UNIVERSITY PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Universitat Oberta de Catalunya – Faculty of Business and Economics

Sharing information on progress (SIP)

Period covered: July 2016-July 2018
Summary

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1. 

TOWARDS A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH SOCIETY
In a recent interview, US economist Joseph Stiglitz noted that there is no stopping globalization now. In the words of this Nobel Prize laureate in Economics, the key lies in increasing "the openness and democratic transparency in our government," in preparing people for technological change and in developing an economic framework that can guarantee the welfare state. The UOC sees itself, and has framed its Strategic Plan for 2017–2020, in this context of social responsibility.

Under the banner of "Generating Societal Impact" – an ambition that entails achieving results and reinvention, reconnecting and giving back to society, and making a contribution through our teaching and research activities – we have identified four priorities: a) we want to be a porous institution that improves the population’s general level of education; b) we aspire to be a global and inclusive university; c) we look to develop healthy competition and strengthen people’s employability, and d) we want to establish a shared knowledge space that can build on feedback and grow exponentially.

These grand schemes are more than just good intentions. We are building on experiences gained through our Global Plan: from advising the Ecuadorian government on introducing e-learning, to working with the Mexican quality agencies on accreditation of online university qualifications, or helping a Chilean higher education institution develop its online professional training model. The desire to overcome compartmentalization, to promote lifelong learning and to connect people and communities, experiences and skills is a key part of the UOC’s identity. This desire has connected us with other international institutions who share concerns similar to our own.

The United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development strongly advocates a shared future focusing on education and research. With this in mind, the UOC forms part of an International Association of Universities (IAU) working group to promote the 2030 Agenda in higher education from an international and multidisciplinary perspective. And Pastora Martínez Samper, the UOC’s Vice President for Globalization and Cooperation and chair of the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (CRUE) working group on Cooperation, is actively involved in national and international forums on sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda has an impact on and guides our day-to-day activities. The European University Association (EUA) has singled out the UOC as a leading example of diversity and inclusion: 41.7% of our research projects promote gender equality, empowerment of women and girls, and the reduction of inequality within and among countries; 30.6% help build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation, and 27.8% contribute to sustainable cities and communities.

These goals must always go hand-in-hand with specific actions because, as the Argentinian economist Mercedes d’Alessandro warns, anything without hard data may as well not exist, and is all but invisible for public policy and private enterprise. This is why we attach such importance to the examples we have mentioned, and to aligning the UOC’s social responsibility with vital and ambitious initiatives such as the 2030 Agenda. They show the path we need to take if we want to achieve a stable, inclusive and sustainable development model, if we want to become better people and a better society.

Josep A. Planell
President, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya
2.

UNIVERSITY BACKGROUND
The Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) is a global university leading the way in e-learning, aware of the diversity of its environment and committed to the capacity of education and culture to effect social change. The UOC aims to drive the creation of a global knowledge space and frontier research in the knowledge society. It fosters cooperation and exchange within its university community and with other universities, institutions, the business community and civil society, whilst at the same time forging international alliances to enable sharing and learning.

The mission of the UOC is to provide people with lifelong learning and education opportunities, while carrying out research into the knowledge society. The aim is to help individuals meet their learning needs and provide them with full access to knowledge, helping them and society advance, above and beyond the usual scheduling and geographical constraints.

The UOC, and more specifically the Faculty of Economics and Business, is committed to lifelong education at an executive level. The Executive Education programme have a specific course related to corporate social responsibility. In October 2014 the new University Master's Degree in Corporate Social Responsibility was introduced.

The UOC is committed to fostering the advancement of the following values:

- **Diversity**, in terms of gender, the promotion and acceptance of cultural pluralism, multilingualism to overcome barriers and open working involving different platform technologies.
- **Participation** of the whole community in the functioning of the University, promoting suitable channels for the free expression of ideas and proposals, and undertaking the actions required to sustain and improve our activity.
- **Quality**, as an institutional culture. The UOC strives to achieve excellence in educational services, educational activity and organizational processes, whilst guaranteeing the academic rigor of its programmes.
- **Innovation**, as a cross-cutting principle for all of our activities. The UOC is open to innovation in education, technology and within its institutional organization. At the same time, it promotes entrepreneurial initiatives and encourages the empowerment and creativity of students, faculty and all employees of the University.
- **Sustainability**, as both the basis for the design and creation of the University's activities and processes, and in order to remain competitive.
- **Cooperation**, as an organizational culture based on flexibility and the social commitment to forging institutional bonds based on collaboration, mutual learning and teamwork.
Courses

27 Bachelor's degrees
46 University master's degrees
4 doctoral programmes

275 Master's degrees, postgraduate diplomas, specialization certificates and courses
53 Open Courses

*academic year 2018/2019

Teaching Staff

338 faculty and research staff
3,710 course instructors
502 administrative staff

*academic year 2016/2017

Virtual Campus

8.037 Open classrooms
5.232 Subjects taught
20.447 Classroom electronic resources
Students

Official Courses (bachelor's, Master's, and doctoral degrees)
54,103

70,267
STUDENTS

UOC-certified courses (master's degree postgraduate, Center for Modern Languages, seminars and in-company training courses)
16,168

57%
43%

43% between 18 and 30
56% over 30
Graduates

Official Courses (bachelor's, Master's and doctoral degrees)
53,147

89,381 GRADUATES

UOC-certified courses (master's degree and postgraduate courses)
36,234

Profile

85% of graduates would choose the UOC again
84% of graduates would do the same programme again

Research and knowledge transfer

3 Research centres: Internet Interdisciplinary Institute, eLearn Center (eLC) i eHealth Center (eHC)
406 professors and researchers
228 Research projects
45 Research groups, 43 recognized by the Government of Catalonia
International Scope

Students in over 90 countries

152 agreements with companies and institutions from around the world
35 international university networks
2 UNESCO chairs

UOC Corporate

2,443 In-company training
33 Programmes
26 Companies
Administrative staff: 582

2018 budget
114.3 million euros in expenses
7 million euros in investments

The UOC on social media

The Networked UOC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Facebook</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>monthly unique users</td>
<td>649,205</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social media followers</td>
<td>448,705</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pages</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>followers</td>
<td>127,889</td>
<td>175,568</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LinkedIn</th>
<th>YouTube</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>followers</td>
<td>6,091</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>members of LinkedIn page</td>
<td>108,489</td>
<td>14,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>members of LinkedIn - UOC Alumni</td>
<td>5,671</td>
<td>10,876,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accumulated plays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. INTRODUCTION
Introduction

The UOC School of Economics and Business is committed to incorporate all the PRME principles in all the programmes, considering ethics behaviour as a transferable skill at undergraduate or graduate level. In 2016 our objectives for the next 24 months were based in improving the quality of the resources available for the online learning experience; increasing the number of research projects and outputs related with sustainability, cooperation and ethics in business; increasing the number of national and International alliances with other higher education institutions; and finally, reinforcing the dialogue between universities and public institutions.

In this sense, an ambitious program was designed to monitor the greatest number of variables that took these factors into account.

Our objective was to share this idea at the institutional level and to verify that the program allowed for synergies from the institution's point of view. The first advantages detected were the following:

- Alignment with the internationalization strategy of the UOC
- Strategic vision of all degrees
- Contribution to the social impact of The School of Economics and Business
- Systematization of strategic indicators

With this idea in our mind, we conceptualize a five steps process:

- Diagnosis of the application of the PRME I ODS in the School of Business and Economics
- Identification of the strong and weak points in our institution
- Creation of a system of sustainable indicators
- Elaboration of one proposal of actions to improve
- Renovation of the PRME principles

The first step in this study was the identification and definition of a system of indicators. This system of indicators has been structured based on the six different purposes that were considered in the previous stage of the PRME and that they are related with the diversity of activities that we develop as a university institution dedicated to the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

In the second phase, the critical variables were identified to be monitored and subsequently, in the third phase, the corresponding indicators were created. The process has been especially valuable for our university, since a large number of professors, as well as management personnel, were involved. The following pages of this report present the indicators and the main results obtained, as well as the proposals for improvement for the next 24 months.
4.

SIX PRINCIPLES ON PROGRESS REPORT
4.1. Introduction to the progress report

The Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) is a United Nations-supported initiative founded in 2007 to raise the profile of sustainability in schools around the world, and to equip business students with the tools they need to understand and manage change through responsible management. It highlights the potential influence of business schools to promote skills and values to the leaders of the future.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been created from the fusion of the UN’s Millennium Development Goals with its Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

This study entails a drift apart from the UOC’s internationalization strategy, maintaining the strategic vision that each degree course can contribute to the Faculty’s overall social impact.

We will first carry out a diagnosis to see how well the PRME and SDGs have been applied in the Faculty of Economics and Business to identify any strengths and weaknesses.

Once they have been identified, we will draw up a proposal for improvements in order to put together a system of internal and external sustainability indicators. The aim with this is to ensure renewal of the United Nations PRME seal.
4.2. Methodology, principles and system of indicators

Six principles were established in the previous PRME stage, and the system of indicators has been created on the basis of these. These goals are related to the diversity of activities we undertake as a university devoted to the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

The indicators have been organized on the basis of the previously set goals. In all, we will have 33 indicators divided into six categories.
Purpose

The aim is to develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of an inclusive and sustainable global economy. In this case, the indicators are sub-divided to extend across the board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of our mission/vision in relation with our commitment to the PRME.</td>
<td>Mission, vision and strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence at the faculty level of a plan for sustainability issues.</td>
<td>Yes, established / Yes, partial or occasional / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary competencies linked to the PRME</td>
<td>Number of competencies / Percentage of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific competencies linked to the PRME</td>
<td>Number of competencies / Percentage of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDGs worked on</td>
<td>Identification of the SDGs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of a Faculty Code of Honour</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of a Faculty Code of Ethics</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programme</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of the PRME in the Programme Objectives</td>
<td>Yes, directly / Yes, indirectly / No / Details / Identification of the principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdisciplinary competencies linked to the PRME</td>
<td>Number of competencies / Percentage of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific competencies linked to the PRME</td>
<td>Number of competencies / Percentage of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDGs worked on in the programmes</td>
<td>Number of programmes / Percentage of total / Identification of the issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of courses that include contents related to sustainability in their title</th>
<th>Number of courses / Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of courses that have prioritized interdisciplinary competencies linked to sustainability in business and society</td>
<td>Number of courses / Percentage of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of programmes where the specific competencies have been defined by taking the subject areas of sustainability into account</td>
<td>Number of courses / Percentage of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of courses that work on issues related to SDGs</td>
<td>Number of courses / Percentage of total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDGs covered</td>
<td>Thematic identification / Weighting-importance evaluation / Number of continuous assessment activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Values

The aim to incorporate the values of social responsibility into our academic activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existence of a UOC Code of Conduct</td>
<td>Existence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of a UOC Code of Ethics in Research</td>
<td>Existence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology

The aim is to create an educational framework that enables effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments made in the creation of new materials linked to the PRME</td>
<td>Amount in euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments made in the revision of new materials linked to the PRME</td>
<td>Amount in euros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of accredited programmes</td>
<td>Number and accreditations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teaching innovation projects/materials/methodologies</td>
<td>Number and objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing e-learning</td>
<td>Prospection results</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research

The aim is to engage in research on factors that influence the creation of sustainability values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existence of stable research groups in the areas of sustainability or the SDGs</td>
<td>Yes, established / Yes, partial or occasional / No / Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of funded projects for the study of issues related to sustainability or the SDGs</td>
<td>Yes, established / Yes, partial or occasional / No / Details / Specific competitive projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of publications generated related to SDG issues</td>
<td>Indexed + peer reviewed / Not indexed + peer reviewed / Sustainability subject area / Area of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of doctoral theses related to SDG issues defended and underway</td>
<td>Sustainability subject area / Area of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of final master's degree projects / final bachelor's degree projects covering SDG issues</td>
<td>Sustainability subject area / Area of knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Partnership

The aim is to interact with corporations to detect challenges and provide solutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existence of cooperation agreements / research projects with companies in the areas of sustainability or the SDGs</td>
<td>Number: area of knowledge and company type (SME, public institution, university)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existence of patents, spin-offs or business initiatives related to the areas of sustainability or the SDGs</td>
<td>Number: area of knowledge and company type (SME, public institution, university)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dialogue

The aim is to facilitate and support debate among all the stakeholders on critical issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissemination of the PRME in the media on aspects related to sustainability</td>
<td>Number of entries / Area of knowledge / Subject area covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events with contents related to sustainability or SDGs open to the public</td>
<td>Number: area of knowledge / subject areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of actions in cooperation with NGOs, non-profit organizations or public agencies related to sustainability to organize events, programmes, learning services, company internships or other related issues</td>
<td>Number: area of knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3. Results

The following outlines the PRME included in the objectives of the various programmes:

With regard to interdisciplinary competencies, 56% are linked to the PRME. As for specific competencies, this figure rises to a 64% connection with the PRME.

The number of courses in the Faculty of Economics and Business that work on the SDGs varies significantly and can be grouped into three large categories according to the relationship they have with the studies; the most closely related of these are work, RCP, industry, inequalities, health, education and gender.
At an aggregate level, the Faculty of Economics and Business primarily contributes, through its courses, to knowledge and work on three SDGs in particular: work, RCP and industry. However, by programme, the truth is more diverse and interesting. The Bachelor's Degree in Economics and the university master's degrees in Sustainable Tourism and ICT, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Economic Environment Analysis are the platforms that most contribute to these objectives, both in terms of the number and the degree to which they cover them.

With regard to research results, of the four research groups in the Faculty of Economics and Business, two of them (MeL and NOUTUR) are emerging and the other two (I2TIC and DigiBiz) are established. All of them are framed within a specific SDG, but only NOUTUR has objectives that are clearly focused on sustainability and responsibility (PRME).

In relation to our scientific production:

94% of our research is related to the SDGs, most notably the ones related to industry, sustainability, education and work.

31% of funded research is related to the PRME, 4 through commissioned research, 1 with an internal grant for RDI projects and 5 through external funding for RDI projects.

56% of funded research is related to various SDGs, sustainability, industry and work, in this order.
4.4. Proposals for improvement

Principle 1 - Purpose:
- **Concentrate** our efforts on fostering one single SDG. The UOC has chosen number 4 (Education) and we can contribute through work with collaborative learning.
- **Provide** training for coordinating professors regarding the SDGs and their application in the field of teaching.
- **Create** a strategy for communication and cooperation with organizations: participative final master’s degree projects/internships

Purpose 2 - Values:
- **Improve** the public information about our programmes, bringing it in line with the PRME.
- **Create** and communicate the vision and values of the Faculty.

Purpose 3 - Method:
- **Foster** the appearance of the SDGs in continuous assessment activities. In an initial stage, working on them as subject areas. A second stage would be to indicate the SDG to be worked on in each continuous assessment activity.
- **Creation** of a specific line in the final bachelor’s degree projects / final master's degree projects on the SDGs and PRME.

Purpose 4 - Research:
- **Foster** research (through internal funding) into work on PRME or the SDGs (as is done with sharing).
- **Awareness campaign and talent search based on PRME and SDG criteria.**

Purpose 5 - Partnerships and Purpose 6 - Dialogue:
- **Create** a strategy for communication and cooperation with private organizations (companies) and the tertiary sector for the development of an R&D project, as well as participative final master's degree projects and/or external internships.

All/Sustainability of the project:
- **Create a standardized procedure and form** that students must complete before defending their final project to automatically create and maintain a database of final bachelor's degree projects and final master's degree projects that includes all the basic information and that also specifies the SDG(s) to which the work is related (compulsory) (already designed).