



sirius program

excellence in higher education



Driestar hogeschool

TALENT IN ONTWIKKELING



Driestar Educatief teacher-training university

Driestar Educatief is a teacher-training university in Gouda in the Netherlands. The students study to become Bachelors of Education, which enables them to find jobs as primary or secondary school teachers. The teacher-training program is one of the best offered by any Dutch university. We are part of an organization that has extensive knowledge of education based on Christian values and biblical sources. Driestar Educatief is a Christian knowledge centre for teacher-training activities, care and advice for special-needs children and consultancy.

We explain the word 'Driestar' as a triangle ['drie' means 'three' in Dutch] in which the school is in the center of a triangle formed by the family, the church and society at the three corners of the triangle. The school is in the centre because it serves all three concepts. We teach young people to think about themselves and within the concepts of the triangle. We teach the students not only to be aware of their position as human beings in the world, but also that it is important to become good, responsible, God-fearing citizens of our society.

The profile of a teacher

The profile of the teacher as a person is as follows:

- First of all, he is a Christian. That means:
 - Having a deep respect for God,
 - Loving God and human beings,
 - Following the teachings of Christ in his daily life,
 - Living a thankful life.
- He is trustworthy, reliable, honest, open and respectful.
- He is present, available, involved in the relationship with his pupils, compassionate and merciful.

- He is authentic, a real human being, enthusiastic, capable of anger, humor, happiness, and passion. He knows his weaknesses but also his strengths.
- He creates an educational environment that challenges and stimulates.
- He has knowhow and professional skills in the subjects he teaches.
- He has the ability to create new educational forms.

The essence of Christian teaching

We have compiled a small book with others in the field in which Driestar Educatief works. The others include teachers at reformed protestant schools, their board members, and students and teachers at the teacher-training university. The book can serve as a guideline and a source of inspiration. The book's main headlines are:

1. Teaching is the joining of Creation, nature, culture and your fellow man.
2. The Heart is the centre of education. "To teach is to touch a heart."



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3. The teacher opens contents and their secrets, granting the pupils a view of the mysterious world around them. He has their development in mind and seeks coherence in the contents. He takes his time and tries to make thorough learning possible.
4. Responsibility is a core value. Autonomy is not the goal of learning, but rather helpfulness. Responsibility means responsibility to God, our fellow man, Creation and dedication to culture.
5. The teacher encourages his pupils. He is an example in his way of living (identification). He knows them as unique personalities. The teacher is close by (presence) but knows that he must keep his professional distance.

International class

Driestar Educatief has an international class focusing on Christian pedagogy. The international class offers 15 European credits, amounting to 3 months of full-time studying, starting in September 2010. Ideally, about half of the participants will come from outside the Netherlands, the rest are Bachelor's students from our own teacher-training colleges for both primary and secondary education. The minor has the title: 'Christian pedagogy, crossing the borders'. It is meant to give students a deeper insight into fundamental choices in classroom practice from a Christian perspective. Part of the minor course may be spent in a primary or secondary school in the Netherlands, in which case tailor-made assignments for students will be issued.'

Honors program

Driestar Educatief will develop a new honors program. In 2009 we received a grant from the Dutch government to contribute to the expansion of challenging programs for excellent students. The ambition is to give the primary and secondary schools high-potential students with pedagogical and didactical knowhow who contribute with their inspiring vision to the education and the culture of the school. There will be a strict selection of students in the first two years in the TTC. After that period they are part of a community of talented young people. In this class there will be a focus on professionalism in order to be completely equipped for the job market. The central theme is mastering teaching skills. In addition to skills, the teacher as a person will also be fully involved. As a Christian, the student will know the biblical notions about raising children and how to make them responsible and responsive human beings.

The Sirius Program: Excellence in Higher Education

The Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) has created the Sirius Program to allow higher education institutions to experiment with a range of excellence programs between 2008 and 2013, involving their most talented and motivated students. By allowing research universities and universities of applied sciences to challenge their best students, the Ministry aims to gain an understanding of how excellence can best be achieved, and of the obstacles that currently exist. The largest portion of the budget has been earmarked for the Bachelor's program that was launched in 2008 (€ 48.8 million), for which 16 applications have been approved. Excellence is being promoted across the entire breadth of these university institutions, involving at least 5% of all students in each case. There is a lot of diversity, both in the chosen definitions of 'excellence' and 'excellent students' and in the activities being developed. Work is carried out based on performance agreements (high trust). Sirius organizes a learning program in which institutions learn from themselves and each other, and in which knowledge is also made available to the entire sector and the government. The Master's program, with a budget of € 12.2 million, will start in 2010.

