

Cross-Disciplinary Strategies

Applied Studies in Art, Science, Philosophy, and Global Challenges

Curriculum

Bachelor's programme

Duration: 8 semesters

Programme number: 033 700

*This is the English translation of the original German version.
Only the latter is legally binding.*

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§ 1. Objectives and principles

The bachelor's degree programme "Cross-Disciplinary Strategies. Applied Studies in Art, Science, Philosophy, and Global Challenges" (CDS) conveys a broad spectrum of artistic and scientific skills, strategies and principles of artistic and scientific praxis, linked with the aspiration to promote a critical approach, cooperation skills and goal-oriented learning that will reach beyond individual areas of knowledge.

This programme's approach represents an answer to transformation processes that our globalized societies face today. To enable students to deal with complex and global dynamics as well as differing realities, courses designed to give an overview provide interdisciplinary knowledge and offer insights into strategies and methods from a number of areas of knowledge.

In order to enable the handling of the world's complex societal challenges in the 21st century, the curriculum covers methods and basics of the arts as well as the humanities, social and natural sciences, economics and politics, thus reacting to the growing fragmentation of the sciences. The coherences between knowledge, experience, and politics are deduced and worked on in practical, artistic, and theoretical instructional models.

Epistemology, methodology, and the history of science form the foundation for posing specific questions relating to the arts, natural sciences and the humanities, as well as the social and economic sciences including current social and political developments. Dealing with artificial intelligence and general techno-political aspects are addressed in the context of these questions.

During an introductory year, knowledge is imparted regarding the basics of programming, statistics, working academically, as well as the basics regarding human rights, the structure of international organizations, artistic practices, and the current discourses in social sciences and the humanities.

In the subsequent years of study, the curriculum is structured around varying semester or annual themes in the subject groups of (1) science and technology, (2) economics and politics, and (3) artistic strategies. These address global challenges such as migration, medialisation, labour, growth, environment, food, etc. Students apply the content during semester or annual projects using theoretical, practical, and interdisciplinary approaches. After the introductory year, the students of all semesters work together in a single class in order to learn from each other as much as possible in respect of subject knowledge and social skills. The instruction encompasses classical teaching formats, excursions, team teaching, project-based learning, tutoring and internships, and includes a continuous reflection process. Objectives of the programme are to recognise complex coherences, to render them visible, and to translate them into cooperative action-taking.

In order to educate professionals who are able to navigate in a globalized and interconnected world and who possess the qualifications to handle complex dynamics, the study programme offers new teaching and learning methods and action strategies. These promote collaboration and teamwork and enable the planning, creation, implementation,

analysis and inspired leading of dynamic projects – an important contribution to providing critical and well thought out foundations for meaningful and sustainable decision processes.

§ 2. Legal basis, scope, and academic degree

(1) Pursuant to §54 para.1 subpara.11 of the Austrian Universities Act 2002 (UG), the bachelor's degree programme "Cross-Disciplinary Strategies. Applied Studies in Art, Science, Philosophy, and Global Challenges" is assigned to the group of Interdisciplinary Studies. As the programme is located at a university of arts, evidence of artistic aptitude – within the meaning of §4 of this curriculum and in the framework of an entrance examination pursuant to §76 (UG) – is a prerequisite for admission to the study programme.

(2) In view of the particular requirements on content and structure to gain occupational competence, the programme is composed of 240 ECTS credits. This equals a minimum period of eight semesters to complete the degree. Upon successful completion of the programme, and pursuant to §51 para.2 subpara.10 (UG), the academic title of "Bachelor of Arts", abbreviated to "BA", is awarded.

§ 3. Qualification profile

Graduates employ artistic skills, strategies and principles of artistic praxis and experience, plus broad knowledge regarding the basic principles of research in engineering, natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, to develop and productively apply systematic and innovative approaches to realising sustainable transformation and design processes. Graduates gain an understanding of the complex coherences of our globalised and tightly interwoven societies and are able to take a critical stance towards the multiple global challenges of our time.

Graduates are to pass through awareness-raising and qualification processes that will enable them:

- to identify and address relevant issues and strategies with regard to change processes beyond the boundaries of disciplines,
- to systemise and communicate (knowledge transfer) the approaches developed, and to implement them according to the requirements of the context,
- to act within different disciplinary contexts and as translator between them,
- to instruct and guide interdisciplinary work teams that are characterised by diversity and heterogeneity.

Graduates also:

- become acquainted with the basic principles of software development,
- learn to differentiate between empirical, participative and artistic methods,
- gain an insight into the principles of project management and apply this knowledge in different fields.

Due to the architecture of the study programme students know how to apply a number of artistic strategies as well as interdisciplinary knowledge in respect of contents and methods from highly diverse knowledge areas. This provides a high adaptability to a wide range of disciplines. Graduates will be enabled to support, in a stimulating and cooperative way, decision processes and strategic developments in complex matters such as politics, administration and new economic systems of the 21st century. They are qualified for fields of work in both the public and the private sector, at universities and external research facilities where complex research subjects require interdisciplinary research teams.

Further fields of work are available in the context of public administration bodies, in NGO's, think tanks, plus in politics at tasks and decisions of multiple and far reaching consequences. Opportunities can also be found in multinational institutions (e.g. the EU, UNO, OECD, UNESCO, OPEC), as well as in enterprises that advise the business world and politics regarding development scenarios and potential courses of action, plus in lobbies that are confronted with a dramatic change in labour and production. Another field of work exists in cultural institutions that offer suitable spaces to voice and make known to a wider public the global challenges confronting our societies today.

§ 4. Admission

(1) Prerequisite for the admission to the bachelor's programme is evidence of suitable linguistic and conceptual aptitude to be demonstrated in an entrance examination pursuant to section 75 of the UG.

(2) The entrance examination consists of two parts: (1) a short biography with a cover letter and (2) a practical test followed by an interview. A positive assessment of the first section is the prerequisite for admission to the second section of the entrance exam.

1. **Short biography and study motivation (to be submitted in writing):**

In the short biography, applicants are to present a written summary of their qualifications and main interests. In the cover letter applicants are to outline their expectations of the study programme.

2. **Interview**

During the interview and based on a practical examination, the examination committee will address the applicant's personal qualifications, study motivation, and main interests, and how these align with the study programme objectives. Based on the results, the aptitude for interdisciplinary, critical-reflective work is assessed.

§ 5. Programme structure

The course of studies consists of 240 ECTS – this equals a minimum study period of 8 semesters – and is set up in three phases: introduction, intensification and application, conclusion.

1. **Introduction phase (60 ECTS)**

The introduction phase consists of 60 ECTS and aims at consolidating the knowledge base that is to be broadened and applied during the following semesters. It covers basic content-related coverage of the programme's various fields of study (cf. section 6) as well as global challenges, and the methods and operating principles essential for the course. The student's progress is scrutinised in ongoing programme-related reflection and documented in a study journal.

2. **Phase of intensification and application (150 ECTS)**

2.1. The study areas of (1) Artistic Strategies, (2) Science and Technology, (3) Economics and Politics enhance and extend the knowledge base. The teaching focuses on a different theme each semester or academic year and, additionally, is oriented toward the Global Challenges.

2.2. Cross-disciplinary links: in the Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities course (CDC Lab), headed by persons experienced in transdisciplinary work, students apply methods for creating cross-disciplinary links and – partly in conjunction with faculty representatives – explore linking potentials in project work. Students' work results are realised in semester or annual projects and are assessed in semester examinations. Projects are to touch on the contents of at least two of the study fields one to three (cf. sections 6.1 to 6.3). Topics for the semester or annual projects are either suggested by the students or can be specified by the teaching staff. During the cooperative teaching format of CDC Lab, students interlink their knowledge based on the taught courses; they experiment, analyse and draft new connections. By working in groups, students develop their understanding of group dynamics, working together, and the cross- and interdisciplinary development of topics in teamwork.

The student's experiences are to be documented in the study journal (programme-related reflection) and form the basis for the final bachelor's thesis.

3. **Concluding phase (30 ECTS)**

In the concluding phase the insights that have been developed are put together and reflected upon in a bachelor's thesis.

§ 6. Study areas

The study programme is structured in the following areas of study:

1. **Artistic Strategies and Approaches to Art**

Reflecting and practically applying artistic procedures and how to convey them; acquiring knowledge of critical terms regarding the analysis of artistic works and phenomena particularly in the area of contemporary art.

2. Science and Technology

Connections between elements of STEM subjects, including but not limited to digital media, artificial intelligence and technology research, with a special focus on their societal contextualisation.

3. Economics and Politics

Connections between elements of discourses in the fields of economics and politics, as well as in social sciences and cultural studies. An additional focus is on issues in the field of Transcultural Studies.

4. Philosophy

Epistemology, theory of science, political philosophy, ethics and other subdisciplines of philosophy.

5. Global Challenges

Inequality, poverty, climate change, demographic change, redefining human work in the era of robotics and digitalization, human rights, international organizations, etc.

6. Communication and Cooperation Strategies

Forms of cooperation, communication, media, marketing, group dynamics, project management.

7. Cross-disciplinary principles of statistical, methodological and academic work

§ 7. Courses

(1) During the programme, courses are on offer from all study areas. In addition, there are the following specific teaching formats:

- a) orientation tutorial: introduction to the resources and workshops/studios at the university
- b) reflection to accompany the studies: within the framework of the programme-related reflection each student is to keep a study journal, in which the competences experienced during the programme are gathered in writing and/or visually for the purpose of documentation, analysis, and critical reflection in discussion groups.
- c) Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities (CDC Lab): In the Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities course, students are supported by experts in applying their knowledge in cross- and interdisciplinary ways in processes of cooperation, peer learning and knowledge transfer. One of the five compulsory CDC Labs can be used for individually chosen international study visits, comparable projects or collaborations, which are included in the student's critical reflection.

(2) Free electives: to the extent of 13 ECTS students may freely select scheduled courses available at any national or international university (depending on the admission requirements at these institutions).

(3) Internships will be recognized pursuant to §78 para.3 and 4 (UG). In addition, recognition of an internship of at least 150 working hours at a subject-related external facility based in an artistic or other field may be granted once during the whole study programme for a course from CDC.

(4) As part of Artistic Strategies and Approaches to Art, a one-off intensification during the programme is possible as a guest of one of the art classes at the Angewandte (Art Studio Practise) to the extent of 8 ECTS.

(5) In addition, subject-relevant excursions may be offered in the context of the courses.

(6) Lectures may partly be offered as digital formats. In such cases the digital teaching must be accompanied by a discursive teaching format.

§ 8. Exam regulations

(1) The method of ascertaining successful completion of the individual study modules is to be announced by the heads of the modules in writing, at the same time as the lectures/courses are announced, or at the beginning of the semester at the latest.

(2) The academic accomplishment in the orientation tutorials and programme-related reflection is to be assessed pursuant to §72 para.2, 3rd sentence (UG). Positive assessments are "mit Erfolg teilgenommen" (successfully completed/pass), negative are "ohne Erfolg teilgenommen" (unsuccessfully completed/fail).

(3) Bachelor's thesis

- 3.1. The topic of the bachelor's thesis is to be taken from at least one course of the study fields one to three and the thesis content must reflect the cross-disciplinary character of the programme. Prior to applying for admission to the bachelor's thesis, students must have accumulated at least 180 ECTS and must have presented a written concept for the thesis including a schedule of timeline and contents. This concept gives details of the cross-disciplinary aspects of the topic selected and must be presented to the supervising instructor at the start of the semester in which the bachelor's thesis is to be completed.
- 3.2. The development of the bachelor's thesis will be supervised during the Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities course (bachelor's seminar).
- 3.3. The student's level of success in the bachelor's seminar is assessed in a public presentation before an exam board that has the necessary key competencies regarding the relevant topic. The exam board is to include at least one teaching staff member from the Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities course (bachelor's seminar).
- 3.4 The final thesis comprises a written and a practical section, both developed in consultation with the supervising instructors.

§ 9. Language of instruction

The language of instruction is English. Students submit their written works in English language.

§ 10. Organizational conditions (part of the university statute)

- (1) The department is managed by a university graduate with interdisciplinary competencies and interests.
- (2) The department management is responsible for the overall coordination of content and organisation and for implementation of teaching and learning activities based on the curriculum.
- (3) The team of instructors advises the department management in matters of content, organisation and the budget and comes together regularly, at least twice a month during the semester, for joint meetings.

§ 11. Study route

1. Basics Phase (60 ECTS)	ECTS
Introduction to Cross-Disciplinary Strategies	2
Artistic Strategies and Approaches to Art	10
Science and Technology	10
Philosophy	8
Global Challenges	4
Communication and Cooperation Strategies	4
Economics and Politics	6
Working Base, div. subjects (Statistics 4 ECTS, Basics of Working Academically 4 ECTS)	8
Orientation Tutorial	2
Programme-Related Reflection	2
Free Electives	4

2. Intensification /Application Phase (150 ECTS)	ECTS
Artistic Strategies and Approaches to Art (of which at least 6 ECTS from the course range of the department of Artistic Strategies)	28
Science and Technology	28
Philosophy	12
Economics and Politics (of which at least 4 ECTS from the course range of the dept of Transcultural Studies)	28
Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities (divided into five semesters: 8 ECTS are gained in each)	40
Programme-Related Reflection (divided into five semesters: 1 ECTS is gained in each)	5
Free Electives	9
3. Bachelor Phase (30 ECTS)	ECTS
Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities (bachelor's seminar)	16
Academic Skills for Finalists	4
BA Thesis	10

§ 12. Transitory regulations

(1) Exam achievements that were attained by regular students in the subject of Science and Technology prior to the effective date of the curriculum version of winter semester 2020/21 and that exceed the required 30 ECTS, will – at the time of transition to the curriculum version of winter semester 2020/21 – be recognized and applied to the subject of Economics and Politics to the extent of 10 ECTS max.

(2) Regular students who started their studies prior to winter semester 2019/20, are exempt from the requirement to pass exams during the Intensification/Application Phase in Methodology and Teaching of Disciplines, subject: Science and Technology, and in Transcultural Studies, subject: Economics and Politics.

(3) Regular students who started their studies before the curriculum version for winter semester 2021/22 came into effect, and who passed exams in the study areas of Artistic Strategies and Approaches to Art, Science and Technology, Economics and Politics, Philosophy, and Free Electives with ECTS that exceed the mandatory amount will get such ECTS recognized for Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities.

(4) Regular students who started their studies before the curriculum version for winter semester 2021/22 came into effect and who passed exams in excess of 4 ECTS in the study area of Global Challenges, will get such ECTS recognized for Economics and Politics in the Basics Phase.

(5) The study area of Artistic Strategies and Approaches to Art as laid out in the curriculum version winter semester 2021/22 equals the previous study area of Artistic Strategies and Art Perception.

(6) Regular students who were accepted for the bachelor's thesis before the curriculum version winter semester 2021/22 came into effect, are to achieve the following exam results during the Bachelor Phase instead of the achievements listed in the curriculum: bachelor's thesis 26 ECTS, Programme-Related Reflection 4 ECTS.

(7) Exam achievements that were assigned to Methodology and Teaching of Disciplines prior to 1 October 2023 (effective date of the curriculum version of winter semester 2023/24), can get recognized for Introduction to Cross-Disciplinary Strategies.

(8) Regular students who started their studies before the curriculum version for winter semester 2023/24 came into effect and who passed exams in excess of 4 ECTS in the study field of Introduction Phase: Communications and Cooperation Strategies can apply these ECTS in the study field Introduction Phase: Introduction to Cross-Disciplinary Strategies.

(9) The curriculum version 2025/26 applies to regular students who started their studies in the winter semester 2024.