

Program Concept

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

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1. Content

1.1. Disciplinary and interdisciplinary qualification objectives

The Master of Arts in General Management (M.A. GEMA) is a two-year full-time program in economics with a practical relevance anchored a combination of profound theoretical foundations and an applied research focus. The program has a scope of 120 ECTS and is aimed at graduates of "subject-unrelated", i.e. not primarily economics-oriented, courses of study. The program imparts basic and, in some places, in-depth theoretical and applied knowledge of general business administration and economics. The aim is to supplement the knowledge and skills acquired by the students in their first degree program with a broad-based management component, which is deepened at selected positions, and to link these to form an interdisciplinary competence profile.

Graduates of the program can 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 questions and to deal with incomplete and contradictory information. They are enabled to analyze socially relevant economic problems in a multidisciplinary way and to tackle them using innovative scientific methods. With this exceptional profile, the Master's program considers the increased demands on today's managers – demands which are the result of an organizational environment that is changing in a faster and more sustained way than ever before.

The program is oriented towards the ideal of a generalist decision maker. Therefore, in addition to basic disciplinary ways of thinking and content, sustainable cross-sectional competencies are also taught:

| *Core competencies in economics in the interdisciplinary context*

After a seven-week domestic or foreign internship, which provides a first practical insight, the necessary economic and methodological basics for the analysis of economic phenomena are taught in a comprehensive compulsory module (1st - 3rd semester). The acquired knowledge and skills are then expanded and deepened within the framework of the elective modules (2nd - 4th semesters).

An important element in the targeted linking of the competencies already acquired with the new competencies to be acquired is the interdisciplinary research project (1st - 2nd semester) within the framework of the compulsory module "Science". Students acquire the ability to formulate a research question in economics with interdisciplinary references and to work on it independently using scientific methods and findings. In this way, a bridge is built between the partially different research cultures of the first degree and economics and furthermore the ability to conduct independent scientific work in the field of economics is specifically promoted.

| **Scientific research and methodological competence**

Scientific methods are taught comparatively, reflexively and application oriented. In the first and second semester, three compulsory modules in quantitative methods, data science and qualitative methods will provide the necessary methodological tools to empirically test economic theoretical models and to analyze economic phenomena qualitatively and quantitatively.

The research project in the compulsory 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 them to their research question. The focus is on assessing the applicability of different research designs and methods with regard to scientific questions as well as on practicing the various techniques. The verbal and written communication of analysis results is systematically taught.

| **Personality formation and labour market preparation**

The seminar-style teaching in small groups fosters individual personal and social skills of the students, such as working in teams, managing conflicts and communicating complex topics. Throughout the entire period of study, students are also enabled to reflect on the course and orientation of their studies systematically and continuously regarding individual career and career orientation ("employability") against the background of their personal development. The study-accompanying concept of TandemCoaching serves this purpose particularly. Throughout their studies students are accompanied by a ScienceCoach from the ranks of lecturers and academic staff at ZU as well as by a PraxisCoach from the fields of business, culture or politics. In regular conversations, concerns and questions about the content of the studies, personal development and professional perspectives are discussed and reflected confidentially. In this way, the ability to reflect, the competence to act and resilience of the students are developed and promoted.

1.2. Focus of the curriculum, breadth/reference to the subject, to neighbouring degree programs and other disciplines

The MA GEMA is supported by the Department of Economics at Zeppelin University (ZU).

The **subject of the program** is to provide in-depth theoretical and practical knowledge for the analysis and solution of demanding business and economic problems, considering their cultural, political and social context. The mandatory methodological training expands the scientific research and methodological competence of the students. The compulsory elective offer of the degree program reflects the research priorities of the department and enables students to deal with complex, interdisciplinary problems from a superordinate and socially relevant subject area. By interweaving this offer across several degree programs, it is ensured that students from different disciplines or students with different disciplinary backgrounds learn and research together. In this way, the ability of students 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. In addition, the specific subject-related contents allow an individual profile sharpening. The modules of the elective area are taken from the two-year Master of Science in Corporate Management & Economics (2y MSc CME) and are to be selected considering the individual prior knowledge. Currently, modules from four interdisciplinary subject areas are available for selection. The choice of a complete thematic field, consisting of three thematically linked modules, is optional in the M.A. GEMA. If a thematic field is to be shown on the degree certificate, students must take all three included modules.

The interdisciplinary subject area of **Family Business** deals with the special features of family-run compared to non-family-run companies, such as differences in resources, decision-making, processes, corporate governance functions and structures. The focus is placed in particular on the understanding of innovation processes, business models and the associated strategy and cultural prerequisites, but also on current challenges such as digitalization, new technologies such as artificial intelligence or 3D printing, as well as changes in markets, industrial architectures and technology. Another focus is on the governance of family businesses with their special topics, such as the question of succession or specific 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 focus of the subject area is on relational leadership both within and outside of organizations. Dealing responsibly with stakeholders is the prerequisite for the development of sustainable relations. On an individual level, it is discussed why people behave honestly or dishonestly and what the conditions for such behavior are. In this context, the effects of unethical behavior on the part of leaders and organizational members are also analyzed. The subject area draws on approaches from economics, philosophy, and psychology.

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

The interdisciplinary subject area **Sustainable Finance & Accounting** considers the important role of finance and accounting as well as global regulation in overcoming the current social and ecological challenges. The Green Finance module offers an overview of sustainability keynotes, discusses challenges experienced by the energy and financial sectors in the wake of the green targets and climate risk, and proposes solutions to cope with these challenges. In the Sustainability Accounting module, students learn about the essential frameworks and instruments with which the social and ecological performance of companies and their businesses can be measured. In order to effectively meet the above-mentioned challenges, global regulation is required; neither Green Finance nor Sustainability Accounting should be confined to national borders. Against this background, the Global Governance module finally examines how supranational organizations, norms, regulations and other forms of cooperative relations in contemporary international politics may emerge.

An elective module worth 6 ECTS can be chosen from the offer of the other, non-executive ZU Master's programs or from the offer of other domestic or foreign universities.

1.3. Sustainable economic, social and scientific perspectives | Connectivity

The more research-oriented, generalist orientation of the 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 fields of activity. This addresses occupational fields that are otherwise typically served by Master's graduates from integrated degree programs in industrial engineering, business informatics, business law, business psychology, etc. For graduates in subjects without such an integrated program, the program offers exclusive access.

The program provides basic as well as in-depth knowledge of analysis, methods and techniques, which also qualifies graduates for further scientific education or science-related work in the public as well as the private sector.

In the course of quality assurance and continuous further development, the study program is submitted to external reviewers from the CME Program Advisory Board at regular intervals. In addition, the student representation MA GEMA is involved in the further development of the program at various points.

2. Structure

2.1. Equipment

Since the degree program is mainly funded by the Department of Corporate Management and Economics, a large part of the content can be taught by full-time faculty staff. The university ideal of the unity of research and teaching is realized by all ZU professors, who, together with their research assistants, form the foundation of undergraduate and graduate teaching. To ensure the breadth of content of the program at all times, outstanding scientists and practitioners are also integrated into teaching as external lecturers.

2.2. Design of the study ability | Study burden

According to the General Study and Examination Regulations for all ZU degree programs, 1 ECTS point corresponds to about 25 hours of work for the students (workload). The actual amount of work required to achieve learning outcomes may vary on a case-by-case basis. A total of 120 ECTS points must be earned as part of the two-year degree program. On average, per semester students have courses in scope of 15 semester hours per week and take courses worth 30 ECTS points.

The degree program consists of I) 12 compulsory modules (76 ECTS, 1st - 3rd semester) in the fields of "Management" (30 ECTS), "Economics & Law" (18 ECTS), "Methods" (18 ECTS) and "Science" (10 ECTS), II) the subject-related specialization in four compulsory elective modules (24 ECTS, 2nd - 4th semester) as well as III) the final module (20 ECTS, 4th semester), which comprises the Master's thesis including a disputation.

A module handbook and the study plan as Annex 2 of the subject-specific study and examination regulations (FSPO) are available for planning the studies. In addition, students can take advantage of general as well as subject-specific study advising.

Regular Program Council meetings (Members: Academic Program Director (Professor), all professors responsible for modules, Program Director of the degree program, two academic staff or staff members who regularly work in the relevant course of study, one employee of the applicant advisory service and two representatives of the students) ensure the fit of the courses in the interdisciplinary subject areas, monitor the study load and thus avoid overloading students. In addition, this committee is responsible for the further development of content and forms of study as well as the use of the funds earmarked for study and teaching.

The courses are evaluated in each round by both students and lecturers (including the aspects "workload" and "study ability"). In the first sessions of the courses, the mutual expectations and obligations are clarified and agreed between the students and teachers within the framework of the so-called Teaching Agreement. In regular meetings of the program board (members: the academic program director (professor), the program director, and the program staff (the representation of the students of the program), quality aspects are analyzed based on the

course evaluations, if necessary, measures are discussed and initiated.

In the Program Advisory Board, experts from science and practice are involved 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 and key qualifications in the curriculum

In the chosen field of study ("Major"), for which an applicant has been admitted by ZU, the student acquires his or her Master's degree. The options of modules in the compulsory and elective area of GEMA result from the study plan, which is attached as Appendix 2 of the Subject-Specific Study and Examination Regulations (SSSER). In the compulsory area "Methods", three out of four modules are to be chosen considering the individual prior knowledge. Students without relevant previous methodological knowledge must take the modules Business Mathematics, Statistics and either Quantitative or Qualitative Methods. In the compulsory elective area, compulsory elective modules amounting to 24 ECTS credits must be chosen according to the individual prior knowledge. Optionally, an interdisciplinary subject area consisting of three thematically related modules can be taken. A module in the amount of 6 ECTS can be chosen from another, not continuing ZU Master's program or from a Master's program from another domestic or foreign university.

Key qualifications are promoted in different ways:

- | The theory-led and interdisciplinary approach allows students to work on more challenging problems that relate to complex, multidisciplinary relationships and new, unfamiliar situations. In this way, students are particularly empowered to deal with uncertainty and to lead and shape changes in companies as well as cultural and political organizations.
- | The predominant seminar style fosters the development of a student's discursive competence and skills. Students learn to listen, argue, judge, assess, criticize and endure criticism.
- | Within the framework of group work, the ability to work in teams, whose members may have different professional backgrounds, is specifically promoted.
- | Some courses are regularly taught in English, so that language acquisition takes place along with the subject matter.
- | Participation in the workshops "Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship" and "Creativity & Performance" is open to M.A. GEMA students as an extracurricular activity and expands the scientific and theoretical skills of the participants by entrepreneurial, emotional and aesthetic dimensions.

2.4. Design of internships | Cooperations

The program requires a pre-study internship, which is mandatory at the beginning of the program or, in exceptional cases, by the end of the second semester. The aim of the pre-study internship is to gain an exemplary understanding of business and economic issues and processes

in real-life practice. This includes an initial understanding of business models, processes, culture, leadership behavior and personnel selection, as well as employee concerns. The course content of the Master's program in General Management refers to this practical insight. Instructive links are made between new and already existing (theoretical) knowledge and its implementation in tasks of everyday business, organizational or institutional life.

In addition, there is always the possibility of completing a voluntary internship. The lecture-free period in the summer is suitable for this, as its duration (approx. three months) offers students sufficient flexibility.

As part of the study-accompanying concept of **TandemCoaching** (see above, point 1.1.), students are supported throughout their studies by a ScienceCoach from the ranks of lecturers and academic staff at ZU as well as by a PraxisCoach from the fields of business, culture or politics.

2.5. Design of semesters abroad | Cooperations

During the two years of study at ZU, students deepen their theoretical knowledge and sharpen their individual professional profile through active participation in ZU's innovative curriculum. Based on the annual curricular offer cycle of the compulsory elective modules, the third semester provides students with an opportunity for a semester abroad.

Due to the short study time compared to the Bachelor's programs, such a semester abroad should be prepared particularly well and early – especially regarding the credit opportunities.

Students are therefore strongly advised to make use of the advisory services of the International Office and the Study and Examination Center at an early stage. The recognition of academic achievements completed abroad is usually possible after prior consultation by the Study and Examination Center.

The university's International Office has already initiated many partnerships with universities around the world. So far, the International Office has been able to offer all interested parties a place to study abroad. There are currently 41 foreign universities available as exchange partners for 2y M.A. GEMA students.

2.6. Number and design of assessments and exams | Final grade | Final examination

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

Course-related examinations take the form of oral (e.g. presentation) and/or written examinations (e.g. term paper, written examination). Details on the type and scope of the examination performances are specified in the module and course descriptions as well as within the framework of 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 final Master thesis examination consists of a written thesis ("Master's Thesis") and an oral final examination ("Master's Disputation"). The Master's thesis is evaluated with 18 ECTS points and must be completed during the 4th semester.

The time to conduct a written Master thesis is 16 weeks. The Master disputation is a 45- to 60-minute oral examination and is evaluated with 2 ECTS points. The grade of the Master examination results as a weighted average of the grade for the written Master thesis with a weight of 80 percent and the grade of the Master disputation with a weight of 20 percent.

The overall grade of the Master program includes the grades of the study-accompanying examinations and the grade of the Master examination in accordance with their respective ECTS points.

2.7. Intended number of first-year students / year

The study program of the Master of Arts in General Management (M.A. GEMA) starts once a year in the Fall Semester. It is intended to enroll a total of 35 students per year.