

Senioren Academie Groningen en Drenthe



History

In 1986 the *Senioren Academie* was founded at the *Rijksuniversiteit* (University) *Groningen* with the aim to provide academical education for elderlies. The education is aimed to all people above 50 who are interested in a study. The initiative in Groningen was soon followed up elsewhere in the Netherlands. Nowadays most of the Dutch universities offer education for older people.

Education on offer

For the first course in 1986, an introduction into psychology, a special course model for education for elderly people was developed. The experience since then proves that the model fits its purpose very well. It still forms the basis for the education at the *Senioren Academie* in Groningen and Drenthe, and elsewhere.

There is no formal requirement for a certain pre-education. The course participants are however expected to be able to think on the level of a starting university student.

The basic structure consists of short courses of five to ten lectures, once a week. The lectures are given by one or several university teachers. Some courses also include workshops that are lead by graduates or advanced university students. These workshops meet the need of many senior students for further discussion with other students, thereby deepening their knowledge.

The most popular subjects are history, art, music, literature, philosophy and psychology. Natural sciences are less popular, probably because the students feel that they don't have enough basic knowledge in this field or because they have worked in this field and after retirement want to develop their knowledge in other sciences.

The programme also includes a number of single lectures.

Since 2001 the senior students have the possibility to take part in scientific research projects at the university. These are either regular projects of various faculties or projects that are specifically set up for the senior students. There is also a possibility to do research individually on a subject of one's own choice, with expert advice from a (emerited) university professor.



Since 1998 the *Senioren Academie* also offers travel arrangements. The theme or place to be visited is discussed in a course prior to the start of the trip.

Presently there are more than 1.500 course registrations per year.

In the autumn of 2006 the students could choose from:
in Groningen:

- 37 courses
- 3 lectures

in Emmen:

- 10 courses

Organisation

The *Rijksuniversiteit Groningen*, the *Hanzehogeschool Groningen* and the *Hogeschool Drenthe* are parent institutions. They advise the *Senioren Academie* with respect to content and level of the courses and they provide rooms free of charge. However, the *Senioren Academie* doesn't receive any financial contributions from them. The only sources of income are the course fees, voluntary contributions of senior students for a support fund and some sponsoring from commercial firms.

Senioren Academie Groningen en Drenthe

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