

# Evaluation des Departments für Materialwissenschaften und Prozesstechnik 2014



## Executive Summary

Für das vom Rektorat beauftragte und von der Stabstelle Qualitätsmanagement begleitete Verfahren zur Evaluation des Departments für Materialwissenschaften und Prozesstechnik (MAP), das mit Mai 2014 gestartet wurde, konnten, entsprechend den einzelnen Fachdisziplinen des Departments, ausgewiesene ExpertInnen der Universitäten Braunschweig, Rostock, Hamburg-Harburg sowie von der Sorbonne in Paris gewonnen werden.

Zu Beginn des Verfahrens, das den Anforderungen des UG 2002 sowie einer Reihe internationaler Standards entspricht, erstellte das Department auf Basis eines Fragebogens sowie relevanter departmentspezifischer Kenndaten einen Rückblick über die wesentlichen Leistungen der letzten 5 Jahre in den Bereichen Organisationsentwicklung, Forschung, Lehre und Weiterbildung, Personalmanagement sowie Beziehungen zur Gesellschaft; außerdem wurden Zukunftsperspektiven entwickelt. Dieser Selbstevaluationsbericht wurde neben einer Reihe weiterer Unterlagen den Peers zur Verfügung gestellt. Im Rahmen ihres Vor-Ort Besuchs im Dezember 2014 führten die Peers Gespräche mit der Departmentleitung, den InstitutsleiterInnen sowie VertreterInnen des Mittelbaus, Doktoranden, nichtwissenschaftlichen MitarbeiterInnen und Studierenden auf Basis dessen eine Evaluierungsbericht erstellt wurde. Diesem Bericht folgte eine schriftliche Stellungnahme des Departments.

Die Ergebnisse der Evaluation in Form von Empfehlungen wurden von den Peers folgendermaßen zusammengefasst:

The department is relatively heterogeneous in terms of research focus of the individual institutes from fundamental to applied research. This can be viewed as both advantage and disadvantage. The review panel feels that the breadth of the research and teaching portfolios can serve well to the department in positioning itself as a multi-disciplinary team with focus on renewable resources. While the spatial heterogeneity might be viewed as an issue, it should not hinder collaboration within the department. Overall the department serves the university mission, performs excellent research in main aspects but needs further deepen the internal cohesion and collaboration. This, in our opinion, will make the position of the department within the University stronger and more visible.

The department is organizationally inhomogeneous with limited interaction between individual institutes. Synergies between institutes are rarely used and this leads to separate research programs at the institute level with only few collaborative projects but some institutes of the departments are seen as flagships within their disciplines. The committee believes that opportunities exist in defining common departmental goals that will bond the institutes in a cohesive unit.

Due to the recent appointments of several professors at the Institute of Chemical and Energy Engineering (2013), the research portfolio of this Institute is in the development stage and needs substantial support in terms of space and equipment. The relatively high teaching load of the IVET (high number of contact hours) limits the ability of the institute to devote sufficient time to research. The research portfolios of the IWT and IPM are well balanced and

supported. The MMS will need to secure new sources of funding after the Vienna Science Chair funding expires.

The Department plays a pivotal role in the education of the BOKU students providing service to many other programs across university (IVET and IPM). Heavy teaching load in these two institutes needs to be evaluated in the context of the University model that requires the faculty to perform worldwide competitive research. The positions statements of the collaborating departments are positive and indicate their readiness to contribute the development of MAP. Overall, it appears that the Department is well integrated within the BOKU community and that further opportunities exist in collaboration between departments.

The student evaluations are generally very positive and reflect the professionalism of the teaching staff. The students would like to have more exposure to the research conducted by the department. The graduate students in the four institutes communicate only sporadically across institutes and have limited knowledge about research in other units. The student evaluations are generally very positive. The number of evaluated courses in the department is relatively low (about 50%) compared to the BOKU (about 70%).

The department has relatively wide teaching responsibilities ranging from general education courses (physics, chemistry) to highly specialized courses (wood science and technology, technology of renewable resources). While the general education courses have fundamental importance for the entire university, the courses offered in the specific area of renewables have extremely high resonance in the society. The department meets the university needs in the area of general education and society needs in the area of technology of renewable resources. If we define the sustainability as the ability of the department to continue the current activities «indefinitely» we conclude however, that the current status-quo is not sustainable: heavy teaching load at the two institutes, especially at IVET, will prevent the faculty to conduct high-quality research in the long run.

Recommendations:

- Initiate a process of finding synergies between the four institutes
- Formulate common goals in research and teaching and make these goals visible
- Involve all institutes in the development of the departmental goals in research and teaching
- Improve the balance of the work load of the individual institutes/professors between teaching and research
- Improve the self-understanding of the individual institutes as members of the department and not only as the individual research units
- Clarify the future development of the department in light of the overall strategy of BOKU in research and teaching

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