Having completed this program, students normally start working on their research projects.

Many of the students enrolled in such programs have no teaching commitments and can thus completely concentrate on their Ph.D., yet several of them are also traditional research and teaching assistants, or become research and teaching assistants, after finishing the program.

Scarc Resources at Smaller Business Schools

A problem that a number of business schools in German speaking countries encounter when launching new doctoral programs stems from their traditionally broad approach to management and economics education at undergraduate and graduate level. There are only a few specialized programs that focus on production and operations management, logistics and so forth at the Bachelor or Master level. Instead, students are given the opportunity to specialize in certain fields in addition to their general management education, which normally includes introductory and advanced classes in a broad range of areas from accounting, taxation, and management to micro- and macroeconomics. This breadth is often reflected in the mix of senior faculty positions. Compared with international standards the teaching load at German universities is quite high for senior researchers, so their numbers are low. It is hence common to find just one single senior member of faculty in each of the important research and teaching areas; at least this is the case at the majority of comparatively small business schools. Sufficiently staffed departments for decision & information technologies, production and operations management etc. with a reasonable number of faculty and in turn doctoral students pursuing research in related areas, typically only exist at a handful of larger business schools. These restrictions on the supply and demand side can make it very difficult for smaller business schools to offer a sufficient number of Ph.D. courses, and even some of the larger schools find it a challenge to offer highly specialized courses.

ProDok

ProDok is a program set up in fall 2009 by the German Academic Association for Business Research (Verband der Hochschullehrer für Betriebswirtschaft, or VHB) to improve this unsatisfactory situation. It started with a survey of 86 business schools in Germany, Austria and Switzerland that examined what these schools consider to be the most important aspects of doctoral training. Respondents were asked to assign 100 points on a constant sum scale to the six categories shown in Figure 1. The results provided the Association with the information it needed to develop ProDok.

Under the ProDok program the Association invites distinguished national and international researchers from different research fields to teach, either in English or in German, methodological courses or classes in their specific area. To date subjects have included accounting, finance, management, marketing, production and operations management, supply chain management, and information systems. All ProDok classes are understood to be complementary to those regularly offered by business schools and are open to Ph.D. students from any university. The program thus supports particularly the smaller business schools in round-
POM 2012 - Twenty Third Annual Conference
Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. (Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile)
April 20 – April 23, 2012
Theme: Socially Responsible Operations
The conference website will be available to submit abstract on November 1, 2011.
Conference Planning Committee
General Chair
Christopher Tang, UCLA Anderson School:
chris.tang@anderson.ucla.edu
Program Chair
Kumar Rajaram, UCLA Anderson School:
kumar.rajaram@anderson.ucla.edu
Chair - Scheduling Committee
Vikram Tiwari, University of Houston: vtiwari@uh.edu
Chair – Doctoral Consortium
Vinayak Deshpande, UNC-Chapel Hill:
vinayak.deshpande@kenan-flagler.unc.edu
Chair – Emerging Scholars Program
Jack Kanet, University of Dayton
kanet@udayton.edu
Chair – Local Arrangements Committee
Laurence Debo: laurens.debo chicagobooth.edu
VP Meetings
Nagesh Murthy, University of Oregon:
nmurthy@lbcmmail.uoregon.edu
Executive Director
Sushil Gupta, Florida International University
POMS@fiu.edu
Venue
The hotel is magnificently situated amongst worldclass shopping and dining., within walking distance of top attractions including the Navy Pier, American Girl Place, Shedd Aquarium, Millenium Park, Theater and Museum Districts.

Figure 1: Perceived importance of training areas (avg fraction of points assigned by respondents to each category).

Since ProDok was launched in 2009 13 classes have been held in various locations in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, each extending over three to five full days with a student workload of 180 hours. Young researchers from various German schools were invited to participate. Class size varied from less than 10 to a maximum of 20.

As for gauging the impact of the program, it is of course early days yet. Nevertheless, participants have claimed that the ProDok classes are “an excellent opportunity for scientific discourse at a very high level”. The Association is convinced that this program is a further step towards greater internationalization of German academic career paths and publication activities. Yet it also is an opportunity for experienced international researchers to meet bright and highly dedicated Ph.D. students and to enjoy the lively atmosphere in the ProDok classes. American colleagues who were invited to teach the Ph.D. courses were delighted about participants’ level of motivation and their prior knowledge in the field. In some cases discussions about promising research avenues have resulted in joint activities to collect cross-national data.

Contact us for more information: caren.sureth@vhbonline.org