




RUHR-UNIVERSITÄT BOCHUM

## EVALUATION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MISSION STATEMENT CAMPAIGN 2011


More than 100 people from all areas of the RUB have sent us feedback on the teaching mission statement via email or postcard. This way, students and teachers as well as non-scientific personnel and alumni made their own personal contribution.

### “WHAT IS IT FOR YOU THAT FILLS THE MISSION STATEMENT WITH LIFE?”

Many participants mention especially the open, non-hierarchical **community** at the RUB, which is characterised by respect and in which **encounters and exchange** take place between different cultures and status groups. From the participants’ point of view, lively **interdisciplinarity** finds reflection in the variety of subjects and the close interdisciplinary ties as well as in the cooperation in science and teaching.

 “I think it’s simply great that the RUB gives so many young people with such different interests and talents, origin, nationality and religion the opportunity of studying something which prepares them very well for their later professional life. It is fun to be part of this community and to profit from it by getting to know and learning to understand each other.”

The participating alumni particularly highlight the **lifelong affiliation** with this community.

 “As a former RUB student, it is a nice and lively feeling to be still part of the university... and then a university you can rely on is a stroke of luck.”

It becomes clear that, from the participants' perspective, the mission statement is first and foremost realised in the concrete actions of individuals. Here, **committed teachers** are particularly pointed out **who teach their courses with enthusiasm** and not only **pass on** knowledge, but also **experience**. Particularly appreciated are teachers **who meet students with openness**, can take criticism and accept dialogue at eye level.

📢 *"In my opinion, there's a very nice atmosphere between students and professors/teachers at the RUB, this is one reason why the mission statement is filled with life!"*

The mission statement is also supported by **responsible and creative students** who get actively involved in the design of teaching and support each other when it comes to learning and working as student representatives.

📢 *"The students are committed, critical and creative; they do not only accept new forms of teaching and learning, but develop them further with their own ideas."*

📢 *"Learning. Performance. Living Community. – This means for me the work as a student representative and in the student representatives committees. I take responsibility for myself and my fellow students, I have a say and implement."*

The **services of the non-scientific personnel** crucially contribute to the realisation of the mission statement, too. The employees in libraries, administrative offices and other service institutions are **helpful and friendly** and they create an atmosphere in which students, teachers and guests at the RUB can be comfortable.

📢 *"I see my job as a service. This does also mean performance. Everyone who comes to me and needs my help in whatever way is courteously and friendly served."*

Not least also the **supportive framework conditions at the RUB** are mentioned as filling the mission statement with life. Especially the good infrastructure, the equipment of the seminar rooms and the extensive eLearning offer are highlighted as being helpful.




📢 *"I think it's good that much is processed online at the RUB. I don't know any other university with such a detailed, extensive internet presence which is at the same time easy to understand... That makes studying immensely easier..."*

## “WHAT CAN RUB MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE TO THE REALISATION OF THE MISSION STATEMENT?”


The feedback to this question almost exclusively reflects the initiative and willingness of RUB members to promote successful teaching day by day. It is told about larger projects, best practices as well as small gestures.

For some participants their very own and **concrete contribution to the realisation of the mission statement** is


- » further developing and optimising teaching by offering for example unconventional seminar topics or actively including students in current research projects

 *“I include students as much as possible into current topics and, in doing so, try to stage something new and interesting for them, for example a course-internal poetry slam Middle High German Poetry.”*


- » **being willing to learn** and seeing student feedback as well as further education courses as a chance


 *“As a scientist, I understand my role as that of a teacher. I try to do my best in research as well as in teaching. Part of that is also comprehensive didactic further education.”*

- » **maintaining an open dialogue and constructive cooperation** by communicating with each other clearly, directly and transparently


 *“I carry out two short evaluations about the practicing processes per course per semester to counter inconsistencies and to address proposals for change that are made by the students.”*

- » **passing on experience and promoting younger generations** by offering support to others and setting an example as a mentor, tutor or in form of peer teaching


 *“Through the high level of expertise and the virtually unprejudiced university community it is possible to achieve great results as long as one is prepared to pass on what is received.”*

 *“As a graduate, I’m glad to support students when it comes to orientation in their studies and to starting your professional life and to pass my experience on to them.”*

- » **actively making use of offers at the RUB** by contributing own ideas in initiatives and projects, by seizing possibilities for the exertion of influence as well as by taking advantage of the attractive social and cultural offers at the RUB

 *“Taking advantage of as many chances as possible! Co-designing through working as a student representative!”*

» **offering practical support to others** by for example helping those seeking advice with information

 *“I have been working as an administrative employee at the RUB for more than ten years and for me communicating with young people is great fun [...]. It is also important for me that the RUB does not only consist of exams and performance, but also of people who find someone ready to listen to their needs and worries.”*



The implementation of the teaching mission statement is reflected in a positive basic attitude guiding the actions of all RUB members. This basic attitude is described by the participants as follows:

1. **Having a high demand on yourself** means
  - ... being prepared to accept challenges
  - ... taking pains
  - ... taking seriously your own responsibility for good teaching
2. **Keeping your optimism and humour** means
  - ... having patience and confidence
  - ... creating an atmosphere of cheerfulness
  - ... not losing your self-irony in academic life
3. **Developing a (self-)critical attitude** means
  - ... forming a free and alert mind
  - ... having and communicating your own opinion
  - ... being sensitive to injustices
  - ... keeping a critical scientific distance
4. **Appreciating the university** means
  - ... identifying with the RUB in a proud and self-confident way
  - ... recognising the modernity and advancement of the RUB
  - ... appreciating the integration of the RUB in the district, city and region

## CRITICAL VOICES ON THE MISSION STATEMENT

The teaching mission statement naturally also serves as an impulse for discussions and a constructive-critical debate about the teaching at the RUB. This is why, besides the predominantly positive feedback, there were also several critical voices we would like to take up at this point.

Some participants note that the standard of the mission statement does not always align with the reality at the RUB. From their point of view, the implementation of the mission statement is made difficult by structural conditions, e.g. suboptimal working conditions of teachers, disadvantageous teacher-student relationships or the strict compulsory attendance which is not always compatible with the life situations of students who have jobs besides being students.

Finally, there is the hint among the critical voices that the focusing on the technical and professional qualification by the university is overstrained in the mission statement. It is once again emphasised that the university is to prepare the students for assuming social responsibility.

## THANK YOU!

The evaluation of the feedback shows that the mission statement can be identified in the attitude and in the actions of many RUB members. Further, the critical voices show that the mission statement as a situation analysis tool and a vision for the future is functioning. For their participation we would like to cordially express our thanks to all people implementing the mission statement in their everyday life and, in doing so, making their personal contribution to good and successful teaching as well as to everyone who dealt with the mission statement in a critical and constructive way!