

Erasmus Policy Statement

Evangelische Hochschule Ludwigsburg

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The Evangelische Hochschule Ludwigsburg carries the historical profile as an institute of higher learning specializing in related disciplines in social service, social and religious pedagogy, education of preschoolers and groups with special needs. The EHL is a state recognized institute of higher learning operating under the auspices of the protestant church of Württemberg. It traces a tradition of social deaconry which is the professional practice of social work in church related social service organizations. The EHL has used the strength of this character profile in its international program. It has progressively expanded and utilized its church related global network to establish an international and intercultural profile. The expansion of the EHL corresponds with the EU vision of promoting quality of life for all, through committed work in protecting the interest of vulnerable groups in Germany and Europe, as well as in other countries where the reach of the EHL is possible through international partnership and project collaboration. The EHL's commitment to educating and training future professionals, corresponds to the European strategic objective of promoting social equity, social cohesion and active citizenship. These strategic objectives integrate into this institution's educational mission of promoting social justice and human rights which guarantees quality of life for all.

As a university committed to the education and training of professionals in the academic disciplines of teaching and social service, a strategy that is sustainable has to be inclusive of all populations. The international educational strategy of the EHL follows the orientation that a borderless university to equip students with cross-cultural competences to work with diverse sectors of the population.

Institutional Partnerships

Institutional partnerships are developed on the basis of shared strategic objectives in international social service. Partners share in the international view that recognizes the link between European development and global processes. The EHL collaborates with institutional partners in a mutual effort of developing and enriching our academic degree programs on both curricular and extra-curricular levels to address the reality that the world is becoming more and more interconnected through the social issues experienced by countries in all continents. Our global partnership in mobility programs include the continents of Asia, Australia, Latin America, North America and Africa. A relationship of trust and mutual support exists among partners. This is with the conscious policy in the International Office of this university to maintain partnerships on the basis of institutional comparability and compatibility to ensure dynamic cross fertilization of program content and maintain to active relationship through mutual support.

Mobility Activities

Teaching exchange has to be continually promoted because this is a most effective manner of comparing teaching content and methodology so as to adapt into to new areas of competences. The international strategy of the EHL links to the approach that our specialization in social service, deaconry, religious education, pre-school teaching and special education require new competences that cannot be achieved within national borders alone.

The Erasmus mobility program worldwide contributes to our strategic objective of opening the EHL to international influences with the knowledge, networks and professional influences that are brought back by students and teachers. Concomitantly the EHL reciprocates towards partners by internationalising its curricular offerings; providing professional practice experience; and upgrading personnel competences and service facilities to respond to the needs of international incoming students and teachers. The mobility program of the EHL for first cycle degree program will continue in its upward trend. As a relatively small university of applied sciences the EHL will maintain its current annual growth of 30% for first cycle mobility program, and open more opportunities for its second cycle programs given the expansion that this university foresees for itself in its five year developmental plan.

EU and Non-EU Cooperation Projects

The EHL will pursue its plan to initiate a double degree program starting 2014. A project is underway in International Social Work and Social Service with European institutional colleagues. The emphasis of the foreseen double bachelor degree is the training of students who will have the professional recognition to work across Europe among specially segregated groups such as migrants, disabled peoples, refugees and sexual minorities. This double degree program sets into motion our standing commitment to continually develop academic programs that respond to the reality that social policies and social problems are interconnected across European national borders and thus, the training of professionals in the social service sector has to respond to this reality.

The EHL having six years of experience both as coordinator and as partner in two Erasmus intensive projects, a proposal for funding a third project is submitted for implementation starting 2014. A longitudinal research project with east European partners has also been submitted for proposed funding starting 2014.

With the foreseen expansion of the EHL in international project collaboration, the upgrading of teaching skills, specifically in language proficiency among teachers is being systematically implemented through budgetary outlays and other incentives. Sustainable partnerships with international partners will be developed when teachers and staff have the competence to communicate across cultures and national divides.

Modernization Policy

One of the educational policies of the EH gears towards the educational inclusion of sectors in the population, who very often may not have their rightful access to higher education. These policies hinge on a very clear commitment to diversity and inclusionary principles. The university profiles itself in international, intercultural and interreligious spheres. The policy of promoting inclusionary practices that is respectful of the resources that diverse student populations bring to the EHL increases the quality and number of higher education graduates across a wide section of our society.

The expansion of the EHL into related social service disciplines is made possible through academic rigor in research, teaching and cutting edge practice. Students are trained in a breadth of theoretical approaches and rigorous practical experiences to guarantee their employability in professions that demand highest competence and personal commitment. The academic areas of specialization in social service such as health, migration, social care and welfare development are foreseen as the occupations in the future given the demographic changes happening in European societies.

International linkages with social service organizations and partner universities is our sustainable strategy in providing opportunities for students with globally comparative relevant skills. Expansions will be made in developing active collaborations with university partners for teaching and research collaboration. Students in their practical placements will be challenged to undertake international experiences for their individual careers and future employability. The resources they bring back to the EHL will be basis for networking and strengthening collaborative linkages.

New models in knowledge alliances have to be evolved by the EHL as a university of applied science specializing in various disciplines related to social service. Quality of life for all does not have a sole reliance on economically determined models such as business. Curricular programs are planned according to the demands of organizations in the social service sector. Responding to social needs on European and global levels are the driving forces from where knowledge and practice alliances will be forged by this institution with other collaborating partners.

Institutional governance will be based on leadership that is participative and supportive of both individual and collective interest. This ensures organizational stability over a sustained period and encourages excellence and meritocratic reward system. It is institutional governance that aligns itself with regional, European and global growth. Fiscal prudence through sound fiscal planning should ensure deliberated institutional growth. While the EHL is supported by the protestant church and the state of Baden Württemberg, it has installed its own fund raising efforts through a university based educational foundation.