



University for Peace
Universidad para la Paz



PRME Principles for Responsible
Management Education

Sharing Information on Progress 2010

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Message from the Rector



The University for Peace (UPEACE), which was founded by the United Nations in 1980, has long been teaching subjects such as international law, human rights, settlement of disputes, respect for other persons and cultures, sustainable development, and respect for the environment. These subjects are, of course, at the heart of the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME), and they remain the core of the education which UPEACE offers.

Beginning in 2008, UPEACE opened a new MA program, in "Responsible Management and Sustainable Economic Development" (RMSED). Our rationale was that the economy, including the world of business and the private

sector, is basic to world affairs, to human development, and to the future of the planet. Just as we have always had as our purpose to prepare leaders who can ensure mutual respect among peoples and cultures, the protection of human rights in all situations, and the protection of the world's environment, we wished to ensure that people who are entering the world of business, or related economic professions, would also learn the basic principles of fairness, ethical behaviour, responsibility and the need for sustainability and equity, as they enter professional life.

The PRME thus fit very well with the central objectives and purposes of UPEACE, and we have integrated them smoothly into our approach to the issues and subjects dealt with in our RMSED program. We are very proud of our record in offering this type of education "to humanity," in carrying out our unique mandate from the United Nations.

The following report focuses on how we have specifically ensured that the PRME are integrated into the teaching of our RMSED course and other related subjects.

John J. Maresca
Rector
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The University for Peace

The University for Peace brings a different perspective to PRME. The University is not a business school; rather, it is a school focused on the promotion of peace. The University introduced the Responsible Management and Sustainable Economic Development programme, recognizing the potential of the private sector to help build peace.

The wider mission of the University should be seen in the context of the worldwide peace and security objectives of the United Nations. The central importance of education, training, and research, in all their aspects, to build the foundations of peace and progress and to reduce the prejudice and hatred on which violence, conflict, and terrorism are based is increasingly recognized. The Charter of the University calls for UPEACE “*to contribute to the great universal task of educating for peace by engaging in teaching, research, post-graduate training and dissemination of knowledge fundamental to the full development of the human person and societies through the interdisciplinary study of all matters related to peace*” (<http://www.upeace.org/about/>).

In order to ensure the intrinsically interdisciplinary nature of academic offerings, all students engage in an initial foundation course in international peace studies and choose a variety of electives. The University offers a range of such electives as part of a “University for Peace Institute” in January and June of each year, inviting professionals, practitioners, academicians and students from other institutions to participate in interactive classes and informal gatherings that bring together different viewpoints and cultures (S-G’s Report 2009, page 3).

Every country and every community needs leaders for peace. We are helping to prepare such leaders, who can take their places at every level of society, and in every walk of life (<http://www.upeace.org/about/welcome.cfm>).



Principle 1

Purpose: We will develop the capabilities of students to be generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

Progress:

Responsible Management and Sustainable Economic Development

The University for Peace introduced a new Masters programme in the 2009-2010 academic year. The Master of Arts Degree Programme in Responsible Management and Sustainable Economic Development (RMSED) emphasizes the economic and management perspectives of peace and conflict studies while focusing on the concepts of sustainability and responsibility as applied to economic disciplines.



The programme focuses on the complexities of today's global challenges, such as the impacts of globalization, financial crises, complex political emergencies, and climate change on developing economies and, more specifically, war-torn societies.

RMSED graduates are able to understand and analyze key theoretical and conceptual dimensions related to economics and management, and the principles of sustainability and responsibility.

Our graduates are given the tools to analyze the impacts of policies, reforms and political decisions in the international, regional, and local context in order to be able to exercise greater influence over policy and decision making processes.

Finally, they will become "sustainable and responsible managers" who will be able to work in the corporate sector, public sector, or social sector, both in "industrialized countries" and in developing countries.

Ideally, RMSED participants will be employed by international and national organizations in the non-profit as well as for-profit sectors. As most corporate businesses,

as well as public and social organizations, are keen to adopt management models which encourage sustainable and responsible behaviour, our graduates will be easily absorbed into the labour market (<http://www.upeace.org/academic/masters/rmsed.cfm>).

The Centre for Executive Education

The Centre for Executive Education provides seminars and workshops to non-profit leaders, business executives, educators at all levels, UN staff, and other professional audiences.

The UPEACE Centre for Executive Education delivers dynamic short courses to non-profit leaders, business executives, educators, and other professional audiences who could play a significant role in world peace and security issues. The approach to all courses is participant-centered, using case-studies and field trips when appropriate. The courses also aim to enhance leadership skills by addressing critical themes such as intercultural communication, inter-personal conflict resolution, and teambuilding. The Centre offers intensive seminars on a regular basis, both in Costa Rica as well as in other countries.



For more information on the Centre's offerings go to: www.centre.upeace.org/.

Earth Charter International Secretariat, and Earth Charter Center of Education for Sustainable Development at UPEACE

The Earth Charter International (ECI) Secretariat, based at the University for Peace campus in Costa Rica, has as one of its focus areas the involvement of the private sector in the



implementation of sustainable development practices. The strategy involves building partnerships with organizations and initiatives who are working with the private sector to synergize efforts, mostly related to bring education opportunities to learn about values and ethics for sustainable development, and how to assess and improve their commitment towards sustainability and accountability to civil society and other stakeholders.

ECI Secretariat has built partnerships with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), the National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development (the Netherlands), Ethos Institute (Brazil) and Amana key (Brazil) among others.

For more information, visit our webpage: www.earthcharter.org, and our business section: <http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/categories/Business/?Page=2>.

Future Plans:

The RMSED programme has just completed its first year. Over the next year this programme will continue to be refined. The Centre for Executive Education will continue to present CSR workshops around the world. In 2011, Earth Charter International Secretariat expects to continue the partnerships forged so far, and is continually looking for new partners in different parts of the world.

Principle 2

Values: We will incorporate the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact into our academic activities and curricula.

Progress:

The RMSED Masters Programme has introduced a series of courses that specifically address this principle. These include, among others:

Introduction to Responsible Management

The roles and responsibilities of business as well as governments and social sector are becoming more urgent and complex, and concepts related to societal responsibility and sustainability are gaining recognition as essential elements in business management. The need for responsible global citizens, leaders, and managers is urgent, and this course helps students in sharing and providing ideas, frameworks, and case studies to ensure that they understand their role as responsible citizens, and future leaders and managers.

A more “responsible” workforce will allow corporations, governments, NGOs, and communities to contribute, rather than detract from the sustainability of the world. Recent empirical research shows that profitability is greater for those companies that are actively engaged in the resolution of global issues and that a better interconnection between all sectors will achieve a more sustainable development and world economy.

The course is taught as a combination between theories and practical exercises, introduced and coached by external experts from the corporate, social, and public sectors.

Economics, Peace and (International) Development

This course is a broad examination of the notion of economic development: its theory, practice as well as policies but with a specific emphasis on the concept of sustainability, at social, economic, cultural and political level. It offers students an opportunity to better understand the concept of economic development from the traditional point of view where the analysis of the economic progress of nations was only measured by economic growth, to the present debate concerning development, which is focusing more on poverty and inequality as well as on questions concerning governance. Throughout the course, special attention is given to the role of conflict in development. The course discusses both national and international development issues, such as international trade and finance. Special attention is also given to various aspects of globalisation, including international governance and international negotiations. Development theories are discussed in depth, as well as practical experiences in development.



Social Entrepreneurship with Field Experience

The worlds of ‘working for the betterment of society’ and ‘private enterprise’ are often seen as incompatible. This course attempts to break-down that perception in order for participants to see the social sector as a place of opportunity, both to ‘do good’ and to innovate and build a financially sustainable enterprise, whether non-profit, for-profit, or some combination of the two. The course suggests that in order to get a socially beneficial idea off the ground, effectively grow it, and make it financially sustainable, social entrepreneurs need to think creatively, reaching beyond models of traditional non-profits or for-profits.

This hands-on and dynamic course exposes participants to a number of cases of social entrepreneurs who have converted their desire of building a better world into a reality. The course includes a significant field-based component in which participants experience first-hand a community-based social enterprise in Costa Rica. The course offers the space and structure for participants to begin developing their own business plan for a socially beneficial venture.

Sustainable Development

This course is a broad examination of sustainable development: its theory, practice, policies, and principles. It offers an opportunity for students to become familiar with the international processes that were initiated with the Brundtland Commission report *Our Common Future* in 1987. It reviews the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development process and outcomes; and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. The course also offers an opportunity to reflect and dialogue about global challenges, the concept of development, global ethics, the notion of responsibility and the principles of sustainability outlined in the Earth Charter. The sessions aim to deepen understanding on the integrated approach of sustainable development and fundamental principles of sustainability.

The 15-session course offers a space for students to reflect on ways to become ethical and responsible leaders. It equips students with the capacity to identify sustainable ways to live and encourages them to adopt such lifestyles. By the end of the course, students are aware of the key values and principles necessary to achieve sustainability. It also offers a space to critically analyse the major arenas, institutions, and procedures for implementing the concept.

Future plans:

Continuous revisions and updates, the development of different courses, and the input of visiting professors and guest-speakers will continue to enrich the Programme and adapt it to world challenges.

Principle 3

Method: We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

Progress:

The Responsible Management and Sustainable Economic Development Master's Programme is in itself a framework enabling effective learning experiences for responsible leadership. The programme brings together students from around the world, and with varying experiences, in an attempt to build responsible leadership at all levels and in all places.

Our first year brought together students from North, Central and South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. Their backgrounds include business, government, international organizations, and civil society. By bringing together such a diverse set of students, an environment of inter-cultural and inter-organizational understanding is developed, adding significant depth and breadth to the programme.

Principle 4

Research: We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental, and economic value.

Progress:

Within the scope of the programme, many papers are written on various aspects of responsible management, CSR, private sector/civil society partnerships, etc. Theses that are currently under way involve original research into Social Entrepreneurship, CSR, Fair Trade, and Academic/Civil Society/Business Partnerships within the Global Compact.

Principle 5

Partnership: We will interact with managers of corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges they face in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to jointly explore effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

Progress:



The Centre for Executive Education reaches out to those in the private sector wishing to learn more about CSR. The following are a sampling of workshops offered around the world:

1) Corporate Social Responsibility – Walking the Talk

This workshop is designed for business executives and those interested in working in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The workshop goes beyond the incentives for engaging in CSR and addresses the question: ‘How does one implement it?’

2) International Business Perspective in Costa Rica

This course allows participants to view first-hand the environmental factors that influence business decision making and will provide students a context for the development of global strategies. Site visits to organizations will permit students to learn about and discuss items related to organization strategy. Students become sensitized to the impact that business decisions have on society. Overall, the course will give participants an understanding of management decision-making in Costa Rica where cultural, social, and economic models and expectations are unique.

3) Non-profit Leadership: Maximizing Impact

The working environment in the non-profit sector is changing at a rapid rate due to changes in society, information flows, new technologies, growing partnership options, and more. As a result, leading and managing a non-profit organization in this dynamic climate presents new opportunities as well as challenges. This course will focus on the specific challenges of strategic planning, impact measurement, innovative fundraising approaches, and interpersonal skills, including emotional intelligence.

4) Educating for the 21st Century/Educational Leadership for Peace and Sustainability

The world is changing at an extremely rapid pace, affecting the essence of how we learn, interact, and work. As educators, can we create learning experiences to equip our students for a future that is constantly changing? This week-long course, designed both for formal and non-formal educators, employs a variety of pedagogical approaches and real-life examples that take into account the changes occurring in the 21st century. The course demonstrates the need for the integration of peace education into current curriculum.

With regard to the Earth Charter International Secretariat, the Global Reporting Initiative recommends the Earth Charter to organizations that seek an extended normative or ethical guide on how they could advance sustainability. For example, they included in their global conference on Sustainability and Transparency, held in Amsterdam in May 2010, a special session called "*Learn about the Earth Charter principles and the GRI Guidelines*". Just like this activity, there have been several education opportunities since 2008 for business groups to learn about Earth Charter and GRI, and how these could help in their engagement towards sustainable development.

In addition, Earth Charter International Secretariat offers its support to specific companies who are willing to move towards more sustainable ways of production, and who have found in the Earth Charter an encompassing framework suitable for them. Some companies who have been working with us since 2009 are Itaipu hydroelectric dam (Brazil), Parque del Lago Hotel (Costa Rica), Arlington Hotel (USA) and Promotora Ambiental (Mexico).