Report on the UN-PRME

1. Letter of renewed commitment

As an institution of higher learning involved in the education of current and future managers, the University of Applied Sciences of the Canton of Zurich is ready to renew its commitment in engaging in a continuous process of improvement in the application of the Principles for Responsible Management Education.

2. Concerning the reported principles

This report describes the achievements we made at the University of Applied Sciences in Business Administration of Zurich. The report focuses on the principles 2 and 4.

Principle 2: Values: We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

Two institutions at the University of Applied Sciences in Business Administration Zurich fundamentally contribute to what can be called “responsible management education”. The Institute for Strategic Management: Stakeholder View is one of the oldest stakeholder research groups in Europe. The Center for Corporate Social Responsibility was established in 2009 and concentrates on the aspects of business ethics. Both institutions pursue research work and contribute to the curricula of the Bachelor’s as well as Master’s education. Since 2010 the head of the Center for Corporate Social Responsibility teaches CSR and business ethics throughout all Bachelors courses and continues its work in the MSc classes. Being part of the Bachelors, as well as the Master of Science curricula, was a major achievement for the Center for CSR in 2010. Ethics and CSR is also part of most of the Courses on Advanced Studies level.

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.

During 2010, Professor Sybille Sachs, head of the Institute for Strategic Management: Stakeholder View, Professor Edwin Rühli and their research team have been working on the new theory book “Stakeholder Matter: A new Paradigm for Strategy in Society” which is almost finished and will be published by Cambridge University Press in September 2011. This book proposes a paradigm shift from the invisible hand of the market to the visible hands of the firm and the stakeholders.

Furthermore the Institute for Strategic Management: Stakeholder View has launched a project in collaboration with the Swiss Commission for Technology and Innovation. At present, many organizations conduct stakeholder dialogues on most diverse subjects. By doing so, a systematic evaluation of these engagements and an answer to the question regarding the benefits of these dialogues for the organization as well as the involved stakeholders remains absent. This is exactly
what the project, by Prof. Dr. Sybille Sachs, Prof. Dr. Ruth Schmitt (FHNW) and their teams, in cooperation with Brugger und Partner AG assesses.

Dr. Christoph Weber-Berg, head of the Center for Corporate Social Responsibility, has his research focus on the „Human case for CSR“. In this context he attended and contributed to several conferences, for example the EABIS Conference in Stresa on “The Future of Economics and Management in a Post-Crisis World” and the 16th International Symposium on “Ethics, Business and Society” at IESE Business School in Barcelona. Furthermore he published some articles in international renowned journals.

Furthermore the Center for Corporate Social Responsibility could successfully finalize a consulting project with a Swiss bank.

3. Future perspectives and key objectives

In future it is very important to promote the research in sustainable and responsible management, and to collaborate with companies to guarantee the transfer between research and empiricism.

The Center for Corporate Social Responsibility is a nonprofit organization, associated to HWZ University of Applied Sciences in Business Administration, and its key objective for 2011 is to guarantee its continuing existence through successful fundraising.

4. Support that may be of help from other PRME signatories or from the PRME Steering Committee

At present, there is no specific need for support.