

Strategy for the Faculty of Humanities 2021-2030 - DRAFT

Knowledge for the 21st century

The humanities make an important contribution to the strong position of UiO, and the Faculty's academic communities have influenced Norwegian society since the university was established in 1811. The mission of the Faculty of Humanities (HF) is to contribute new knowledge and insight, and to educate students for a changing working life.

During the next decade, HF will continue to be Norway's leading humanities faculty, and we must be among the best in Europe.

Research of high international quality requires solid disciplines, characterised by curiosity-driven basic research and academic freedom. The Faculty has a strong research profile, and many academic communities at HF are international leaders. This advantageous position is related closely to the Faculty's academic breadth and is the basis for the quality of our research-based education programmes. In the course of the next ten-year period, the education programmes must be strengthened.

Education programmes of high international quality require student-active learning, a focus on a learning environment, integration of students into research, and closer collaboration with practice environments and social partners. Our students must be part of a challenging and inspiring academic community.

HF's staff and students contribute knowledge and skills that are of great value to society. This makes HF an attractive place to study and a workplace that attracts highly-qualified applicants in all job categories, from both Norway and abroad. Our students and staff are our most important resource, and HF is very well-placed to set the course for a new strategy period.

During the next decade, HF may be challenged by changes in the sector, increased competition for students and changes in framework conditions. Innovative thinking and pioneering work are necessary to retain and strengthen the position we hold today. Economic scope for manoeuvre and a flexible organisation that facilitates interdisciplinary collaboration are prerequisites for achieving the Faculty's goals for its activities.

The strategy focuses on areas where the Faculty needs to change over the next ten years.

Diversity, gender equality and organisational culture

HF is and must be a significant, leading faculty characterised by breadth, conviviality and diversity, and a meeting place for people from every part of the world. *This is a source of wealth that must be reflected in HF as an organisation, place of study and research institution. Representativeness, academic freedom and diversity of opinion are important values for the Faculty and must be reflected in its activities.*

Norway is a multicultural society, and Oslo is a multicultural city. HF must be an open and inclusive venue for all groups of students, staff and guests, regardless of gender, orientation, nationality, social background and functional ability. The work to promote equal opportunities and diversity must be followed up on a structured and planned basis. Among other things, HF will seek to achieve a more diverse student population. HF must have an active policy to achieve a gender balance among academic staff, including at professorship level.

A good working environment is a prerequisite for the successful pursuit of academic ambitions. HF's staff and students must experience a good and social learning and working environment characterised by co-determination and knowledge sharing. The Faculty will engage with students, ensuring that they feel part of HF, and offer teaching methods that promote integration. Opportunities for staff and students to contribute and participate must be highlighted.

Major societal challenges

The humanities contribute critical reflection in a globalised and multicultural society. The humanities have underutilised potential to contribute to understanding and resolving the great challenges of our time. We need to be better at achieving this potential, while also more clearly communicating what we are already doing.

The Faculty's academic breadth and strong disciplines provide good opportunities for challenge-driven and societally-relevant research and education. This must be utilised better. HF must be a key contributor to identifying, understanding and resolving challenges in society.

The organisation of research, education and administration must facilitate and support cooperation that contributes to responding to challenges in society. The Faculty will develop collaborative arenas and support interdisciplinary research and education initiatives.

Societally relevant perspectives must be better integrated into existing and new study programmes. This can be achieved through more research-oriented teaching methods and in collaboration with external parties. Students must be aware of how their expertise is relevant in contributing to understanding, discussing and resolving challenges in society.

The greatest potential for growth in research grants to HF lies in thematic programmes. The thematic programmes under the Research Council of Norway and in the EU framework programme are fully or partly aimed at societal challenges and to a great extent require interdisciplinary approaches. On a wider scale than today, HF's research communities must compete for the awards from thematic programmes.

Sustainability

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the point of departure for the Faculty's perception of the concept of sustainability. The Faculty's breadth and international perspectives make HF particularly qualified to contribute to both interpreting and defining the SDGs, and to promoting these goals through our research, education and dissemination.

Democracy is under pressure, and HF must be an active contributor to research and education concerning democracy. A better understanding is needed of how knowledge can be used and misused, and how it can motivate people to act. Inequality is an increasing problem, and HF will contribute knowledge of how inequality in a broad sense can lead to polarisation and erosion of trust in society.

The multicultural reality is enriching. At the same time it also presents challenges because culture and identity can create conflict. HF has a special responsibility to understand and explore contemporary cultural change processes, locally and globally. Our researchers and PhD students must contribute to understanding cultural complexity, and work to ensure that culture and society are characterised by tolerance, even in situations marked by tensions and contradictions.

HF's unique cultural heritage expertise gives the Faculty a responsibility for ensuring that knowledge of majority and minority cultures and languages in Norway is developed and described in research and teaching.

The climate crisis is a global challenge that HF will contribute to resolving with knowledge of the interaction between people, nature and technology. The challenge is not only a lack of scientific understanding of the climate crisis, but also how people relate to scientific knowledge. We must teach our students about these complex interactions, so that they can carry this with them in their further careers.

HF must contribute to efforts to achieve the climate goals, and to do so, we must be flexible and change how we work and study. The Faculty must reduce its own greenhouse gas emissions through binding measures related to operations and to staff and student travel activities. The Faculty must facilitate that staff and students can make environmentally-aware choices in their everyday studies and working lives.

[Societal relevance and engagement](#)

Expertise in the humanities is necessary for society, and the Faculty must ensure that this knowledge benefits society through the education programmes offered. HF is a knowledge-based premise provider that contributes to debate and knowledge sharing in the general domain through extensive dissemination activities. As a faculty in a capital city, HF must be a visible player in the city of Oslo.

In view of the current trends for increasing mistrust of research and expertise, new solutions are required. Traditional dissemination is not sufficient, and HF must put new dissemination and communication arenas into play. Through contact and cooperation with relevant decision-makers and parties in society, HF must work to ensure that knowledge is used.

HF will make a greater contribution to reducing inequality and to promoting inclusion and citizenship. HF will be in productive dialogue with many different groups in society, and we will include citizens in research to a greater extent. This will promote knowledge sharing,

and make valuable contributions to research and opportunities for society's active involvement.

HF will give students skills that they can use in the labour market of the future, and from which employers can benefit. Key qualifications are strong professional expertise, an affinity for critical reflection, context awareness, digital skills, and oral and written dissemination skills, together with a capacity for cooperation and creative thinking. The content of the study programmes must ensure that students achieve these qualifications.

Through academic interrelations at HF, and with other academic communities at UiO, and through collaboration with external parties, HF's educational provision must be even more relevant for society, while students must become more aware of their own expertise. Better contact with alumni will contribute to highlighting different career paths for the students, and bring external perspectives into teaching and the development of the education programmes.

In order to offer outstanding education programmes, research and education must be more closely linked. More students will contribute to research and research projects. This will give the students valuable expertise and experience, making the research more relevant. Research-oriented teaching methods must be developed and used in all of HF's study programmes.

Lifelong learning is increasingly defined as part of the Faculty's mission in society, and HF will contribute to ensuring that a rapidly changing society has updated expertise. The Faculty must avail of the opportunities that are opening up in the field of continuing and further education, and establish offers that are in demand and relevant. Schools are an important collaboration partner, but HF will also offer continuing and further education to other areas of working life and society. These offers must reflect HF's portfolio and should not steal resources from ordinary teaching. The focus must be on offers that can be developed in parallel with or be integrated into other education programmes.

Digitalisation and technology

The data-driven society offers new opportunities and makes new demands of us as individuals and as a society. It also presents us with new dilemmas. The humanities are of particular relevance to the intersection between man and machine and the ethical and political perspectives that arise in this meeting. In the coming years, research methods and topics will be characterised by digitalisation, and the everyday work of education programmes and administration will become even more digitalised.

HF already has strong technology environments, but needs to become even stronger in this area. HF will make sustainable utilisation of new technologies in research and take greater ownership of research into and using technology. This requires the use and development of relevant infrastructures, such as databases and laboratories. HF will work according to plan on the development and administration of digital resources, also in collaboration with competence environments outside the Faculty.

To a great extent, open research is driven by new technologies. This not only includes free access to publications, but also the sharing of data, methods and educational material. To ensure better research, HF's researchers must be more transparent about the research process. Research material should also be used in teaching and contribute to better dissemination.

HF will use digital tools to raise the quality of education programmes and for better deployment of teaching resources, for the benefit of students. HF must have a learning centre to develop and support the use of digital teaching methods and be an arena for skills development, sharing of experience and discussion of teaching.

Everyone who is to join the labour market has a need for digital expertise. During their education programmes, students will gain experience in using various digital tools that will give them the skills needed in the workplace.

More flexible organisation

The organisational structure of the University and Faculty impedes collaboration across the organisation. Economic scope for manoeuvre and a flexible organisation that enables cross-disciplinary collaboration are a prerequisite for HF to achieve the goals for its activities.

A more flexible organisation is one of the goals for the next ten years. The Faculty needs a plan that describes the challenges and solutions. HF must make organisational changes and set priorities that promote interaction between subjects and units.

The Faculty must facilitate innovative research and educational cooperation in the form of administrative support and incentives. We will face the upcoming challenges by making better use of our resources across the organisation, working more smartly, and using good tools. These goals concern research, education, dissemination and administration.