



Honours Teaching Course

The role of Honours Teaching at Utrecht University

Honours Teaching at Utrecht University is aimed at providing the top 10% of students (in terms of motivation, ambition and academic performance) with opportunities to get more out of their studies than can be offered in the regular programmes. This provision refers to the education itself, as well as to research activities and/or community service projects.

The honours programme is diverse, which makes sense given the different cultures in different faculties, the differences between Bachelor's and Master's programmes, and the principle of demand-driven education. Both the faculty and interfaculty honours programmes at Utrecht University exist as an experimental and innovative space within Utrecht University education, in which students can pursue activities aligned to their personal choices and ambitions. Honours students explore their chosen discipline in greater depth than the learning outcomes of the regular programme require, look beyond the boundaries of their own field, take initiative within and outside the honours community, and amass substantive and relevant international experience. This description applies to both the Bachelor's and the Master's phase. Another important aspect of successful honours programmes is their trickle-down effect on the regular curriculum; Honours serves as a testing ground, as it were. Consequently, the honours programme acts as a source of inspiration for the regular degree programmes.

Honours Teaching Course

A successful honours programme requires passionate, experienced and highly motivated lecturers. The Honours Teaching course focuses on increasing professionalism in the broad range of lecturers within diverse Honours programmes, who stand to learn from one another on the basis of the ample research conducted on honours students and their characteristics, honours teaching and honours programmes by exchanging knowledge with one another, jointly conducting an in-depth exploration of honours teaching and consequently developing into a network of expert lecturers with a shared vision for honours programmes within Utrecht University. In doing so, optimum use will be made of the knowledge gained through research and the experiential knowledge accumulated in past years.

To date, a considerable number of Utrecht University lecturers have completed the Honours Teaching course (111 lecturers since 2011). The result is a marked increase in the professionalism of the honours programme and beyond. Course participants were enthusiastic about the opportunity to evaluate their ideas on honours teaching methods as well as to expand and deepen their knowledge in this area, all in a pleasant and open atmosphere. They found exchanges with colleagues from other faculties to be enriching. Past participants say that the programme is intensive, varied and inspiring.

This course is being offered under the auspices of the Centre for Academic Teaching (CAT).

At this time, we ask that each faculty nominates candidates for the 9th Honours Teaching course. We expect your nominations no later than 1 June 2019. Please submit them to the CAT Board via the following email address: j.h.tenberge@uu.nl.

Please note: Should any lecturers sign up who are not sufficiently proficient in Dutch, the course will be given in English.

This memo lays out the basic structure of the course.

Objective

After completing this course:

- participants are able to take a substantiated decision about their approach within an honours programme, based on state-of-the-art insights into honours teaching and their vision on the honours programme and education in general;
- participants are able to shape a small portion of the honours programme based on state-of-the-art insights into honours teaching;
- there is a Utrecht University -wide network of expert lecturer who maintain contact with one another and exchange ideas on honours teaching.

Selection

The Honours Teaching course is intended for experienced honours lecturers who are involved in providing an honours programme at Utrecht University at the time of the course, and who demonstrate engagement with the organisation and quality of talent education. The Dean will nominate candidates, after which the CAT Board will take a decision on admission to the course. A maximum of sixteen lecturers may take part in each edition of the course.

Criteria for selection of candidates:

- They must be experienced lecturers who are permanently employed at Utrecht University .
- They have completed at least their University Teaching Qualification (BKO).
- They have been involved in teaching an honours programme at the Bachelor's or Master's phase for at least one academic year.
- They are involved in providing an honours programme at the time of the course.
- They have learning queries related to honours teaching.
- They have an idea for the organisation of part or all of the honours programme in which they are involved.
- They are in a position to attend the course from start to finish, i.e.
 - ✓ to take part in all sessions of the course;
 - ✓ to complete the interim assignments (at least 20 hours).

Selection committee

The Board will take a decision whether to admit the candidate based on:

- the nomination by the Dean;
- the documentation submitted by the candidate (copy of BKO certificate, covering letter with learning queries and an idea for development);
- the outcomes of the intake interview with the candidate, conducted by one of the supervisors at the Honours Teaching course.

Programme supervisors

Michael Burke (Utrecht University Honours Dean) and Hanne ten Berge (Education Development & Training, FSBS, Utrecht University)

Costs

Faculty and participants alike invest their time in this course. The Executive Board covers the out-of-pocket costs for this course.

2019-2020 Calendar

Dates for preparatory phase

1 June 2019	Final deadline for nominations by Dean or Vice Dean
17 June 2019	Final deadline for candidates to submit covering letters
19-26 June 2019	Intake interviews
Before 5 July 2019	Decision on nominations by CAT Board
Soon after	The CAT Board's decisions are shared with the candidates

Course dates

Monday 16 September, 16:00 through Tuesday 17 September, 16:00	24-hour session, outside Utrecht
Monday 7 October, 18:30-20:30	Honours experience session, in Utrecht
Monday 18 November, 10:00-18:00	Full-day session, outside Utrecht
Monday 9 December	Full-day excursion, outside Utrecht
Monday 20 January, 13:00-18:00	Afternoon session, in Utrecht

PROGRAMME	
Assignment to prepare for session <i>Participants elaborate their project idea for an intervention in their own honours programme.</i>	
Participation in SIG Honours Teaching <i>Participants are encouraged to attend the Special Interest Group Honours Teaching. See: https://www.uu.nl/onderwijs/centre-for-academic-teaching-0/sig-honours-teaching (in Dutch).</i>	
Monday 16 September 16.00 – Tuesday 17 September 16.00: State-of-the-art In a conference centre outside Utrecht (with guest speakers) In-depth exploration of themes, learning from one another and comprehension assignments	
Late Monday afternoon and evening: <i>Talented students, interventions</i>	Themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characterising the honours programme in Utrecht What is talent (literature, research results)? • Who are talented students? What are their characteristics and learning-related desires? • Vision on honours programme and its relationship with regular education • Refining of ideas for interventions
Tuesday: <i>Honours teaching methods, honours lecturer, interventions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contemporary insights into honours teaching methods • Who is the honours lecturer? Which competences does honours teaching require? • Perspectives on the differences and similarities between regular and honours programmes • Contemporary insights into honours teaching methods • Refining of ideas for interventions
Interim assignment (18 September-17 November) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Participants elaborate ideas for interventions in their own honours programme.</i> • <i>Interventions will be discussed one-on-one with a programme supervisor.</i> • <i>Observations in one another's honours programmes.</i> 	
Monday evening 7 October 18:30–20:30: Honours experience session In Utrecht. Participants experience what it is like to take part in an honours programme.	
Monday 18 november, 10.00-18.00: Capita selecta In a conference centre outside Utrecht (with guest speakers) In-depth exploration of themes, learning from one another and comprehension assignments	
Morning: <i>Honours teaching methods</i>	Possible themes (please note: exploration of learning queries during first session will help to determine the themes on which the training will focus) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual practice in honours programmes and the intervention ideas of the participants • Fostering community, authenticity, providing space for individual initiative within education, feedback, motivational support, personal guidance, substantive quality, increase to the depth and breadth of learning*
Afternoon: <i>Honours lecturer</i>	(*guest speakers from the Netherlands and abroad who have experience of/have conducted research into the good practices in question)
Interim assignment (19 November -19 January) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Participants elaborate ideas for interventions in their own honours programme.</i> • <i>Interventions will be discussed one-on-one with a programme supervisor.</i> • <i>Observations in one another's honours programmes.</i> 	
Monday 9 December: Excursion Visit to an honoursprogramme in the Netherlands, Belgium or Germany to exchange experiences and discuss specific topics.	
Monday 20 January 13.30-17.30: Paneldiscussion In Utrecht. Exchange on interventions and learning experiences. Discussion with panel.	
<i>Interventions, talented students, honours teaching methods, honours lecturer</i>	Discussion of intervention results and learning outcomes of the course in connection with each of the three themes. Evaluation of the course.