In 20 years, well over half of the researchers at our university will come from abroad.”

And not only will the researchers come from far and wide: Soete is convinced that so, too, will the students. In 2030, the student population will be 100% international, and the language English. He also expects the university to further disconnect itself from its local economic environment. “It will become a think tank place itself among the top 200 universities in the world and being involved mainly in global issues. The result? Maastricht will outgrow its European fame as the home of the Economic and Monetary Union Treaty, better known as the Maastricht Treaty. That treaty was ‘only’ European-oriented, after all.”



Text: Femke Kools
Photo: Gerrit Schreurs

Sustainability, respect and governance: vital parts of the toolkit

Professor Evelyne de Leeuw is Chair in Community Health Systems and Policy at Deakin University in Australia. A graduate and former staff member of Maastricht University, De Leeuw is known for being a woman with strong opinions. “People who say that universities must choose between research or education in the future are talking elitist nonsense.” A conversation about beliefs, hope, love and the similar trends in higher education in Europe and Australia.

In the course of the Skype conversation with Evelyne de Leeuw it emerges that, in some respects, developments in higher education in Australia mirror those in the Netherlands and other European countries. Take, for example, the blurring of boundaries between higher vocational education and university education. “Here, it’s possible to study Social Work and Occupational Therapy at university”, she says. “Though these courses generate funding for the university, they don’t lend themselves readily to the formulation of research profiles. The academic performance of some departments is extremely meagre. In my opinion a proper university not only conveys knowledge, but also generates it. People who advocate the creation of separate teaching and research universities are talking elitist nonsense. Students only value my teaching because I’m well versed in the literature and I’m continually exploring the boundaries of my domain.”

In the Netherlands, the Veerman Commission recently concluded that universities need to profile themselves in a specific academic field. Likewise, in Australia, the ‘Bradley report’ recommended that universities profile themselves in one distinguishing area. Deakin University, for example, has set its sights on higher education and research on hard-to-reach groups, including the question of how to do research on and with groups that live outside cities, in rural, regional and remote Australia. “Identifying such a niche and investing in it together with international universities will make us stronger. I think it has great potential – not just in the sense of attracting lots of new students, but developing our knowledge makes teaching much more interesting and institutions more sustainable.”

Love

For De Leeuw, working with Maastricht University is no self-evident matter, even though she spent

20 years at the institution. The tie that she must have felt previously has weakened, and not just because of the distance. “The love hasn’t always been reciprocal. UM now has a degree programme in European Public Health, which is something I proposed 20 years ago. I felt that a course in international, transnational and global health had great potential, but I was laughed at in what I can only describe as an unkind way. At the time, I was unable to distance myself and say: ‘Your loss, not mine.’”

This illustrates not only how fragile the ties with alumni and former staff members can sometimes be, but also how visions of the future can occasionally be spot on. De Leeuw: “When I was studying in Maastricht, I was taught by Professor Albert van der Werff. I thought he was great because of his rather visionary mindset. He was instrumental in setting up the Steering Committee on Future Health Scenarios STG, and in 1984 he asked me, a third-year student, to help with one of the scenario groups. During my time in that group I realised that it is, of course, impossible to predict the future. If a meteorite hits the Netherlands tomorrow we’ll have worried about rising sea levels for nothing. However, what we can do is speculate about the future, and our preferences for it. We can give careful consideration to questions such as: What is my vision for 2030, and how can I make it happen? It’s important to have visionary goals.”

Beliefs

What De Leeuw has retained from her time in Maastricht is “an almost ideological faith in PBL and its future benefits”. Because in her view, PBL is so much more than simply “a small group of students having a chat”. “The underlying philosophy is key: students are encouraged to explore and do their own research and to use their findings in a constructive manner. In the past, UM operated according to a ‘base philosophy’: a number of principles regarding

“It’s important to have visionary goals”

its role in society and the implications this had for its educational model. One of the reasons that a separate student housing association was not created in Maastricht was the fact that the philosophy prescribed that students should be part of the community. The idea was that the university should be anchored in society. It’s these values that have made me what I am now.”

“And to my mind, that remains an important guideline for university education in future. For the record, I feel I must warn people that we’re on a slippery slope: here at Deakin we have PBL tutorials with 35 students, which is simply wrong. Professor Henk Schmidt is right – 12 should really be the maximum number, but of course 35 is more profitable. In my opinion, PBL is a supremely interesting and effective teaching method. UM should, in any case, do everything possible to stay committed to this

method, and I hope that Deakin University will do the same.”

Hope

De Leeuw argues that if we want to educate the leaders and thinkers of the future, we must focus on their skills and mindset, rather than their factual knowledge. “I believe that sustainability, respect for others and governance are vital components in the toolkit of future professionals. Their importance was instilled in me by UM, and I hope that in the next 20 years the university will impart them to many more students. The ever increasing process of globalisation poses issues to every discipline. The world is changing in many ways that are hard for us to grasp, and we don’t know what these challenges will involve. It is for precisely this reason that universities must instil the right values in their graduates, to guide them on their way.”

Evelyne de Leeuw is Chair in Community Health Systems and Policy at the Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing and Behavioural Sciences at Deakin University. After a gaining a master’s in Health Policy and Administration (1985) at Maastricht University, she acquired an MPH in comparative health systems research (1986) at the University of California at Berkeley and a PhD on the feasibility of true health policy (1989) at Maastricht University.

De Leeuw has been involved in the health promotion endeavours of the World Health Organization (WHO) since the 1986 Ottawa Conference. In 2001 she took up a position with the University of Southern Denmark, where she was charged with the development of new teaching and research programmes in public health. In 2005 she was appointed to the Faculty of Health, Medicine, Nursing, and Behavioural Sciences at Deakin University. She took up her current chair in 2009 at the School of Medicine, teaching and carrying out research in areas such as urban health (WHO Healthy Cities) and the nexus between research, policy and practice.

KICK-OFF:

The UM Green Office



Text: Femke Kools
Photo: Jonathan Vos

“If you want to change society for the long term and it’s clear that this is needed on a number of fronts,” says Valentin Tappeser, “there’s no better place to start than in education and research.” Tappeser is a UCM student, and one of the 15 or so student initiators of ‘The UM Green Office’. This project is being supported by Marc Fischer of Maastricht University’s Environmental Department, and its official kick-off will take place during the Opening of the Academic Year.

When it comes to the concept of sustainability, most people think of things like double-sided printing and turning off the lights when they leave the office. “That’s more the operational side of sustainability; the question of how to spare our planet, now and in the future”, says Fischer, UM environmental adviser. “But sustainability is also about a broader mindset: how do your actions influence the world in which we live? This also allows you to look at the sustainability of your education and research.”

And that was exactly the idea of a group of students from various programmes who, supported by the university, have been working over the last few months on a business plan for ‘The UM Green Office’. Tappeser is one of them: “The idea is to establish a physical office within the university where everyone who wants to do something related to sustainability can meet. You could

see it as a sort of incubator, where initiators come together, advise one another, and get in touch with volunteers to carry out plans. In this way, UM students and staff will be able to transmit their enthusiasm and expertise to one another, and the university will also be able to reap the benefits.” After its kick-off on 6 September, the network both within and outside the university will be expanded further, a website will be set up, and so, too, will a database of all relevant initiatives and literature in all UM curricula. The supervisory board will also have its first meeting, and decide on the long-term agenda.

Extra burden

An example of an agenda item could be the introduction of the ‘Auditing Instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education’ (AISHE) of the Dutch Foundation for Sustainability in Higher Education (DHO). The AISHE uses a star ranking to indicate the sustainability of a given

programme. Fischer: “So far, faculties tend to see this as an extra burden: ‘Not another audit!’ But it’s important to take this subject seriously, even in your education and research. As a university you have a responsibility towards society to produce managers and policy advisers who consider sustainability an important subject. So it’s more about just doing things ‘differently’ rather than adding to the existing workload.”

Tappeser adds: “It’s about creating a mindset: how do my actions contribute to a sustainable world? Maastricht University has something to offer to the world, in my view: highly qualified people are being sent out into society through programmes such as International Business and European Studies. It would be great if we could nourish their interest in sustainability, so that they can change the world in a fundamental way.”

Awards

On the occasion of the opening of the academic year, two awards are presented: the Edmond Hustinx scholarship and the Maastricht University Student Award.

Edmond Hustinx scholarship

The objective of the Hustinx scholarship for young scholars and scientists is to lend support to promising young researchers attached to Maastricht University. Research projects should deal with work that has interdisciplinary and innovative elements and must have an international context. The Hustinx scholarship is a € 7,500 grant that will be paid over a period of four years, depending on the progress and the completion of a scholarship activity. The Edmond Hustinx Foundation will decide in advance to which academic discipline the prize will be awarded. Each year this will be a different discipline. In 2010 the focus is on the Faculty of Humanities and Sciences.

Maastricht University Student Award

Since 2000, the Maastricht University Student Award has been presented annually to a student (or group of students) at Maastricht University who, in addition to his or her studies, has made a special contribution to society or culture. The award consists of a piece of art and € 1.000,-. In addition, a portrait of the winner is hung up in the 'student hall of fame' in the UM administrative building. The winner of the award is announced during the Opening of the Academic Year. For the Student Award 2010 eleven (groups of) students are nominated.

The awards are presented by Professor Gerard Mols, Rector Magnificus, Maastricht University.

Colophon

Editing: Marketing & Communications, Maastricht University Office

Translation: Translation & Editing Service, Maastricht University
Language Centre

Concept and design: Vormgeversassociatie BV, Hoog-Keppel

Print: Drukkerij Pietermans NV, Lanaken

For more information, please contact Maastricht University Office,
Marketing & Communications:

Telephone: +31 43 3885222

E-mail: communicatie@maastrichtuniversity.nl

www.maastrichtuniversity.nl

www.maastrichtuniversity.nl

Based in Europe, focused on the world. Maastricht University is a stimulating environment. Where research and teaching are complementary. Where innovation is our focus. Where talent can flourish. A truly student oriented research university.

