



UNS50 last Monday Photo: Yuri Meesen

They are back!

The students are back in Maastricht. The tutorial groups have started. But is everyone happy about that? Should there be a vaccination requirement? Observant asked people's opinions, see p 6-7

4 First

First of the family to go to university. Inge Melchior, lecturer at Fasos: "I felt like I wasn't allowed to become too ambitious"

5 Afghanistan

Fifth-year Medicine student: "I know people who are in hiding, waiting for a chance to flee"

No wave of infections after the Inkom

The Inkom has not led to an avalanche of new COVID-19 infections. That was the conclusion by the GGD Zuid-Limburg (Area Health Authority), based on the results of the number of students reporting in with health issues.

In order to keep a close eye on matters, the GGD appealed to first-year students to have themselves tested five days after the Inkom. Of the three thousand newcomers, about fifty took heed of that appeal. "That is not a lot," says Christian Hoebe, Maastricht professor of Infectious Diseases and a member of the OMT (Outbreak Management Team). "Many students use the free self-tests and only come to the GGD when they test positive. But if you combine the fifty first-year students with those who came to the testing area of their own accord, we can still form an image."

The GGD registered fifteen UM students with COVID-19 in the past two weeks. "That is very few," says Hoebe. "You could suggest that

the precautionary measures taken during the Inkom worked."

Now that the university is starting up again, he expects that there will be focuses of infection or clusters in Maastricht. "It could happen in student associations, but also as a result of house parties. The number of infections is highest in the 19-25-year age group. In the South of Limburg, the GGD sees ninety positive cases each week"

Still, Hoebe is completely behind the opening of higher education. "I feel it is tremendously important, seeing the backlog in education and the mental health complaints. I'm not worried about a new boom in infections. Of all lecturers, 85 per cent have been vaccinated and of the youths, 60 per cent have had their first jab. Moreover, you see the most antibodies in youths, because a large portion of them have already had the infection."

Maurice Timmermans

Silent march for Tanja Groen

"Get home safely"

"Bring Tanja home," people said on Tuesday evening 31 August on the Koningsplein in Maastricht. It is the end of the silent march for Tanja Groen, the student who - today exactly 28 years ago - disappeared without a trace after a party at student association Circumflex.

Among others, Groen's mother and the chair persons of the parties that organised the march - Circumflex and De Gouden Tip (The Golden Tip) foundation, did this call to the participants of the march. "Dig deep into your memory one more time. Do you remember anything from those days? Let us know," says Kelly de Vries from De Gouden Tip (Yes, the daughter of the recently murdered journalist Peter R. de Vries). The hundreds of twenty-year-olds on the square most likely couldn't act on this appeal, but maybe the appeal will end up reaching the right person through the media present there in large numbers. The foundation is offering a million euro to the person with the golden tip. It is ten to six and already rather busy between Hotel Apple Park Maastricht and the A2 motorway. More and more neckties and female suits collect at the starting point of the silent march. Many students from Circumflex, but also the boards of other associations - from inside and outside Maastricht - are present. Everyone receives a white rose. The atmosphere is

cosy, there is chatting, hugging, kissing. Until a quarter past six. Groen's parents, De Vries and Circumflex chairperson Tanne Nevels lead the way. The rest follows. From that moment on, you could hear a pin drop.

The group walks together in deathly silence almost one and a half kilometres to Koningsplein, where a stage has been set up and there are hundreds of chairs. There are railings surrounding the square with police and city enforcers everywhere. Behind the stand, on the Limburg Liberation monument, there are two photographs. One of Tanja Groen and one of Peter R. de Vries, the crime journalist and founder of De Gouden Tip foundation, who was killed in July.

'Someone who is just like me'

When everyone has sat down, the CF chairperson welcomes them. After her, there are a number of speakers, including Kelly de Vries, who gives the most impressive speech of the evening. Her father's motto was tattooed on his left leg: 'On bended knee is no way to be free'. "Since his death, most people know that it was there. Under that tattoo was my brother's name. What fewer people know, is the text on his other calf 'Someone who is just like me' it says, with my name underneath. We have the

To be continued on page 5

SPLINTERS

A funny incident, a striking piece of news, something interesting that happened elsewhere in the country: it is in this column.

All public holidays together



A tip for those who are fond of parties and want to learn something about other cultures: the new academic calendar by the Diversity & Inclusivity Office. On A2 format, it doesn't just list the academic highlights, such as the university's foundation day, but also the Dutch and international public holidays. On Wednesday 15 September, for example, it is Yom Kippur, or Day of Atonement, the most important and holiest day in Judaism. And on 15 February, Buddhists celebrate that Buddha reached Nirvana during Parinirvana. Most Dutch people will associate the word 'Ascension' with the Christian feast day upon which Jesus ascends to heaven, but Muslims also celebrate an ascension, namely Muhammad's on 28 February. Lailat al Meraj is the name of this feast day and next year it coincides with the first day of Carnival. The calendar can be collected free of charge this week and next week from the reception of various university buildings.

Back to Westerbork



A couple of weeks ago a group of fifty students boarded a bus to Poland. The plan: to cycle from the concentration camp in Auschwitz back to the camp in Westerbork. Along the way they stopped at places that played an important role during World War Two. Both Dutch and German students did the trip – that was organised in the framework of 75 years of freedom. It is a trip of extremes says one of the participants to radio Drenthe. "On the one hand it is very emotional, because of the horrifying events that you are reminded of. On the other hand we are also just a group of students and we make a hell of a 'racket' together." The participants talk a lot together so that they can process all the impressions. The students returned to Drenthe on Tuesday. RTV Drenthe shadowed them the last few days of their trip, you can read the report on their website.



Tribunal: the soul has been preserved

Last Monday was the day: the Tribunal pub opened its doors again. For the first time since Tuur Huijbregts and his wife

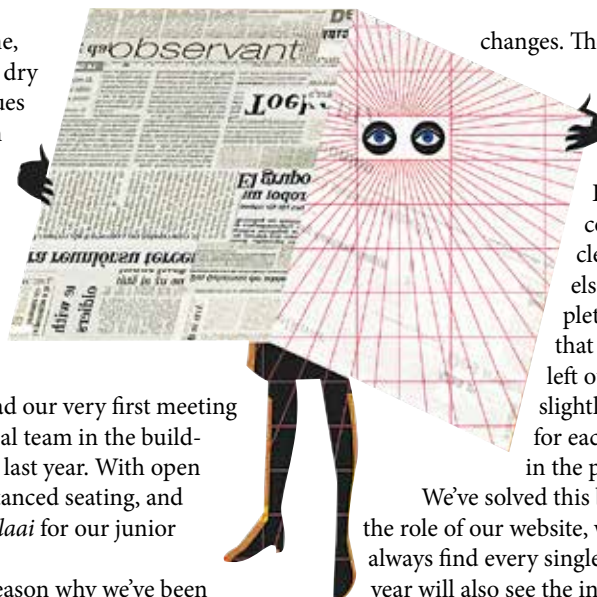
Rachel Vandaele took over the brown pub next door to the Institute of Performing Arts. They had already assured in the newspaper that authenticity would be maintained. But is that the case? Let's have a look... sand on the floor, all tables are in use, indeed nothing has changed. But that is not entirely correct, says Huijbregts, while he is making coffee. "The soul has been preserved, but in the meantime a lot has changed, adapted to current times."

Huijbregts is busy and calls upon Rachel. The most important, invisible change is the new beer pipes, she says, with a three-month-old baby in her arms. But please note: the taste is just as good, even a little better. The menu has also undergone an update. Scampi Pernod and Procureur (a roll filled with slowly cooked pork). Trendier than ever, but also slightly more expensive. "Because of the scampi, but also because of Covid."

We're back!

They were soaked to the skin, and they only just managed to save the laptop, the printer and the stack of *Observant* copies from the rain. The first day of the introduction week for new students didn't go particularly well for *Observant*. Colleagues CF and YM had planned to be in the market square to introduce the first years to our website and newspaper. They would treat anyone interested to a super short interview and a printed photograph, complete with a quote. That was the plan. But then the municipality ordered them to remove the cover from their market stall because the wind was too strong – and shortly after that, a downpour threw another spanner in the works. Just one first-year student had their picture taken.

Things worked out fine, though. Everything is dry again and the colleagues didn't fall ill, although YM had a runny nose for a few days. By now, we have mostly returned to working on campus, the streets of Maastricht are thronged with first years and older students, and we've had our very first meeting with the entire editorial team in the building we moved to June last year. With open windows, socially distanced seating, and traditional Limburg *vlaai* for our junior journalist's birthday. And there's another reason why we've been in a celebratory mood here at Lenculenstraat 14 this week: for the first time since March 2020, *Observant* is being published in print. Loyal readers may notice that we've made some



changes. The newspaper is now fully bilingual, with two identical front pages. Except for our columnists' articles, everything else is also completely identical so that no one will feel left out. This leaves slightly less space for each language in the print version. We've solved this by increasing the role of our website, where you can always find every single article. This year will also see the introduction of new columnists, as well as a brand new weekly series of interviews with employees and students who were the first in their families to go to university: first-generation students.

You can find the print version of *Observant* every Thursday at noon in its usual place near the entrances to the faculty buildings and service centres. Meanwhile, our website will provide you daily with the latest news, background stories, photo reports, and so on. We also have a new online columnist: Stijn Engelen, who was a "pretend student" at UM until two years ago and now works in the hospital pharmacy. For him, watching the students pour into the city is a confronting experience. Engelen describes himself as "a searcher for purpose among the students". He still lives in a student house and is mentally preparing for the awkward question he knows he will be repeatedly asked in the coming weeks: "What do you study?"

We're back. And we're excited to be back.

Riki Janssen

Every week, the editor-in-chief writes about what has been happening at the *Observant* office

Hardly any student room shortage expected in Maastricht

After a COVID-19 year of lack of occupancy, the demand for student rooms is back to the level of before the pandemic. Where in some cities the shortage has become dire, the majority of students looking for a room in Maastricht will have found a place by the end of September, Maurice Evers, head of Maastricht Housing, expects.

At the moment, Evers sees a busyness comparable to that of 2019. "Back then, we saw that - after the usual peak during the summer months - the demand for rooms dropped quickly after the start of the academic year. This year, Maastricht Housing (Maastricht University's housing agency, ed.) expects a similar scenario. Should the number of students looking for a room nevertheless remain high, we are considering a temporary solution, such as using sports halls as sleeping quarters." It is different this time round, with the return to actual in-person education, many senior

students are also looking for accommodation. "These are mainly students who decided against moving to Maastricht last year because of the online education," says Evers. "That lack of occupancy is now helping with the extra demand for accommodation. Foreign bachelor's and master's students are also eager to make use of the possibility of staying in the UM Guesthouse, which normally speaking is only meant for exchange students. Of that latter group, there are - as one would expect - a lot fewer, many programmes having been cancelled due to COVID-19."

This seems to confirm Maastricht's reputation of being a university city with a relatively relaxed housing market. In some other cities, such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam, the demand for rooms is traditionally a lot higher. The situation in Enschede is so tight at the moment that the University of Twente is advising foreign EU students without accommodation to stay at home or even to reconsider their

choice of study programme, *Tubantia* reported. Although the UM warns foreign students that the waiting time for a room can take up to a month, the situation like in Enschede is not an issue for the time being. "Certainly for a university with an international character, it would mean losing face if foreign students were unable to find a place to live," says Evers. "That is why we keep a really good eye on the situation every year."

For example, the UM has arranged with the city of Maastricht that every year 485 new student rooms will be added in Maastricht, to accommodate the growing influx of students. However, this doesn't offer any guarantees. Evers: "Many construction projects suffered great delays during the pandemic. That is why only about half of the planned accommodation has been completed. So, we need to remain vigilant."

Dennis Vaendel

Van Engelshoven: education will not shut down in fourth wave

Higher education is not going to shut its doors again, even if there is a fourth wave of COVID-19 infections. So said outgoing Minister Van Engelshoven yesterday at the opening of the academic year of Zuyd University of Applied Sciences.

"My answer is no", Van Engelshoven told local radio station 1Limburg. "We are simply not going to do that anymore."

In extreme cases the government could make access passes mandatory. Students and staff can then enter the campus only if they have been vaccinated or tested. These rules are already "in her back pocket", the Minister said, but she hopes they will not be needed. "It's a very tough measure."

The Minister calls on students to get vaccinated, "and if that really isn't possible, get tested." In addition, self-tests are available free of charge. "It will be of great help to us if as many students as possible do the test twice a week."

HOP

9,700: just as many first-year students as in 2020

It is expected that about 9,700 first-year students will start their studies in Maastricht this week. That is more or less the same as last year. This brings the total number of students to roughly 22 thousand. These are preliminary figures, as it will only become clear in autumn exactly what the number is.

In 2020, the influx of first-years students grew extremely fast, by almost 14 per cent. That had everything to do with COVID-19: considerably more secondary-school pupils passed their final exams and fewer of them went on a gap year.

It appears that this year the number of newcomers has stabilised. These are students



Last Monday: Students in front of the building at Grote Gracht 92 Photo: Yuri Meesen

who have come directly from pre-university education, those who have completed a pre-master's or who have completed a bachelor's at the UM or elsewhere and are now starting on a master's.

The ratio of Dutch and foreign students (more than half are from abroad) appears to be at the same level as last year. The number of registrations from Germany and Belgium have declined slightly, interest from the United

Kingdom has dropped substantially. The latter is a result of Brexit, which makes studying in Europe a lot more expensive for the British students.

RJ

The River

For the last year working from home has also meant, for me, working along the river. Beside the Meuse, or Maas, I have walked out articles and taken podcast breaks. I have met with friends and colleagues at the Bonnefanten Museum to meander downstream, immersed in talk about pandemic life or a new project. For many years I have also described myself as working across the river: I am an anthropologist of medicine, based at FASoS, doing fieldwork and collaborating with colleagues



at FHML. But it wasn't until the 15th July 2021 that I

think I really noticed the river. It had been swelling for days and from that morning onwards the city bridges became crowded with onlookers, then television reporters. After dinner I took a walk with my family and a broken umbrella, the leather of our inappropriate summer footwear soon sodden and dirty. An upturned fridge went by, then half a tree. The water surged on. A rabbit appeared, clinging to a log, then it was gone too. As the crowds grew, the evacuation alarm shook us out of our damp reverie. We went back to our home, a few blocks from the river, and made a sad little sandbag from potting soil and flour to block our vents. Darkness fell. We translated the local news and the river raged on. And then, all so quickly, for the moment at

least, it subsided, leaving tragedy in some parts and nothing but a dirty residue on leaves in others.

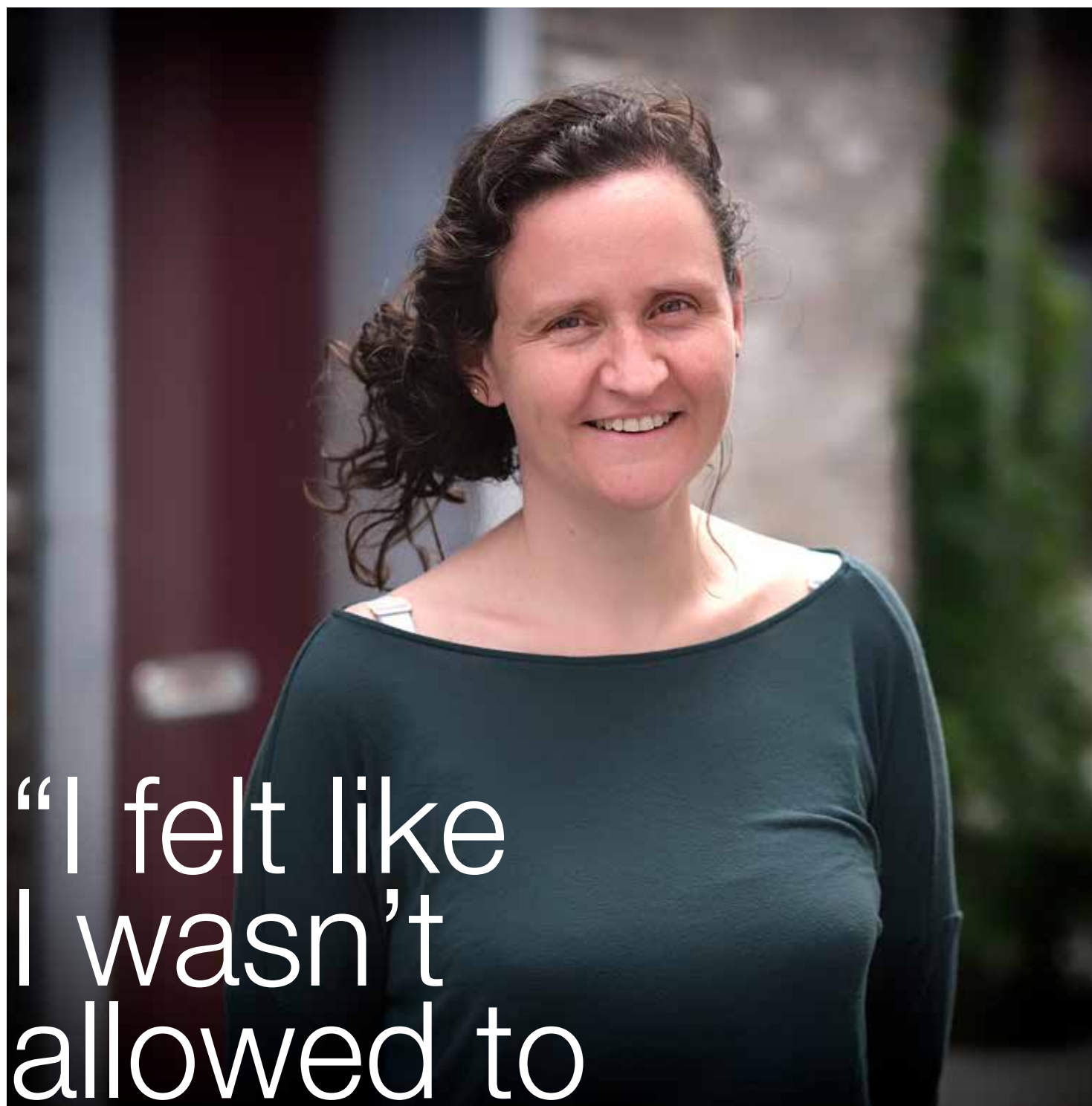
Now I walk besides the river, I cross the river, but I also am much more aware of how I live with the river. Not just the water that flows through Maastricht, but also the flood barrier holes in the streets, the rabbits who nibble at its banks and the mountain rivulets that nourish it.

I am here, the river and its vast ecosystem murmurs, please don't forget me.

Anna Harris, associate professor department of Society Studies; Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

This column reflects the personal views of the author

series the first of the family to go to university



“I felt like I wasn’t allowed to become too ambitious”

Photo: Joey Roberts

Her father’s background is “an interesting factor”, says Inge Melchior with a wink when her childhood comes up in the interview. “His family is rich.” Her father’s uncle, entrepreneur Léon Melchior, was a wealthy man who made millions in real estate and breeding horses. “My father has seen the dark side of money: its close relationship with power and influence. Léon bought houses for his relatives and got them jobs. They became dependent on him, my grandfather included. My father always taught us to do what we love and stay away from money. “It sometimes made me feel uncertain about my decision to go to university. I definitely wasn’t doing it for the money or to get ahead. ‘Career’ was a dirty word in my family. I felt like I wasn’t allowed to become too ambitious, or like I should at least be able to justify my ambition to my father. I now work as a lecturer at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. I’m on a teaching-only contract, which is quite exceptional for an academic with a PhD. Somehow, I now feel like I have to justify to my colleagues why I don’t request any research time, why I’m not pursuing a research career, and why I do what I’m most interested in.”

- Inge Melchior, age 36
- Lecturer at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
- Went to Radboud University Nijmegen in 2003 to study Cultural Anthropology (and, a year later, Sociology)
- Born and raised in Maastricht, together with her parents and three younger brothers

Buttermilk

Inge Melchior grew up in Malberg, a post-war residential neighbourhood in Maastricht. Her mother, a trained nurse, was the breadwinner; her father was a stay-at-home dad. “He didn’t take school very seriously. He had to repeat a few years. He eventually finished secondary school, but he chose to become a stay-at-home parent when I was born. I don’t think he ever regretted his decision. I think he found it very enjoyable and valuable to stay home with us. It was uncommon, though. I was the only one in my class with a stay-at-home dad.” Unlike her father, Melchior took school very seriously. “I was a model pupil. Our teacher would tell my classmates, ‘Go and have a look at Inge’s handwriting, it’s so neat.’” In secondary school, she met children from other neighbourhoods, including wealthier ones like Campagne and Sint Pieter. “They all cycled the other way after school”, she recalls. “I didn’t really think about it at the time, but there were certain things I didn’t interpret as signs of economic inequality, of social class differences, until later. I went home with classmates who lived in houses with paintings on the walls, who went to Albert Heijn for their groceries, who drank buttermilk instead of regular milk.” When she was fifteen, she met her current partner Jeroen Moes [a lecturer at University College Maastricht] through the Scout Movement. He was also a first-generation student. They decided to go to university together. “After completing a year of teacher education for primary school, Jeroen decided that he wanted to go to university. We visited

Radboud University Nijmegen together. I already knew that I didn’t want to follow in my mother’s footsteps and work in health-care, but I did want to work with people. I remember coming home and telling our parents that we’d decided to enrol in Cultural Anthropology. They had no idea what it was, of course. What’s more, there was never anything cultural growing up. My mother believed in taking children to playgrounds, not museums.”

Opportunities

Melchior enjoyed her time as a student, especially as she and her boyfriend could do everything together. “We went to class together, cycled back to our room together, had philosophical discussions together. After a year, we even decided to enrol in Sociology as well. The pace was too slow for our liking, ha ha. Jeroen and I don’t study the same way, though. I learn from textbooks; Jeroen doesn’t. In secondary school, I learnt everything by heart. After failing my first two university exams, I realised that I needed to study differently. There was simply too much material to memorise.”

Melchior continued to do her best at university. “I wanted to do well. Yes, maybe it was about living up to my parents’ expectations. I realised that having a degree gives you more opportunities. And opportunities are not guaranteed in life.

“During my bachelor’s degree, I organised a study trip to Estonia. It’s a wonderful country. I wrote my bachelor’s thesis, my master’s thesis and my PhD thesis about it. I learnt the language and immersed myself in the culture. It was my passion.”

Her parents have always supported her. “I could live off of my student loans. My father got another paper round to give me the 60 euros I was short of every month. I remember that, at first, he was afraid we would start looking down on others, that we wouldn’t come home on the weekends. That didn’t happen. I tried to involve my parents in my studies, but I also realised I shouldn’t go into too much detail.”

Melchior and Moes recently submitted a project proposal for a grant from the Diversity & Inclusivity Office of Maastricht University. It’s about first-generation students. “We spent an afternoon coming up with it. A major theme in sociology is inequality, cultural and social capital. It’s something Jeroen also runs into in the University College admission process: the differences between students in terms of background, upbringing and cultural engagement.”

If it was up to Melchior, the university would pay more attention to this group of students. “For example, VU Amsterdam offers an introduction programme for first-generation students in the summer so that they will know what to expect. These students often receive less practical support from their parents during the university application process. Once they are at university, they have to rely more on their own intellectual, social and financial resources, according to the study we did with two students for this project.”

Father

“The other day, my father said, ‘You’ll never guess what I did’. He read my PhD thesis when he couldn’t sleep. He enjoyed reading about my experiences in Estonia and the people I met there. The fact that he picked it up is very special to me.”

Wendy Degens

This is a weekly series of interviews with students or academics who were the first in their families to go to university.

Fifth-year medical student on the state of his home country Afghanistan

“Acquaintances have gone into hiding, waiting on the chance to flee the country”

A woman wearing nail polish? Then her fingers will be hacked off. Visible ankles? Then she will be flogged. Walking alone on the streets? No, only if there is a male family member accompanying her. And music, television, a game of chess, or flying a kite? All prohibited. This is just a selection of the rules that applied 25 years ago in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime. Together with his parents, Nawid Daliry (30), fifth-year medical student, fled to the Netherlands when he was six years old. How does he feel about the Taliban being in charge again? “I am angry, but sometimes also carefully optimistic. I have no idea how I should feel.”

Angry because his family was suppressed by the same group and had to flee. But he sometimes also feels relieved, because this time the Taliban seems much more moderate, says Daliry. “Everyone can go to the shops and radio and television are permitted.” What struck him most: “A Taliban public relations officer allowed himself to be interviewed on national television by a woman. Girls are also still going to school. Twenty-five years ago, that would have been impossible. Women were allowed to do almost nothing.” It is a subject that means a lot to his father. Once settled in the Netherlands, he founded SCAN, the Solidarity Committee Afghanistan Netherlands. A foundation that puts its efforts into the redevelopment of Afghanistan. For example, they collected money for the construction of a girls’ school in the country.

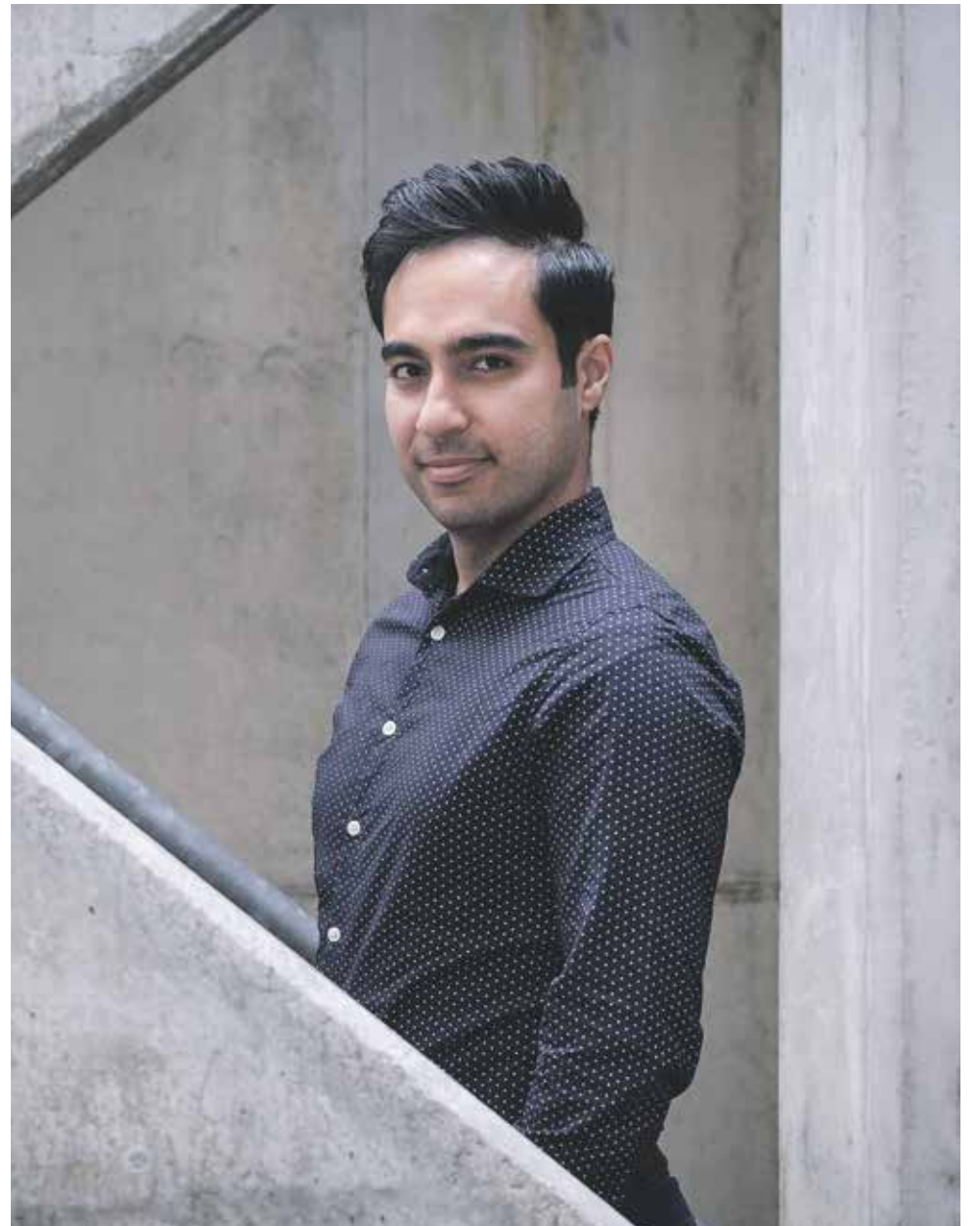
“Until now this has remained open,” says Daliry.

So, it doesn’t seem to be too bad, but Daliry is very sceptical. After all, they hear different stories from family friends. “About kidnapping, torture and murders. Many different ethnic groups live in Afghanistan, but it is not a case of specific groups being picked on. That randomness makes it worse. No idea what is behind it. Power, politics, or are other things in play that we don’t know about yet?” His first guess is sowing fear. “Because anyone who is afraid, will follow the rules.”

Or flees to another country. Some of the people he knows want to get away. “They don’t dare talk about it with us much because they are afraid, but there aren’t a lot of options.

“At the moment, they are in hiding, waiting for an opportunity to leave the country.” The Taliban is now in charge of the airport again, so you have to flee over land. “You have to find someone with a truck or a car. That isn’t easy, certainly if you have a large family.”

Daliry feels it is unbelievable that the Americans, British and also the Dutch left Afghanistan. “Why were they there? They sent troops there for years to stabilise the country and train the Afghan people how to rule a country. They have clearly failed. What did they do for the past twenty, thirty years? They would have been better off staying, reflecting on their approach and doing things differently.” Daliry is happy, however, that the military stayed and helped people to evacuate. “Now I hope that European countries and the United States



Nawid Daliry Photo: Joey Roberts

grant refuge to people who have escaped. It would be strange to help people get out and then not to look after them.”

Daliry spends “rather a lot” of time thinking about it. Before falling asleep, he scrolls through the news on his telephone and he also watches BBC Persian with his family. “Even though I don’t believe everything that I

see and read there. What is told in the media, is often different to reality. For example, you hear nothing about the murders. There is so much that is not clear. I just hope that peace returns for everyone in Afghanistan. After all, it is my native country.”

Yuri Meesen



People listening to the speeches Photo: Joey Roberts

“We have the same DNA”

Continued from page 1

same DNA and the same vision. We both stand for a fair and equal society.” With that, De Vries announced that she would take over from her father as chairperson of the foundation and do everything in her power to realise her father’s dream: “To solve the mystery of that night in 1993.” She is the only speaker to receive an applause.

After Groen’s mother, who thanked everyone for coming and appealed again to share all information and memories with De Gouden Tip foundation, Nevels brings the meeting to a close. “Tanja lives on in our association. Every year, her story is told and in that way, she protects new association members.” Nevels’ last words this evening: “Get home safely.”

Yuri Meesen

“Several colleagues are wary about being in a classroom again”

Anyone who physically takes part in education activities should have themselves vaccinated, says the Maastricht Economics professor Bart Verspagen (see the Dutch column on [Observantonline.nl](https://observantonline.nl)). As far as he is concerned, students who refuse should be banned from the classroom and referred to online education. Lecturers who are not vaccinated, can make themselves useful at the computer. A good idea?

Text: Maurice Timmermans
Photo: GGD

Fons Coomans, professor holding the UNESCO chair for Human Rights: “No, I don’t think that is a good idea. Look, access to education is a human right, but it isn’t absolute. This means that this right may be limited in certain situations. For example, when health comes into play, like with this present pandemic. “But the measures should be proportionate. I think a judge would not accept it, if you were to deny students who are not vaccinated access to the classrooms. Why not? Because there are alternatives that you could use to achieve the same objective: proof of testing, for example. Something else that must also be considered, is that students have missed out on contact with other students for more than a year now, just like the atmosphere and interaction in the classrooms. This all touches on the core of the right to education. “However, I do hope that students - I teach a lot of foreign master’s students - have themselves tested before they attend tutorials. In the Oud Gouvernement (Bouillonstraat) lecturers find themselves in small spaces with fifteen students, where ventilation at times is not up to scratch. I know several colleagues, often somewhat older, who are wary of ‘being in a classroom again’. I myself have faith in my vaccination.”

Lotte Meerhof, student member of the University Council (for Dope): “I feel that it is very important that students and lecturers have themselves vaccinated, but that shouldn’t play a role in access to education. In this situation, everyone weighs the pros and cons differently. If an educational institute more or less forces students to have themselves vaccinated, then that



infringes on the right to bodily integrity. That is not allowed. I do think it is a good thing to encourage students to be inoculated. “I myself have had my first jab, but I also do a self-test every week, and I will continue to do so even after the second jab. The vaccine doesn’t give complete protection. You can still get Covid and pass it on to others. I’m not wary of returning to the tutorial group, but I know of students who are. That is why I feel that the university should always offer the opportunity of taking online classes. “How safe is it actually, some students wonder? And what are the consequences of the relaxation of the rules? Will the number of infections skyrocket again? It would be really rough if we all ended up sitting at home again.”

Christian Hoebe,
UM professor of Infectious Diseases and member of the Outbreak Management Team (OMT): “You shouldn’t only allow entry to those who have been vaccinated, but also those who have had the infection. A relatively large group among youths. Anyway, I do get Verspagen’s appeal, education should be safe. But we don’t have compulsory vaccination in the Netherlands at the moment. We will have to learn to live with a small risk. Also, with the present Delta variant, it is impossible to bring that down to zero, not even with compulsory vaccination. Moreover, such compulsion has a huge disadvantage: it creates antithesis between groups. I am more in favour of dialogue.”

Thomas Ziesemer,
retired researcher at UNU/Merit: “I retired last year, but still teach some classes. I was

supposed to teach a course in February, but that was cancelled. I only want to teach online, unless I was certain that everyone had been vaccinated or recently tested. I am familiar with the classrooms on the Boschstraat, and it is hardly possible to maintain a distance there.

“Moreover, as we have seen in primary and secondary schools, students will come to the campus even if they are not feeling well. As far as I am concerned, the risk of infection is too high. Things are not too bad in the Netherlands, but in Germany and Austria infection rates are rising seriously again, mainly because of the Delta variant. I would not make education completely accessible all at once, but by degrees. That seems safer to me.

“Certainly, students have not had an easy time the past year, but mainly because they were sitting at home all day long as a result of the lockdown, not because education was online.”

Lotte Thissen,
lecturer-researcher at the department of Health, Ethics and Society (FHML): “If you don’t give unvaccinated students access to the classrooms, you are literally and figuratively shutting them out. In doing so, you reduce the chances of a dialogue, a discussion. And that is exactly what I think is needed. Also, we mustn’t forget what online education did to students, just how many suffered from mental health problems.

“It feels very double for me. I am worried, not so much about being infected but more so that I might infect others. But at the same time, I am eager to get started again, to be in the same space as the students, being involved in lively discussions again.”

Dennie Hebels,
project manager and lecturer at MERLN: “I agree with Verspagen’s plea, and there are good arguments to support it at the moment. If you allow students or lecturers who have not been vaccinated access, they can infect others, it is as simple as that. But the question is: how great is that risk? You could wait until all students have had both vaccinations, but we are going to have to make that leap into higher education at some time or other. You can’t wait until the risk has completely disappeared. It reminds me of the rubber-flagstone society, I am really allergic to that. “Also, look at how we used to view the flu. Many employees didn’t stay at home because they had a slight fever or headache and most likely they infected colleagues. Not at all comparable to the dangers associated with COVID-19, but these flu-infected employees also entered the hospital for a cappuccino. They stood in line behind really ill, older patients. Is that also unacceptable now?”

Bart Verspagen,
professor of International Economics (UNU/Merit): “This week, I am teaching a small group of PhD students. I have asked the education co-ordinator to sound out whether the PhD students have or have not been vaccinated. It appeared that they have all had a jab. Had that not been the case, I would have given an online lesson. I don’t want to be infected, but it is not just about me, it is about everyone at the faculty. Some colleagues agree with me and have informed the faculty board of that fact. The board has not given a reaction yet.”

Survey among employees: how safe is the UM?

Almost a quarter of Maastricht University employees expect not to feel safe upon their return to their workplaces in September. Almost 18 per cent has a ‘neutral’ opinion: not safe, but also not unsafe. These are some of the outcomes of a survey that was held by the Executive Board in June, the results of which were discussed in a webinar at the beginning of July.

“Not that people aren’t happy to be here,” said Gerjo Kok, emeritus professor of Applied Psychology, in the webinar. “The majority wants to meet colleagues and students, but there are also worries.” And they can be explained, he thinks. Not just from a psychological point of view, because people have to get used to the new situation, having contact with ‘others’, but also because there are many uncertainties, such as new variants.

The main fear is about meeting students and staff from high-risk areas, vaccine refusers and meetings with large groups.

“Some of the staff is scared or stressed; we have to do something about that,” was rector Rianne Letschert’s reaction, who accompanied Kok during the webinar. Safety is a priority, she emphasised.

The survey was submitted to employees more than two months ago. Do they still feel the same? Or has the Executive Board been receiving other signs? According to spokesman Koen Augustijn (who received information from the faculties’ Education Offices among others), a large majority is happy to be on campus again. There are a few practical things to get used to, however, such as following the correct walking routes, he says. “The stewards are not an unnecessary luxury”.

And yes, there are still concerns, uncertainties and questions, but there are not many.

Where necessary, the protocol is made more explicit. An example: ‘How to deal with colleagues or students with symptoms of a cold in a tutorial group?’ The basic principle is that people are not allowed to come to campus if they have cold complaints that indicate a corona infection. But what if they walk around the faculty sniffing? On what basis can they be sent home? But also: how can students with allergies or, for example, asthma be helped so that they can stay on campus? “There is uncertainty about that; the guideline is now being adapted.”

Furthermore, he continues: “Staff with worries about safety may approach their managers, the education coordinator or the company doctor, while students may do so with their study advisor and the corona@maastrichtuniversity office.”

colofon

Redactieadres

Lenculenstraat 14
Postbus 616
6200 MD Maastricht
T 043 - 38 85 390

E observant@maastrichtuniversity.nl

W www.observantonline.nl

Stichtingsbestuur

Anita Jansen (vz), Samantha Cijntje, Teun Dekker, Liesbeth Lijnzaad, Hanneke

Ramakers

Redactieraad

Piet Eichholtz (vz), Birsan Erdogan, Silvia Evers, Rense Hoekstra, Janneke Frambach, Juul Hennissen, Thomas Vaessen, George Vogelaar

Redactie

Riki Janssen

(hoofdredacteur) 043 - 38 85 384

Wendy Degens 043 - 38 85 382

Cleo Freriks 043 - 38 85 386

Yuri Meesen 043 - 38 85 385

Maurice Timmermans 043 - 38 85 381

Dennis Vaendel 043 - 38 85 383

Redactie-assistent

Marion Janssens 043 - 38 85 390

Aan dit nummer werkten verder mee:

Anna Harris, Sander Jansen

Fotografie

Loraine Bodewes, Joey Roberts

Illustraties/Opmaak/Basisontwerp

Simone Golob, www.sgiv.nl

Vertalingen

o.a. door B. Wall & P. Nekeman, Maud Boveland

Druk

Janssen/Pers Gennep

Mededelingen

Voor het inleveren van mededelingen zie www.observantonline.nl/Mededelingen of www.observantonline.nl/English/Announcements

Advertenties

Voor regionale en interne adverteerders: www.observantonline.nl/Adverteren-en-Paartjes

marion.janssens@maastrichtuniversity.nl

Voor overige adverteerders:

Bureau Van Vliet, 023 - 57 14 745,

m.dewit@bureauvanvliet.com

www.bureauvanvliet.com

(Voor Paartjes zie info bij Paartjes)

Abonnementen

Observant wordt gratis verspreid op de universiteit en op diverse locaties in Maastricht.

Belangstellenden kunnen Observant thuisgestuurd krijgen voor € 37,00 per academisch jaar.

HOP

Observant is aangesloten bij het

Hoger Onderwijs Persbureau

© Stichting Observant

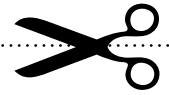
Niets uit deze uitgave mag zonder voorafgaande schriftelijke toestemming van de hoofdredacteur geheel of gedeeltelijk worden overgenomen

Voor hetzelfde geld staan de paartjes
iedere week ook op internet:
www.observantonline.nl

paartjes

TE HUUR VASTE PARKEERPLEK onder
appartementen Waldeck/Brandenburg €110,-
per maand Onmiddellijk te aanvaarden
Info:0620964012

Students always get 20% discount at mac
SportsClub! The best gym, Athletic & Yoga in town!
www.macmaastricht.nl Brusselsstraat 74 A/56 or
043-3258179.



Paartjes

Per letter, leesteken of spatie een apart hokje gebruiken. Regels volschrijven tot het einde.

Voor langere teksten geldt het advertentietarief. Inleveren bij de redactie kan maandag

tot en met donderdag van 09.00 tot 17.00 uur / contant betalen. Bezoekadres: loop

de Minderbroedersberg omhoog, vóór de ingang van nummer 4 rechts af en loop het

appartementencomplex (rode baksteen) binnen. Volg de bordjes naar de 2e verdieping.

Digitaal inleveren kan ook, zie www.observantonline.nl Vóór dinsdag 16.00 uur ingeleverde

Paartjes verschijnen de donderdag daarop in de krant. De redactie is niet verantwoordelijk

voor de inhoud van de Paartjes en behoudt zich het recht voor om zonder opgaaf van reden

Paartjes te weigeren.

_____ € 3,00

_____ € 4,00

_____ € 5,00

_____ € 6,00

_____ € 7,00

_____ € 8,00

In Memoriam Roy Fransen

It was with great sadness that we learned of the sudden passing of Roy Fransen at the age of 38, on Wednesday, August 18, 2021.

Roy enjoyed working in the



laboratory at the Central Biobank MUMC+ and grew in his role as a laboratory technician. He was very happy to have gotten a permanent position and he foresaw a bright future. The Biobank's laboratory was his domain and he took on more and more responsibilities. Training students and new employees in the techniques and familiarising them with all the tasks of the Biobank gave him great pleasure. He was proud when they could perform the actions independently. Roy was part of the team and felt at

home at the Biobank. We will never forget that Roy used to have breakfast with Red Bull and biscuits. His love for 'cuddly animals' such as the Quokka and Lamas was fascinating. So was his wish to have a penguin act as the mascot of the Biobank. Together we were working on a promotional film about the Biobank, but with Roy's vivid imagination this slowly became a thriller/action movie at cinema level. We enjoyed Roy's adventures and photos. His experiences with Obstacle runs as well as his stories of his

adventures with cycling, climbing and vacations were greatly appreciated. Unfortunately we have not been able to hear his last stories about the trip to Denmark with his brother. Roy still wanted to travel a lot and had many plans for the future, unfortunately they will not come true. Roy will be missed greatly and our thoughts are with his family and friends. We wish them a lot of strength.

On behalf of the colleagues of the Central Biobank MUMC+

In memoriam Nathan Van Genechten

On July 9, completely unexpectedly, on his 20th birthday Nathan Van Genechten passed away.

Nathan studied Economics and Business Economics at Maastricht University. He started his studies in 2019. Friends and family share that Nathan radiated the joy of life to everyone around



him with his smile, his laughter, the funny anecdotes, his energy and just his presence. With freedom and equity as his core values, he was gentle, caring and thoughtful towards others, present when he needed. He enjoyed practicing sports and he was happy to be able to do so in the university facilities. "Twenty-one", as he was called after

his favourite number, was unique. People that crossed paths with him felt that they found a friend, a sibling and companion and consider themselves lucky and proud for getting to know him. It is difficult to understand that through a tragic car accident his life ended; He was so much looking forward to a new academic year

and to resuming the student life, he liked so much. A big loss for his family, friends and the community of the School of Business and Economics. We remember him with great respect and we can only be proud that he was one of our students.

Students and staff School of Business and Economics

Students, especially those who were close to Nathan, may feel the need for support to deal with his demise. The student advisors at the School of Business and Economics as well as the Psychologists at Maastricht University will be there for you if you need them. Feel free to contact either

Evangelia Ipektzidou (e.ipektzidou@maastrichtuniversity.nl) or Wim Bogaert (w.bogaert@maastrichtuniversity.nl), or the secretariat of student guidance at the Student Services Centre (SSC) by email. You can also contact the Student Chaplaincy, Innbetween, for support (info@innbetween.nl).

De mededelingen van de universiteit, faculteiten, servicecentra en studentenorganisaties zijn te vinden op www.observantonline.nl

The announcements of the university, faculties, service centres and student organisations can be found on www.observantonline.nl

agenda academische zittingen Aula Minderbroederberg 4-6

30-08-2021 13.00: mw. Raginee Baruah	15-09-2021 10.00 dhr. Michaël M. Veldeman
30-08-2021 16.00 mw. Yentl van der Zee	15-09-2021 13.00 dhr Mohammed Ali Alahmari
31-08-2021 10.00 Dhr. Andrew Bowman	15-09-2021 16.00 dhr Kay H.M.Roumans
31-08-2021 13.00 mw. Iulia Falcan	16-09-2021 14.00 dhr Roman Zeleznik
31-08-2021 16.00 mw. Lisanne Canjels	17-09-2021 12.00 mw Sandra van Pelt
01-09-2021 10.00 mw. Teddy A.J. Jothikaran	17-09-2021 14.00 dhr Oscar Timmermans
01-09-2021 13.00 dhr. Sjors C.F. van de Weijer	17-09-2021 16.30 inauguratie Prof. dr. Astrid van Tubergen
01-09-2021 16.00 dhr. Lennart R.A. van der Burg	20-09-2021 10.00 dhr Mariusz Kowalewski
02-09-2021 10.00 dhr. Wouter H.G. Hubbens	21-09-2021 13.00 dhr Han Jin
02-09-2021 12.00 mw. Ankie Reumkens	21-09-2021 16.00 dhr Nkansah Anakwah
02-09-2021 16.00 mw. Anne-Lore Fraikin, joint degree UM en Uliege	22-09-2021 13.00 mw Nynke van Polanen
03-09-2021 10.00 dhr. Pinak Samal	22-09-2021 16.00 mw Sascha R. Bolt
03-09-2021 12.00 dhr. Tim Klaassen	23-09-2021 14.00 mw Charlotte C.M. van Laake-Geelen
03-09-2021 14.00 mw. Lysbeth Jongbloed-Faber	23-09-2021 16.00 afscheidscollege Prof. dr. Sjeff van Erp
03-09-2021 16.30 Inauguratie prof.dr. Machteld Marcelis	24-09-2021 10.00 dhr Wouters K.G. Leclercq
06-09-2021 Opening Academisch Jaar 2021-2022	24-09-2021 12.00 dhr Walderik J. van der Vliet
07-09-2021 13.00 dhr. Volkert H. Hackert	24-09-2021 14.00 mw Manouk L.E. Hendrix
08-09-2021 10.00 dhr. Maximilian Vollmer	24-09-2021 16.30 inauguratie Prof. dr. Jacqueline Strik
09-09-2021 10.00 mw. Siyu Wu	27-09-2021 10.00 mw Anique E.N. Atherley double degree UM and Western Sydney University
09-09-2021 12.00 mw. Lina M. Lozano Montana	27-09-2021 16.00 mw Jessica J Cunningham
09-09-2021 16.30 afscheidscollege Prof. dr. Jan Glatz	28-09-2021 16.00 mw C.M. van Leersum
10-09-2021 10.00 dhr. Hendricus H.H. Schreurs	29-09-2021 13.00 dhr Miguel E. Zoubek Aranda
10-09-2021 12.00 dhr. Remy Jorritsma	30-09-2021 10.00 mw Colja Schneck
10-09-2021 14.00 mw. Willemine L. Willems	30-09-2021 14.00 mw Ellen G.J. Ripmeester
10-09-2021 16.30 inauguratie Prof. dr. Nico Randeraad	30-09-2021 16.30 inauguratie Prof. dr. Ruud Bekker
13-09-2021 13.00 mw. Maria Cámara Torres	
14-09-2021 13.00 dhr Halefom Yigzaw Nigus	

Observant zoekt uitdelers!

Observant is op zoek naar studenten die in de periode week 36 t/m 39 de papieren versie van Observant willen uitdelen in de UM-gebouwen.

Wat ga je doen?

Eén dag in de week sta je twee uur lang op locatie en deel je Observant uit aan iedereen die langskomt. Je bent herkenbaar aan het Observant-shirt dat je van ons krijgt. Jouw dag en de locatie worden in overleg op een later tijdstip bepaald. Je verdient 10 euro per uur.

Interesse?

Stuur een mailtje naar marion.janssens@maastrichtuniversity.nl.



Maastricht University

Interne vacatures

Voor uitgebreide informatie, raadpleeg de website www.maastrichtuniversity.nl. Klik op de link "Werken bij de UM" en vervolgens op "Vacatures". Schriftelijke sollicitaties o.v.v. vacaturenummer op brief en envelop (of elektronisch solliciteren via de vacaturewebsite) richten aan de afdeling HRM van de betreffende faculteit of beheerseenheid (Postbus 616, 6200 MD Maastricht).

www.maastrichtuniversity.nl