Leuphana: Sustainability throughout the university and beyond

1) Policy & planning
   - Foundation for operational & cultural changes
     - History, key principles, master planning, etc.

2) Institutional arenas
   - Collaboration
   - Outreach

3) Vision / final goal
   - Envisioning sustainable university

Foundation: Sustainability is one of the key principles for Leuphana University’s development. Its core activities - research, teaching and transfer - are seen as basic academic action areas for the development of a sustainable society.

- Humanistic university
  - Education through scholarship.
- Sustainable university
  - Transformation competence for sustainable development.
- Action-oriented university
  - Analysis, creativity and reflexivity with regard to practical problems.

Institutionalizing Sustainability in Research, Partnership, Campus Development and Education
Experiences from Leuphana University of Lüneburg

Prof. Dr. Daniel J. Lang
Institute of Ethics and Transdisciplinary Sustainability Research
ISCN Conference, Working Group 3, University of Gothenburg, June 6, 2011

The Leuphana University Lüneburg - a modern, medium-sized university

- Founding year: 1948
- Students: Ca. 7000
- Employee: 750
- Scientific personnel: about 410
- Professors: about 100 (35 non-scientific 2008)
- Number of faculties: 4 as of October 2010
Campus development: The campus as a sustainability laboratory

Education: Higher Education for Sustainable Development has been integrated in the form of a general studies mandatory component for all Bachelor students and in different degree programmes.

General studies for all Bachelor students:
(1) Leuphana Semester covers the first semester of all Bachelor study programmes and is mandatory for all first semester Bachelor students, independently from their major studies.
Module "Science bears Responsibility" accounts for 1/3 of the Leuphana Semester and covers sustainability issues and illustrates ethical behaviour.
(2) Complementary studies accompany all Bachelor study programmes and cover several sustainability seminars.

Specialisation options:
(1) Bachelor studies: Major in Environmental Sciences
Minor in Sustainable Social Science
(2) Master studies: Sustainability Sciences
(3) MBA: Sustainability Management
(4) PhD: Sustainability Sciences

Research: Realizing a truly interdisciplinary approach in Sustainability Science

Collaboration: Enabling mutual (sustainability) learning processes and learning in networks with strong partners
Course results

„Products”
- Draft of a scientific paper
- Discussion paper for the city administration
- Research report

„Process results”
- Raised awareness in the city administration
- Results will be presented to the city council ➔ Implementation of concept?
- Follow up project for the next semester
- Inputs for ongoing research project

Special setting at Leuphana University

- Several large scale projects on how to realize a „sustainable university“ since 1998
- Fundamental restructuring process of the entire university started in 2006
- University leadership fully dedicated to sustainability and inspired by the idea of „rethinking university”
- Guiding idea – A university for the civi society of the 21st century
- UNESCO-Chair Higher Education for Sustainable Development
- Sustainability activities at Leuphana embedded in and supported by networks of friends and partners

What did the students do – first semester

What did the students do – second semester

Workshop
Current state analysis
Threats & Weaknesses
Values
Strengths

Ideal C-Office
Theory

Analysis of documents
Expert interviews
Actor analysis
Concluding remarks

- Sustainability “activities” in research, teaching, collaboration and campus development are not separated issues
  - Aiming at a sustainable university requires an integrated approach
- Sustainability experts need specific competencies beyond disciplinary knowledge
  - New learning environments should complement more classical forms of teaching
- Mutual learning process between science and society can foster sustainable development
  - This calls for inter- and transdisciplinary approaches based on sound disciplinary foundations
- There is not “the sustainable university” but a multitude of facets exist
  - Potential for learning from experiences of others and making use of complementarities

Thank you very much for your attention!

Contact: daniel.lang@leuphana.de