

Case Study from the Johannes Gutenberg-University of Mainz

Aims:

- To identify the main drivers for change in universities and explore how these impact on ULLL (cf. 2c, 2d)
- To consider the different structures of ULLL between universities and what the consequences of these structures are for implementing change in ULLL (cf. primary goal, sub-goal 1)
- To identify the real practical changes being made in universities in ULLL (cf. subgoals 1,2,3)
- To explore evaluating change in ULLL and consider how this might differ from existing approaches (criteria: number of courses/programmes, number of participants, number of teaching hours/duration)

Continuing education is enshrined as a mandate in the Rhineland-Palatinate Higher Education Act.¹ The mission statement² of the JGU Mainz defines continuing education and lifelong learning as key aspects of its education policy mandate. The enormous potential of continuing education was acknowledged by the university council at its meeting of June 23, 2010. The meeting of the university senate of July 9, 2010 concluded that **lifelong learning** should continue to be systematically pursued at the JGU Mainz as a “third strand” alongside **research** and **teaching**, as an important development activity and as a means of strengthening the university’s profile.³

The term “continuing education” at JGU Mainz refers to university-level studies for individuals who hold a vocational qualification and who are already in employment; the relevant courses and programmes are geared to university level in terms of content and didactic methodology and take account of the work-related time commitments of this target group.⁴

In order to achieve this, the JGU Mainz has set itself the following objectives for the strategic development of its continuing education programme.

¹ Cf. § 35 of the Higher Education Act, as amended on 01.09.2010.

² Mission statement of the JGU Mainz, passed by the senate on February 17, 2002, cf. p. 8 “Weiterbildung und lebenslanges Lernen” (continuing education and lifelong learning).

³ Other documents relating to continuing education: Mission Statement ZWW (version 06/2009). Draft application by the ZWW for the HL to the association for the promotion of universities in the continuing education market (“Hochschulen im Weiterbildungsmarkt”) 2004; strategy paper “Forschung und Lehre an den Grenzen des Wissens” (research and education at the frontiers of knowledge). (Passed by the senate November 14, 2003, cf. item 2.1.5 “Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung neben Forschung und Lehre ausbauen” (Developing continuing education alongside research and teaching), pp. 15/16).

⁴ Definition cf. HRK policy document on academic education. Decision of the university authority in its 588th meeting on July 7th, 2008 (contributions to university policy) July 2008. p. 8.

Primary Goal:

As with teaching and research, the continuing education programme should also reflect the academic profile of the JGU Mainz as a university which offers a comprehensive range of courses and academic disciplines. It should therefore be a fundamental objective of the continuing education programme that it becomes an integral part of all curricular subjects, **regardless of their marketability.**

Responsibility for continuing education at the JGU Mainz lies with the faculties (decentral) and the ZWW Centre for Continuing Education (central). At the JGU Mainz a distinction must be made between continuing education proper, which culminates in the award of an academic degree (e.g. MA), continuing education courses directly below the MA level (refresher and certificate courses) and, thirdly, individual continuing education seminars.⁵ The faculties currently offer a number of continuing education programmes along with various certificate studies.⁶ The Centre for Continuing Education also operates a number of certificate courses along with numerous individual seminars.

In order to ensure that the profile of the JGU Mainz is also reflected in the continuing education programme the JGU Mainz is pursuing the following **sub-goals**.

Sub-goal 1: Raising awareness and supporting the commitment of the faculties, universities, and institutions for the continuing education programme of the JGU Mainz

Sub-goal 2: Improving the public image of the entire range of continuing education courses offered by the JGU Mainz

Sub-goal 3: Definition of core focus: using the example of further training of academic staff

Sub-goal 4: Expansion of continuing education into the “public science” field

Sub-goal 1: Raising awareness and supporting the commitment of the faculties, universities, and institutes for the continuing education programme of the JGU Mainz.

The following **measures** are to be implemented in order to raise the profile of continuing education throughout the various university institutes and departments and to increase motivation:

1a) Appointment of continuing education coordinators in the faculties, universities and institutions.

1b) A regular meeting day will be arranged in order to facilitate exchange between the continuing education coordinators and the Centre for Continuing Education. The continuing education coordinators and the Centre will discuss the current status of continuing education activities as well as plans for the expansion of the continuing education programme. These meetings will also look at potential trends to ensure that the JGU Mainz is in a position to respond to future demand for continuing education services as rapidly as possible. To reach this aim, trend scouts and a good bench-marking are needed. A strategy with quick response makes it possible to develop new courses/programmes quickly.

⁵ The award of credits ensures the integration and transferability of prior learning and the resumption of learning processes in the context of continuing education in accordance with the Bologna Reform.

⁶ Cf. overview ZWW homepage and StuL <http://www.uni-mainz.de/studium/3653.php>

1c) In addition to implementing its own continuing education programme/projects and advising the university administration, the Centre for Continuing Education will also act as a central service provider for the faculties, universities and institutions. In order to adequately perform this service function, the Centre must be sufficiently well equipped to be able to provide an attractive centralised support system for the faculties that includes professional planning, counselling and companionship, marketing, organisation and support on financial aspects for new courses/programmes.⁷ The support furnished by the Centre will also comprise up-front needs assessments for continuing education services. A realistic customer (i.e. participants) staff-ratio is important for achieving this aim is. The staff consists of research-assistants, administrative staff and student-assistants.

1d) An information day on continuing education at the JGU Mainz: “Continuing Education Day”

1e) Development of intra-university incentives. An intra-university incentive scheme is to be developed to encourage involvement in the continuing education programme. In addition, start-up financing is to be made available in future for the development of innovative additions to the continuing education programme. Last but not least, a new “continuing education award” will be presented on Continuing Education Day (see below).

Sub-goal 2: Improving the public image of the entire range of continuing education courses and programmes offered by the JGU Mainz

The following **measures** are proposed:

2a) Development of an in-house coordinated marketing strategy for continuing education (target group analysis, publication of materials, revision of “continuing education” content on homepage, etc.).

2b) Targeted use of existing partnerships and networks to publicise the continuing education programmes.

2c) One of the jobs of the soon-to-be established College for Knowledge Transfer (CKT) will be to play a key role in improving the public image of continuing education - by underlining the benefits of tailored continuing education programmes for companies, for example. The Centre for Continuing Education should be able to bring a number of things “to the table”, not least its experience in the field of knowledge transfer, its business contacts and its cooperation resources. It can coordinate inquiries regarding organisational and continuing education advice, provide an initial response to the inquiry and set up direct contact with the continuing education coordinators in the faculties, universities and institutions.

2d) Expansion of the continuing education advisory services provided by the Centre for Continuing Education in order to keep pace with the growing diversity of the target audience

⁷ Cf. HRK policy document on academic education. Decision of the university authority in its 588th meeting on July 7th, 2008 (contributions to university policy) July 2008. Citation: p. 19

for courses and the courses themselves. New kinds of advisory services geared more effectively towards the specific requirements of this target group in terms of time and place – online, for example, in a chat format or in the form of evening helplines – should be “road-tested” and introduced over time if they prove effective.

Sub-goal 3: Definition of Core Focus: using the example of further training of academic staff

The continuing education profile of the JGU Mainz should be based on existing priorities. The number of students in teacher training in the winter semester 2010/11 was 5,790⁸ (16.68% of all students). Further training courses for academic staff have long been an integral part of the programme offered by the Centre for Continuing Education and are both developed and staged in close collaboration with the faculties, universities and institutions.

3a) The programme still needs to be structured in such a way that it incorporates **all** faculties and universities, that it systematically integrates the interface to teacher training activities and that it can be effectively optimised and developed in years to come on the basis of well-designed needs assessments.

Measure:

Further education programmes for the academic staff at the JGU Mainz will be expanded. To this end, the present cooperation between the Centre for Teacher Training, the faculty and the university will be continued. Needs will be ascertained in a process of mutual exchange, an appropriately structured programme will be developed, and the necessary services will be provided to support the work of the teacher conferences at the institutes.

Sub-goal 4: Expansion of continuing education into the “public science” field (PUSH / PUR)

The JGU Mainz prioritizes its students and its strategy is both demand driven and need oriented. It offers numerous seminars and courses (sometimes free) in the field of “public science”. These include the seminars organised by the endowed chair of the “Studium Generale” institute as well as the courses for those aged 50 and over – “Studieren 50 Plus” – offered by the Centre for Continuing Education and developed in close collaboration with the faculties, universities and institutions. The target group to whom such courses are likely to appeal continues to grow. In future, there should be regular consultation between the institutions providing these courses.

Measures:

4a) In acknowledgement of the potential social relevance of this topic, the JGU Mainz will stage workshops and seminars in which this question is discussed by academics and members of the public with the aim of formulating a joint position.

4b) A regular round table will be set up for the faculties, universities and institutions offering courses in the field of “public science”. Participants will report on their activities and identify

⁸ Teaching training certificate for German Gymnasium (High School) and teacher training Bachelor degree

common interfaces for future cooperation. A joint presentation profiling the courses and seminars will be prepared (see also item 2a).

4c) The courses for the over 50s offered by the Centre for Continuing Education are to be expanded in close cooperation with the individual subjects, in particular in the natural and life sciences. The Centre will have to conduct an evaluation-based, thematic need assessment and adapt future programme planning accordingly.

[Translator's Note: although I have adopted the term "Public Science" in the text, because it seems to be accepted in several sources on the Internet, it seems inadequate, since the humanities and research are also included – something like *public learning and research* might be more accurate.]

For discussion:

This a time of major change and excitement at JGU Mainz and there are many aspects of implementing change to encourage growth of lifelong learning in the University. First on our minds is to set some definitions of what success will look like, particularly as it is to happen in all areas 'regardless of their marketability'.

- How should success be defined, and what consequences might there be if we are unable to define success?

We have opted for a central Centre for Continuing Education and to develop activity in each Faculty with formal meetings between co-ordinators to ensure communication and support intra university working.

- What key challenges might the co-ordinators face in attempting to respond to market demand?

We demand intra-university incentives to encourage involvement in the continuing education programme.

- What sort of incentives might be needed? What effects are they expected to have?