The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance’s PRME Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) Report

The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance
Our Vision: To solve global questions and local problems in today’s society, business, government, and civil society must collaborate. Furthermore, entrepreneurial personalities are needed to challenge existing borders of their respective disciplines, to develop innovative solutions, and to implement them. The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance aims to provide a platform and be a forum for entrepreneurs, change agents, and innovators, contributing to the advancement of intelligent solutions for current social problems. Our unique combination of practice-oriented teaching, political platform, and application-oriented research allows the School to offer a credible, impartial, and safe platform, and allows it to be a key catalyst effecting a sustainable process of change.

Practice-oriented teaching
Our goal is to train dedicated entrepreneurial personalities who can take effective decisions and act in a politically responsible manner. The School’s Executive Master of Public Policy and the Executive Education supplementary training programs cater for these needs. A practice-oriented project that aims to offer a solution to a specific socio-political problem forms the basis and core of our level education.

We are pleased to share with you below our SIP Report.

Prof. Dr. Gesine Schwan
President
HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance
**Principle 1**

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

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**Master of Public Policy of the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance**

The Master of Public Policy program is a unique, joint educational program between the European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) and the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, administered through the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance gGmbH.

This Master program provides engaged and committed students from diverse backgrounds including politics, business, and civil society with the skills to:

- Develop, implement, and communicate strategies for individual policy areas;
- Bring ideas to life in private, political, or civil society organizations and shape and guide processes of change;
- Conceptualize and implement projects and activities in the public sector and political realms.

Over the course of the four-semester-long study program, students will learn to:

- Formulate and address complex new questions;
- Navigate along different dimensions of a complex challenge;
- Proceed effectively with the (limited) resources available;
- Integrate the distinct expectations of various stakeholders into one effective win-win solution.

Students will combine their distinct multidisciplinary knowledge and diverse professional experiences in order to address subjects based on their own varied perspectives.

The heart of the Master of Public Policy program lies in the hands-on, practice-oriented project. Students will address problems pertaining to their own organization and, during the course of the MPP degree, develop and implement solutions to these problems in their daily work environments. Students will thereby acquire the concrete and practical skills needed for dealing with complex decision-making processes. For the organization in which the student works, this innovative problem solving and implementation process will entail a real added value. In working on their projects, every student will be able to rely on the guidance and support of a personal adviser provided by the program. Successful students will leave the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance after four semesters experienced and trained as leaders, able to effectively apply the tools needed to competently and sustainably manage complex societal problems or organizations.
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.

All activities at the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance are guided by the following principles:

Problem Solving
Complex problems are important opportunities to reshape and rearrange. Problem-solving is an open, understanding-based process that seeks to arrive at a consensus in addressing even the most complicated issues; successful problem-solving will try to work from a shared perspective to find joint strategies and techniques to approach complex conflicts.

Multi-disciplinary and Multi-perspective Thinking and Acting
Knowledge of problem-solving methods is a necessary component of many social disciplines, as well as something demanded by many concrete situations. The ability to apply these methods effectively is the key to finding long-lasting solutions to various challenges and obstacles.

Process Orientation
Only with the application of adequate procedures and processes can the development of solutions to complex problems be successful; what is therefore needed is a readiness for and willingness to engage in an open and productive dialogue.

Learning
Problem-solving is a vital aspect of any given learning process, as well as a departure point for addressing complex new challenges. Policy that reflects and integrates ongoing change is the core element of a “learning society.” The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance’s educational program therefore places particular importance on the development of both individual and collective learning skills, as well as on the ability to adjust problem-solving strategies according to new demands made by changing situations.

Intercultural Understanding
Attempts to address cultural differences influence countless aspects of society, and affect everything from urban planning to the international strategies employed by companies and governments. In order to be able to properly identify and assess the ‘cultural’ facets of certain projects and decisions, a certain sensitivity to and ability to work within intercultural contexts is vital.

Political Orientation
In the development of political problem-solving, the logic of distinct approaches must be considered; political design is an interactive process between those who shape policy and those who are influenced by its designs. It is those who are directly affected by policy who most often organize themselves, and, both individually and in small groups, uncover and implement effective solutions to problems.

The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance seeks to put these goals and principles into action in three areas of activity – political platform, teaching and research.
**Principle 3**

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

Acting as a forum as well as a teaching and research facility, the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance develops new approaches to leadership and initiates innovative processes of change. The School moderates between the perspectives found in distinct academic disciplines and social spheres. As an institution, the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA’s unique contribution lies in advancing and sometimes effectively developing concrete solutions to political and social problems, with a special focus on their practical realisation and (when necessary) modification. The School thereby strengthens cooperation between governments, business, and civil society and helps to improve democratic decision-making processes.

*The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance. Not just thinking. Acting.*

Examples include:

- The “Center for Peace Mediation”, an arm of the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance, is an academically and practically involved player in international peace processes.
- A new methodical approach to legislative processes focuses on transparency and traceability and effectively integrates stakeholders’ claims.
- In researching funding for non-profit activities, a growing internet platform for socially conscious projects worldwide – betterplace.org – was created.
- The project “ACIS” identifies practical ways to improve the organizational capacities of NGOs alongside their relevant actors.

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**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.

**Research Profile**

Research conducted at the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance aims to facilitate and improve the cooperation between governments, business, and civil society by developing innovative concepts aimed at managing and solving societal challenges. The School’s research profile is guided by the institution’s overall mission statement and can be characterized by the following principles:

**Practical Applicability**

Questions and issues that originate from practical concerns are addressed and will be embraced by experts and practitioners in politics, business, and civil society with regard to the practical application of research.

**Innovation as key driver**

Innovation arises from dealing with a question or problem, not from a given solution. The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA uncovers new questions and problems relevant across disciplines, thereby making room for innovation.
Multi-Sector Approach
Actors from various social sectors, and not only specialists, are to be included in the process of conceptualizing and implementing projects.

Practice-oriented Research
Understanding the practical relevance and complexities of a particular issue requires a systematic, procedural approach. This approach must start with identifying problems and the role of regulatory requirements, and conclude with an analysis and thorough evaluation of the setbacks possible in implementation. In so doing, one deals with issues in a dynamic, nonlinear fashion, demanding constant refinement and revaluation. If problem solving is to succeed, it is crucial to analyze the contributions that different disciplines can offer to the field, as well as to carefully assess the claims of validity that different disciplines might make. Even in successfully formulating a problem, the interaction between different disciplines (as well as the capacity for productive dialogue among these disciplines’ main actors) is tested. Accordingly, disciplines must constantly reflect upon and “negotiate” their individual approach (and the scope of their contribution) to problem-solving. Doing so is greatly facilitated by a procedural method, confronting issues on a step by step basis.

The unique contribution of the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance lies in the creation of a forum, wherein these distinct proposals can be moderated, assessed and in some cases unified. In providing this space, in acting as a platform for policy development and reform, and in the work that the School does alongside its students, novel approaches and ideas will be stimulated and engaged, applied and evaluated.

Current Areas of Research
The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA SCHOOL of Governance identifies relevant topics in accordance with the School’s distinct research profile. Currently, following are some of the key research areas of School:

Lawmaking
In the study of legislation, the development of new techniques and methods for successfully drafting legislation is examined. The overall process begins with the identification of regulatory needs and ends with the implementation and evaluation of new bodies of rules.

Peace Mediation / Mediation in Peace Processes
Applying academically tested methods, the Center for Peace Mediation supports international peace processes. Key instruments for a constructive monitoring of peace processes and the development of long-term solutions to a conflict situation are taken from an interest-based model of conflict resolution.

Financing Social Cause
The effective procurement of funding for nonprofit organisations and social businesses is at the centre of this research area. In addition to other successes, research has resulted in the creation of ‘betterplace.org,’ an international internet platform for communication on worldwide social projects.

Effective Judicial
The research project on ‘Effective Judicial’ deals with the question of how civil trials can be improved and accelerated to the satisfaction of all parties. Visualization techniques can, for example, help to make decision-making processes more transparent.
Anti-Corruption Incentives and Sanctions for Business
The project analyzes and tests in real world situations existing and potential anti-corruption incentives and sanctions to achieve a sustainable impact on the behavior of business by providing successful models for practical implementation.

Library
The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance is home to the only interdisciplinary library in Germany focused on the subject of civil society, philanthropy and the nonprofit sector, whose contents are open to the public. Visiting and using the library is free of charge. The stock currently includes about 14,000 books, as well as magazines, annual reports of various foundations, unpublished degree dissertations, informative literature and also relevant internet and conference documents.

The Political Platform
It is the duty of all citizens, and not only that of "professional politicians", to find solutions for our social and political problems. Higher echelons of professional politics are increasingly struggling to autonomously bring together diverging interests within our society and formulate strategically convincing policies. That is why, as HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance, we wish to contribute to furthering argument-based agreement and promoting cooperation between different sectors of our society outside of the immediate realms of parliament. In this manner we seek to initiate solutions for our most pressing problems and support democratically sustainable politics.

In looking at different social actors and at academia, we can find extensive, yet not systematically incorporated knowledge that is needed in processes of political or social change. In the context of the "political platform" at the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance, we aim to merge the experience and specialist knowledge accumulated within the public and private sectors, civil society, academia and media, in order to work out strategies as well as communicate and implement them.

Three-Actor-Dialogues
Concerted and targeted collaboration of all social actors is needed in order to gain a common understanding of multi-faceted social challenges, to develop strategic solutions and mobilize political coalitions for their implementation beyond party-based reasoning. Representatives of academia and media equally need to involve themselves. Against this background, the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance invites actors from government, business, and civil society, as well as from academia and the media to jointly participate in so called "structured dialogues" on specific topics, thereby allowing collectively discussing the issues, agreeing on potential solutions, and hence, preparing complex social change and/or policies beyond party-based policies. A successful example is:

The Triialogue on Financial Market Reform
The idea for a Governance-Triialogue on Financial Market Reform is based on an initiative by the financial commission of the European parliament, which was made public in June 2010 with a cross-party appeal for support of their financial policy decisions. Members of the commission warned that they were being beleaguered by financially solvent lobbies of the financial sector aiming at securing legal regulation favorable to their interests. Members of parliament felt ill-pressed for information, as they are unable to call on specialist knowledge as this is offered, for instance, by the "Research Section" of the German Bundestag. Therefore, they publically asked for support. The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance is able to bundle fiscal competence by calling on its network of experts. In accord with members of the European parliament, a first dialogue round on the topic of a
Financial Transaction Tax was organized in December 2010. The afternoon roundtable event was followed by a public speech (entitled “Chances and Risks of Financial Transaction Tax”) by Pastor Jörg Alt, coordinator of the campaign “Tax Against Poverty” of the Jesuit order, who reflected on the ethical and moral dimensions of such a tax. The outcome of the discussions is a written statement, which was published shortly after the event and is available on the homepage of the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance.

The series Governance-Trialogue on Financial Market Reform started in January 2011, focusing on the topic “Too big to fail?” with sessions taking place March, May and July 2011. As a result of the Trialogue, a conference titled “Financial Markets or Political Establishment: Who has the upper hand?” took place on October 24th, at which questions like “Do we need systemically relevant banks?” were discussed with – among others – the designated Co-CEO of the Deutsche Bank, Jürgen Fitschen, and the State Secretary at the Ministry of Finance, Hartmut Koschyk. Moreover, the three following panel discussions focused on the topics of “equity ratio and leverage ratio”, “ring-fencing or a separate banking system” and “restructuring banks”. The conclusive paper of the serial focusing on “Too big to fail?” will be published by the end of 2011.

The new series began in November 2011 and focuses on the subject of “Sovereign Debt Crisis”.

Principle 5
Partnership: We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

The HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance engages with all stakeholders of society, including businesses and managers of business corporations, to advance its mission and engage them in jointly addressing society’s pressing issues.

Principle 6:
Dialogue: We will facilitate and support dialogue and debate among educators, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

This Principle is 100% in line with the mission of the HUMBOLDT-VIADRINA School of Governance: To bring government, business, and civil society actors together to jointly address and work towards solving global questions and local problems of today’s society.

For further information, please visit www.humboldt-viadrina.org
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