

Workshop „How to motivate faculty to engage in Teaching for Sustainability?“

Sustainable University Day 2015

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As part of our project “Development of a Curriculum Integrating Sustainable Development in Management Education” (<https://www.alexandria.unisg.ch/Projekte/226834>), we realized that one of the most important leverages to reach our goal is faculty motivation. Thus, we developed a workshop on „How to motivate faculty to engage in Teaching for Sustainability & Responsibility?“ We started out with two students’ statements (Cécile Schmid and Vanessa DaCosta) who reflected to what extent responsibility and sustainability were integrated in the curricula of their studies at the bachelor’s and master’s level. In a next step, about 25 participants from 10 different Swiss universities discussed the typical challenges for faculty. We identified three categories:

- institutional challenges: e.g. no possibilities for interdisciplinary cooperation;
- pedagogical challenges, e.g. missing concepts or methods;
- individual challenges, e.g. no interest in the topic.

The core of the workshop was a world café where participants discussed three questions:

(1) Which good practices regarding the integration of sustainable development in the curriculum can we communicate to our faculty?

Concrete ideas included authentic case studies, the introduction of responsibility and sustainability by an expert in different classes so that both students and faculty get to know the topic or the task for students to identify sustainability issues in a class (instead of the lecturer taking over this task).

(2) What are drivers for faculty to integrate sustainable development into their curriculum?

Three different drives were identified: (a) incentives from the universities such as awards for (teaching) projects in the field of sustainability and responsibility and their proactive communication, (b) changing the recruiting and promotion strategies of faculty, (c) fostering students’ interest in the topic, for instance, by showing them the practical relevance of the topic in companies and organizations.



(3) What kind of support is needed by faculty? What measures/tools/ideas do exist?

An example was the development of a teaching guideline which is currently developed in another project at the University of Bern (http://www.sd-universities.ch/project_funding/funded_projects/index.php?id=A2-5). It would also support faculty if pedagogical and subject-matter experts (both from university and from companies) were available to consult with them. Other possibilities include network activities or workshops for an exchange on how to teach responsibility and sustainability.

The workshop generated many ideas which will be integrated into a paper on the topic. At this point, we would like to thank all participants for the valuable exchange!

A more detailed description of the workshop (in German) is available at

<http://blog.hochschulentwicklung.ch/2015/03/25/rueckblick-auf-unseren-workshop-am-sustainable-university-day-2015-an-der-universitaet-st-gallen/>