

State of the HSoG

Welcome:

Dear students, dear faculty, dear admins, welcome to the first “state of the HSoG plenary”.

I know that some of you have dubbed this session the “state of the union address”, as if I were the president and you are congress. But those who make the joke best be careful and take a better look at history. For if this is the “state of the union address” then I would like to follow the practice of my favourite US president, Thomas Jefferson, who in 1801 discontinued the practice of delivering the “State of the Union” in person, because he found it to be too monarchical. Back then Jefferson chose instead to send a written address to congress, where it was then read by a clerk. This is why I have taken the liberty of bringing 100 copies of the written address. Let me commence the passing out of the copies of the address. And without any further ado, here is Karen Hauff who will read the speech in a quick and expedient manner, so that we can end today’s “state of the HSoG address” in a timely fashion.

Unfortunately though, I am not Thomas Jefferson and you are not the Congress of the United States of America. This plenary is meant to be interactive and contributory to our institutional learning. It is decisive to recall that the session itself is above all the result of an exercise in institutional learning and communication between different groups within the HSoG. It is part of the process in which the HSoG moves from a start-up to an established institution of higher learning.

As you remember, upon your initiative we decided to split the plenary sessions into two categories: First, the more interactive session where students draw up the agenda, second, this session, where I will try to set out over the next 30 minutes where I see the school at this moment, how our achievements contrast with what we had originally defined as the mission/goals of the school and where I see us likely to head over the next year. Of course, you will not only listen, all of you are heartily encouraged to contribute and give insights and comments on everything I have

mentioned. After all, you already had the opportunity to collect quite a bit of experience with the School and I am eager to learn from them.

Let me add that we should stop at 12:45 at the latest. For as the school grows, moments with all of us together get rare. This is why I ask you for documentary and film purposes to stay here after the plenary for a photo session,

The timing for this plenary is near-perfect. The first class of the Hertie School of Governance is about to graduate, 2 years of valuable experience behind them. In addition, 45 new minds with impressions from their first year are about to embark on their summer internship. The faculty has been consistently growing. A new director of the MPP programme has started and our team is working hard in making the preparations for the first graduation in a few weeks time.

So the timing is right, but how can one evaluate the progress, or the lack of progress, of a School for Public Policy?

Most of you applied to the HSoG on the basis of the self-description that was projected in the public. All of us, students, faculty and staff came here because they believed in the project, not because of a tradition of successful practice. Therefore it makes sense to evaluate ourselves against the background of our original mission, which is what I intend to do.

I will take the Mission Statement written in 2003 as the starting point, which was a programmatic statement for the development of the school and the MPP programme over the last years. Against this background, I want to proceed in three steps.

- goals
- products
- major challenges

So let us begin with the goals.

The mission statement explicitly mentions four aspects, which the Hertie School of Governance would need to maximise, in order to become a successful Public Policy School fit for the 21st century and that will have an impact on the training practices of policy makers and analysts: Interdisciplinarity, Internationality, Tri-Sectorality and Practice-Orientation.

Big words indeed, and often used devoid of content, but I would argue that we can see these aspects in most of what the school does in its everyday activities.

Interdisciplinarity:

In the mission statement it was stated: “The Hertie School must become a multidisciplinary institution...across and beyond the academic disciplines”. A good balance of disciplines and, most importantly, a very high standard of both disciplinary excellence and the integration of the disciplines, was our explicit aim.

Did we achieve this?

I believe the HSoG achieved this goal by selecting a faculty with a unique balance of various disciplines, experience, ambition and tradition. The faculty consists of experts on environmental policy, welfare state policy, theories of the state, international relations, public management, political economy, labour policy and legal studies. This shows that there is a broad representation of different disciplines.

Most importantly, we have the right representatives of each discipline.

We have the right lawyers; they are lawyers who are not only interested in the appropriate interpretation of given law, but also in law-making and the structures in which law is embedded.

We have the right social scientists; the type of people who are not married to just sociology, Political Science or International Relations, but they bring these specific social sciences together in a broad manner.

We also found the right economists; from the specific branch of political economy in which both social scientists and economists communicate with each other. And we have the right public administration experts; they have good connections to the mother disciplines of public administration.

All in all, the mix is good.

What strikes me most, however, is the attitude that my colleagues bring to this School. Despite the challenges that every one of us has when trying to teach interdisciplinarily, everyone contributes to this common endeavour. There is real interaction going on, cooperation truly runs across the 4 groups I mentioned. This is greatly helped by all the dedicated students that bring in their expertise and are sincerely interested in bridging the disciplinary boundaries. At the core of it, interdisciplinarity is about communication.

Let us not forget that there are deficits as well

Such as in the economics area: This needs to be developed more strongly and I hope we will be successful in doing this by attracting the candidates we selected from the ongoing faculty recruitment process. We already have a positive decision from Mark Hallerberg from Emory University and in terms of economics he certainly will be a great addition.

So far we have also not achieved an incorporation of “exotic” people like anthropologists, social psychologists and others. This is another step we will try to make in the future, through probably not in the next two or three years.

Internationality:

Public Policy is inherently international. Almost no single policy can be thought of that does not somehow entail an international dimension. This has been repeated so many times that it already sounds hollow to many ears – but nevertheless it is one of the most important insights of modern social science.

Within the curriculum, we try to highlight the interplay of national, international and European politics in several core courses (U1, U4, C1) and in the Areas of Concentration, which all have a very strong international component. Currently, the thematic focus is on the “European take” on governance and we mostly deal with governance problems in the OECD world, as well as European and transatlantic problems of international governance. These are already very complex issues, and we have set our minds on “getting these right” before attempting to explain more of, for example, north-south relations.

In addition, there are additional opportunities for specialisation with an international theme through exchange and dual degree programmes, where students can tailor their course of study to gain insights into different governance structures and deepen their knowledge in a more specific area of concentration at several prestigious universities across the globe. Several of you in this room have participated in the past and will in the future and have benefited from these opportunities.

Let me add that there is now a new exchange program with the Maxwell School of Syracuse University, one of the leading US professional schools, which was agreed upon yesterday.

The mission statement also points out that an international profile should not only be a thematic focus. Everyday life at the School should also reflect and foster an international flair. The HSoG is privileged to be multilingual, multicultural, situated in a national capital of a country and due to the specific European context acts as a bridge between East and West, as well as a focal point for both German and European integration. With our 73 students (39 from Germany, 6 from European non EU-member states, 8 from the Americas, 12 from EU member states, 6 from Asia and Australia, 2 from Africa) from a multitude of countries, one can see the fruits of our recruiting efforts.

In terms of internationality, we can be happy with what we achieved, but I also see a need to improve in two specific areas.

Firstly, we need to broaden our case studies, and we need to include more international speakers into workshops and classes. It is also the case that too many of the extra-curricular activities have a focus on Germany. There is a need for more balance.

We do not need to become more international in the student body, but we need to stay attractive for students from all over the world, and we need to become more attractive (and known) to students from parts of the world under-represented so far, namely Africa and Asia.

Practice-Orientation and Trisectorality:

As a European Professional School for Public Policy, the Hertie School of Governance aims to closely connect practice and theory, research and implementation, as well as scholarship and politics. Practice-orientation, while maintaining and achieving academic excellence is what can set this school apart from the “standard” institutes at other universities, and which can equip you with an understanding of what lies ahead in your professional career.

Practice-orientation has some “obvious” elements – using case studies from the practice in the classroom, getting in contact with practitioners through lectures and presentations, dipping your toes into new fields during the internships, but also consulting with practice institutions during the student project. For some of you, there will also be a unique possibility of working at a growing number of partner institutions during the professional Year. Just recently we made agreements with the GTZ, WHO and other German ministries, where students will have the chance of collecting practical experience during their studies.

The internship possibilities that we achieved for students were an important step. The introduction of the professional year was another such step. We were also able to bring some interesting political and practical characters to the School to share their knowledge. I would also like to point to the student projects, where the topics prove that we are truly a practice oriented institution.

Yet, more needs to be done. The biggest challenge will be the further integration of all the three sectors. The whole School will need to be active in reaching out to institutions of the practice and to our international partners. This activity will get everyone at the School more insights and experience and contribute to our network.

In addition, the next round of faculty recruiting has put a special emphasis on practical experience and we will keep an eye on that for the future.

Faculty has and is still discussing the weighing of criteria for admission, trying to optimize the balance between practical experience and academic excellence in the student body.

In conclusion, these four aspects – interdisciplinarity, internationality, practice-orientation and trisectorality -- were the foundations of the School, the principles that guide our work. I do think we can be happy with what we have achieved.

Let me now turn to a more specific assessment of what needs to be done with respect to our major products: the Master of Public Policy programme, Executive Education, research and knowledge transfer.

Naturally, the Master of Public Policy is the area that interests you most, and it is as well the product that defines this school most.

There are a number of challenges that await us in the next months and years.

The first challenge will be the transition of the first class into the job market. As you all know, Public Policy does not lead into that ONE job or the ONE field rather it depends on the initiative of the graduates and the networking of the School. We will all need to work together very hard in the following months to make the class of 2007 a success on the job market.

The second challenge will be the need to improve and upgrade the space available for MPP students and faculty. This was not too much of an issue for the class of 2007, but as you know, the school is successfully growing and as of this fall we will

have approximately 110-120 students in this building, compared with 30 at the time when we started. There will be more rooms and an upgrade of library facilities over the next few months.

Thirdly, the HSoG has already implemented a comprehensive evaluation system, where the curriculum and offered courses are reviewed regularly by the students. This led to the creation of a new area of concentration (AoC IV- Democracies: transition, consolidation, design alternatives), the restructuring of our problem child C2 to a professional development class workshop module, creation of U5, as well as the elective courses being adjusted and cross listed towards the interests and AoC's of the students. Currently, the monitoring process is being extended to include additional plenary meetings and focus groups, which will ensure that the MPP programme is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

As the fourth challenge, we intend to further integrate elements from practice into the MPP. This is why there will be a new "Practice Advisory Council" (Praxisbeirat) in which selected practitioners will represent future employers and voice their opinion on what a modern Professional School should teach to its students. This could lead to further adaptations of the curriculum.

The final challenge will be the hiring and successful integration of the new faculty member appointees. Soon we hope be able to add in addition to Mark Hallerberg - Christina Gathmann, Alina Mungiu-Pippidi and Kai Wegrich to our faculty.

Sometimes the curriculum might feel a bit narrow for you, but it is imperative that you and the faculty develop a sense of the type of governance that we want to understand at the HSoG. And I feel that we are on a good way, and our strong international partners feel the same. Just recently, SIPA, one of the most successful Public Policy schools, reiterated how influential our core curriculum has been in the remodelling process of their own curriculum.

For an effective and enduring interdisciplinary framework at the HSoG, it will be imperative that not only the faculty displays cohesiveness, but also that the students

and the administrative staff are integrated via leadership and clear communication structures.

Executive Education

Now I would like to turn to the Executive Education programme at the HSoG, which is something you don't often realize exists, because it is separate from the MPP. Yet, it existed even before the MPP and started out with 3 programmes, which were evaluated very positively. In 2007 we added the "Diplomatenkolleg" and are trying out new formats for the seminars, like the "shaping debates" seminar that we conducted with IFOK not long ago. Next year, we already want to offer 9-12 seminars a year involving numerous mid-level career professionals and from 2010 on we expect that the executive education programmes will begin to be a valuable income source.

Research:

Research is one of the burning topics for the development of the school. Excellent teaching needs to be constantly fed by excellent research, and while we have successfully taken the first steps, there is a strong need for more to follow. Our immediate aim for the next few years will be to establish more research projects. In the mid-term, we are aiming at establishing clusters of several projects, in conjunction with other institutions, in which several faculty members could take part and contribute. This would help the HSoG to build on its name recognition and offer contributions for the teaching in the MPP. "Political Economy", "Multi-Level Governance" and "Social Policy" are naturally among the frontrunners for such clusters.

Moreover, this School strives for excellence in teaching and research therefore we want to be successful in the so called "Exzellenzinitiative"

We are participating in the proposal for a cluster on risk and security at the Humboldt University, where Alexander Graser, Anke Hassel, Markus Jachtenfuchs, Stein Kuhnle and I have been active.

We also are aiming to become a major partner of the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences.

I wish now to slowly come to an end and what I have said so far can be summarized easily. We have achieved a lot with respect to our major goals. We are also very proud to have our first graduates this May. But there is still a lot to do in order to improve the MPP, Executive Education, research and knowledge transfer.

In addition to this long list of things to do, there are two additional and very specific major challenges in 2007.

This school will need to undergo the process of “accreditation” by the German Science authorities. We have started working on this quite a while ago and plan to launch an official application by September or November of this year. This should be a crucial test for the changes in the German university landscape. Of course, we will inform you in time about the progress of this endeavour.

At a certain point, all of us will be involved in one or the other way, and especially others within the administration team will spend most of their time for this effort. This will be a truly major effort in the months to come.

Probably, the single biggest piece of news, and one that I hope will excite you as much as it excites us, is that the HSoG will soon, soon means fall 2008, start a new Masters programme in Public Management.

KPMG, the University of Potsdam and the Hertie School of Governance have decided to join forces to start the new Masters in Public Management. The degree programme will be situated here at the HSoG, as will the new professor who will be in charge of the programme. The curriculum will be aimed at both mid-career students and at people willing to get more knowledge of the field before embarking on a new career. Currently, we are looking into options for part-time studying as well as into options for integrating the courses very closely with the MPP and Executive Education.

This should be a big boost for all aspects of the school – a new theme and field for teaching and research, an enlarged faculty and the integration of a lot of practice-oriented elements, lecturers and students.

And let us also not forget that in fall 2007 two other new programmes will begin. Then we will start the new dual degree programmes with LSE and Sciences Po.

Let me finish my report here, I have talked for long enough, and now it should be your turn to comment, to raise questions, to add, to make suggestions.

Thank you very much for what you have contributed in all the time here at the school and I really look forward to the discussion.