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Project EVALUE

Evaluation at the University of Hamburg

Second Case Study Germany (1997)

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Introduction

A Brief History and Main Characteristics of the University

On March 28, 1919, the parliament of the city-state of Hamburg, which had just been democratically constituted after the end of World War I, passed the resolution to establish the University of Hamburg. Whereas up to this time universities had been founded by sovereigns or the government, this was the first democratic establishment of a university in Germany and it stood under the motto democracy needs education.

The roots of the University, however, date back to the beginning of the 17th century. From 1613 to 1883, Hamburg had an Akademisches Gymnasium (an intermediate level of education between school and university), and from 1885 on, an Allgemeines Vorlesungswesen (an organization of general lectures), both of which already had professorial chairs. Alongside these institutions, a number of scientific institutes developed (the Botanical Garden, the Observatory and the State Chemical and Physics Laboratory), and in 1907 the Colonial Institute was founded, which also had professorial chairs.

The start of the University in the 1920's was outstanding and promised great scientific success. One of the main goals was to open the University to the city and people and to society more than traditional universities had. After 1933, a conservative and nationalistic majority of university members strengthened and incorporated the University into the national socialistic "Führerstaat" and many famous scholars had to leave the university and the city. The rebuilding of the University of Hamburg after the end of World War II aimed at enabling the University to resume its scientific responsibilities in research, teaching and study in a short period of time. The student body increased rapidly, from 3.000 in 1949 to 17.000 in 1964. During the 1950ís and the 1960ís the University of Hamburg became one of the largest universities in Germany.

At the end of the 1960ís students forced discussions about the national socialistic past of German society and at the same time criticized the traditional self-government of the University where academic decisions and positions were reserved for the professors. In 1969 Hamburg's parliament passed a new body of laws governing the University. The far-reaching

reforms manifested themselves, on the one hand, in the extension of academic self-administration the participation of all members of the University in the governing process of academic affairs and on the other hand, in the creation of a continuous central authority, the office of the President of the University.

With approximately 43.000 students, the University of Hamburg ranges fifth in size among the institutions of higher learning in the Federal Republic of Germany. It has about 850 professors engaged in teaching and research, as well as an additional full-time academic staff numbering 2.000. There are also approximately 7.400 technical and administrative employees. About 1.000 part-time academic instructors teach at the University, and an equal number of additional academic and other employees are engaged in individual research projects financed by parties outside the University.

Table 1: University of Hamburg:

Departments, number of students and average duration of studies:

Departments:	Number of students:	Average duration of studies (measured in semesters for the students who finished their studies in the summer semester of 1994)
Protestant Theology	587	13,8
Juridical Science I	3.437	9,7
Juridical Science II (Reformed two-stage training)	1.476	4,0
Economic Sciences	5.070	12,0
Medicine	4.279	12,8
Philosophy and Social Sciences	2.828	12,0
Education (without teachersí training)	788	11,6
Languages	3.981	13,4

History	1.106	10,7
Fine Arts	1.485	12,6
Oriental Studies	1.359	12,4
Mathematics	871	12,7
Physics	1.483	12,0
Chemistry	1.569	10,1
Biology	1.373	11,4
Earth Sciences	1.050	10,6
Psychology	1.292	12,8
Computer Science	1.825	15,0
Physical Education	377	16,2
Institute for Shipbuilding/ Musical Theater Direction/ Film	280	(diverse)
Teachersí Training	6.824	9,7
University in total:	43.340	11,6

The University is an institution of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg, and it is financially maintained by the city. It has an annual budget of about 1,2 billion marks (0,6 billion Ecus), of which about 775 million (397 million Ecus) are allotted to the University Hospital.

Moreover, the University receives funds from outside parties (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft/German Research Foundation, ministries of the federal government, foundations, industry) totalling 120 million marks (61 million Ecus) annually.

The University is spread over 270 buildings (alone 120 occupied by the Department of Medicine), with a usable area of 345.000 square meters. The center of the University is its campus which is situated close to the lake in the heart of Hamburg. Many more facilities belonging to the University are located in other parts of Hamburg.

Important Dates and Events

Major evaluation projects (chronological presentation):

since 1970: first evaluations of courses at the University of Hamburg initiated by student groups and (upon request) coordinated by the Interdisciplinary Center for Research and Development in Higher Education IZHD.

November 1993: The SEZ, a center for coordination and support of student evaluations, was founded.

1994: The Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany VNU (members: the Universities of Bremen, Hamburg, Kiel, Oldenburg and Rostock) signed an agreement for the evaluation of teaching and studies. The procedure is the same as in the Dutch model: self-evaluation is combined with peer-review and the consequences of the evaluations are recorded in a contract between the departments and the university board. The peers come from outside the Consortium and students can take part in all stages of the project. The Dutch University of Groningen supports the evaluations.

1994/95: The Higher Education Information System Ltd. <HIS> evaluated Biology and German Language and Literature at the Universities of Hamburg and Kiel. Parallel to this, Biology at the Universities of Bremen, Oldenburg and Rostock and German Language and Literature at the Universities of Bremen and Oldenburg were evaluated in the process of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany.

September to December 1995: Evaluation of the financial situation and advising of three departments of the University of Hamburg (Chemistry, Philosophy and Social Sciences, Computer Sciences) by The Boston Consulting Group. This evaluation was a good, intensive preparation for putting the new 'lump-sum budget' into effect.

1995/96: Evaluation of the Departments of Computer Sciences and Economics in the evaluation process of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany.

1996: The External Advisory Commission for Structure and Development Planning of the University of Hamburg evaluated the overall structure of the university. (The experts' report was published in January 1997.)

1996/97: Evaluation of the courses of study in Chemistry and History in the evaluation process of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany.

December 1996: The presidents of the five participating universities signed an agreement in which the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany pledges to continue its work for another four years. The evaluation processes had proven to be very successful. In the future, 3 - 4 courses of study will be evaluated annually.

1996/97: The Volkswagen Foundation initiated a project to develop management structures in higher education. Together with seven other universities and 'Fachhochschulen', the University of Hamburg was chosen to gather experience with new financial decision-making and with new forms of management within the university and in connection with the government over a five-year period. The Volkswagen Foundation invites all eight projects to a workshop annually to exchange experiences.

A Brief Presentation of the Case Study Methodology

This report is based upon content analyses of relevant documents and upon qualitative expert interviews with members of the University of Hamburg and people who are otherwise involved in evaluation processes.

The University of Hamburg was chosen because it is one of the largest and one of the most important universities in Germany and because there are meanwhile diverse evaluation activities taking place throughout the university. In addition, the University of Hamburg is a member of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany <VNU>. The Consortium initiates evaluations of teaching and studies in different fields of its five universities using an evaluation process which has proven to be quite successful. Due to their importance in general and in particular for the University of Hamburg, the evaluation processes which have been developed by the Consortium will be given special attention in this case study. This special attention will focus on the Departments of Economics and Computer Sciences, which were evaluated by the Consortium one year ago. So it will be possible here to collect qualitative data about the evaluation process itself, on the one hand and about the effects and the implementation of the results on the other. The two departments are very different in quantity and structure. The Department of Economics has the largest number of students at the University of Hamburg; Computer Science is one of the departments with the longest average duration of studies (see Table 1).

1. Official and Unofficial Evaluations

Who Initiates Evaluation?

Up to now the most important evaluations at the University of Hamburg have been the evaluations of teaching and studies carried out and supported by the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany (Verbund Norddeutscher Universitäten <VNU>), the evaluations of courses by students, the evaluation of finances by The Boston Consulting

Group, and the evaluation of the overall university structure carried out by the External Advisory Commission for Structure and Development Planning of the University of Hamburg (Externe Beratungskommission zur Struktur- und Entwicklungsplanung der Universität Hamburg). Most of the evaluation processes mentioned here were limited timewise. Only the evaluations carried out by the VNU have a long-term perspective (with a supported implementation phase and a repetition of the evaluations after 8 years) and can thus claim social process character.

For the future, it is foreseeable that the project of evaluating and developing the management structure of the University which is being funded by the Volkswagen Foundation (the application was initiated and supported by the President of the University of Hamburg) will also become very important.

An overall distinguishing feature concerning the situation in Hamburg is the fact that the President of the University is very active in initiating and supporting evaluation processes in the various possible areas of assessment.

For most of the different evaluation processes at the University of Hamburg it is difficult to distinguish between internal and external evaluation. Although there is no external accreditation organization for the evaluation of the University of Hamburg, there are some evaluations, e.g. the one by the External Advisory Commission for Structure and Development Planning of the University of Hamburg, that have to be characterized as external evaluations. Furthermore in some evaluation procedures internal evaluation settings and goals cannot be distinguished from the external ones. Especially the evaluation processes initiated within the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany, which includes self-evaluation as well as external assessment, can be seen as interwoven processes where internal and external types of activities have complementary functions and mutual effects. So in some cases it is difficult to classify the evaluations in the clear-cut way it is presented in the following points.

1.1. Official External Evaluations

In 1994 the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany VNU was founded. Members are the Universities of Bremen, Hamburg, Kiel, Oldenburg and Rostock. The Consortium evaluates teaching and studies in the different courses of study at the University of Hamburg in combination and in comparison with the evaluation of the courses of study at the four other universities in Northern Germany. Up to now, the Consortium has evaluated Biology and German Language and Literature (1994; as an exception, these evaluations in Hamburg were carried out by the HIS), Computer Sciences and Economics (1995), Chemistry and History (1996). All evaluations of the Consortium follow a pattern of self-evaluation, peer-review and a follow-up for the results.

Organization in the VNU is intentionally kept to a minimum. The evaluation projects are coordinated at an office in Hamburg. Each VNU university has a person responsible for questions concerning evaluation.

In 1996 the External Advisory Commission for Structure and Development Planning of the University of Hamburg evaluated the overall university structure. The background was formed by the drastic savings-plan called for by the city of Hamburg. The University sought external advice as to how a solution could be found and economic measures could be implemented. The office of the Commission was located at the Institute for Developmental Planning and Structural Research Ltd. (Institut für Entwicklungsplanung und Strukturforschung GmbH, IES) in Hanover. The report was published in January and is now being discussed.

1.2. Unofficial External Evaluations

For the last seven or eight years several newspapers have been publishing university ranking lists. However they are not systematic and their methods vary. The greatest endeavor was initiated twice by the influential weekly magazine "Spiegel": In 1989 and 1993 students were

asked about their opinions on the organization and conditions of study at their universities. (Spiegel Spezial 1993)

The "Stern", another well-known weekly magazine, also carried out a poll in 1993: Instead of students, they interviewed professors as to which universities they preferred. In the same way, "Managers Magazine", a monthly magazine mainly read by business people, asked employees in the marketing field which universities in their opinion produce "high quality" graduates.

But all these ranking lists are very general. They are not of the same quality as the ranking lists in the USA, for example, which are based on systematic data and are published every year. The German unofficial ranking lists were read and recognized at universities. But at the University of Hamburg, as at other universities, they are not important for the development of the organization of the University.

At the moment the Center for University Development (Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung, CHE) is planning a new project entitled "Vergleichender Studienführer" (Comparative Study Guide) in cooperation with the "Stiftung Warentest" which will begin in the summer of 1997.

1.3. Official Internal Evaluations

Apart from 'ex-ante evaluations' during staff recruitment procedures, which can be regarded as official traditional forms of evaluations at German universities, evaluations at the University of Hamburg are carried out by the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany in the area of teaching and studies (see Chapter 1.1.).

In November of 1996 the University Development Project got underway at the University of Hamburg. The project aims at the systematic development of organization to strengthen self-responsibility by decentralizing and optimizing job perception and plans to achieve an increase in the efficiency of the administrative and self-government structure of the university at all organizational levels in four closely interrelated project stages. The project is in its initial stage.

1.4. Unofficial Internal Evaluations

Since 1970 evaluations of classes and lectures, initiated by student groups and (upon request) coordinated by the Interdisciplinary Center for Research and Development in Higher Education IZHD have been taking place at the University of Hamburg.

Since November of 1993 these student evaluation processes have been (upon request) supported by the SEZ, a student center for the coordination and support of student evaluations.

2. Evaluation Objectives

What Are We Evaluating and Why?

As a basic background for the classification of evaluation processes here in this case study, it is important to note that no general and clear definition of the term "evaluation" yet exists. One reason is the fact that evaluation is a relatively new expression for the examination of personnel, teaching and studies, research projects and management structures at universities. The word has become fashionable at the University of Hamburg, as everywhere in Germany, but not as common as in the English language.

So the question "What is meant by evaluation?" has been a central one in the interviews. Most of the interviewees have been of the opinion that evaluation merely refers to the assessment of teaching and studies.

2.1. Evaluation of Organization

The most important evaluations of the organization of the University of Hamburg are or have been the evaluations of Boston Consulting in 1995 (concerning the financial situation), the evaluation by the External Advisory Commission for Structure and Development Planning

of the University of Hamburg in 1996 (concerning the overall university structure) and the newly-initiated project which is being financed by the Volkswagen Foundation (concerning the management structure). They are described in more detail in the following chapters.

2.1.1. Management Structure

In 1996 the Volkswagen Foundation started a program which offers financial support and expert advice for implementing new management systems. Funds have been given to six German universities and two polytechnics that had the best concepts for renewing their management structure. The University of Hamburg was selected as one of these universities. The program will last for a period of five years. It is required that an annual report be submitted to a committee of experts for discussion.

The Hamburg University Development Project for the systematic development of organization to strengthen self-responsibility by decentralizing and optimizing job perception has been underway since November of 1996. The concept aims at achieving an increase in the efficiency of the administrative and self-government structure of the university at all organizational levels and will take place in four closely interrelated project stages. A few main points regarding a stronger job- and efficiency-oriented administrative practice at the university, infused with the management experience of privat enterprise, include:

- strategic orientation to developmental goals as well as management by goal-agreement rather than by individual regulations and decisions
- decentralization of money management and other heretofore centralized administrative tasks to the departments and institutes
- transparency in the allocation and use of funds by developing job- and efficiency-related reference numbers and a university cost and efficiency system
- parallel organization of a job- and goal-oriented information-, report- and controlling-system

- programs to qualify university members to serve various functions and work in academic self-government as well as to qualify members of the technical and administrative staff to assume new and different tasks

The entire project, which is under the direction of the President of the University, is to be systematic and procedural: systematic in that the development of organization which is targeted does not relate to optimizing individual aspects of the overall university system, but to including the synchronization of all factors relevant to the efficiency of the institution (goal-setting, qualification of the acting persons, structure of organization and how it runs, information and communication systems). Procedural means that the changes are not to be predetermined and imposed as a finished overall model from outside, but that they should be developed and tested step by step, if possible in consensus, in a common learning process of all participants with professional support.

Under the direction of a steering committee, an advisory board and a team for organizational development (which is responsible for the scientific-methodological as well as administrative management of the project), the entire project will comprise the following four stages:

- 1.) strategic orientation and management by goal-setting,
- 2.) strengthening of the departments,
- 3.) reorganisation und development of a new understanding of tasks at the central level and
- 4.) development of a report- and controlling system.

Interviews revealed that great expectations have arisen in connection with the realization of the project. The administration is considered to be in need of as well as capable of improvement. With this assessment in mind, the project is considered to be an opportunity for conscious change at the University.

2.1.2. Overall University Structure

In the face of grave financial cuts demanded by the Hanseatic city of Hamburg, the University of Hamburg seized the initiative in 1996 and appointed an External Advisory Commission for Structure and Development Planning of the University of Hamburg to qualitatively ensure its efficiency and actively structure its future development. The advisory commission was made up of twelve academic experts with outstanding professional reputations and higher education experience. It was assisted in its work by an office established by the Institute for Developmental Planning and Structural Research IES at the University of Hanover in cooperation with the Higher Education Information System Ltd. <HIS>. Leading concepts targeted were the aspects of equality of research and teaching", "improving teaching conditions while promoting interdisciplinary offerings as well as promoting young academics. The Commission as well as the IES-office describe the procedure itself, within limits, as an evaluation (of subjects and departments), because it was not possible to gather data to cover all areas. The Commission saw itself as a knowledgeable discussion partner, as stimulator and catalyst for the necessary considerations and efforts of the university, its departments and its Senate-institutions and perceived the task to be to strengthen the willingness of all participants within the university to actively cooperate in structuring the necessary changes. The university as a whole was to be given the stimulus and the initiative for future development supported from within.

To realize this goal, hearings were held with representatives of all departments and Senate-institutions. The first round took place in the spring of 1996. On the basis of initial estimates, a second round of hearings took place in the fall of 1996. Five groups were formed, each consisting of two members of the commission who were experts in the subject area in question and one or two who were not. The discussion partners from the departments were chosen by the departments themselves.

The hearings with the departments which lasted for several hours centered upon their strengths and weaknesses, models and visions, future structure with an eye on economizing, and development potential as seen by the departments. In addition to this, interdisciplinary and interdepartmental aspects were discussed.

On the basis of this, department-related observations, determinations and recommendations were formulated which constitute the core of the final report. This report was published in January of 1997.

The commission concluded that most of the problems discussed had a certain explosive character due to the orders to economize, but irregardless, they were still confronting them and aside from certain questions particular to Hamburg these problems basically concern all German universities.

Among other things, the commission recommends in its final report a university-wide change in personnel structure to better promote young academics as well as the development of adequate efficiency indicators for the areas of research, teaching and administration with the goal of a stronger efficiency-related management of funds. The report and possible consequences are now under discussion.

By choosing the process of external advising, the opportunity is given to accelerate the formation of opinions within the university and simultaneously to leave the concrete decision-making to university members.

2.1.3. Financial Situation of the University and Information Management System

In the Federal Republic of Germany in general it is currently being discussed if and to what extent universities should have their own financial plans, what decision-making competence should be turned over to the universities by the ministries and what kind of reporting obligations can and should go hand in hand with greater autonomy for the universities. The boundaries between what is meant by reporting obligations and what is called evaluation are still fluid.

In 1995 the University of Hamburg asked The Boston Consulting Group, a business consultancy, to help it take its first steps towards the lump-sum budget with decentralized decision making. Decisions should be made closer to where the activities are taking place. Boston Consulting carried out (pro bono) interviews in three selected departments (Chemistry, Philosophy and Social Sciences, Computer Science) and in the administration.

They analyzed what the academic staff actually knew about the budget in its institutes and departments and which facts in the organization were recognized as good and which as bad. The aim of Boston Consulting was not to judge and decide which way was right for the University and the departments but to prepare and moderate the discussion about the possibilities of a new and better system, because they came to the realization that it is necessary for new decisions to be accepted by the people who must work with them. In this sense the activity and advising of Boston Consulting was very important for the exploring and implementing of a decentralized structure at the University. Boston Consulting did not call their task evaluation but coaching.

Regardless of how the process is termed, the general assessment is valid: the experience with Boston Consulting and its methods contributed to reducing prejudices against advisory procedures and evaluations and increased the willingness within the university to continue to employ such techniques.

The concept for the application to the Volkswagen Foundation was based on the experiences with the project described here (see Chapter 2.1.1.).

2.1.4. Non-academic Staff

The non-academic staff is hardly ever regularly evaluated. If there are questions regarding salary levels of individual employees at the University of Hamburg, it is the job of the Office for Organizational Affairs (upon application) to carry out qualitative job appraisals. Such appraisals are usually made on the basis of models on paper; in difficult cases, talks are held and the work place is visited.

Quantitative job needs for an individual area of work are determined by this office where one full- and one part-time employee are involved with structural questions of work organization. With the help of their exact analyses, job descriptions and interviews are possible. Up till now these kinds of examinations have not been carried out in regular intervals, but only when concrete problems have arisen (e.g. the examination of how the Registrars' Office runs in Chapter 2.2: Student Services). Since the need for work

organization examinations is increasing due to decreasing funds, the Office for Organizational Affairs is attempting to restructure its own area so that more (of its own) employees will be available to carry them out. Right now an examination of Technical Services is planned.

Aside from the efforts to assess individual and general job structures, each position at the University of Hamburg has always gone through a process of appraisal carried out every two years by the superior of each area.

Within the framework of the Volkswagen Foundation project which was just initiated, various measures, including talks with co-workers, are to be instituted in order to improve the way things work by using a discursive process.

2.2. Evaluation of Teaching and Learning

Student evaluations of courses have the longest tradition with respect to evaluation of teaching and learning at the University of Hamburg even though student working groups lack continuity timewise, which often hampers the real making of tradition. In order to support such student initiatives in the various departments, a Student Evaluation Center, <SEZ> was established in November of 1993 and since then has offered advice and organizational help to individual students and student groups.

Meanwhile the most significant evaluations are probably those of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany which has carried out evaluations of studies and teaching in representative subjects or departments since 1994. The preliminaries consisted of three studies-reform conferences which were structured such that at the first conference only teachers, at the second only students and at the third teachers and students together discussed what was considered good and what was less so about studies and teaching at the University of Hamburg. It was important to discuss each perspective separately and then to bring them together. The essential results were that in almost all departments communication about studies and teaching was lacking, that the evaluation of courses was important and made sense in order to improve individual courses, but that the main weak

point of most courses of study was seen to be in the meshing of individual courses the coordination, the organization and the communication.

The different procedures and conditions of the evaluation of studies and teaching developed at the University of Hamburg will be dealt with more closely in the following.

Evaluations in the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany

The central organization for the evaluation of teaching and learning at the University of Hamburg is the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany. Besides the University of Hamburg, where the main office is located, the Universities of Bremen, Kiel, Oldenburg and Rostock are also members. At various conferences about quality in teaching some divided into groups of teachers and groups of students initiated at the University of Hamburg, it came to light that problems in teaching were less often found at the level of individual courses as in the structure of the courses of study. With this in mind, a procedure was developed in the Consortium which begins with the structure and organization of individual courses of study and departments. The goal of the evaluations carried out by the Consortium is the continual ensuring and improving of quality in studies and teaching.

Ideally, the evaluations should be initiated by the departments. It is increasingly more often the case that the presidents of the participating universities determine which departments are to be evaluated. Participation in the procedure is optional, however, for the individual disciplines. Whether it will remain optional or not is now being considered at the presidential level, since the necessity for evaluations is seen and they are also finding increasing acceptance. Among the universities where parallel evaluations are carried out in their respective departments, a process of self-evaluation, external assessment, exchange of experiences and implementation of results has been agreed upon.

Up to now the following disciplines have been evaluated in the Consortium: Biology and German Languages and Literature (1994/95; as an exception, Hamburg was assessed by HIS), Computer Sciences and Economics (1995/96) as well as Chemistry and History (1996/97).

Since experience with evaluations within Germany has been limited till now, the evaluations are being carried out with the advice and support of the University of Groningen.

The Endowment Association for German Science (Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft) has distinguished the evaluations in the procedures of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany as exemplary initiatives in academic reform.

Following the experiences of the Consortium, the German Rectors Conference, HRK as well as the Science Council (Wissenschaftsrat) suggested in 1996 that evaluation of teaching and studies should take place every ten years as self-evaluation combined with a peer-review and a follow-up for the results. The main pattern for the evaluation is to attempt to determine if a course of study is on an acceptable academic level, if it is studyable and if the teachers reach their own goals. Every two or three years each department should report on statistics and efforts to raise quality.

Due to its significance, the procedures of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany will be dealt with in points 3 and 5 in more detail.

Course Evaluations

Since 1970 there have been evaluations of classes and lectures at the University of Hamburg, initiated mainly by student groups but in some cases also by assistants or professors.

Although students are also integrated in the evaluations of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany, the main evaluation processes carried out by students concentrate on the evaluation of courses. They are (upon request) coordinated by the Interdisciplinary Center for Research and Development in Higher Education, IZHD.

Normally these evaluations are carried out by means of questionnaires which are distributed in one or several classes in one field. Because these activities have an additional and voluntary character for the students, it often is not possible to evaluate all classes in one semester.

The evaluations are supported by the Student Evaluation Center, <SEZ> which observed in the recent past that the student formulation of the problems has become more general and extensive.

Support from the Student Evaluation Center for Student Evaluations

In November of 1993 the Student Evaluation Center, SEZ was founded, a student center to support and coordinate processes of evaluation by students. The motive for its establishment was the general dissatisfaction of many students with the quality of teaching and with the university's willingness to reform. On the initiative of the Student Union (Allgemeinen Studierenden-Ausschusses, AStA) an autonomous office administratively responsible to the <IZHD> was established in which first five and now three students work. By promoting and propagating appropriate forms of student course critique, the SEZ aims at encouraging discussion about courses, teaching methods and curriculum among students and teachers at the University of Hamburg. The Center concentrates its work in three areas:

1. First and foremost the SEZ serves as a counseling center for students who either want to carry out an evaluation project in their respective area in their department and are confronted with a (non-student) evaluation project in their department or who have other questions about evaluation in general.
2. In addition to this, the SEZ distributes information and student reflections on evaluation in publications and in lectures and workshops and attempts to build a network here.
3. As a basis for the tasks already mentioned, the SEZ gathers expertise and experience on the topic of evaluation, analyzes it and is taking part in the further development of the student position.

During the initial phase of the project, the development of a self-image, public relations and the elaboration of a counseling concept which oriented itself on student needs stood in the forefront. Meanwhile the SEZ has become better known (also outside the University of Hamburg), so that the tasks are less determined by the Center's own basic initiative than by concrete demands. Now different counseling concepts can be offered, according to the

individual needs of each group and the various situations in each department. In practice, a more pragmatic approach to evaluation activities has proved successful. Questions of feasibility, i.e. effort and available personnel, are considered carefully during counseling and are to some extent regarded as more significant than the exact sociological-methodological advising and safeguarding of the individual process taking effect.

Although the SEZ meanwhile is described as being quite established, the problem still remains that some professors do not take it seriously as a student project.

Student Services:

The Student Services Administration (Studentenwerk) is responsible for the social welfare and health of the students. It works in close cooperation with the University and other institutions of higher education in Hamburg. It offers approximately 4.000 student-dormitory places and inexpensive meals at 11 cafeterias. The Student Services Administration is also responsible for student financial assistance (BAfÖG) and operates a health service.

At the University there is also a Student Counseling Center (Zentrum für Studienberatung). It not only provides information concerning general questions involving studies, e.g., registration requirements and course content, but also offers psychological counseling for personal problems. Students desiring information about studies abroad can obtain this from the University's International Affairs Office (Akademisches Auslandsamt).

These student services have not been evaluated on a regular basis up to now. Job structure and the number of positions at the Registrar's Office was investigated two years ago by the Office for Organizational Affairs the university's own department for organisation. As a result of this examination, 3 1/2 positions (10% of all positions in the Registrar's Office) have been cut for economy's sake.

2.3. Evaluation of Research

As already indicated above, the present discussion on evaluation in German higher education is mainly concentrating on the evaluation of teaching. As there is traditionally an elaborate system of research evaluation, since most of research financing (including staff) is provided by grants, this aspect has not attracted very much attention in the field of evaluation in the recent past. Up to now the academic reputation of university members has been based on two criteria: the acceptance of publications in the scientific community and the success in getting research grants. Apart from these processes, which can be considered as external evaluations, little effort has been made to evaluate research activities. At the University of Hamburg there are no special activities to improve the quality of research in general. One reason is that at one single university different departments and fields of research are assembled to guarantee a variety of courses for students and for the cooperation among different areas of research. Due to this fact it is not possible to define or 'measure' the quality of research inside the University because the diverse areas are not comparable; the same areas of research can, however, be compared at different universities. Aside from this, there is no interdisciplinary consensus about the definition of the measurement of the quality of research in Germany.

But it must be mentioned here that the External Advisory Commission for Structure and Development Planning of the University of Hamburg which is described in Chapter 2.1.2, has devoted a great deal of it's time to the research activities from the point of view of developing a profile for the departments.

2.4. Evaluation of Academic Staff

Academic staff is hardly ever officially and regularly evaluated in Germany. Apart from the general importance to one's reputation of getting research grants and publishing the results, one can say that the academic staff is evaluated in a specific way during the process of earning scientific qualification (doctorate and habilitation): This can be regarded as a kind of peer-evaluation of young scholars. Also the 'ex-ante evaluations' during recruitment procedures may be regarded as a kind of evaluation of teaching abilities, of the research record and, in this sense, of the scientific potential of the candidate.

These conditions are likewise valid for the academic staff of the University of Hamburg, and so one can say that they are not evaluated regularly. The IZHD at the University of Hamburg offers members of the academic staff supervision a kind of didactics counseling in their classes and lectures. There are, however, only five well-trained supervisors for 3.500 teachers. Nevertheless, up to now that has not been a problem because the demand for supervision does not exceed what can be offered.

In addition to this, there are also course evaluations (see Chapter 2.2) in which not only the course itself, but also the quality of teaching is taken into consideration. As it has been seen, for example in the preparations for the evaluation procedures of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany, the main problems in teaching are found not so much to be the individuals involved or individual courses, but the structure of the courses of study. For this reason, right now efforts are being put forth in this direction at the University of Hamburg. This does not mean that the evaluations of individual teachers or individual courses lose significance, but rather that a mutual strengthening of importance, acceptance and public awareness is ascertainable.

For some time now prizes for teaching e.g. for successful, researched teaching and learning (Fischer-Appelt Prize) or for the best teaching in an individual department have been awarded at the University of Hamburg. The Physics Department at the University of Hamburg was the first department in Germany to give such a prize, owing to new criteria for the distribution of material funds. According to a resolution passed by the Department of Physics, 0,5% of the available material funds can be used for these kinds of prizes. At a festive event in the winter semester of 1996/97, the first three teachers received prizes of 2.500 DM (1.281 Ecus) and 1.000 DM (512 Ecus). The prizes were awarded on the basis of an assessment of the course lectures required for exams which was carried out by students in that discipline. The SEZ was in charge of the poll.

Besides this, professors in the Department of Physics receive 1.440 DM (738 Ecus) per position per year as an acknowledgement for positions for doctoral candidates they have helped to create by bringing in outside funding from ministries and industry. Altogether 240.000 marks (122.980 Ecus) can be distributed here.

2.5. The Education/Employment Relationship

As is already explained in the "National Report", in Germany no systematic data exists on the careers of academic degree holders on the job. Numerous regulations about protection of data privacy prevent universities from following their students when they leave the alma mater' It is therefore very difficult if not impossible to carry out evaluations in this area.

3. External and Internal Actors in Evaluation: The Experts

For most of the different evaluation processes at the University of Hamburg it is difficult to distinguish between internal and external evaluation, because internal evaluation settings and goals often cannot be separated from the external ones. Especially the evaluation processes initiated by the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany, <VNU>, which include self-evaluation as well as external evaluation, can be seen as interwoven processes where internal and external types of activities have complementary functions and mutual effects.

As already mentioned in the introduction of this case study, in the following chapters special attention will be paid to the evaluation procedures carried out by the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany due to its importance in general and in particular for the University of Hamburg. It is a university-wide process in which meanwhile enough practical experience has been gained to make its analysis especially of its effects and consequences interesting and possible. In substance the process developed by the Consortium refers to the evaluation of the structure of teaching and learning in different departments, which has come to be one of the biggest problems.

Special attention will be given the Departments of Economics and Computer Sciences which were evaluated in 1995. The evaluations of these two departments are representative of the evaluation process of the Consortium.

3.1. Number, Origin, Selection Modes, Training

As will be described in detail in Chapter 3.2, the procedure of the VNU includes first a phase of self-assessment which leads to a self-report from the specific department and a subsequent assessment of all participating departments carried out by an external group of experts. In the phase of self-assessment in March and April, the Departments of Economics and Computer Sciences at all five universities set up their own evaluation teams or commissions which had the task of preparing and carrying out a discussion of the goals and self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses of its department. The teams were made up of professors, representatives from the academic non-professional staff, students and, at some universities, also of representatives from the administrative staff.

In the phase of external assessment, peers in the respective evaluated disciplines from other universities than those in the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany were asked to cooperate in the evaluation process. They were selected, upon recommendation by the disciplines, by the head of the VNU. The Consortium generally keeps an eye on the fact that as often as possible, student participation is guaranteed and that one of the assessors is a woman. In Economics, there was a student member of the commission and one of the professors was a woman. In Computer Science, the commission had no female member, but six professors and two students. In addition, each commission called in a representative in its discipline as an expert with evaluation experience from the University of Groningen.

The experts act on the basis of academic self-organization. Apart from the fact that they work without remuneration, it means that they can be seen as peers of the evaluatees, in both senses of the word: They are the esteemed in their disciplines who analyze and assess and simultaneously they are the equals who advise and discuss.

In the selection of external experts, the wishes of the disciplines to be evaluated are taken into consideration, among other reasons, in order to increase the acceptance of later recommendations. The danger of making selections to please is prevented by having the teams at the five universities agree on a list of candidates which they present to the head of the Consortium.

Generally the disciplines want to see the commission composed of experts in areas that mirror their own most significant points of emphasis. In Computer Science and also in Economics they were successful in recruiting as assessors those persons whom the disciplines had given highest priority on their lists.

In interviews, representatives of the disciplines stressed that having the right of proposal was just as important as their own efforts to select personally and, above all, professionally respected assessors.

Besides the emphasis on professional proximity and respect, importance is also given to participation of expert opinions outside the discipline in other evaluation processes such as visitations in the departments made by the External Advisory Commission for Structure and Development Planning of the University of Hamburg: Teams were consciously structured to include assessors inside the discipline and those outside it (all of whom, however, enjoyed good professional reputations) and they all visited the departments.

Neither internal nor external evaluators receive any kind of professional training in the Federal Republic of Germany nowadays. There are only some initial stages like the training involving teamwork and evaluation processes which the <IZHD> has worked out for the members of the <SEZ>, who had no knowledge about evaluations prior to beginning their work. When the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany supports an evaluation process, the management tries to prepare the evaluators for the job they are to undertake. But on the whole, it is what one usually calls on-the-job training.

3.2. Legitimacy and "logiques d'action"

Legitimacy in the concept of the evaluation process of the Consortium of Universities of Northern Germany does not mean officially authorized but accepted by the people concerned. That means that the external evaluators do not have an official mandate from an authorized institution (e.g. Ministry of Education) but their legitimacy is based on the confidence of the evaluated departments. They are from outside but accepted inside. Legitimacy is gained by the externals because of their professional standing as scholars and

their reputation within the scientific community and, more specifically, because they show a professional attitude during the evaluation process itself. If both conditions are fulfilled, a high level of acceptance even towards critical recommendations can be achieved.

As far as the logic of evaluation activities concerned, generally two major logical perspectives behind the evaluators' missions can be identified: the controlling perspective and the counseling. For the evaluations of the Consortium the counseling approach is central. It aims at helping one to help oneself. Adopting this strategy means trying to organize a self-learning process within a university with the help of external evaluators. This approach does not include comparative (ranking) perspectives between different institutions but mainly aims at enabling the departments to make the most of their own potential. The results and the recommendations of the evaluation report have the purpose of giving helpful hints to the people concerned within the evaluated organizations rather than feeding political decision makers.

This counseling approach within the autonomy of the departments is described in the interviews as being especially important in order to achieve or maintain an openness and honesty in the disciplines where possible problem areas are concerned. If the process were organized differently, there would probably be less acceptance on the department level. As it is, the atmosphere is described as being predominantly stimulating and open, so that even existing weaknesses can be more or less extensively presented and dealt with.

4. Organization of Evaluation

Most of the evaluations carried out at the University of Hamburg, such as course evaluations, the evaluation by Boston Consulting and the university-wide inspection by the External Advisory Commission begin at specific problem spots and the process itself is accordingly often limited in time and/or scope.

With the student course evaluations which usually initially apply to individual courses, a stronger network seems to have resulted through the establishment of the SEZ. This could

contribute to the expanding of what up to now has been a strong problem-point-oriented character and to making possible an exchange and further development as well as a handing down of employed procedures, results and possible problem points. Similar opportunities could present themselves in the advisory and coordination work of the IZHD.

The structure of the process of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany for the evaluation of studies and teaching distinguishes itself however in its design in that inner-university-wise it is concerned with all disciplines and even crosses the boundaries of the University of Hamburg. Till now two subjects per year have been evaluated; in the future, this is to be extended to three or four subject a year. The process of evaluating is not completed when the final assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the discipline has been made, instead this triggers the implementation in which concrete steps toward change can be initiated with the help of the goal agreements developed together with the disciplines. Evaluation of a discipline should be repeated after 8-10 years. Since the Consortium is only three years old, no statement can be made about the implementation of this plan.

The concrete evaluation process, which has been highly influenced by the Dutch model with its combination of internal self-assessment and external peer review, has three phases:

1. internal evaluation
2. external evaluation
3. implementation of the results

All three phases are considered by the evaluated departments to be very important, each with different emphasis.

With the selection of these five participating universities, the evaluation projects are carried out across state borders. This prevents precipitate comparisons of facilities and results and competition for financing. The proximity simultaneously minimizes the costs of the evaluation. The stimulating effects targeted by incorporating five different universities in the evaluation of a subject, first, seem to strongly depend on the respective department and its openness. (The possibility of receiving deeper insights into other departments seems, in part, to be welcomed, in part to be considered less important.) Second, it has also been

described in interviews that there are few points of contact and possibilities for exchange for the departments of different universities in the process so far, so that an exchange has not been encouraged to the degree it could be.

An important characteristic of the process is the fundamental autonomy of the universities and with that, of the University of Hamburg and of each individual department with regard to the decision whether to participate in an evaluation or not.

Given in the sense of agreed upon among the universities is only the framework for the individual project which concerns the following aspects:

There are topics which should be taken into consideration in the self-description of the disciplines, such as goals for teaching and studies, areas of specialization, formal organization of studies, advising/supervising, communication, curriculum structure, situation of the students, situation of the teachers, facilities, exams and duration of studies, reform projects, statistics. (These topics were set down in an outline of questions for the disciplines.)

The evaluation projects have a formal order of events (see Chapter 4.1.).

There is a timetable for each evaluation (see Chapter 4.1.).

Primary organization in the Consortium is kept to a minimum. The rectors and presidents of participating universities have elected a spokesman. At the moment it is the President of the University of Hamburg. Coordination of the evaluation projects takes place at an office also located at the University of Hamburg. At each university there is a contact person for questions concerning evaluation in the Consortium who has taken on these responsibilities in addition to his/her regular duties.

4.1. Phases and Itinerary

Each individual evaluation project of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany lasts one year. In addition there are follow-up activities (i.e. the implementation of the results) which are not limited time wise. In each summer semester the disciplines concentrate on compiling materials for a self-report, which constitutes the first basis of information for the external evaluators. In the following winter semester the evaluating commission makes its rounds, visiting each discipline at each university for one or two days, holding talks with teachers, students and administration, formulating their first impressions at the end of each visit. At an evaluation meeting the recommendations of the evaluators and the self-commitments of the disciplines are discussed and exchanged among the disciplines. At the end of the winter semester at least one meeting between the head of the university and the discipline takes place in which it is agreed upon which measures and projects are to be carried out and realized by whom and in what time frame. Afterwards each discipline draws up a final report that is published.

The individual phases in our example disciplines Economics and Computer Sciences took place in the following way:

Internal Evaluation (summer semester 1995)

In both departments evaluation teams or commissions were established which were to prepare and carry out the goals and self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in each discipline. An outline of questions concerning goals, practical aspects and conditions in teaching and studies provided stimuli and a framework for this work.

Generally, preparing the self-report takes very different forms in different departments. The working group of the Hamburg computer scientists gave themselves the task of evaluating the numerous but unconnected departmental activities of the last few years (teaching conferences for teachers only and with students, feed-back processes in courses, ombudspersons for teaching, a moderated closed meeting about corporate identity, a new

curriculum outline) and preparing them for the department with the question of which of these measures and activities should be introduced on a long-term basis. One of the main problems for the team was getting a hold of the desired information for the self-evaluation. Data concerning exams duration, supervision and topics had to be copied by hand from the files. Information about schedules of studies and study policy were not available.

In the Department of Economics at the University of Hamburg the outline of questions was distributed to all teachers who were to answer them independently. Talks were held with the students in the department and with doctoral candidates and assistants.

The self-reports which were compiled on the basis of this information were discussed and passed by the respective department councils. They formed the basis of information for the evaluators in the following semester.

External Evaluation (winter semester 1995/96)

The evaluators were experts in both disciplines from universities outside the Consortium (see also Chapter 3.1.). They received the self-reports of the disciplines four weeks prior to their visits at the universities. Two weeks before their visits they were asked if they needed any kind of additional information and with whom they wanted to speak in the departments they were to visit. The external evaluation commission visited each discipline that was to be evaluated for one or two days. Talks were held with professors, academic staff members, students, administrative staff members and with the dean. Additional talks took place with a representative of the president about the relative significance of the discipline in the development plan of the university and, for the first time, talks were held with a representative of Women's Affairs during the visit to Computer Sciences. Besides this, rooms, laboratories and libraries were visited.

The evaluators then discussed their impressions, conclusions and recommendations with the evaluated disciplines and the presidents of the universities at an evaluation meeting in February of 1996. While the phases of self-evaluation and visitation from the standpoint of the disciplines do not relate to the overall university structure, here the opportunity for

exchange of information about the situations at different universities is given. At the evaluation meeting the process of publishing of the results was also agreed upon. Afterwards a final draft of the assessment was set down and made available to the disciplines and university management.

Meeting the standards that the process of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany should successively improve with experience, suggestions for improvement in future evaluation processes were compiled at the evaluation meeting.

Implementation of the Results

Cooperation among the universities in the evaluation process ends with the evaluation meeting and the final draft of the evaluation report. The implementation of the results is up to each individual discipline at each university. The Departments of Economics and Computer Sciences decided, as does each evaluated discipline, which measures should be put into practice to improve quality in teaching as a result of the evaluation. The discipline and the university management came to an agreement on the goals and what steps were to be taken to reach them.

4.2. Statistical Data and Performance Indicators

Gathering information and quantitative statistical data is one of the major tasks during the internal self-assessment, the first phase of the evaluations carried out by the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany. Apart from indicators regarding aspects of research, profile or management of the evaluated field, quantitative indicators mainly concentrate on the following aspects:

capacity of positions:

- the number of academic and non-academic positions
- ratio of professors to other positions
- the quantitative range of classes and lectures

number of students:

- first-semester students
- first-semester students in their subject
- students within or exceeding standard period of study
- male and female students

examinations/graduates (according to sex):

- standard period of study
- number of graduates
- number of postgraduates

supervision ratios:

- students in subject-related semesters to professors and to total academic staff
- students within standard period of study and total students to total academic staff
- number of intermediate and final exams to professors and to total academic staff

teaching capacities:

- curricular-standard-value according to KapVO and utilization of course of study capacities in regard to students in various phases of study
- decrease in number of students

young academics:

- number of doctorates according to sex
- number of post-doctorate qualifications according to sex

location of graduates:

- after the first academic degree
- after doctorate

The information given here is part of the analyses of strengths and weaknesses which are carried out by the departments at the beginning of the evaluations of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany, VNU. Since this data, which is fundamental to the self-reports, is not automatically made available to the individual disciplines in Hamburg by the administration, it is often a great deal of additional work to gather this information in the first phase of evaluation.

Although quantitative indicators are in general regarded as necessary and indispensable most of the interviewees are of the opinion that simple statistical figures alone cannot provide sufficient information about the quality of teaching. So they deem it very important that in the evaluation procedures of the VNU different methods are combined.

Beyond the already mentioned performance indicators as minimum requirements for the prerequisites and results in studies and teaching, the procedure of the VNU works on the principle that qualitative criteria (also quantitative) cannot be determined with universal validity, but that they must be defined and further developed by the representatives of the

disciplines. For this reason the process is structured in such a way that the representatives of the disciplines and students analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the situation in studies and teaching with the help of an outline of questions. This is put down in writing in the self-report.

After an external evaluation and an assessment conference, the evaluations of the disciplines of the VNU lead to agreements between the evaluated subjects and the presidents (so-called goal agreements) about the implementation of the results of the evaluation. Such agreements were made with the disciplines of Economics and Computer Sciences in the summer of 1996 (see Chapter 5).

4.3. Dissemination of Results

The results of the different evaluations are usually presented in the form of written documents. The crucial question here is whether these reports should be accessible to the interested public or whether they should be used only for internal discussions. Usually it is left to the evaluators and/or the evaluated institutions whether the reports are published or not.

In the process of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany the decision as to whether or not the self-report should be published, lies with the respective department. The promise that the decision about publication of the self-report falls within the autonomy of the department is an important confidence-giving measure within the process for the purpose of attaining a frank, honest analysis of strengths and weaknesses. Especially at the beginning of a new evaluation process, when no one has had experience "putting this kind of information into practice", an open atmosphere can be created.

While the departments were wary about publishing the results at the beginning of the evaluations carried out by the Consortium, meanwhile, after having experienced the process, all self-reports and assessments are now published. The initial careful, reserved approach was based on the fear that the weaknesses mentioned in the report might have direct, negative, above all financial, consequences.

Reports are available at the main office of the VNU and meet with great interest.

The decision to publish results of student course evaluations lies with the respective initiative. Often feedback is only given to the evaluated teachers and the results are published in a somewhat general form as an article in a departmental magazine or a notice on a bulletin board. Sometimes all the results are put up on a board in the department for all to read. The SEZ has the impression that a spectacular show of evaluation results is more likely to reduce the chances of repeating an evaluation, since the teachers are less willing to subject themselves to such a procedure again. The student office therefore advises giving direct feed-back in smaller teams, so that students can actually talk to the teachers about the results. Further, the SEZ recommends making them public at meetings with as many participants as possible. Students also say it would make sense to edit the results of various course evaluations for first-semester students and publish them in a department newspaper which could be used to introduce the teachers in the department. This has not yet been put into practice, however.

One fundamental problem in the evaluations which have been carried out so far at the University of Hamburg is that they are still not very well known. Various evaluation approaches, such as those of the Consortium, are meanwhile at least known by name, but not necessarily by their concrete subject matter and aims.

In addition to such basic public relations work for the evaluation process, it is necessary that each evaluation carried out by the Consortium extends its publishing practice further to include the results of the evaluations and the goal agreements so that more notice will be taken by people in the departments.

Up to now the evaluation results have been discussed in the respective (public) departmental committees. This means that, above all, students who are not directly tied to a departmental committee learn relatively little about the results or possible effects of evaluation in their departments. Even though those interviewed generally tended to think that students are basically less interested in evaluations, it was also determined in the interviews that even those who were interested had a considerable information deficit. Also in the processes of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany which places great emphasis on the phase of implementation, it seems to be the case that department

members other than committee members have relatively little knowledge about the evaluations and their results since no functions or meetings are held at which the outcome of the evaluations could be presented. More of the general public could be reached if results and steps to implementation were more carefully directed toward publication in department newspapers or if some kind of event were held in the department at the time the evaluation was published.

5. Results and Effects of Evaluation

Whereas content and didactic qualities of course offerings are of central interest in the evaluation of individual courses, it can be said of the processes of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany and of the evaluations in the disciplines of Economics and Computer Sciences that the results are concerned with the structural aspects of teaching and studies.

One of the main problems in both evaluations was the lack of communication among teachers. What is regarded as insufficient communication among participants does not seem to be a problem only in the departments that have been described in detail here. The results of evaluations in other departments also refer to the problem of a lack of organization and agreements in the areas of course offerings (with regard to content as well as form, counseling and exams), which causes problems and delays for the students. Inspired by the evaluations, communication and communication structures were significantly improved in both departments. These side-effects were repeatedly stressed as being important in the interviews.

Results and Consequences in the Department of Computer Sciences

The Department of Computer Sciences willingly accepted the offer to be evaluated in the framework of the VNU because this offer fit into a series of departmental efforts to submit teaching there to some critical examination. The process of the <VNU> would support, focus and coordinates such activities.

Another result emerged from the evaluation carried out in 1995, in addition to the aforementioned insufficiency of communication among teachers; there was seen to be a lack of coordination of teaching content (above all in the first stage of studies) and an insufficient data base, especially regarding students' reasons for terminating their studies. The lack of coordination of first-stage teaching content had an especially serious effect on the courses in the second stage which could not be based upon a homogeneous base of knowledge.

The measures planned by the Department of Computer Sciences as a result of the evaluation and fixed in the goal agreement between the discipline and the President of the University are specified in the following:

- increase in the coherence of contents and strengthening of a corporate identity in regard to teaching (among other things, semi-annual teaching conference, election of a Teaching Representative, annual conferences for minor subjects, annual conferences for the first stage of studies);
- improvement in the data base (initiation of a study to explain why students terminate their studies)
- improvement in study efficiency (including discussion about a time limit for the first stage of studies and time limits for theses)
- increase in demand for higher education (including intensifying contact to schools, establishing a team together with secondary school teachers)
- improvement in general conditions (realization of many considerations have failed due to the current deterioration of financial conditions)
- offering new courses of study (including preparation of a new course of study Economic Computer Science, more intensive discussions about the introduction of studies profiles).

Since then, studies conferences and a monthly professors meeting organized by the dean have been introduced into the department. In addition to that, a position for a Teaching Representative has been created. For the past six months she has been fulfilling the central duties of ensuring the quality and efficiency in teaching in agreement with the Dean of the department and is also the person students may contact in regard to problems in teaching.

In this connection she has helped compile a questionnaire for student course evaluations in Computer Science. As one of the first steps for a study about the transition from university to profession, the department used the festive event celebrating its 25-year anniversary to collect addresses of graduates in a "snowball-process". In this way approximately one third of the graduates could be contacted so far. The evaluation of changes in student behavior has been considered a crucial problem for the department. The study regulations of the Department of Computer Sciences are interpreted the evaluators perceive this as a special feature in Hamburg with freedom of choice and self-responsibility in the designing of curriculum; proof of academic achievement is shown in graded oral exams in pre-diplom and diplom testing and in theses and diplom exams. Freedom and responsibility gave rise to the positive effect that, in contrast to other universities, it was possible to complete part-time studies in Hamburg, which did indeed have an extended duration of studies as a consequence, but which is compatible with the altered material circumstances of today's students and with the fact that many students study and work at the same time. It has been increasingly observed, however, in the last few years that students have taken advantage of the pedagogically motivated freedom in examination and study regulations to minimize the work load. This had as a consequence that important knowledge could be missing upon the completion of a degree. The change in student behavior also found expression in a growing percentage of students who for various reasons pursued part-time or full-time jobs. The result is a prolonged duration of studies or even termination of studies for reasons of work.

After long discussions, the department has drawn conclusions from the development in order to ensure quality in Hamburg computer science education. The new examination regulations call for fourteen certificates of academic achievement in the first stage of studies in order to promote acquisition of the subject matter in active course participation and to give students better feedback.

Results and Consequences in the Department of Economics

A crucial problem of the Department of Economics is its size and strong subdivision into individual institutes. One of the main conclusions of the evaluation of this department was,

accordingly, that it had an extensive lack of corporate identity, that is, a connecting idea or a focus of identification of the individual with the whole department. Parallel to this, as was mentioned at the beginning, it was also determined that too little communication took place in general among the teachers. And the external evaluators found that the structure of studies was problematic, its range of courses in the first stage of studies was considered too small and did not mesh with the second phase well enough, so that the transition from the first to the second stage was made more difficult. In addition to this, improvements in the area of organization and information in the department as well as defined and improved organizational competence were recommended. Based on the discussions about information and communication technologies which are to be intensified, the department should think about creating new courses of study, e.g. Computer Science in Economics.

The measures planned by the Department of Economics as a result of the evaluation and agreed upon between the discipline and the President of the University can be outlined as follows:

- strengthening of a corporate identity in the department and a discussion and stronger elucidation of an overall strategy of the discipline
- improvement of the organizational structure and communication within the department
- development of new courses of study (i.e. Computer Science in Economics)
- academic reform in the first and second stages of studies and in regard to the connection between both stages

Based on the results of the evaluation, additional mathematics courses have been incorporated into the first-stage studies regulations. Data processing courses are to follow. The meshing of the first and second stages of studies is to be achieved by changing the distribution of the required number of teaching hours of individual teachers in both stages, which has already begun. The department is engaged in changing the examination regulations and adding new subjects such as "Environmental Management". In part but dependent upon the personal commitment of individual teachers staff members will be more strongly tied to larger research contexts or colloquia for doctoral candidates will be re-introduced.

Although, according to statements of several interviewees, there were great reservations in the Department of Economics during the phase of self-report, for example, regarding the publishing of potential "weak points", they meanwhile look back upon the evaluation experience, at least in part, with more self-assurance.

The evaluation in the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany and the departmental changes which have since been initiated were introduced by the department in the assessment carried out a short time later by the External Advisory Commission for Structure and Development Planning of the University of Hamburg and were recognized positively as an unmistakable effort on the part of the discipline to improve studies and teaching.

Beyond the actual evaluation results mentioned here, it seems to have been basically very important to the departments, by means of the evaluation, to be able to create an (organized) framework at all and a "discussion-atmosphere" for changes in teaching. In the evaluated departments, the practical experiences have brought about a stronger willingness and openness to change, and where these efforts were basically already in existence, activities could clearly be supported. It is beginning to show that a consequence of wider discussions of this topic is that the willingness to evaluate and to change is promoted. This is evident also in the significantly increased publication practice of the departments with regard to evaluation results.

Even if various evaluation results in the Departments of Economics and Computer Sciences have not always subjectively been new discoveries for the department members, the evaluations have still clearly been considered to be positive. Because for the first time there is a neutral description of conditions in written form, one to which all department members can refer and relate. Within the framework of the evaluations in the process of the VNU, discussions could be initiated which would not have taken place owing to the stress of everyday affairs; and after the evaluation, only selective measures for the improvement of teaching could be incorporated into an overall concept, perpetuating the process of change. The processes and conclusions of the evaluations effected first, the illustration and stronger structuring of potential problem areas and second, they also provided arguments with which to support practical steps inside and outside the department for people or groups who are willing to change.

The process of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany is generally described by the interviewees as being especially appropriate for encouraging a dialogue and exchange of experiences within the respective disciplines themselves, but also beyond it. By working out a self-report, the members of the discipline first have the opportunity to clarify their own standpoints which then can be tested and sharpened in discussions with outsiders (external evaluators). Both steps, independent of each other, but also especially in combination, are considered to be very important in order to achieve an objective assessment which includes inner and outer perspectives.

All told it can be said that the topic of evaluation is gaining in significance at the University of Hamburg as it is in the Federal Republic in general. The combination of various evaluation activities has a positive effect on the establishment and further development of content, questions and procedures.

Up to now there is generally little known about the impact especially the long-term effects of evaluations. The very process of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany offers a framework which allows for a long-term perspective of processes with the organization of studies. Those who have been evaluated consider the initial efforts toward the development of an evaluation-culture, that is an organized reflecting upon opinion-forming and decision-making, to be very positive. The actual effects, however, cannot yet especially from a long-term perspective be conclusively evaluated.

6. Conclusion: The << Ideal >> Evaluation

"There are such ground-in manners of behavior they could be changed, but someone has to come along and do it ..."

As it has already been described in the National Report, Germany in general is a developing country in the field of evaluation. With this in mind, the diverse, meanwhile tested and further differentiated evaluation processes at the University of Hamburg which are described in this report are gaining importance and, as a result, widespread public interest in testing and further developing the various processes is ascertainable.

As a general summary of this case study, the following three basic attitudes of those interviewed regarding evaluation can be noted:

- Evaluation is necessary.
- It should be part of the quality management of the university.
- The evaluation itself should be detached from direct financial or other political decisions.

These basic requirements were considered to be especially important for the evaluations in the VNU, but they also applied to the other evaluation and assessment processes mentioned.

The ideal process of evaluation would be discursive, action-oriented and multidimensional and it would be open to the definitions and problems of those concerned. The process would be seen as positive if it had self-evaluation, external evaluation and a follow-up in combination as its integral parts. In the self-evaluation the most extensive inclusion of all participants possible would be guaranteed. As for the peers, it has made sense that they be accepted as equals, on the one hand, and be highly respected and feared, on the other. A follow-up, i.e. the implementation of the results, would be a component of the process itself and would include consequences in some form.

One characteristic of all German universities is the special significance of autonomy, for both the university as an institution and for each individual university teacher. Such autonomy, however, requires the cooperation of all members of the institution. For decision-making capability, certain (non-hierarchical) steering mechanisms must be developed in which the following factors are balanced within the limits of a charged field:

Quality

The University of Hamburg is responsible for the further development of the quality of its achievements in teaching, research, self-administration and administration this was the consensus of those interviewed. What quality actually is, was either difficult to say or only conditionally definable. The circumstances in the various departments and institutions, and

in that connection, the conditions of possible and sensible change were seen to be quite diverse. At the same time, those interviewed consciously saw quality not as something static, but as something dynamic which must adapt itself to the criteria and requirements of the practical social environment (e.g. also professional life).

A concept of quality which is so dynamic and bound to practical work or environment is the basis for different evaluation processes at the University of Hamburg. In particular, the process of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany with its discursive and action-oriented approach was developed with this understanding of quality in mind. In this context, quality is seen as being multidimensional with regard to quantitative data, goals, content, organization, etc. Beyond certain minimum requirements of the prerequisites and conclusions (see performance indicators / quantitative indicators in Chapter 4.2.), within the limits of the VNU it is assumed that the criteria for quality must be defined and further developed by the experts themselves. The process has been structured in such a way that experts in the discipline and students carry out an analysis of strengths and weaknesses with the help of an outline of questions. This is fixed in a written self-report. Such an approach to developing quality in studies and teaching is considered generally to be very suitable by those who have participated in the evaluation processes.

Acceptance

It was repeatedly described how significant it was to find the necessary acceptance of the respective areas and departments with regard to questions posed, conclusions made and steps taken toward implementation. Suggestions for change which did not meet with approval did not need to be made; therefore working toward the greatest acceptance possible was particularly important. This is especially true for procedures which are initiated under outside pressure, such as the advising of the departments by Boston Consulting. The University was under the pressure of having to introduce a new type of budget (required by the city of Hamburg). Boston Consulting consciously chose the approach of not forcing solutions upon the University but accompanying them through the decision-making process and offering them external advice (including methods for expanding knowledge). In this way,

the autonomy of the departments was observed and acceptance of the process of evaluation at the University of Hamburg was in general greater.

Openness

Openness is a term which is considered important from different points of view. First, it is necessary that each process be open to individual conditions in the respective departments. The procedure's openness to pressing problems in the different departments was stressed in connection with the analysis of the evaluations in Economics and Computer Sciences. Second, departments and other areas of work must also be open to change. Individual departments can, in part, be very different in regard to the necessary openness. Evaluations take place in a field which can vary individually from a fundamentally great openness and acceptance on the one side (so that existing efforts must merely be strengthened) to a possible skepticism or rejection (which then must be overcome) on the other. In the interviews it was repeatedly stressed that it is important to create openness for a critical view of things and for change. Having Boston Consulting make an appraisal was an important experience for the University of Hamburg, among other reasons, because it fostered an openness in the departments for possibilities of administering and distributing funds and for evaluation processes in general.

Transparency

In the process of the VNU data concerning teaching, advising, examinations or facilities is gathered (sometimes for the first time). Dealing with this data and exchanging practical experiences with other universities in the same discipline increase the consciousness and the transparency in the relationship of available funds, distribution of funds and the achieved quality. A reinforcement of transparency in, for example, decision-making processes is described as being very important, since only in this way co-determination of participants is possible. At the same time, greater transparency had a motivational effect on participants.

Public Relations/Publication of Results

One question with regard to evaluation results concerns their publication beyond the limits of the evaluated subjects. Although there is widespread public interest in the processes and results of evaluations, fear of negative consequences in the evaluated areas and departments often leads to an initial guarded attitude toward publication.

In the process of the VNU, the evaluated departments could autonomously determine if, at the close of the evaluation, results should be published, and which ones. In this way they did not need to fear that weaknesses they had revealed might meet with sanctions from the supervisory board. Instead, the departments could approach the elimination of recognized weaknesses in a self-determined and constructive manner. With the increase in experience with evaluation processes in the VNU has come an increase in the willingness of the disciplines to deal more openly with the results.

Inclusion of all represented groups

The willingness of the individual to commit himself/herself (together with others) to teaching was repeatedly called for in the interviews as an important basic requirement for an ideal evaluation in the VNU. At the same time, it was clear that this kind of "joint" commitment could definitely be further intensified.

In the same way, one conclusion of the evaluation meetings in the subjects of Economics and Computer Sciences was stressed, namely that intra-departmental polls, group discussions and conferences should be intensified in order to expand the discussion process. This was also considered a prerequisite for the fact that as many people as possible should bear the consequences which derived from the evaluations and self-reports.

In general it is especially the students who consider stronger participation of student members of the discipline (as "experts" in teaching and learning) to be important. With regard to students (who are not on committees), a prerequisite for a larger number taking part in co-determination would first be an intensification of public relations.

Up to now, something which has been more underexposed is the inclusion of women's interests in the evaluations. The processing of all relevant data (also) according to sex, is an important prerequisite to this. For the University of Hamburg it can be said that such data does exist, but that it has not yet been consciously perceived. Besides the deliberate inclusion of female evaluators, an even stronger inclusion of women (women's affairs representatives) in the evaluation process needs to take place to reach this goal (as was the case for the first time in the VNU at the external visitation of Computer Science).

Although evaluations at the University of Hamburg are afforded great significance, the concept is in no way clearly defined, so that the question "What is evaluation?" must always be clarified anew in the interviews.

Besides the observation that the concept is in urgent need of clarification, other results of the interviews included further general, crucial aspects which will be considered briefly in the following.

On the Concept Evaluation

Although the concept of evaluation is meanwhile of relatively common use in describing university processes, a striking fact of the interviews carried out within the scope of this case study was that the meaning of the concept and its usage were in no way clear and unified. Most of the people interviewed were of the opinion that the concept was solely used correctly in the context of self- and peer-review processes in studies and teaching (and possibly also in research) and/or was always connected to an empirically valid process. Various assessment processes (nevertheless included in this report) were in this sense viewed by the participants themselves only with reservations as being evaluations. Here it was shown that there was generally an even stronger need for open discussion and clarification.

Self-Evaluation and/or Outside Evaluation

It became clear in the interviews that processes of self-reflection and processes of outside evaluation cannot be seen as alternatives, but that their value lies in the fact that they complement each other. Stimulation from outside is necessary and desired, but it must be accepted by the department in order for it to be effective. Acceptance such as this and with it, the chance to put it into effect can be increased by acting in their own self-determined interests (autonomy) in the evaluations process. It is unfortunate that up till now, work on the self-report has often been made more difficult by the fact that at the University of Hamburg there are inadequate possibilities for obtaining data.

The combination with outside assessment by external peers reduces the danger that significant aspects are overlooked (possibly due to self-consciousness) in their own observations.

Five Universities in Comparison

Five universities in Northern Germany participate in the processes of evaluation of studies and teaching in the VNU. It is not the goal to rank the universities. Visiting several, very different (partially as a result of their histories) universities allows the evaluators to compare the universities and to make recommendations for improving their strengths and concentrating on the image they have developed. Likewise, the exchange of experiences among universities can contribute to the development of a stronger consciousness of one's own image in studies and teaching. In the interviews, varying degrees of significance were attached to the direct exchange of experiences. Great interest led to common activities in the Computer Science Departments which formed an association that is involved with questions of a new structuring of the first stage of studies and with gathering indicators for the description of performance in studies and teaching.

In part, however, interest and focus within the (still unfamiliar) evaluation process centered more on one's own department. Alongside this, the exchange of ideas among the

universities in the assessment by outside evaluators proved favorable to the general (further) development of criteria for the evaluation of quality in studies and teaching.

Implementing the Results

The evaluation procedures as a process of gaining knowledge per se were described by the people interviewed as predominantly positive with positive repercussions for the departments. The phase of implementation, a particularly important one for the evaluation process, was often seen critically and skeptically. It was that much more regrettable when there was some doubt about practical implementation of the evaluation results, that is about the actual change or will to change.

The evaluations did indeed have a manifold effect, as mentioned in Chapter 5, but some of those interviewed still were in doubt as to whether the results could actually be put into practice with the necessary consistency, without stronger accompaniment or support from outside the departments. Doubts such as these were expressed above all by the academic non-professional staff and students, which can be attributed to the limited public relations in the phase of implementation. Since there have been no general department publications or events in connection with concrete results or steps which might already have been put into effect, students have hardly become aware of changes which might have resulted from an evaluation (see Chapter 4.3.).

Basically, with regard to the implementation of results, it seems to be especially important to seek solutions which find as great a consensus and as widespread an acceptance and support in the departments as possible. Only in this way will it be considered to be guaranteed that they are being lived.

In the evaluations described in this case study there were often initially great starting hurdles to overcome, since evaluations in this form were, for one thing, still very new and unknown, and, for another, were often looked upon skeptically (see the German National Report). Besides very concrete changes which are described as positive, the great commitment of those participating in the evaluation processes and the interest shown by

members of the departments in discussion about possible changes have therefore alone often (justifiably) been considered the great success of the evaluations.

Annexes

Annex 1: Methodology of the Case Study

This report is based upon content analyses of relevant documents (published and unpublished papers/documents for internal and/or external use, reports of internal and external evaluations, articles published in the press) and upon qualitative expert interviews with academic and non-academic staff members of the University of Hamburg, students and people who are involved otherwise in evaluation processes. The interviews were semi-structured. They generally began with questions about an area known to the interviewee, about evaluation-processes or with an evaluation in which they had participated. Apart from general questions referring to the definition of 'evaluation' and its special meaning in the particular case, the objectives and expansion of evaluation, the relationship between external and internal evaluation, the participants and the organization of the evaluation etc., the interviews concentrated on questions involving the results and the effects of the evaluation processes.

The University of Hamburg was chosen because it is one of the largest and one of the most important universities in Germany and because meanwhile one can find diverse evaluation activities all over the University. In addition, the University of Hamburg is a member of the "Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany". The Consortium initiates evaluations of teaching and studies in different areas in all five participating universities with an evaluation process which seems to be very successful. Because of its importance in general and in particular for the University of Hamburg, in this case study special regard was given to the evaluation processes which were developed by the Consortium. This special regard focused on the departments of Economics and Computer Sciences, which were evaluated by the Consortium one year ago. So it was possible here to collect qualitative data about the

evaluation process itself, on the one hand, and about the effects and the implementation of the results, on the other.

List of interviewees:

- President of the University of Hamburg and Spokesman for the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany
- Chancellor of the University of Hamburg
- Head of the Planning Staff
- Head of the Organizational Affairs Office
- Executive Director of the Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany
- Student co-worker from the Office of the VNU
- 2 co-workers from the Student Evaluation Center SEZ
- Head of the Institute for Regional Development and Structure Research IES (former Office for the External Advisory Commission for the University of Hamburg)
- Co-worker from IES, responsible for main office work for the External Advisory Commission
- Former AStA Chairperson, now student member of the Advisory Board for the Volkswagen Foundation project
- Co-worker from the IZHD
- Executive Director of the central office for women's support at the University of Hamburg
- Dean of the Department of Computer Sciences
- Former Chairperson of the evaluation team in the Department of Computer Sciences

- Former member of the evaluation team in the Department of Computer Sciences and Student Counselor
- 2 student members of the evaluation team in the Department of Computer Sciences
- Academic staff member within the evaluation and author of the self-evaluation in the Department of Computer Sciences
- Planner from the Department of Computer Sciences
- "Teaching Representative" appointed after the evaluation in the Department of Computer Sciences/member of the Academic Reform Committee
- Dean of the Department of Economics
- Member of the Student Organization of the Department of Economics and former student member of the evaluation team
- Member of the Department Council in the Department of Economics and former member of the evaluation team
- Teacher from the Department of Economics and Chairperson of the Steering Committee of the Volkswagen Foundation project
- Head of the evaluation team in the Department of Economics

Annex 2: Statistical Data

VNU

The evaluation of courses of study uses a questionnaire of 64 questions and statistics. The questionnaire is usually answered by all staff members, often also by students. The answers are the basis for discussions in the evaluated department during the self-evaluation process. The results also are used in the self-report. The qualitative questionnaire has the following headings:

- Goals in Teaching and Studies
- Areas of Specialization and Image of Discipline
- Formal Organization of Studies
- Courses: Planning and Organization
- Courses: Forms of Teaching and Learning
- Counselling, Supervising, Communication
- The Students
- The Teachers
- Teaching Facilities
- Examinations and Duration of Studies
- Administration and Self-administration of Teaching
- Evaluation und Reform Projects

Quantitative indicators mainly concentrate on the following aspects:

capacity of positions:

- the number of academic and non-academic positions
- relations: professors in relation to other positions
- the quantitative range of classes and lectures

number of students:

- first-semester students
- first semester students in their subject
- students within or exceeding standard period of study
- male and female students

examinations/graduates (according to sex)

- standard period of study
- number of graduates
- number of postgraduates

supervision ratios:

- students in subject-related semesters to professors and to total academic staff
- students within standard period of study and total students to total academic staff
- number of intermediate and final exams to professors and to total academic staff

teaching capacities:

- curricular-standard-value according to KapVO and utilization of course of study capacities in regard to students in various phases of study
- decrease in number of students

young academics:

- number of doctorates according to sex
- number of post-doctorate qualifications according to sex

location of graduates:

- after the first academic degree
- after doctorate

External Advising

The external commission used the following data from each department:

- structure of department
- courses of study
- number of first-semester students and total
- number of staff members (professors, assistants, doctoral candidates, non-academic staff)
- While the advising was taking place, following data was also submitted by the individual departments but not published
- number of examinations, doctorates and habilitations
- number of professors, assistants and doctoral candidates versus number of non-academic staff
- percentage of females on the teaching staff

- number and sums of grants, which are acquired from outside sources (so-called Drittmittel)
- number of publications, citation indices, patents und prizes

Cost Planning

The University of Hamburg is testing different indicators and varying the values of the indicators to distribute the lump-sum budget in the departments. The attempts to assess the indicators have not been concluded.

- number of students in the 1st, 4th and 8th semester
- number of examinations, doctorates and post-doctorates
- number of professors, assistants and doctoral candidates versus number of non-academic staff
- percentage of females on the teaching staff
- number and sums of grants, which are acquired from outside sources (so-called Drittmittel)
- number of publications, citation indices, patents und prizes

Examples for Statistical Indicators which are available in the University

Students (WS 1993/1994), students on leave and auditors and fields of study

Total number of students (excluding students on leave and auditors): 44,202 comprised of

- German 41,401 (93.7 %)
- 2,801 (6.3%) foreign students
- 4,775 (10.8%) first-semester students.

In addition there were 2,171 students on leave and 730 auditors.

Positions / Staff (as of December 1993)

	Positions			Full-time Staff		
	Total Positions	comprised of		Total Staff	comprised of	
		Academic Staff	Technical and Administrative Staff		Academic Staff	Technical and Administrative Staff
University Total	9,104.1	2,839 ¹⁾	6,265.1	11,022	3,565 ²⁾	7,457
University excluding the Department of Medicine	3,551.6	1,767	1,784.6	4,525	2,374 ³⁾	2,151
Department of Medicine	5,552.5	1,072	4,480.5	6,497	1,191 ⁴⁾	5,306

¹⁾ Of these 1026 are professorial positions(230 of which are at the Department of Medicine).

²⁾ Of whom 875 (24.5 %) are female

³⁾ Of whom 510 (21.5 %) are female

⁴⁾ Of whom 365 (30.6 %) are female

Institutions (as of December 1993)

The University of Hamburg comprises 19 departments and five institutions independent of them. The five institutions are directly subordinate to the Senate of the University of Hamburg. The departments are structured in institutes and subdepartments; the Department of Medicine has clinics in addition. At this moment there are 154 scientific institutions at the University of Hamburg. Buildings / Floor Space (as of June 1991)

The university (excluding the Department of Medicine) has 174,000 square metres of utilizable main floor space (net floor space) in 150 buildings at its disposal.

Passed Final Examinations (as of examination year 1992)

In the examination year 1992 a total of 4,462 graduates of the University of Hamburg passed their final examinations: of this number 1,528 received diplomas, 590 master's degrees and 746 doctorates, and 1,135, 411 and 52 respectively passed state, teaching and church examinations.

Research

According to the University's research report for the years 1991 - 1993, 3.687 research projects were carried out in that period. In 1993 outside parties provided DM 127.2 million in funding for research (e.g. DM 38.8 million from the Federal Minister for Research and Technology, and DM 31.5 million from the German Research Association).

Annex 3: Abbreviations

- AStA Allgemeiner Studierenden-Ausschuß
(Student Union)
- CHE Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung
(Center for University Development)
- DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft
(German Research Association)
- HIS Hochschul-Informationssystem GmbH
(Higher Education Information System Ltd.)
- HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
(German Rectors Conference)
- IES Institut für Entwicklungsplanung und Strukturforchung GmbH
(Institute for Development Planning and Structure Research Ltd.)
- IZHD Interdisziplinäres Zentrum für Hochschuldidaktik
(Interdisciplinary Center for Research and Development in Higher Education)
- SEZ Studentisches Evaluationszentrum
(Student Evaluation Center)
- VNU Verbund Norddeutscher Universitäten
(Consortium of Universities in Northern Germany: Members are the Universities of Bremen, Hamburg, Kiel, Oldenburg and Rostock)
- VW-Stiftung Volkswagen-Stiftung (Volkswagen Foundation)