

Program Concept

Master of Arts in General Management | 2y M.A. GEMA

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1. CONTENTS

1.1. Subject-specific and interdisciplinary learning objectives

The Master of Arts in General Management (M.A. GEMA) study program is a two-year, full-time study program in economics with a theoretical and practical focus and a strong research orientation. The program has a scope of 120 ECTS and is aimed at graduates in other fields, i.e. not primarily economics-oriented. The program provides basic and, in some areas, advanced theoretical and applied knowledge of general business administration and economics. The aim is to supplement the knowledge and skills that students have acquired in their first study program with a broad-based management component, deepened in selected areas, and to combine them into an interdisciplinary skills profile.

Graduates of the study program are able to solve challenging problems that relate to multidisciplinary contexts and new, unfamiliar situations. Their special ability to analyze and reflect enables them to recognize the essentials of complex issues and to deal with incomplete and contradictory information. They are taught how to analyze socially relevant economics problems in a multidisciplinary way and to tackle them using innovative scientific methods. With this special profile, the study program takes into account the increased demands on today's managers resulting from an environment of organizations that is changing ever faster and ever more sustainably. In order to prepare students for the international labor market and account for the increasingly international working and research environments, all courses in the Master's degree program are held exclusively in English.

The study program is based on the ideal of a generalist decision-maker. Therefore, in addition to fundamental disciplinary ways of thinking and content, sustainable interdisciplinary skills are also taught:

| Core Competencies in Economics in an Interdisciplinary Context

After a seven-week pre-study internship in Germany or abroad, which offers a first practical insight into the contents of the study program, the necessary fundamentals of economics and methodology for the analysis of economic phenomena are taught in an extensive mandatory section (Semesters 1-3). As part of the elective modules (Semesters 2-4), the acquired knowledge and skills are then expanded and deepened.

An important element in the targeted linking of existing skills with the new skills to be acquired is the interdisciplinary research project (Semesters 1-2) as part of the mandatory module Science. Students acquire the ability to formulate an economic research question with interdisciplinary references and to work on it independently using scientific methods and findings. In this way, a bridge is built between the sometimes different research cultures of first degree studies and economics and the ability to carry out independent academic work in the field of economics is specifically promoted.

| ***Scientific Research and Methodological Expertise***

The scientific methods are taught in a comparative, reflective, and applied manner. In the first and second semesters, three mandatory modules in Quantitative Methods, Qualitative Methods and Data Science will provide the necessary methodological tools to empirically test economic theoretical models and to analyze economic phenomena qualitatively and quantitatively.

The research project as part of the mandatory module Science is flanked by a seminar on Research Design. In this course, students are introduced to scientific models and methods of business administration, in order to enable them to apply these to their research question. The focus is on assessing the applicability of different research designs and methods with regard to scientific questions and practicing the various techniques. The verbal and written communication of analysis results is systematically taught.

| ***Personal Development and Labor Market Preparation***

Within the framework of seminar-style teaching in small groups, students' personal and social skills such as teamwork, conflict resolution, and communication skills are specifically promoted. Throughout their studies, students are given the opportunity to systematically and continuously reflect on the course and orientation of their studies with regard to their individual professional and career orientation (employability) against the background of their personal development. The TandemCoaching concept, in which students are accompanied throughout their studies by both an academic coach from the ZU teaching staff and a practical coach from the worlds of business, culture, or politics, serves this purpose in particular. In regular meetings, concerns and questions about the content of the study program, personal development, and career prospects are discussed and reflected on confidentially. In this way, the students' ability to reflect, their ability to act, and their resilience are specifically developed and promoted.

1.2. Focus of the curriculum, scope/reference to the subject, to related study programs, and to other disciplines

The MA GEMA is supported in particular by the Faculty of Corporate Management & Economics at Zeppelin University (ZU).

The subject of the study program is to impart theoretical and practical knowledge for analyzing and solving business and economic problems, taking into account their cultural, political, and social context. The necessary economic and methodological knowledge and skills are trained in an extensive mandatory area. The compulsory methodological training expands students' (economic) scientific research and methodological skills. The program's elective courses reflect the faculty's research focuses and enable students to deal with complex, interdisciplinary problems from an overarching and socially relevant subject area. The interlinking of this offer across several study programs ensures that students from different disciplines or students with different disciplinary backgrounds learn and research together. In this way, students' ability to reflect on subject-specific and interdisciplinary approaches, to recognize the limits of their own discipline, to develop interdisciplinary questions, and to test new research methods can be specifically promoted. The specific subject-related content also allows the individual profile to be honed. The modules in the elective area are taken from the two-year Master of Science in Corporate Management & Economics (2y M.Sc. CME) study program and are to be selected taking into account individual prior knowledge. There is currently a choice of modules from four interdisciplinary subject areas. The choice of a complete subject area, consisting of three thematically linked modules, is optional in the M.A. GEMA. If a subject area is to be shown on the degree certificate, students must take all three modules included.

The interdisciplinary field of **Family Business** deals with the special features of family-run companies compared to non-family-run companies, such as differences in resources, decision-making, processes, functions, and structures. The focus here is particularly on understanding innovation processes, business models, and the associated strategy and cultural requirements, but also on current challenges such as digitalization, new technologies such as artificial intelligence or 3D printing, as well as the convergence of markets, industrial architectures, and technology fields. Another focus is the governance of family businesses with its special topics, such as succession issues or specific tax and legal aspects.

The interdisciplinary subject area of **Leadership & Relational Societies** combines questions in the field of ethical leadership on an individual and collective level, with the aim of preparing students for the complexity of a globalized and digitalized working world. The main focus of the subject area is on relational leadership both inside and outside organizations. Responsible interaction with stakeholders is a prerequisite for building sustainable relationships. On an individual level, the focus is on why people behave honestly or dishonestly and what the conditions for such behavior are. In this context, the effects of unethical conduct by managers and members of the organization are also discussed. The field draws on approaches from economics, philosophy, and psychology.

In the interdisciplinary subject area of **Sustainable Transport & Mobility**, students are introduced to innovative developments in the modern world of mobility from a strategic perspective and sensitized to the challenges they face. They learn to apply the principle of sustainability to the (international) mobility of goods and people, with a focus on the development of intelligent transportation systems and governance through the transport policy framework.

The interdisciplinary field of **Sustainable Finance & Accounting** deals with the important role of financing, accounting, and global regulatory issues in overcoming current social and environmental challenges. The Green Finance module provides an overview of sustainability guidelines, discusses challenges facing the energy and finance sectors in the wake of the Green Goals and climate risk, and proposes solutions to address these challenges. In the Sustainability Accounting module, students learn about key frameworks and tools that can be used to measure the social and environmental performance of companies and their business operations. Global regulation is needed to effectively tackle these challenges; neither green finance nor sustainability accounting should stop at national borders. Against this background, the module Global Governance finally examines how supranational organizations, norms, regulations, and other forms of cooperative relationships emerge in current international politics.

An elective module worth 6 ECTS credits can be chosen from the range of other, non-executive ZU Master's programs or from other universities in Germany or abroad.

1.3. Sustainable economic, social, and scientific perspectives / Connectivity

The more research-oriented, generalist focus of the study program and individualized training qualify graduates of the M.A. GEMA for future management and leadership tasks at the interfaces between different specialist areas/departments and the classic economic-scientific areas of responsibility. This addresses professional fields that are otherwise typically served by Master's graduates from integrated study programs in industrial engineering, business informatics, business law, business psychology, etc. The study program offers exclusive access for graduates in subjects without such an integrated offer.

The study program provides basic and advanced analytical, methodological, and specialist knowledge, which also qualifies graduates for further academic training or science-related activities in the public and private sectors.

In the course of quality assurance and continuous further development, the study program is submitted to external experts from the CME program advisory board at regular intervals. In addition, the student representative for M.A. GEMA is involved in the further development of the program at various points.

2. STRUCTURE

2.1. Facilities

Since the study program is mainly supported by the Department of Corporate Management & Economics, a large part of the content can be taught by full-time faculty members. The professors at ZU live the university ideal of the unity of research and teaching and, together with their academic staff, form the foundation of undergraduate and graduate teaching. In order to ensure the breadth of content of the program at all times, outstanding academics and practitioners are also integrated into the teaching as external lecturers.

2.2. Design of study capability | Study load

According to the General Study and Examination Regulations (GSER) for all study programs at ZU, 1 ECTS point corresponds to approximately 25 hours of work for students (workload). The actual amount of work required to achieve the learning outcomes may vary from case to case. A total of 120 ECTS credits must be earned as part of the two-year study program. On average, students have 15 h/week of lessons per semester and take courses worth 30 ECTS credits per semester.

The study program consists of I) 12 mandatory modules (76 ECTS, Semesters 1-3) in the areas Management (30 ECTS), Economics & Law (18 ECTS), Methods (18 ECTS), and Science (10 ECTS), II) Advanced study or specialization in four elective modules (24 ECTS, Semesters 2-4), and III). The final module (20 ECTS, Semester 4), which comprises the Master's thesis including defense.

A module handbook and the study plan as Appendix 2 of the Subject-Specific Study and Examination Regulations (SSSER) are available to enable students to plan their studies. Students can also take advantage of general and subject-specific study advice.

Regular program council meetings (members: the academic program director (professor), all professors responsible for the modules, the program director of the study program, two academic staff members who regularly work on the study program, one staff member from the applicant advisory service and two student representatives) ensure that the courses in the areas and interdisciplinary subject areas fit together, monitor the course load and thus avoid overloading the students. In addition, this committee is responsible for the further development of the content and form of studies as well as the use of funds earmarked for studies and teaching.

The courses are evaluated by both students and lecturers in each session (including the aspects of workload and study capability). In the first sessions of the courses, mutual expectations and obligations are clarified and agreed between students and lecturers as part of the so-called **teaching agreement**. In regular meetings of the program board (members: the academic program director (professor), the program director, and the representatives of the program's students), quality aspects are analyzed on the basis of the course evaluations and, if

necessary, measures are decided and initiated. Experts from academia and practice are involved in the program advisory board as external reviewers in the further development and redesign of the study and examination regulations and review the study program at regular intervals.

2.3. Design of freedom scopes and key qualifications in the curriculum

In the chosen field of study (Major), for which an applicant has been admitted to ZU, the student obtains his or her Master's degree. The options for modules in the elective areas of the GEMA are set out in the curriculum, which is attached as Appendix 2 to the Subject-Specific Study and Examination Regulations (SSSER). In the elective area, elective modules worth 24 ECTS credits must be selected in accordance with the respective prior knowledge. Optionally, an interdisciplinary subject area consisting of three thematically linked modules can be taken. A module worth 6 ECTS can be selected from another, non-executive ZU Master's program or from a Master's program at another German or foreign university.

Key qualifications are promoted in different ways:

- | The theory-led and interdisciplinary approach allows students to work on more challenging problems in a targeted manner that relate to complex, multidisciplinary contexts and new, unfamiliar situations. This enables students to deal with uncertainty and shape change in companies and cultural and political organizations in a special way.
- | The predominant seminar style develops discursive competence. Students learn to listen, argue, judge, evaluate, criticize, and endure criticism.
- | Group work specifically promotes the ability to work together in teams, some of whose members have different professional backgrounds.
- | Courses are taught in English to empower students to communicate, act and manage tasks within an international working environment.
- | Participation in the workshops Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship and Creativity & Performance is open to M.A. GEMA students as an extracurricular activity and adds entrepreneurial, emotional, and aesthetic dimensions to the participants' academic and theoretical skills.

2.4. Organization of internships | Cooperations

The study program requires a **pre-study internship**, which must be completed at the beginning of the study program or, in exceptional cases, by the end of the second semester. The aim of the pre-study internship is to get to know business and economic issues and processes in practice. This includes an initial understanding of business models, processes, culture, management behavior, and personnel selection as well as the interests of employees. The content of the Master's study program in General Management is based on this practical insight. Instructive links are established between new and existing (theoretical) knowledge and its implementation in everyday operational, organizational, or institutional tasks.

There is also the option of completing a voluntary internship. The lecture-free period in summer is suitable for this, as its duration (approx. three months) offers students sufficient flexibility.

As part of the **TandemCoaching** concept (see above, point 1.1.), students are supported throughout their studies by an academic coach from the ZU teaching staff as well as by a practical coach from business, culture, or politics.

2.5. Organization of semesters abroad | Cooperations

During the two years of study at ZU, students acquire theoretical knowledge in economics and sharpen their individual professional profile through active participation in the innovative educational programs offered by ZU. As part of the annual cycle of elective modules, the third semester offers a mobility window for a semester abroad.

Due to the short duration of study compared to the Bachelor's programs, a semester abroad should be prepared particularly well and in good time – especially with regard to credit transfer options. Students are therefore strongly advised to take advantage of the advisory services offered by the International Office and the Study and Examination Center at an early stage. Recognition of academic achievements gained abroad is generally possible after prior consultation with the Study and Examination Center.

The university's International Office has already initiated a large number of partnerships with universities all over the world. So far, the International Office has been able to offer all interested students a place abroad. There are currently 41 foreign universities available as exchange partners for M.A. GEMA students.

2.6. Number and structure of examinations / Final grade / Final examination

The examinations required in the GEMA Master's study program are the course-related examinations, the Master's thesis and the final oral examination (defense). Details are regulated in the General Study and Examination Regulations (GSER) and in the Subject-Specific Study and Examination Regulations (SSSER).

Course-related examinations are carried out in the form of oral (e.g. presentation) and/or written examinations (e.g. term paper, written test). Details on the type and scope of examinations are specified in the module and course descriptions as well as in the Teaching Agreement (see above, point 2.2). With a regular semester workload of 30 ECTS credits, there are usually five examinations per semester.

The Master's examination consists of the written thesis (Master's thesis) and a final oral examination (Master's defense). The Master's thesis is worth 18 ECTS credits and must be completed during Semester 4. The processing time for the thesis is 16 weeks and runs from the day of registration. The Master's defense is a 45 to 60-minute oral examination and is assessed with 2 ECTS credits. The grade of the Master's examination results from the assessment of the Master's thesis with a weighting of 80 percent and the assessment of the Master's defense

with a weighting of 20 percent.

The overall grade of the Master's study program includes the grades of the course-related examinations and the grade of the Master's examination according to their respective ECTS credits.

2.7. Intended number of first-year students / year

The Master of Arts in General Management (M.A. GEMA) program starts once a year in the fall semester. The intention is to admit a maximum of 35 students per year.