

Annual Review 2009

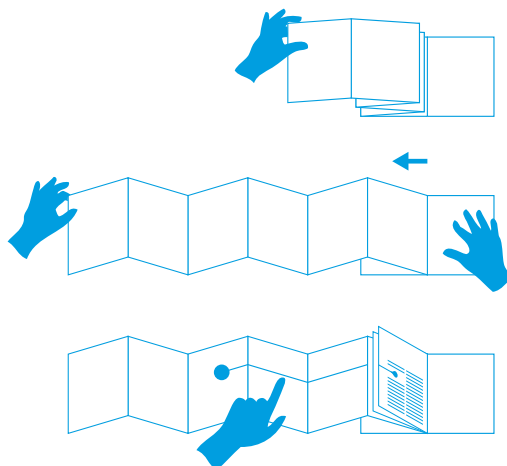
Facing Facts



This page covers a timeline of events in 2009 at VU University Amsterdam. If you unfold the pages - as shown in the instructions below - a table of contents will appear on the right. The table contains the names of a select group of people working at VU University Amsterdam, all of whom excelled in 2009. You can read more about their work and achievements by connecting the lines that run left from the table of contents into the unfolded timeline. Finding your way in this Annual Review couldn't be easier: the **page numbers** can be found in both the table of contents and the timeline. The back pages of the timeline provide a more general overview of the most important events of 2009 that have taken place in and around VU University Amsterdam. This timeline also serves as a calendar.

2009

Turn this page over and fold it out.



6 March

Andreas Daffertshofer (MOVE) receives €200,000 for his Classification of Gait Patterns project.

2 March

Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR) relocates from Leiden to the VU University campus.

12 February

32 Omid Majidpour (International Business Administration) is a member of the "Best International Delegation" at the Harvard Model United Nations.

1 February

Christine Otten becomes the new writer in residence.

1 February

8 Jelle Jolles appointed as Professor of Brain Behaviour and Education.

1 January

Peter Nijkamp takes up his post as University Professor.

12 January

19 Mirjam van Veen Calvin Week opens.

23 February

Historical Documentation Centre for Dutch Protestantism receives a grant of €30,000 for its Heritage of War programme.

24 February

Thijl Sunier and Mattijs van de Port take up the first professorial chair dedicated to Islam in Europe (VISOR).

27 February

With student intake up 15 per cent, VU University is the fastest growing Dutch university.

9 January

Electoral Compass develops website for Israeli general election.

16 March

Anne Willem Omta (Theoretical Biology) awarded NWO Rubicon grant.

26 March

9

Gijs Wuite (Molecular Biophysics) inducted into the KNAW Young Academy.

1 April

32

Omid Majidpour wins Echo Award for the most outstanding ethnic-minority university student in the Netherlands.

23 April

Historical Documentation Centre for Dutch Protestantism launches *Het Gereformeerden Boek*, a popular guide to the Dutch Reformed tradition.

7 May

Guest lecture by Prof. Pieter van Vollenhoven.

Sierd Cloetingh joins the Scientific Council of the European Research Council.

26 April

Annual Zuidas Run.

14 April

Rienk van Grondelle (Biophysics) appointed KNAW Academy Professor.

9

27 March

Dorret Boomsma (Biological Psychology) contributes to an article in *Science*.

16 April

VU University Fund for Academic Freedom welcomes two Iraqi guest researchers.

12 May

Recording of the TV programme *Nova College Tour*, with guest Deputy Prime Minister Wouter Bos.

12 May

Rector Lex Bouter and Minister for Development Co-operation Bert Koenders sign declaration of intent to finance project for South-African students.

13 May

VU University Twitter launched.

20 April

Danone Institute grant for Department of Clinical Neuropsychology and VUmc.

29 May
Calvin Cantata performed at the Westerkerk, Amsterdam.

10 June
Albert Feilzer
Topping off ceremony for the ACTA building.

18 June
Heidi Dahles (Organisational Anthropology) awarded NWO grant.

19 - 20 June
Conference: The Ends of Development.

1 July
Dorret Boomsma (Biological Psychology) wins Dr Hendrik Muller Prize for Behavioural and Social Sciences.

2 July
Franc van Nunen
VU Quarter partnership agreement signed with the City of Amsterdam.

7 July
Josho Brouwers (Archaeology) and Jorn Bruggeman (Theoretical Biology) awarded NWO Rubicon grants.

8 July
Ben Spiecker (Theory and Research in Education) receives Kuhmerker Career Award.

4 June
Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende opens Zijlstra Centre for Public Control and Governance.

2 June
"Talent to the Top" Charter signed.

28 May
Gijs Wuite (Molecular Biophysics) unravels the mechanics of so-called viral capsids.

19 June
Dorly Deeg (Epidemiology of Ageing) wins FEDERA Medical Science Prize.

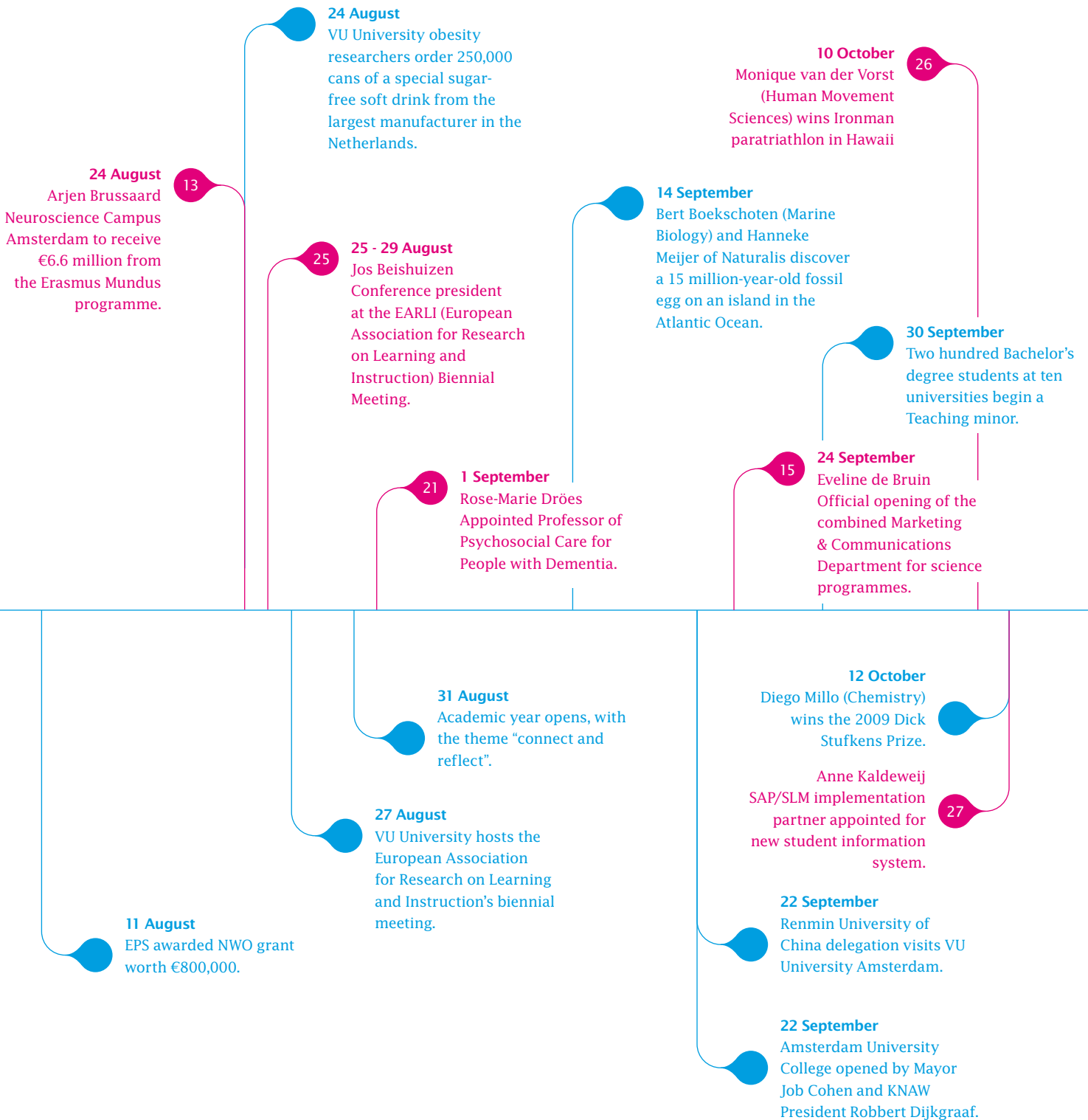
9 July
Romano Orru (Organic Chemistry) and colleagues synthesise eight organic building blocks into one complex molecule.

18 June
Rienk van Grondelle
Awarded €720,000 TOP grant.

10 July
Henk Scholten (Spatial Economics) is first ever Dutch winner of an ESRI Lifetime Achievement Award.

21 July
Irene Costera Meijer (Journalism) awarded Netherlands Press Fund grant.

22 July
Chen Fliesher (Management & Organisation Studies), Raphie Hayat (Economics), Katja Iachina (Genetics) and Babak Mahdavian Delavary (Molecular Cell Biology and Immunology) awarded Mozaiek grants for young ethnic-minority researchers.



20 October
Sir Timothy Berners-Lee
receives an honorary
doctorate.

20 October
Irma Mooi-Reçi (Social
Research Methodology)
receives the Junior Societal
Impact Award.

20 October
Henk Vroom (Theology)
receives the Senior Societal
Impact Award.

3 November
NWO awards Veni grants to
eight recent PhD graduates
from VU University.

13 November
European Research Council
awards Advanced Grant
to Erik Verhoef (Transport
Economics) and to Gary
Marks and Liesbet Hooghe
(Political Science).

17 November
Arianna Betti (Philosophy)
is inducted into the KNAW
Young Academy.

17 November
World Wide Web
Foundation to work
with VU University on
regreening initiatives in
Africa.

1 November
Prof. Jan Passchier
inaugurated as Dean of the
Faculty of Psychology and
Education.

15 December
Monique van
der Vorst voted
Netherlands'
Disabled Athlete
of 2009.

15 December
Three-year
contract signed
with De Acht
Foundation to train
top-level athletes
as rowers.

29 October
New NESDA depression and
anxiety disorder website
goes live.

28 October
Centre for Higher Education
Development rankings:
Psychology and Economics
rated "excellent".

26 October
Elsa van de Loo (Law)
elected as Dutch youth
representative to the
United Nations.

20 October
Bust of Willem Hovy
unveiled.

20 October
Hans Akkermans
Founders' Day symposium:
the World Wide Web and
Social Development.

28 November
Peter Heutink (VUmc)
receives the Princess
Beatrix Fund's Scientific
Research Prize for his work
on Parkinson's disease.

12 December
VU University
student rowing club
Okeanos wins five
races, including
three Dutch titles, at
the national indoor
championships.

12 December
Federica Pasquotto
(Mathematics) is awarded
an NWO MEERVOUD
programme grant for
female researchers.

24 November
NWO awards Vidi grants to
nine leading VU University
researchers: three in the
Faculty of Sciences, two
in Law, three in Earth and
Life Sciences and one in
Psychology and Education.



Jelle Jolles
1 February
Appointment as
Professor of Brain,
Behaviour and
Education.

8



Gijs Wuite
26 March
Inducted into
the KNAW Young
Academy.

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Mirjam van Veen
12 January
Calvin Week opens.



19



32

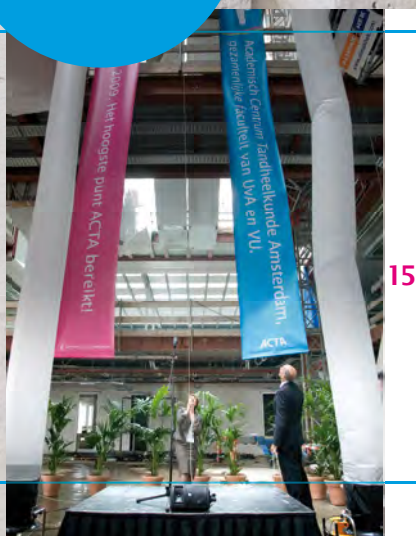
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1 April
Echo Award for the
most outstanding
ethnic-minority
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the Netherlands.

Rienk van Grondelle
14 April
Appointed KNAW
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29

Albert Feilzer
10 June
Topping off ceremony
for the ACTA building.



15

2 July
VU Quarter
partnership agreement
signed with the City of
Amsterdam.



14

Irene Costera Meijer
21 July
Awarded Netherlands
Press Fund grant.



32

Arjen Brussaard
24 August
Neuroscience Campus
Amsterdam to receive
€ 6.6 million from
the Erasmus Mundus
programme.



13

fotografie: Eveline de Bruin



15

Eveline de Bruin
24 September
Official opening of the
combined Marketing
& Communication
Department
for science
programmes.

Rose-Marie Dröes
1 September
Appointed Professor of
Psychosocial Care for
People with
Dementia.



21

fotografie: Freda Dröes

Jos Beishuizen
25-29 August
Conference president
at the European
Association for
Research on Learning
and Instruction
Biennial Meeting.

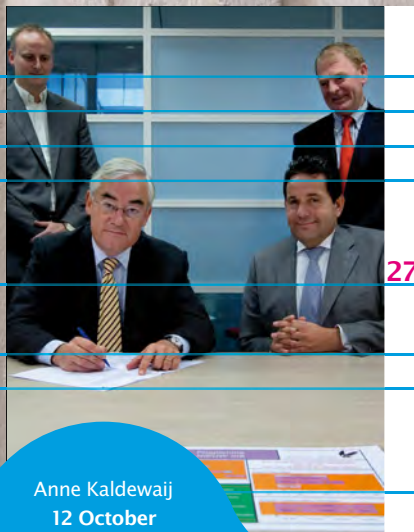


25



Jesse van der Lee
25 September
ied al-fitr.

33



Anne Kaldewaij
12 October
implementation
partner appointed for
a new student
system.

27



Hans Akkermans
20 October
Symposium: the World
Wide Web and Social
Development.

7



Frans Kamsteeg
19 October
Diversity workshop,
Mafikeng in
South-Africa.

33



20

Henk Vroom
20 October
Wins Senior Societal
Impact Award.



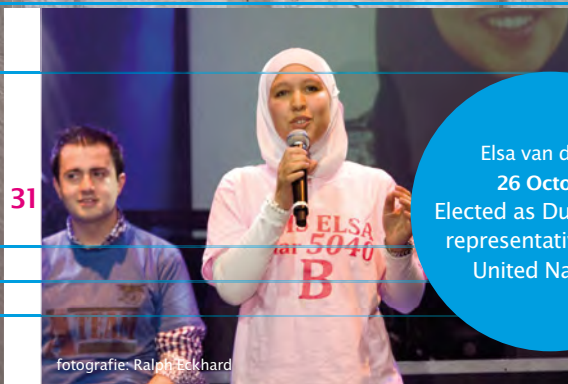
27

Hans Koot
28 October
Centre for
Higher Education
Development rankings:
Psychology and
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15 December
Voted the Netherlands'
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26 October
Elected as Dutch youth
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fotografie: Ralph Eckhard

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Introduction

VU University Amsterdam is a leading European research university. With almost 23,000 students, about 4,700 staff and twelve faculties, we are a modern organization at the cutting edge of academic higher education. Yet our distinctive origins still shine through in our unique characteristics: a fundamental esteem for personal principles, a deep-seated appreciation of diversity, active social engagement and freedom from ideology or dogma. Our core values – inspiring, innovative and involved – are a direct product of that background.

The “Vrije Universiteit” was established in 1880 by the statesman and theologian Abraham Kuyper as the first Dutch university free of state and church interference. Instead, thousands of ordinary people contributed to make the project a success. To this day, that heritage fuels our drive to excel and our closeness to the society in which we are rooted. We seek quality in education through close personal contact and supervision within a community of learners, whilst allowing ample scope for personal development and expression. Students and academic staff work closely together in pursuit of new knowledge, with investigative work as a key part of the educational process from beginning to end. Our students are challenged to ask critical questions, to tackle problems and to place what they are learning in a wider philosophical, ethical and social context.

VU University Amsterdam today

Exactly 130 years after its foundation, VU University Amsterdam is a successful, respected centre of academic endeavour and scientific investigation. In our research, education and other activities, we are committed to serving society. We therefore seek to attract talented, ambitious students from all sections of the Dutch and international community, training them to be the educated citizens of tomorrow: people with the academic grounding needed to pass on a better world to the next generation. Since personal development is as important a part of the academic experience as the acquisition of skills in the classroom or laboratory, we also offer our learners a wide range of cultural, sporting and social provision.

In research, we view the acquisition of knowledge as a means to benefit the greater good. In the past year we have continued to develop our interdisciplinary approach to this task, opening new research institutes and developing the existing ones so that they bring greater focus and mass to the investigative process. Homing in on key areas as varied as neurosciences and the environment, networks in the broadest sense of the term and education itself, the institutes bring together scholars from different academic backgrounds, allowing them to approach research issues from new perspectives as well as concentrating the capacity needed to attract greater funding and to use it in an efficient, effective way.

The core tasks of VU University Medical Center (VUmc) are patient care, scientific research and medical training, with its position as a first-rate teaching hospital reflected in its ability to treat patients with rare conditions and the intensive, complex care it can provide for those who need it. Work that provides a much-needed public service for Amsterdam and the wider region.

Academic, scientific and medical breakthroughs only gain genuine value when they are put to good use in the wider world. For this reason, VU University Amsterdam vigorously promotes knowledge valorization and technology transfer – by helping our scientists to turn their discoveries into commercially viable products and forging alliances that give their work a public platform.

All this activity makes our compact campus a busy, vibrant place. But sometimes a crowded one. So, despite the economic downturn, we have been pushing ahead with plans to expand and improve. Agreements signed in 2009 have brought completion of the new “VU Quarter” a step closer. This will be an entirely new kind of campus, placing the university much closer to the community it serves. By incorporating housing, offices, commercial premises and recreational provision alongside our own state-of-the-art research and education facilities, it will position them in more open, interactive setting.

Meanwhile, we have been further strengthening our ties with the City of Amsterdam, other academic institutions in the region and our business partners. For example, we share – and are an integral part of – the local authority’s vision of the Dutch capital as a knowledge hotspot, an international commercial hub and a centre of sporting excellence. Two exciting joint initiatives with the University of Amsterdam, the Amsterdam

Graduate School of Sciences and Amsterdam University College, opened their doors for the first time in 2009, whilst a third – the new home of the Academic Centre for Dentistry in Amsterdam, located on the VU University campus – is nearing completion.

As these developments hint at, VU University Amsterdam is a key player in an intricate web of academic, scientific, social, economic, technological and political networks. Just as the university itself can be viewed as a complex network. In the future, moreover, these are only going to become even more important. A phenomenon that we welcome wholeheartedly, because networks emancipate people, build communities and create knowledge – all goals at the heart of our mission as an institution. For that reason, in 2009 VU University Amsterdam decided to place an emphasis upon networks and our role in them, under the slogan “connect and reflect”.

Strategic themes

VU University Amsterdam is committed to be inspiring, innovative and involved. To ensure that we hold true to these core values as we pass through a period of challenges and transition, we have identified five strategic themes that pervade everything we do. Defining our position as a leading academic centre for today’s world, they provide us with the focus we need to pursue our ambitions with absolute resolution. They emphasize our commitment to quality and innovation, our relevance in contemporary society and our forthright approach. And, last but not least, they explain where we stand for all those who come into contact with us: current, future and past students, our own teaching,

research and ancillary staff and their colleagues throughout the world, fellow institutions, public and private partners, funding organizations, every level of government, people of influence in all sections of the community and, of course, the general public.

Research leader

Ours is a broad-based institution at which top researchers can excel. This is demonstrated by our high placing in respected independent rankings and by outstanding inspection reports, by our consistent ability to secure funding from a variety of sources and by the many awards our staff and students win. It is also clear from our ability to attract research talent from all over the world. Interdisciplinary research institutes transcend the traditional boundaries between faculties, encouraging outstanding investigative minds to focus upon those areas where the most exciting breakthroughs are waiting to be made.

A campus on the move

Strategically located in Amsterdam's expanding Zuidas district, the VU University Amsterdam campus is – literally and figuratively – the hub of a strong academic, social and commercial network. In turn, our local, national and international partners help to forge our dynamic research and learning environment. As the university continues to develop and expand, so too will its campus. The new VU Quarter will integrate us even more into the wider community, creating a unique combination of commercial enterprise, academic endeavour and social life with genuine global allure.

Serving society

Born out of a community initiative, VU University Amsterdam has always been sensitive to issues affecting the man and woman in the street. Even in our most fundamental research, we focus upon those aspects which resonate in society at large. We encourage critical, rational reflection so that our researchers appreciate the full relevance of their work, both to the international scientific community and in the wider world. This is reinforced by our governance structure, based upon a public association with thousands of members – stakeholders in the modern university alongside our traditional grass-roots support – through whom we maintain a real and direct link with the people we seek to benefit.

Excellent education

VU University Amsterdam has a long tradition of emancipation through education. Today, a significant proportion of our students are first-generation academics and many are drawn from ethnic minorities. By providing a well-organized educational environment in which academic rigour is combined with flexibility and freedom of choice, we offer all learners the opportunity to develop their abilities to the full. And we are proud to give our most talented and ambitious students the space they need to excel. Our community of learners is characterized by enquiry-based learning, intensive tutor-student interaction, a personal approach and wide participation in relevant extracurricular activities. This produces graduates with both the academic qualifications and the personal maturity to play a meaningful role in the world.

A diverse community

A founding principle of VU University Amsterdam in 1880, respect for diversity has never been more relevant than in today's multicultural, multiethnic, multifaith society. We regard diversity as a positive opportunity, so we deliberately bring together people from different backgrounds and with different beliefs. By facilitating interaction between personal interpretations and convictions in a spirit of openness, we allow new paths to be trodden and new forms of understanding to take shape. Science and learning can never be value-free, so for us ethical reflection is as important as empirical results.

Review of 2009

Many people, projects and activities throughout the university epitomize the aspirations underlying our strategic themes. For the annual review we have selected just a few of those individuals whose work and achievements in 2009 embody the qualities enshrined in each. They describe their success or progress in their own words, whilst prominent figures in the theme's unfolding story look ahead to 2010 and beyond.

The review highlights key facts and figures about VU University Amsterdam in 2009. In addition, you will find a historical timeline.

Research leader

VU University Amsterdam is a European leader in academic, scientific and medical research in a broad range of disciplines. And a pioneer in new approaches to fundamental and applied research, across traditional dividing lines. Now numbering eleven, our interdisciplinary research institutes continue to produce innovative work of high professional quality and great societal relevance. As forums where scientists from very different backgrounds are able to meet and interact on equal terms, to share their know-how and combine their strengths, the institutes provide the focus and mass needed to attract research funding from a variety of sources, including the major European competitive programmes, and to push back the boundaries of human knowledge. Although many have been formed only comparatively recently, they are already establishing an international reputation for their pioneering work, comprehensive networks, excellent facilities and successful PhD and research Master's programmes.

The most recent institute to be formally inaugurated, in April 2009, is the Neuroscience Campus Amsterdam. Dedicated to better understanding the functioning – and malfunctioning – of the human brain and nervous system, this organization brings together more than four hundred specialists, ranging

from clinicians to geneticists, psychologists, biophysicists and statisticians, to apply an integrative, “molecule to bedside” approach to neuroscientific research.

Also very much centre stage in the past year has been the Network Institute. With networks identified as a key theme at VU University Amsterdam for 2009 and beyond, it has been showcasing its vision of “the connected world”, the product of a research matrix encompassing everything from internet technology to social communication networks. The highlight of the Institute's year was the acceptance of an honorary doctorate by Sir Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the world wide web.

Meanwhile, numerous researchers across the university have confirmed our outstanding investigative credentials by securing impressive funding packages and other honours. They include political scientists Gary Marks and Liesbet Hooghe, who received an European Research Council (ERC) Advanced Grant worth some €2.5 million for their work on multilevel governance. Transport economist Erik Verhoef has been awarded a similar Grant for his project on optimising policies for transport.





"Our research is very close to what Sir Tim Berners-Lee wants the web to achieve, so there are personal connections."



Hans Akkermans

Africa in the web

Scientific Director, Network Institute

With “connect and reflect” as theme of VU University Amsterdam throughout 2009, it was only fitting that the guest of honour at its Founder’s Day celebrations in October was the man behind the most influential network of all time: Sir Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the world wide web. After accepting an honorary doctorate, he announced that he would be joining forces with the university’s Network Institute in an alliance to help regreen regions of sub-Saharan Africa affected by encroaching desertification as a result of climate change.

For Hans Akkermans, Scientific Director of the Network Institute and one of the organizers of the day’s events, it was an honour that Sir Tim was willing to accept the honorary doctorate. “As an iconic figure, he’s been offered degrees and prizes all the time. But he accepts very few of them. Why make an exception for VU University Amsterdam? One reason is that he does know us quite well. Our institute, and the Department of Computer Sciences in particular, has been doing a lot of top-class work related to the development of new semantic standards that can handle web intelligence. That research is very close to what



Jelle Jolles
Appointment as
Professor of Brain,
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1 February

Sir Tim wants the web to achieve, so there are personal connections.”

“Another reason is that he is launching a new World Wide Web Foundation, to enhance access to the technology he originated. That tied in perfectly with the theme of the symposium we organized on Founder’s Day: the web and social development. Although 1.5 billion people already have access to and are benefiting from the web, sharing information and communicating with one another, about 5 billion still do not. We, like Sir Tim, want to help bring as many of them as possible into the loop.”

According to Akkermans, the Web Alliance for Regreening Africa is a perfect example of this ambition: empowerment through networking. The Web Foundation, the Network Institute, the Centre for International Cooperation, and local partners are about to jointly support grassroots initiatives to assist farmers in the region with the cultivation of previously barren land. “Using the technology, hundreds of thousands of them can work together, share knowledge and obtain information. We need to develop content and give training, of course, but perhaps the biggest issue is how to provide access. Luckily, these days even remote villages without electricity often have mobile phones. So they’re necessarily going to be an important platform. Then there’s the fact that many of the older farmers, especially, are illiterate, so we need to use speech-based content and alternatives to text. Fortunately, Web Science is an area our institute is a leader in.”

Established in 2008, the interdisciplinary Network Institute brings together 150 researchers from three VU University faculties – Sciences, Social Sciences and Economics and Business Administration – to investigate all aspects of “the networked world” and the people, organizations

and technologies which are part of it.

“... we are trying to build bridges between science and the practical field.”

Jelle Jolles

Brain gain

The university gained an important new research focus in February 2009, with the appointment of neuropsychologist Jelle Jolles as Professor of Brain, Behaviour and Education in the Faculty of Psychology and Education (FPP) and director of AZIRE, the interdisciplinary institute for research in education. In his previous post at Maastricht University, Jolles was director of the Brain & Behaviour research institute and head of the prestigious Centre for Brain & Learning. With his move to Amsterdam, its centre of gravity has also shifted to VU University.

Combining fundamental and applied research, Jolles explains, at the heart of the centre’s work are such concepts as brain and learning, Lifelong Learning and neurocognitive development. “At all stages of life, from early childhood to old age, there are individual differences between how the brain develops or degenerates. Why do some children pick up certain talents better than others with the same IQ? Why is it that some people enjoy good cognitive health in later life, while others do not? In answering questions like that, we are trying to build bridges between fundamental science and the practical field.”

After 23 years at Maastricht, that was one of the main reasons Jolles was attracted to VU University. “This is a great institution with good researchers and exciting possibilities for co-operation.



Rienk van Grondelle
Appointed KNAW
Academy Professor.
14 April



Gijs Wuite
Inducted into the KNAW
Young Academy.
26 March

Mine is a highly interdisciplinary field, so an initiative like AZIRE is just what I need to bring greater cohesion to the work I oversee. What's more, this university has excellent extramural networks. Societal partnerships, one of its real strengths, are vital to my work. Both physically and psychologically, it's great to work in Amsterdam. In addition, the other universities and educational institutions in the region are nearby, as is the centre of political power in The Hague. This is of importance for our ambition to develop the 'Brain & education' domain."

Rienk van Grondelle

Green switches

As leader of one of the world's foremost research groups in photosynthesis, VU University Amsterdam biophysicist Professor Rienk van Grondelle gained dual recognition in 2009. KNAW, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, awarded him the prestigious title of Academy Professor and his team secured a TOP grant worth €720,000 from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). That will enable the group to continue its groundbreaking investigations into the early stages of the process whereby plants convert sunlight into stores of energy-rich substances.

"We're looking at a very specific aspect of the process," says Van Grondelle. "In normal sunlight, a plant actually receives too much energy. Enough, in fact, to destroy the entire photosynthesis system. To prevent that, plants have developed a mechanism to convert the excess into heat, which is then dissipated harmlessly." Van Grondelle's group has already discovered how that happens, through a phenomenon called membrane switching. "Now we want to find out exactly what that

process involves. How does a botanical system 'decide' how much of the energy it receives to use and how much to discard?"

"Our group has started working with teams at the VU University Medical Center to apply that knowledge to potential medical uses."

To study a process that takes mere picoseconds, the multidisciplinary group is also pioneering the use of very advanced laser spectroscopy techniques. "Only laser pulses can capture an event that fast," says Van Grondelle. "But the same techniques have the potential to perform fantastic microscopy, in an entirely new way. Not just with plants, but also on other living tissue. So our group has started working with teams at the VU University Medical Center to apply that knowledge to potential medical uses."

Gijs Wuite

Measuring molecules

Biophysicist Gijs Wuite was inducted into the KNAW Young Academy in March 2009, becoming VU University Amsterdam's eighth member of this elite national group of youthful scientists. He is conducting pioneering interdisciplinary work at the cutting edge of the natural sciences. "I'm applying techniques and methods from physics to better understand biological systems," he says. "We know a lot about the mechanics behind those systems, but not about the underlying numbers."

Using optical "micro-tweezers" it has developed itself, Wuite's group is now able to grasp individual organic molecules such as DNA in order to take precise measurements from them. They can then build predictive models in collaboration

with mathematicians and theoretical physicists. “My basic work – quantifying biology – is pretty fundamental,” says Wuite. “But the ultimate aim of the research is of vital practical importance in



“The intellectual level is high and the organization has real impact: decision-makers listen to what we have to say.”

teaching us more about how cells work, and in particular what happens when things go wrong. So that we can better deal with genetic mutations, damage to DNA and the effects of medicines, for instance.”

The Young Academy is a branch of KNAW, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, specifically for high flyers in the first decade of their professional research career. Wuite, 37, is already an active participant. “The members are all remarkable scientists,” he says. “There’s a lot of fascinating interaction, with people working in other disciplines as well as my own. The intellectual level is high and the organization has real impact: decision-makers listen to what we have to say. It’s a great club to be part of.”

Facing the future

Brenda Penninx

Depression and anxiety disorders affect an estimated one in three people at some time in their lives. To help determine what factors influence the development and long-term prognosis of these conditions, the Netherlands Study of Depression and Anxiety (NESDA) has

been tracking nearly 3000 patients since 2004. Coordinating a consortium of academic and mental health institutions, the project’s chief researcher is Brenda Penninx, Professor of Psychiatric Epidemiology at the VU University Medical Center.

“Depression and anxiety disorders are particularly complex diseases, involving psychological, sociological and neurobiological as well as genetic factors. The project so far has been a fine example of multidisciplinary and interinstitutional cooperation. But that broad approach means that we are only now beginning to find answers to our questions. We have already published more than forty scientific papers, all based upon our initial measurements. They have revealed first results ranging from the genetic aspects to the role of childhood trauma in depression and anxiety, and from the importance of biological stress systems in these disorders to their disabling consequences.”

“Our main future goal is to look at how such disorders unfold over time. Over the next couple of years we want to compare subjects with different course outcomes, to see whether that reveals useful predictive indicators that could result in tools for clinical practice. There are plenty of indications that depression and anxiety disorders have physical as well as mental effects, but we need more in-depth research to show exactly why these consequences exist. And then there is the major public health impact of these disorders, in terms of job performance, their societal cost and their associated social problems. If we can help do something about that by gaining relevant knowledge, then the funding we receive represents an excellent investment for the future.”

A campus on the move

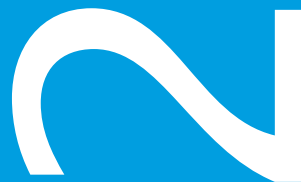
The VU University campus is a stimulating academic hotspot at the heart of one of Amsterdam's most dynamic districts, the Zuidas. Compact and accessible, over the years the characteristics of this existing site have facilitated a unique creative synergy between the diverse research and educational activities hosted there. Developments in 2009 have maintained that trend, whilst at the same time our aspirations for future expansion and innovation have come closer to fulfilment.

In April, the VU University Medical Center opened its new Clinical Training Centre to provide medical students with a simulated setting in which to prepare for their first patient contacts and clinical interventions. After an initial course introducing them to anamnesis, physical examination and the medical thought process, students return to the centre on a regular basis to train in additional skills.

Another medical facility has also been taking shape on the campus. Due to open in September 2010, the architecturally striking new Academic Centre for Dentistry in Amsterdam (ACTA) will be a cutting-edge training, research and treatment facility for the combined dental faculties of VU University and the University of Amsterdam.

Plans for a huge multiple-use urban campus in the Zuidas, the so-called "VU Quarter", have been progressing steadily. The partnership agreement signed in July has formalized our working relationship with the City of Amsterdam, paving the way for the university's education and research facilities on the site to be developed alongside buildings for public and private use: housing, offices, retail outlets and so on. The result will be one of the most modern campuses in Europe, seamlessly integrating state-of-the-art premises for science and study with residential, commercial, cultural and leisure provision.

Nor has recreation been forgotten, with VU University last year agreeing to play a prominent role in Amsterdam's aim to become a European sporting powerhouse – and perhaps even an Olympic city once again. As part of the city's "Sports Axis" initiative, the university intends to build upon its established strength in sport, exercise and health sciences to establish a national sport sciences centre on the campus.





“The aim of
the Neuroscience
Campus Amsterdam is
to study brain disorders
from molecule to
bedside.”



Arjen Brussaard

We care about the brain

Neuroscience Campus Amsterdam

By way of introduction, Professor Arjen Brussaard shows off his EU plaque: "This institute participates in the Erasmus Mundus joint doctorate programme." As scientific and managerial director of the Neuroscience Campus Amsterdam, he plans to hang it at the entrance to his office soon. "There are only thirteen of these in existence so far, after all. We're the sole Dutch coordinating institute to have one, and the only health sciences network anywhere in Europe. It's a sort of quality mark and certifies our organization to train PhD researchers in a joint degree setting. It's also a positive signal to the university administrators and faculty deans, to prove to them that they've invested in the right place."

Impressive though the plaque is, even more important is the €6.6 million of EU funding which comes with it. That will enable the five universities of the European Neuroscience Campus Network to pay for fifty PhD researchers over the next five years. Uniquely, they will rotate between the participating institutions, reading for joint degrees awarded by two of them.



VU Quarter partnership agreement signed with the City of Amsterdam.
2 July

The grant comes from Erasmus Mundus, the European Commission programme to encourage academic mobility. For Arjen Brussaard, there could not have been a better start for his Neuroscience Campus Amsterdam. Bringing together researchers at VU University Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center with a mission to understand the brain and its disease mechanisms, this new interdisciplinary institute was founded during the summer of 2008. Around the same time, Arjen Brussaard started persuading partner

institutions in France, Germany, Switzerland and Portugal to form the European network. "We have to live off subsidies," he explains, "and it was clear to me that Brussels was the place to get them. Only Europe has the kind of resources needed to pay for the ambitious work we want to do. But to secure a share of that, you have to forge a strong network with the same strategic outlook. Fortunately, everybody I approached said yes. This award represents a benchmark, showing that our image of ourselves and our ambitions is accurate."

"The aim of the Neuroscience Campus Amsterdam is to study brain disorders from molecule to bedside. A good place to start is genetics and molecular neurosciences. The hope is that, within the next five to ten years, we will really come to understand genetic vulnerability to particular neurological conditions. In other words, to what extent diseases of the brain are hereditary. That's a key component of their biological mechanisms. For example, are there genes that -when mutated- may cause Alzheimer's disease? And, if so, what are they? Right now, we can explain about 35 per cent of cases. At least some of the Erasmus Mundus investigators will be trying to unravel the other 65 per cent."

Franc van Nunen

VU Quarter partnership

Plans for a new kind of campus came a step closer to realization in July 2009, when a partnership agreement with the City of Amsterdam was

"... our latest plans envisage buildings we can convert to other uses or lease out commercially if need patterns change."

signed. The so-called "VU Quarter" will be a lively and open academic space, and an integral part of the developing Zuidas business district. According to Franc van Nunen, Director of Property Services for the project, that ambition makes close cooperation with the local authority vital.

"This latest agreement," he says, "sets out how the university and the city are going to work together and how that relationship is organized. By sealing their partnership, both parties have expressed their commitment to make the VU Quarter happen. Signing the agreement has enabled us to start planning in detail. The first building on the new site, a replacement for the current Faculty of Sciences and Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences, is scheduled to open its doors by 2016."

Especially in the current economic climate, one key aspect of the recent agreement is the flexibility it allows the university. "It is difficult to predict how such factors as student numbers and demand for research capacity will evolve so far in the future," says Van Nunen. "So our latest plans envisage buildings we can convert to other uses or lease out commercially if need patterns change. And the mixed nature of the VU Quarter will facilitate that."



Eveline de Bruin
Official opening of the
combined Marketing &
Communications Department
for science programmes.
24 September



Albert Feilzer
Topping off ceremony
for the ACTA building.
10 June

Situated adjacent to the present campus, the VU Quarter will combine education and research with commercial premises, housing, culture and leisure facilities in a single complex, making the university the dominant element in a new kind of dynamic metropolitan environment.

Eveline de Bruin

Selling science

"As for the faculties' scientists, our aim is to tell the world about the results of their research, as widely and as effectively as possible."

"Students don't think in terms of faculties," says Eveline de Bruin, head of the new combined Marketing and Communications Department for the so-called "beta" faculties: Sciences (FEW) and Earth and Life Sciences (FALW). "They are guided by whatever palette of courses interests them."

It was that insight which prompted FEW and FALW to start coordinating their student recruitment and publicity activities. And in 2009, after two years of ever closer collaboration, finally resulted in the formal merger of their M&C operations.

The new organization has been launched with ambitious objectives. "On the education side," says De Bruin, "we want to make a significant contribution to increasing the number of new students. Moreover, by providing the right information, we intend to make sure that those newcomers are suitable and motivated. Another goal is to make their transition from secondary to higher education as smooth as possible."

"As for the faculties' scientists, our aim is to tell the world about the results of their research, as widely and as effectively as possible. What are we good at and what are we really outstanding in?

That's the challenge we've set ourselves for the future: raising the profile of FEW and FALW, and so making our contribution to the positive image of the university as a whole."

"That's something we're only able to do thanks to the quality of the people who work here. On the one hand we have science experts who are able to provide prospective students with excellent substantive advice to help them choose the right programme. And on the other there are the communications specialists, who can translate that core information into a message with impact – one which reaches and appeals to the right audience: the successful VU University alumni of the future."

Albert Feilzer

Drilling new ground

With the new Academic Centre for Dentistry in Amsterdam (ACTA) building approaching completion on the VU University campus, its dean, Albert Feilzer, is looking forward to a new era. "After many years at remote and dispersed sites," he says, "we intend to make the most of the move to introduce some important innovations."

The new location will combine state-of-the-art research and patient facilities with the latest training aids. "They include a drilling simulator designed by a maker of flight simulators," says Feilzer, "so that students can learn the basic skills more efficiently. We will also be able to take a lead in digital dentistry, which uses advanced imaging techniques and internet technologies to replace traditional casts. That's faster, more accurate, hygienic and environmentally friendly."

"It's great that we're going to be on the VU University Amsterdam campus, and especially

that the new centre is so close to the teaching hospital. That will shorten lines of communication and should enable us to intensify our research collaboration with other departments, as Biology, Immunology, Dermatology and Orthopaedics. I see fantastic opportunities ahead."

Designed by Benthem Crouwel Architects, the new building was topped off in June 2009 and is due



"By working more closely with other people here at the VU, I hope to be able to see things from a new perspective."

to enter full service in September 2010. ACTA is unique in that it combines the only two dedicated dental faculties in the Netherlands, those of VU University Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam, under one roof. Research, teaching and treatment facilities are fully integrated, and Feilzer serves as dean of both faculties. With 900 students and 500 staff, ACTA is one of the biggest dentistry education and training centres in the world.

Facing the future

Peter Beek

As part of its ambition to bring the 2028 Olympic Games to Amsterdam, the local authority has identified a so-called "Sports Axis" on the south side of the city. This axis is to be developed into a high-profile hub for both competitive and recreational sporting activities. VU University Amsterdam is pivotal in this project, both as a player and as a venue,

says Peter Beek, Dean of the Faculty of Human Movement Sciences

"There is already a concentration of sports facilities in a corridor running right along the university. The City of Amsterdam is now looking at how to integrate these facilities more effectively and strengthen the infrastructure, with the aim of creating an appealing environment for sport activities at all levels. As a university and medical centre, we have a key role to play in its development. The Faculty of Human Movement Sciences, the Research Institute MOVE and the EMGO+ Institute for Health and Care Research are already front runners in sport, exercise and health sciences. Both at the top end – improving the performance of talented and world-class athletes – and for the general population, encouraging them to stay healthy through sport."

"Our plan is to establish a national sport sciences centre on the campus, which I hope will be closely linked to the new Centre for Elite Sport and Education in Amsterdam. That's where promising sportsmen and women are trained and educated to reach the top. We want to ensure that they receive the best possible support, by applying scientific know-how to improve training and performance. At the same time, we want to inspire as many other people as possible to participate in sport."

"The new centre will maximize the university's traditional strengths in this area. That should benefit the whole of society in a context with an iconic value for the city and the nation, thereby fuelling our dream to bring the Olympic Games back to Amsterdam."

Serving society

VU University Amsterdam exists to serve society. Inherent in our tradition as the product of a social movement, that is a commitment we take as seriously today as we have done throughout our history. Whatever field our researchers are active in, however fundamental and apparently abstract their work might seem, all are encouraged to consider its relevance to the “real world”. Likewise, our students are expected not just to learn their subject but to also to engage positively with the academic community and the wider world. As an institution, too, we are dedicated to active participation in networks of all kinds and at all levels in order that the knowledge we possess be disseminated as widely as possible.

Positive results reinforce our reputation within the academic community and on the public stage. We celebrate our successes. VU University’s Societal Impact Awards spotlight researchers who have substantially enhanced general understanding of their subject, and once again the 2009 winners exemplify that goal. In the junior category, Irma Mooi-Reci of the Faculty of Social Sciences won for her thesis revealing how periods of unemployment and the associated benefit dependency adversely affect later career prospects and earning potential. The recipient of the senior award was theologian Henk Vroom, whose long career has combined ground-breaking academic research

on hermeneutics with active engagement in interreligious dialogue. External recognition of our work in the past year has included a prestigious e-Democracy Award for EU Profiler, a tool developed to orient voters in the European elections by the Electoral Compass team affiliated to the Department of Political Science.

Another key player in our mission to serve society is the Technology Transfer Office (TTO), which helps to oversee the path from academic knowledge or scientific breakthrough to practical application, commercial or otherwise. To do this effectively, it draws upon an extensive network in industry, the financial and legal services sectors and government. Products brought to market with TTO assistance in 2009 range from high-quality expertise in health and safety at work to cultivated human gum tissue for use in transplants.





“Whether
or not we are
churchgoing Calvinists,
much of the way we as a
nation think and believe
are rooted in that
tradition.”



Mirjam van Veen

Contemporary Calvin

Coordinator, Calvin Week

With 2009 designated International Calvin Year to mark the 500th anniversary of the great church reformer's birth, VU University Amsterdam launched the Dutch commemorations with its own Calvin Week in January. A resounding success, says organizer Mirjam van Veen of the Faculty of Theology. "Our tradition makes this the ideal venue for such an event, of course. We are and have long been a world centre of research into the man and his work, and the university holds a vast and unique collection of material related to him. Moreover, it has always sought to highlight religion's role in society."

Although almost half a millennium has passed since the French theologian's ideas first reached the Netherlands, they continue to exert a profound influence over Dutch life, says Van Veen. "In many different ways. Whether or not we are churchgoing Calvinists, much of the way we as a nation think and believe are rooted in that tradition. For centuries it has permeated our politics, our literature and even our music, and it continues to do so. Because of that, I feel that this event came at exactly the right moment."



Henk Vroom
Wins Senior Societal
Impact Award.
20 October

Certainly, it enabled us to compile a varied programme with great contemporary resonance.”

The week’s events ranged from a political symposium, with participants including Deputy Prime Minister André Rouvoet, to a day of lectures and workshops devoted to what the organization dubbed “the C-Factor”: Calvinism’s impact upon Dutch culture, with topics covered ranging from economics to the press, heritage to film.

Amongst the highlights for Van Veen, though, were some of the less formal activities. “I really enjoyed the walk through Calvinist Amsterdam,” she says. “As well as the obvious churches, we saw all sorts of monuments and social initiatives. It was fascinating to see just how much this religious movement has left its mark on the city. There was also a great concert on the Wednesday evening. Few people today realize that Calvin had a huge impact upon the history of music, encouraging a period of great creativity and innovation in the 16th century. He effectively democratized church music, allowing the congregation to join in and so play an active part in the service for the first time. In that sense, as in many others, he was something of a revolutionary who tapped into the spirit of his times. Perhaps that explains his success.”

Thanks to the variety of events on offer, more than 2000 people took part in Calvin Week. “A very satisfactory result,” says Van Veen. “All the more so because they were a good cross-section of the population. Not just committed Calvinists, but many with a broad interest in our cultural history and the role religion has played in that. From my perspective, it’s great to see that people still want to explore the religious roots and sources which have shaped the Netherlands of today.”

Henk Vroom

Religion with impact

The winner of the university’s 2009 Senior Societal Impact Award is theologian Henk Vroom, for the wide-ranging contribution his work has made to political, cultural and ecclesiastical dialogue in the Netherlands over more than three decades. In particular, his studies of Biblical hermeneutics – the interpretation of scripture – have reverberated through the world’s Reformed churches. He has also become a leading figure

“Of course it’s important to see what aspects we share, but it’s at least as important to know which aspects we have difficulty with.”

in the interreligious dialogue in the Netherlands, leading the Encounter of Traditions research group at VU University and serving as coordinator of the Centre for Islamic Theology since it was founded in 2005.

For Vroom, that dialogue is as fascinating as it is serious: “If the meeting of faiths comes down to no more than eating couscous and listening to world music, then it’s just tourist theology. Simply looking for the similarities between Buddhism and Christianity or between Christianity and Islam is so boring. I want more. I want to know what the world looks like if you’re a Zen Buddhist or if the Koran guides your life. Of course it’s important to see what aspects we share, but it’s at least as important to know which aspects we have difficulty with. When you behave as if there are only similarities, you lose all credibility.”

The Societal Impact Awards are presented annually to one senior and one junior researcher who have made a major impact on the world



Rose-Marie Dröes
Appointed Professor of
Psychosocial Care for
People with Dementia.
1 September



Irene Costera Meijer
Awarded Netherlands
Press Fund grant.
21 July

beyond the university. The judges praised Vroom for transcending any specific religious viewpoint to facilitate the dialogue between faiths – a stance which has contributed greatly to VU University’s positioning as an institution with a broad perspective and clear social relevance.

Rose-Marie Dröes

Care for people with Dementia

“The number of people with dementia is set to more or less double in the next 40 years. We are simply never going to have enough professional

“The important thing is not to write off patients but to find the tools which will enable them to live an active and fulfilling life for as long as possible.”

carers to look after them all. That means we really need to devise alternative forms of support. Assisted technology is one possible answer, so an important part of our research is going to be gaining an insight into concrete needs, coming up with solutions and trying them out.”

As the VU University Medical Center’s new Professor of Psychosocial Care for People with Dementia, Rose-Marie Dröes is keen to find new ways of improving the quality of life for this growing segment of the population and their carers. Whilst colleagues at the hospital’s Alzheimer Centre continue to seek means of preventing and treating the condition, her focus upon alleviating its impact is just as crucial for those affected.

“The repercussions of dementia are very wide-ranging,” she continues. “There are the functional

limitations, of course, but the emotional and social effects are enormous, as well.” For Dröes, the important thing is not to write off patients but to find the tools which will enable them to live an active and fulfilling life for as long as possible. These range from the expanding national network of meeting centres she has pioneered over the past 15 years, where people with dementia and their relatives receive a combination of professional assistance and peer support, to practical technological solutions. “For example, we have developed a multifunctional touch screen that enables patients to stay in contact with their family by a pictophone. It also reminds them to eat lunch or to visit their GP, and even warns them if they’ve left the front door open. An easy-to-operate mobile device with a ‘take me home’ service helps them to find their way back when lost. The challenge now is to investigate if the device really allows people with dementia to remain at home and independent – and happier – for longer.”

Irene Costera Meijer

By the people, for the people

Does so-called “citizen journalism” benefit democracy or threaten it? Is it a valuable source of alternative information or simply a cheap way of producing media content? These are some of the questions being addressed by the five-year research project Rethinking the Value of Journalism in the Digital Age, which has been awarded grant funding worth €139,000 by the Netherlands Press Fund. The study is led by Irene Costera Meijer, Professor of Journalism at VU University Amsterdam since November 2007.

“We are looking at journalism produced by ordinary people but published within a

professional context,” she explains. “What are the dynamics behind their participation? What motivates them? What obstacles and dilemmas do they face? And what do the professionals think?” Current activities include an experiment in the city of Utrecht, where residents of two deprived neighbourhoods are being trained as community reporters for the web and local television. “Our interest,” says Costera Meijer, “is in what local people want them to report. What kind of stories would they like to see? And what impact does the material actually produced have in their neighbourhood? To gather that feedback, we are employing students to survey local residents. So



“People want ‘their own’ newspaper or TV news to portray their communities more accurately.”

for them it’s a sort of research-based education.” Although the project is in early stages, Costera Meijer says that preliminary findings indicate that this kind of participatory reporting has real value at the local level. “It reflects people’s dissatisfaction with the way their lives are covered by traditional journalism. People want ‘their own’ newspaper or TV news to portray their communities more accurately. That stimulates some of them to do the job themselves.”

Facing the future

Bram Pieter Vriens

In a world first, dental researchers affiliated to VU University Amsterdam have succeeded in cultivating gingiva – human gum tissue

– outside the body. The aim is to use the cultivated tissue in transplants and laboratory applications. Spin-off company Mucosa BV’s preparations to bring the product to market have been boosted by its nomination for the prestigious Herman Wijffels Innovation Award. CEO Bram Pieter Vriens explains.

“The challenge with gingiva is that it consists of two layers, an upper and a lower one. What we have managed to do is reproduce that entire structure from a sample of tissue no bigger than a pinhead. We’re still in the early stages, but our initial results were so promising that we have decided to push ahead with commercial development of the product under the name Gingraft. We believe that it has huge clinical potential, in a whole variety of applications. For tissue grafts following the excision of tumours, for example, or to replace receding gums. The technique requires a comparatively simple intervention, avoiding the need to take tissue from a second donor site and all the complications that can involve. And in the lab it could be used to test oral products – prostheses, toothpastes and the like – as a substitute for animal testing.”

“Being nominated for the innovation award is a great acknowledgement of our achievement as a group. But it also recognizes the many others within the university who have worked so well with us in developing this idea. In particular the Technology Transfer Office, which has played a key role in helping us develop Gingraft commercially and provided excellent advice along the way.”

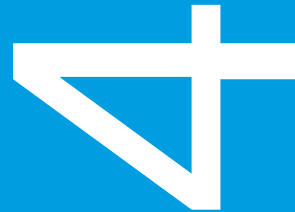
Excellent education

VU University Amsterdam is committed to providing stimulating, well-organized education of very high quality to a diverse student body. Our aim is to equip them with the knowledge and skills they need to become active members of society for the rest of their lives. At the heart of this vision is the “community of learners” concept, which reflects the university’s traditional mission to emancipate through education in a manner tailored to the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century. As members of that community, our students are full participants in the process of their own education from the moment they first arrive on campus. And throughout their studies they are encouraged to pursue their ambitions in order to achieve their full potential.

Confirming the effectiveness of our drive for quality, VU University Amsterdam continues to perform well in international educational league tables. For example, our Psychology and Economics programmes were both classified as “excellent” in the 2009 European rankings published by the Centre for Higher Education Development. High ratings of this kind are sure to assist in student recruitment efforts, especially those at the international level, which were redoubled with the dispatch of a mission to promote the university at higher education fairs in the Far East.

Two long-standing collaborative projects with the University of Amsterdam came to fruition last year. Both the Amsterdam Graduate School of Science (AGSS) and Amsterdam University College (AUC) opened their doors at the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year. The former brings together the two institutions’ MSc and PhD programmes in the exact and life sciences, in part to make them more appealing to outstanding international students, whilst the latter offers an innovative undergraduate education in the liberal arts and sciences, taught entirely in English, for ambitious scholars from both the Netherlands and abroad.

Better support for the community of learners is also on the way, with a new and more dynamic student information system on track for implementation in 2010. Looking even further ahead, in 2009 a comprehensive assessment was completed to identify the core requirements for VU University’s next generation digital learning environment. Against a background of rapidly evolving educational needs, this will be expected to meet tutor and student needs for at least the next decade.



A blurred photograph of a classroom. In the foreground, the back of a person's head and shoulders are visible, wearing a blue t-shirt. In the background, several students are seated at desks, looking towards the front of the room. A whiteboard or screen is visible in the background. A blue speech bubble is overlaid on the right side of the image.

“The
better kids are
taught, the more
appealing teaching
becomes to them as
an option for
the future.”



Jos Beishuizen

Classroom inspiration

Networking with secondary schools

Dutch secondary education is currently suffering from a serious shortage of teachers. According to Jos Beishuizen, Director of the Centre for Educational Training, Assessment and Research (CETAR), the roots of the problem lie in the classroom itself. "Too many young people are put off a career in teaching by their experiences on the receiving end," he says. "They see their own teachers as rather wretched figures: people whose lot in life is to keep vivacious adolescents in their place. From where they're sitting, teaching looks like a lousy job."

And that, from where he sits, is a great pity "because, in fact, it's just about the most inspiring career there is." To help bring that inspiration back into the profession and so combat the shortage, CETAR has set up a project it calls The Better the More. "The better kids are taught," explains Beishuizen, "the more appealing teaching becomes to them as an option for the future. Our aim is to improve the quality of secondary education and the conditions in which it is provided, especially in the pre-university so-called VWO stream, so that graduates are drawn back into the classroom."



Monique van der Vorst voted the Netherlands' Disabled Athlete of the Year.
15 December

A second and related problem is keeping newly qualified teachers in the profession. "About 50 per cent leave within the first five years," says Beishuizen. "Apart from being a waste of money, that's also a huge waste of talent." So his project is addressing that issue, too. The university is investing in a network of so-called academic teaching schools, at which its aspiring teachers are challenged to learn the trade in a practical setting. Backed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, partnerships have already been established with schools in Alkmaar and West Friesland. And more are in the pipeline.

Beishuizen compares the training schools with teaching hospitals, where junior doctors acquire specialist skills through hands-on experience combined with independent research and traditional learning. "This is much more than a work placement. The important thing is that the teaching practice takes place in a strongly academic context. Students receive intensive supervision focusing upon the ins and outs of the job itself, but whilst at the training school they also conduct research as they would if at the university full-time." They can even involve their pupils in those investigations and experiments, an approach which past experience has shown adds to the inspirational nature of the exercise.

"Once we have a strong enough network in place," Beishuizen continues, "it may be possible for the student teachers to complete the bulk of their training at the school itself. That will give them maximum possible exposure to a rich climate in which they acquire research and experimentation skills at the same time as they learn to teach. That's what makes The Better the More both more and better."

Monique van der Vorst

Studying for gold

The dazzling career of wheelchair athlete Monique van der Vorst reached new heights in 2009 with a convincing win in perhaps the most challenging event on the sporting calendar: the Ironman paratriathlon in Hawaii. The only woman in the field, she beat all her male challengers to complete the gruelling race - a 3.9-kilometre swim, 180 kilometres of handbiking and 42 kilometres in a wheelchair - in just over 11 hours and 10 minutes. For the former world handcycle champion, this triumph in her first full triathlon provided some consolation for "only" picking up silver at the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games and gave her the title of the Netherlands' Disabled Athlete of 2009.

"A thorough understanding of topics like anatomy and physiology is a real help in my branch of sport."

Amidst a hectic training and competition schedule, the 25-year old sportswoman still finds time to pursue her studies in Human Movement Sciences at VU University Amsterdam. That is well worth the effort, she says, because the programme provides insights that contribute directly to her success on the track. "A thorough understanding of topics like anatomy and physiology is a real help in my branch of sport. I've learnt so much. The faculty helps me directly, too, conducting tests and taking measurements to help refine my performance. Even though my other commitments have slowed my studies, the university has been very supportive. And studying here keeps me in touch with the real world: it's the one place I come into contact with people who aren't totally absorbed by sport."



Anne Kaldewaij
SAP/SLM implementation
partner appointed for new
student information system.
12 October



Hans Koot
Centre for Higher Education
Development rankings: Psychology
and Economics rated "excellent".
28 October

"I hope to obtain my BSc this year, then go on to read for the Master's. That should stand me in good stead when I finally need to find an alternative career. But that won't be just yet: right now, my ambition is to win gold at London 2012!"

Anne Kaldewaij

Dynamic information

Due to go live in late 2010, the university's new student information system (SIS) will be much more than a mere upgrade. Called Student Life-cycle Management (SLcM), the SAP-based technology is set to replace a whole range of current applications as well as linking seamlessly with other key systems, such as Blackboard and the timetable programme Syllabus+.

"This is going to be a system that really helps students and staff," says Anne Kaldewaij, who is

is what makes this project so fascinating: it gives you a totally new perspective. I hope that the SIS implementation will serve as an example for other university-wide projects in the future."

Following a European tendering procedure, in 2009 the university selected a commercial implementation partner. SLcM's core functionality should be available in time for the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year, with full service coming on stream in subsequent months.

Hans Koot

Psychology excels

Psychology is one of two disciplines at VU University Amsterdam to achieve "excellent" status in the authoritative 2009 CHE (Centre for Higher Education) rankings of European higher education institutions. That position was secured

"(...) the key change is that the system is being designed to meet the specific needs of its users."

directing the implementation. "From a passive administrative approach, we're changing over to genuine educational support. Not only will that simplify or eliminate a lot of the routine work associated with managing your studies, it will also offer a dynamic environment in which to monitor progress and plan your academic career." According to Kaldewaij, the key change is that the system is being designed to meet the specific needs of its users. "This project is being led by the faculties and Student Services – not the IT people. We've held a series of workshops to identify the processes they need and want, so that together we can define the best practices which will end up as system functions. That input

"Students are taught by people who are also very good researchers in their own right. That means that they are challenged to think investigatively."

thanks to its high output of publications, the frequency with which they are cited and the mobility of its students.

"Several factors have contributed towards this success," says Hans Koot, Dean of the Faculty of Psychology and Education (FPP) until 1 November 2009. "One is the academic quality of our programmes, another the international standing of our tutors. We have a good mix of teaching staff from different parts of the world, which in turn makes our courses appealing and accessible to international students."

“Another thing we consider extremely important is the link between research and education. That provides real depth to the courses. From the very start of the BSc cycle, a third of our teaching is devoted to methodology so that students are immersed in research methods and skills from the outset. Even at that stage, they are taught by people who are also very good researchers in their own right. That means that they are challenged to think investigatively.”

The other “excellent” discipline at VU University Amsterdam is Economics, which the CHE praised for its large number of publications and the mobility of its tutors. The German-based Centre for Higher Education Development is an independent institution which bases its annual excellence rankings upon a combination of performance data, objective information about institutions and student surveys. The primary purpose of its reports is to assist prospective students in selecting the right course for them.

Facing the future

Sylvia Hoogendijk

Looking east

VU University Amsterdam can expect an influx of new students from East Asia at the start of the next academic year, judging by the initial results of last autumn’s recruitment mission to the region. At international student fairs in China, Taiwan and Indonesia, the delegation made contact with hundreds of potential applicants. It was led by communications officer Sylvia Hoogendijk.

“Thanks to the excellent reputation of its higher education system, the Netherlands is already the most popular destination outside the English-speaking world for students from the Far East. And they are especially attracted to VU University because of our international standing. As well as offering many programmes taught in English, our strong position in the educational rankings affords us status. That’s an important factor for these prospects.”

“Since we returned, there’s been a substantial increase in website hits and requests for information from the countries visited. And several faculties have already seen a rise in actual applications. Popular subjects with Asian students range from International Business Administration, Economics and International Law to Computer Science. Overall, the number of international students at VU University rose by 10 per cent between 2008 and 2009. With this new wave of interest, we expect that figure to be much higher for the 2010 intake.”

“At the fairs, we invited local VU University alumni to our stand to share their first-hand experiences of studying here with visitors. That proved an effective tactic, so our aim now is to strengthen our alumni networks in these countries. If they feel that they’re still part of our community, then they’ll promote us to with the next generation. This is especially important in countries like China, where personal networks are much more important than perhaps they are in Europe. Our alumni are our best ambassadors, so we need to cherish and support them.”

A diverse community

With students from many different cultural backgrounds and all parts of the world, VU University Amsterdam embraces diversity as one of its most distinctive characteristics. Welcoming learners of numerous faiths, from dozens of nations and drawn from every level of society, our aim is for all to work together in a spirit of mutual understanding to enrich themselves and the institution, its academic output, its community and society as a whole.

Nonetheless, such diversity presents its own particular challenges. For so-called first-generation academics – those with no family history of university attendance, many of them from ethnic minorities – entering higher education can be a daunting prospect. To help them, we work with schools to smooth the transition and organize special summer schools to introduce them to the demands of academic study. Participants are then supervised throughout their first year, so that they achieve their initial study goals. Following a successful pilot project, this scheme is now being introduced throughout the university.

To reflect the wide variety of talents and aspirations inherent in a student population as diverse as ours, we are keen to make the educational opportunities available to them as flexible as possible. In particular, the expanded range of

minor studies available during the Bachelor's phase has been designed to allow greater scope for learners to tailor their programmes to their own specific needs and personal profiles.

For tutors, too, dealing with diversity can be complicated. A study of so-called multicultural competencies in the classroom – the qualities needed for the successful teaching of groups with a mix of cultural and ethnic backgrounds – was completed in 2009. The best practices it identified are now being incorporated into training programmes. For example, VU University has become an enthusiastic participant in the Vidivers project run by the SURF Foundation as part of its National Action Plan for E-Learning. This uses video of case studies and actual lessons to introduce trainee tutors to critical but also realistic diversity-related issues that they might encounter in their professional lives, so that they can reflect upon appropriate responses.





"Many
children miss
out on school because
they have to spend
all day helping their
families collect water
to survive."



Elsa van de Loo

A thirst for change

Youth representative United Nations

A driving passion for a basic human right ignited on the arid plains of Africa has propelled VU University Amsterdam law student Elsa van de Loo to the heart of international diplomacy. Campaigning on a ticket to highlight the plight of the many millions of people denied ready access to fresh water, in October 2009, she was elected as the new Dutch youth representative to the United Nations (UN).

"It's going to be a hectic two years," says Van de Loo, who is just back from her first trip to the UN in New York. "This was an introductory visit to find out how the organization works. I had a busy schedule with lots of briefings, but it was enjoyable and very instructive. Now that I have a reasonable picture of the UN, the real work can begin. In 2010 I'm going back to work on a resolution on behalf of the Netherlands, and I'll be making a speech to the General Assembly. How much will that achieve? I really don't know. I just hope they listen."

As far as she is concerned, however, the real opportunity lies in the ability to put across her message closer to home. "I've received so many



Omid Majidpour
Echo Award.
1 April

requests to speak at schools and take part in debates that I barely have time to keep up with my course. I hate to miss lessons, but for now I've decided that being youth representative has to take priority. This is a unique chance to raise awareness and to help set up projects that make a real difference to people's lives."

Van de Loo, 21, came to VU University Amsterdam in 2009 after obtaining a vocational diploma in Law. That crystallized her interest in both human rights and the work of the United Nations, but it was on a visit to rural Africa with the Foundation Rombo Kenya that she discovered how pressing an issue the right to water and sanitation remains. "Kenya was a real eye-opener! For people there, just getting water dominates their lives. Whenever you see groups of people heading somewhere, you know it's towards a source of fresh water. Many children miss out on school because they have to spend all day, every day helping their families collect enough water to survive. And yet there should be enough to go round. Two-thirds of the world is covered with water, but still there are massive shortages in many regions. I believe that we should all be working together to solve this problem, be it at the United Nations or in our own communities. If I go some way towards achieving that, then my term will have been a success."

Omid Majidpour

Echo of ambition

International Business Administration undergraduate Omid Majidpour is the 2009 winner of the ECHO Award WO, a national prize for the most outstanding ethnic-minority university student in the Netherlands. Originally from Kurdistan, he was honoured for his work on behalf of minority students and communities, as well as his own excellent academic performance. He has also been an active member of the "United Netherlands" delegation to mock UN assemblies in Oxford and Harvard, and has established his own record company.

Speaking from New York, where he is currently taking a year out to read Finance and Economics at Columbia University, Majidpour is sanguine about the prize. "I'm proud to have won, of course, but in some ways it's a shame that an award like this is still needed. To counter all the negative reporting and to show that there are people from ethnic minorities who are heading in the right direction."

"Make the most of your talents and abilities. Do your best and get involved."

The Netherlands is one of twenty four countries to elect a youth representative to the United Nations each year, as part of the organization's effort to involve young people in its work. To ensure continuity, the representatives serve overlapping two-year terms. Their role is twofold: to encourage young people to participate in the political debate and to raise issues that concern them at the UN itself.

He has sought to set a positive example. "My goal is to involve everyone. There are plenty of minority students at VU University Amsterdam, but to me they often seem rather passive. They study hard, but don't always make the most of everything else the institution has to offer. I try to make those around me realize how important – and enjoyable – it is to play an active part in university life."



Frans Kamsteeg
Diversity workshop,
Mafikeng, South-Africa.
19 October



Jesse van der Lee
ied al-fitr.
25 September

"I say: use this opportunity, because you're very lucky. From my own background I know that the possibilities we are afforded in the West are a blessing compared with those available in other parts of the world. Make the most of your talents and abilities. Do your best and get involved, because you have so much more to gain."

Frans Kamsteeg

Diversity international

Diversity is a key topic for VU University Amsterdam, but also a major issue in higher education in many other parts of the world. To gain a better insight into the concept and its many global manifestations, in March 2010 the Faculty of Social Sciences (FSW) is to host an expert seminar with a view to establishing an integrated comparative research programme in conjunction with partners in the United States of America and South-Africa.

"Obviously, diversity has a different context in each of these countries," says Frans Kamsteeg, co-organizer of the seminar. "But there is a

"The point is to realize that students from different cultural backgrounds bring valuable new perspectives into the classroom."

common underlying theme: how do universities deal with a diverse student population and how do they reflect that in the education they provide? We plan to bring together people responsible for policy in that area to compare and contrast their approaches. Which, we hope, will provide a starting point to further investigate the impact of that policy."

The other seminar participants are UCLA (University of California in Los Angeles) in the United States and two South-African institutions, the University of Kwazulu Natal and North-West University. Kamsteeg is particularly impressed by North West University, which has declared its diversity a challenge and an asset against a difficult political background. "If they think they can achieve that," he says, "then we at VU University Amsterdam should be able to do the same. The point, I think, is to realize that students from different cultural backgrounds bring valuable new perspectives into the classroom. They sometimes challenge us as tutors, but they also make things more interesting. As long as we learn how to use those perspectives properly, they can only enrich the education we provide. That's one thing I hope the seminar will help us explore further."

Jesse van der Lee

Multicultural economics

In an effort to bring members of the university community from different cultural backgrounds closer together, several of its leading student societies have joined forces to collaborate in multicultural forum *Dialoog@vu.nl*. This organizes

"As a faculty organization, we should accurately reflect and represent its student population."

activities ranging from open days specifically for the parents of first generation students from ethnic minorities to a social event, open to all, to celebrate ied al-fitr, the holiday marking the end of Ramadan, or Holi, the Hindu spring festival. One of the participating groups is Aureus, the association for students in the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration (FEWEB).

According to Jesse van der Lee, a former member of its Executive Committee and one of the initiators of Dialoog, Aureus' involvement was partially driven by economic considerations. "Thirty per cent of our members are from ethnic minorities," he explains, "but very few of them were joining in our activities. And that meant that we were losing potential income! But the main reason, of course, was that we want to be as inclusive as possible. As a faculty organization, we should accurately reflect and represent its student population."

Joining Dialoog has helped to raise Aureus' profile amongst those FEWEB students who previously identified more closely with other member groups, such as the Turkish student association Anatolia. "By working together," says Van der Lee, "we've shown that we aren't mutually exclusive. We as Aureus wanted to dispel the stereotypical image that we're an all-white drinking club. Dialoog has provided us with the opportunity to show that we have something to offer everyone. And we've seen benefits already, in two ways: the chance to take part in all sorts of multicultural activities and the number of new and different people we've seen at our own events. It's a win-win situation!"

Facing the future

Somya Bouzaggou

First-generation students – those with no family history of higher education, often from ethnic minority backgrounds – can face problems when they come to university. Many find it difficult to adapt to academic life and drop-out rates are high. Now one of their own number may have found the solution. According to

BSc International Business Administration student Somya Bouzaggou, 22, what they need are buddies.

"I was the first from my home to discover the world of higher education. So I just didn't know the strategies needed to study for exams, for instance, like using past papers or lecture slides. Instead I tried to learn the whole book off by heart! At first I had a hard time passing, but fortunately I met some older, more experienced students who explained how things work around here. And the opportunity to become active in social clubs and councils, which satisfied my wish to change things within the university as well as developing personally. They kept encouraging me, in an informal way, but one which worked for me."

"My idea is quite simply to offer that to everyone who needs it. The Buddy Project would link up first-year students with more experienced partners, to show them the ropes. Exactly how would vary in each case, but the basic task would be to inform the newcomer, to motivate them and to encourage them to get the most out of university life. The difference from other mentoring schemes is that it would be kept informal and social, to maximise the benefit. And by bringing together people from different backgrounds, it would encourage them to mix more."

"Several Faculties are now considering whether and how to put the plan into effect. I'm surprised that nobody's thought of this before, but as a student maybe I'm closer to the issue and how to tackle it. In any case, I'm really proud that my idea might actually come to something."

Facts & Figures

1 Key facts of VU University Amsterdam

Executive Board

Drs. R.M. Smit - *President*
Prof. dr. L.M. Bouter - *Rector*
Mr. H.J. Rutten - *Member*

Secretary to the Executive Board

Drs. I.R. Vunderink

Supervisory Board

Prof. drs. P. Bouw - *Chair*
Drs. A. de Widt-Nieuwenhuizen - *Vice-Chair*
Ir. R. Willems - *Vice-Chair*
A. H. Berg
L. Bikker
Prof. dr. F. Leijnse
Mr. drs. F. J. Paas
Drs. A. E. J. M. Cook-Schaapveld MA
A. Weijsenfeld

College of Deans

- Prof.dr. L.M. Bouter, Rector Magnificus
- prof. dr. B. Oudega, Vice-rector, Earth and Life Sciences
- prof. dr. P.J. Beek, Human Movement Sciences
- prof. dr. H. Verbruggen, Vice-rector, Economics and Business Administration
- prof. dr. J. van Mill, Sciences
- prof. dr. W. Stalman, Medicine (VU University Medical Center)
- prof. dr. W. Janse, Theology
- prof. dr. D.G. Yntema, Arts
- prof. dr. J. Passchier, Psychology and Education
- prof. mr. A. Oskamp, Secretary of College, Law
- prof. dr. A.C. Hemerijck, Social Sciences
- prof. dr. A. Feilzer, Dentistry (Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam)
- prof. dr. R. van Woudenberg, Philosophy
- P.J.M. Brasik, General Secretary

Faculties, research institutes and schools

- 12 faculties
- 11 interdisciplinary research institutes
- Participant in two national research centres of excellence, of which one as coordinating institution
- Participant in 38 accredited research schools, of which six as coordinating institution

Education

- 22,738 students, including 6,595 first years; 4,410 master enrolments, 490 international students
- also including 2,464 medical students of which: 259 first years, 546 master enrolments, 51 international students
- 48 Bachelor's degree programmes, including two taught in English
- 89 Master's degree programmes, including 50 taught in English, one in French and one in German
- 28 postgraduate programmes
- Postgraduate continuing education courses provided by five faculties and institutes
- Contract teaching
- Higher education for senior citizens

VU University Amsterdam personnel

- 2,764 academic staff (2,045 FTEs)
 - 1,905 non-academic and ancillary staff (1,564 FTEs)
- ### VU University Medical Center
- 1,989 academic staff (1,609 FTEs)

Faculty	Full Professors	Endowed Professors
Earth and Life Sciences	51	29
Human Movement Sciences	5	5
Economics and Business Administration	82	10
Sciences	57	19
Medicine	147	33
Theology	19	12
Arts	25	14
Psychology and Education	20	21
Law	45	14
Social Sciences	27	18
Dentistry	13	1
Philosophy	8	3
Total	499	179

Rankings

- Leiden Ranking: N° 3 in the Netherlands, N° 15 in Europe, N° 112 in the world.
- Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities: 101-151
- Times Higher Education QS World University Rankings: 165
- Webometrics Ranking of World Universities by web presence: 237
- European Research Council: fourth in overall ranking of institutions awarded ERC grants
- CHE Ranking of Excellent European Graduate Programmes:
 - * In the Natural Sciences: Biology ranked in the excellence group
 - * In the Social Sciences: Psychology and Economics & Business Administration ranked in the excellence group

Academic prizes and grants

Spinoza Prizes

Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO)

Four winners:

- Prof. dr. P. Nijkamp, Economics and Business Administration, 1996
- Prof. dr. H.M. Pinedo, Medicine (VUmc), 1997
- Prof. dr. D.I. Boomsma, Psychology and Education, 2001
- Prof. dr. M.S. van der Knaap, Medicine (VUmc), 2008

Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW)

Five Academy professorships:

- Prof. dr. G. Semin, Psychology and Education, 2003
- Prof. dr. A.S. Tanenbaum, Sciences, 2004
- Prof. dr. M.B. Katan, Earth and Life Sciences, 2005
- Prof. dr. S.A.P.L. Cloetingh, Earth and Life Sciences, 2006
- Prof. dr. R. van Grondelle, Sciences, 2009

New Academy Members 2009

- Prof. mr. drs. B.P. Vermeulen, Law
- Prof. dr. A.W. van der Vaart, Sciences
- Prof. dr. S.A.L.M. Kooijman, Earth and Life Sciences

Young Academy Members 2009

- Dr. A. Betti, Philosophy
- Prof. dr. P.J.E.M. van Dam, Arts
- Dr. F.A. Gerritsen, Arts
- Prof. dr. H.D. Mansvelder, Earth and Life Sciences
- Prof. dr. B.W. Penninx, Medicine (VUmc)
- Dr. D. Posthuma, Psychology and Education
- Prof. mr. E. van Sliedregt, Law
- Dr. Y.D. van der Werf, Medicine (VUmc)
- Dr. W. van Westrenen, Earth and Life Sciences
- Prof. dr. ir. G.J.L. Wuite, Sciences

NWO Innovative Research Incentives Scheme

Veni grants 2009

- Dr. D.P. Geerke, Sciences
- Dr. J. Geurtsen, Medicine (VUmc)
- Dr. G. de Graaf, Sciences
- Dr. ir. G.J. de Ridder, Philosophy
- Dr. M. Roerdink, Human Movement Sciences
- Dr. E. Tolstaja, Theology
- Dr. P. Wiepking, Social Sciences
- Dr. S. Witte, Sciences

Vidi grants 2009

- Dr. F. Camia, Sciences
- Prof. dr. G.R. Davies, Law
- Dr. P. Gori-Giorgi, Sciences
- Dr. R.N. Frese, Sciences
- Dr. ir. J. Legler, Earth and Life Sciences
- Dr. M. Meeter, Psychology and Education
- Dr. R.M. Meredith, Earth and Life Sciences
- Dr. D.M.V.A.P. Roche, Earth and Life Sciences
- Prof. mr. E. van Sliedregt, Law

Vici grants 2009

- Prof. dr. J.F. de Boer, Sciences
- Prof. dr. A. Lucas, Economics and Business Administration

ERC (European Research Council)

New Scientific Council Member

- Prof. dr. S.A.P.L. Cloetingh, Earth and Life Sciences

Starting Grants 2009

- Dr. C.A.H. Waerzeggers, Arts

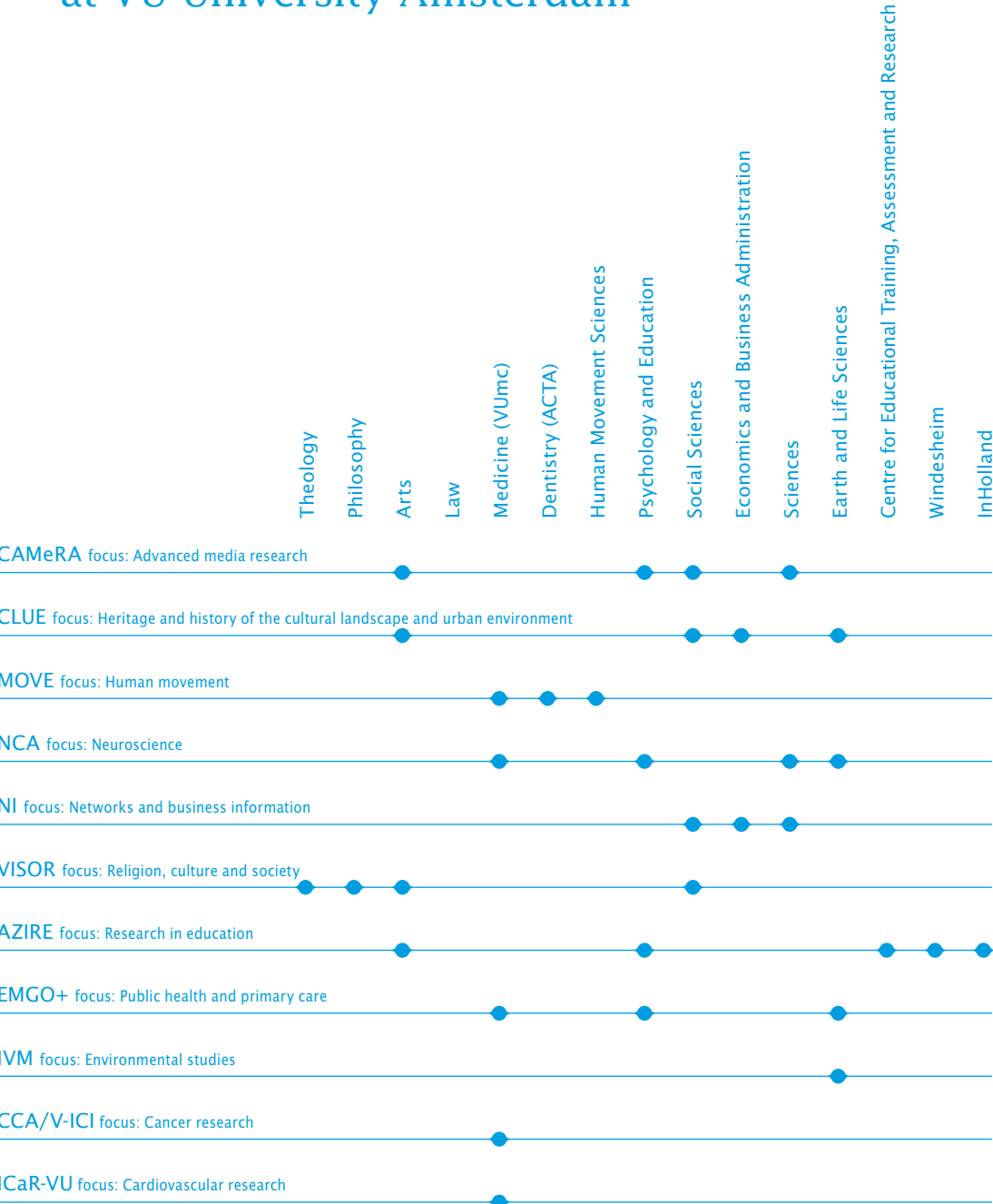
Advanced Investigators Grants 2009

- Prof. dr. E.T. Verhoef, Economics and Business Administration
- Prof. dr. G.W. Marks & Prof. dr. E.A.E.B. Hooghe, Social Sciences

'Mozaïek' Scholarships 2009

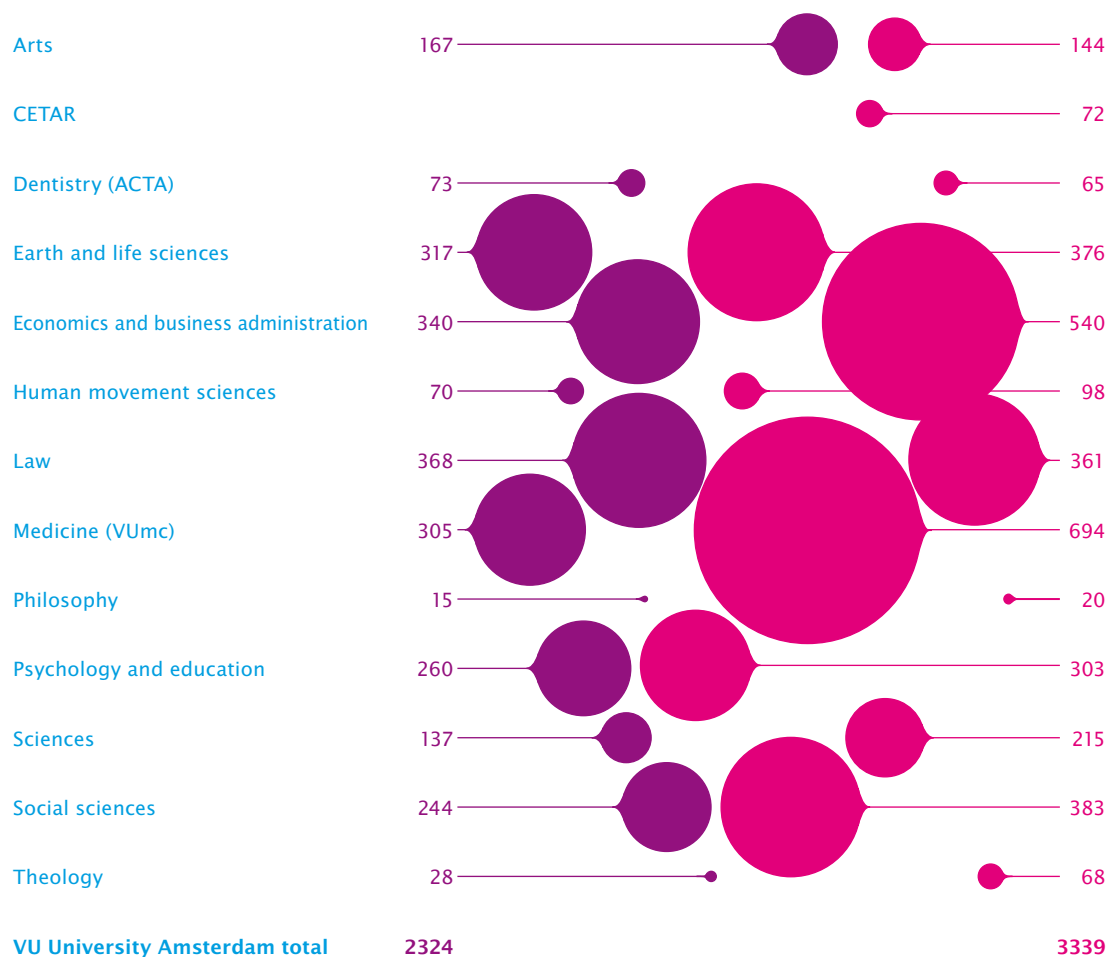
- C. Fliesher M.Sc., Economics and Business Administration
- R. Hayat M.Sc., Economics and Business Administration
- E.V. Iachina M.Sc., Earth and Life Sciences
- Drs. B. Mahdavian Delavary, Medicine (VUmc)

2 The interdisciplinary research institutes at VU University Amsterdam



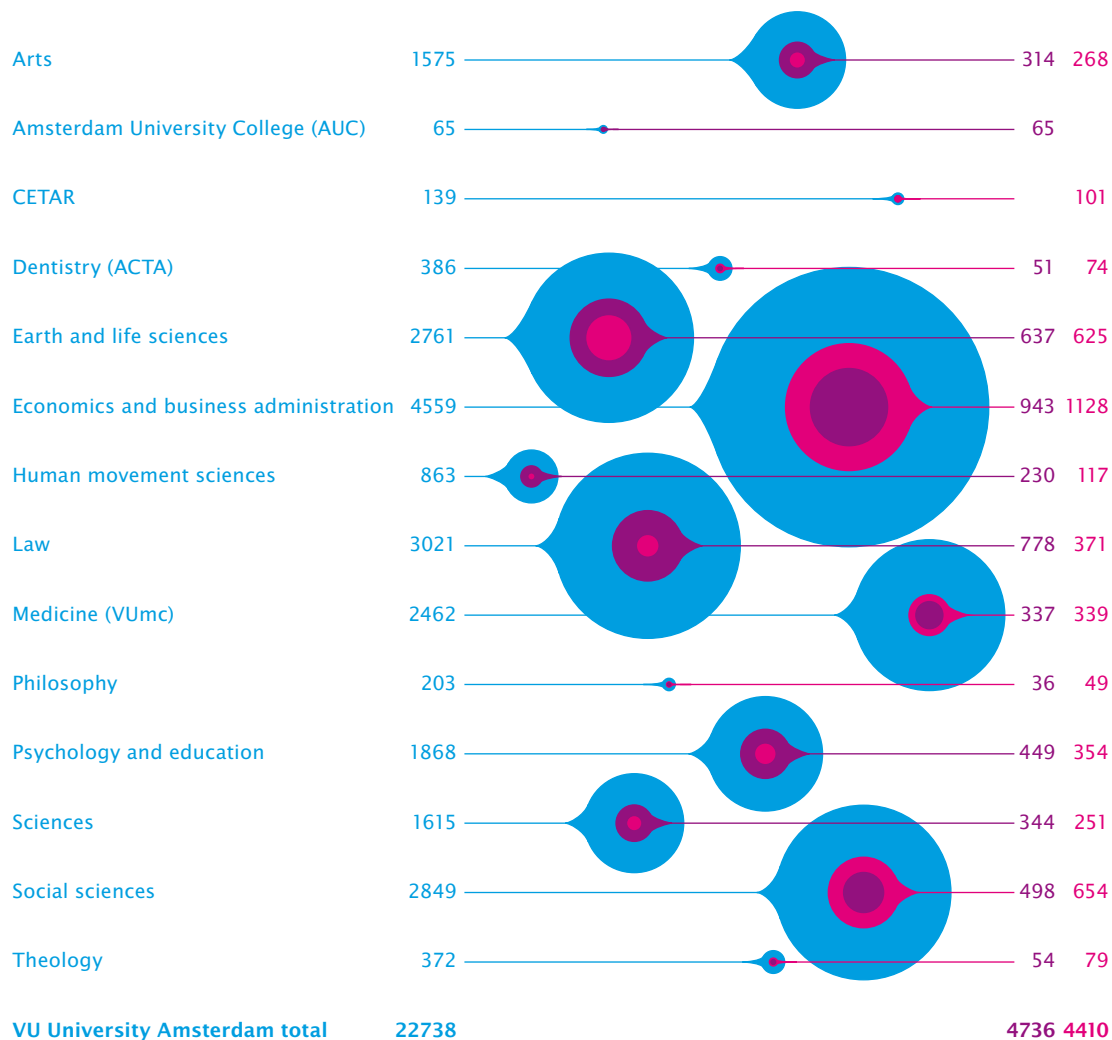
3 Degrees awarded in 2008-2009

bachelor's
master's and others



4 Admissions and enrolments 2008-2009

admissions
bachelor enrolments
master enrolments



5 VU University Amsterdam* consolidated income and expenditure account

Amounts in millions of euros

	2010 Budget	2009 Actual	2009 Budget	2008 Actual	2007 Actual
Income					
State funding	268.1	266.6	252.7	245.0	236.6
Tuition fees	35.6	35.1	33.9	31.5	28.5
Indirect funding	22.3	18.8	19.6	17.2	18.8
Contract funding	60.1	61.8	57.4	56.3	48.7
Other income	79.8	37.8	31.8	41.6	39.3
Total income	465.9	420.1	395.4	391.6	371.9
Expenditure					
Staff costs	258.6	256.4	241.0	233.7	213.3
Depreciation	25.1	18.7	19.0	18.4	16.7
Premises	44.5	34.2	34.7	32.1	28.1
Other operating expenses	139.0	122.2	109.3	115.2	107.8
Release of provisions					-6.4
Total expenditure	467.2	431.5	404.0	399.4	359.5
Operating balance	-1.3	-11.4	-8.6	-7.8	12.4
Financial income and costs	0.9	-3.2	5.3	3.9	5.3
Exceptional items	0.4			-6.5	
Surplus/deficit	0.0	-14.6	-3.3	-10.4	17.7

* excl. VU University Medical Center

6 Research staff by faculty and source of funding, with number of publications

	Research staff (FTEs)				Publications		
	Directly funded	Indirectly funded	Contract funded	total	Ph.D. Theses*	Academic	Professional
Theology	22.55	0.72	0.32	23.59	14	111	187
Law	37.31	6.31	3.71	47.33	6	343	322
Arts	37.02	22.32	4.66	64	17	355	111
Philosophy	12.71	0.93	0	13.64	3	76	36
Medicine (VUmc)	228.07	115.6	269.45	613.12	92	1961	242
Dentistry (ACTA)	40.8	7.95	12.85	61.6	5**	228	168
Sciences	103.6	85.6	59.53	248.73	48	806	26
Earth and Life Sciences	53.13	64.2	109.92	227.25	39	1014	72
Economics and Business Administration	60.31	9.51	39.02	108.84	17	304	246
Social Sciences	63.93	13.74	20.03	97.7	19	497	140
Psychology and Education	27.99	29.7	17.13	74.82	20	650	82
Human Movement Sciences	22.88	9.37	6.53	38.78	9	173	5
CETAR	8.2	2	1	11.2	0	25	83
Total	718.5	367.95	544.15	1630.6	285	6543	1720

* VU University Amsterdam also awarded Sir Tim Berners-Lee with an honorary doctorate in Sciences

** 1 Dissertation at VU University Amsterdam

Dr. A. Kuyper

Founder VU University Amsterdam 1879-1908

H.J. Haverman (1857-1928)



Historical Timeline VU University Amsterdam

VU University Amsterdam was founded in 1880 by dr. Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920). The University started in these early days with three faculties: Theology, Law and Arts. In the twentieth century another nine faculties were added. Nowadays VU University Amsterdam counts twelve flourishing faculties of renowned scientific quality.

The gallery of paintings spread out on the next pages is a tribute to the early initiators of these twelve faculties. Each faculty is represented by one of its most famous founders. Information is given about the person's scientific assignment at VU University Amsterdam and its duration.

An illustrated manuscript with a more elaborated gallery of painted professors will be published on the Dies Natalis of 2010, the 26th lustrum of VU University Amsterdam.

Dr. J. Woltjer

Professor of Greek Language and Literature 1879-1908

Faculty of Arts

Jacob 'Jac.' Eriks (1895-1965)

Mr. D.P.D. Fabius

First professor of Law at the VU 1881-1921

Faculty of Law

L. Goudman (1880-1939)

Dr. G.H.J.W.J. Geesink

Professor of Philosophy 1890-1926

Faculty of Philosophy

Bart Peizel (1887-1974)

Dr. J. Waterink

Professor of Psychology and Education 1926-1961

Faculty of Psychology and Education

Jacob 'Jac.' Eriks (1895-1965)



Dr. G.J. Sizoo

Professor of Physics 1930-1965

Faculty of Sciences

Roeland Koning (1898-1985)

Dr. J.H. Bavinck

First Protestant professor of Science Mission in
The Netherlands 1939-1964, Faculty of Theology

Roeland Koning (1898-1985)

Dr. G.A. Lindeboom

First professor of Faculty of Medicine at the VU 1939-1986

Faculty of Medicine

Artist unknown

Dr. R. van Dijk

Professor of Economy 1949-1962

Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

Artist unknown



Dr. L. Algera

First professor of Biology at the VU 1950-1974

Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences

Roeland Koning (1898-1985)

Dr. J. Blaauw

Professor of Social Sciences 1964-1979

Faculty of Social Sciences

Artist unknown

Dr. C.C.F. Gordijn

Founder Faculty of Human Movement Sciences 1969-1975

Faculty of Human Movement Sciences

Artist unknown

Dr. C.O. Eggink

Professor of Conservative Dentistry 1969-1988

Faculty of Dentistry / ACTA

Johannes Marie Hazenbroek (1929)



VU University Amsterdam

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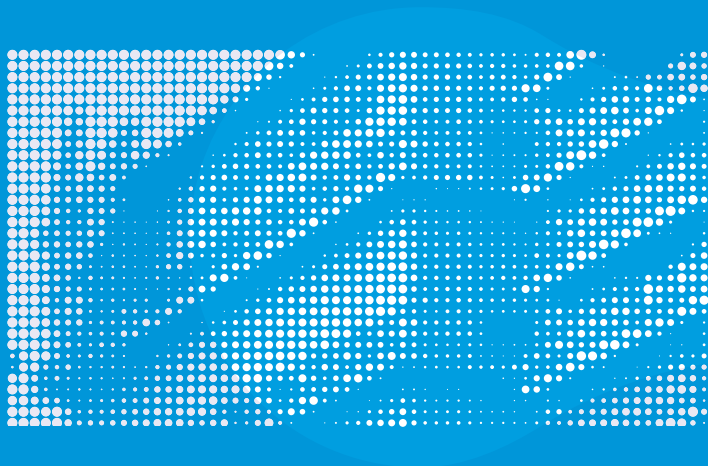
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annual report and annual
accounts.



VU University Amsterdam
Annual Review 2009
Marketing & Communications Department
May 2010