

Cross-Disciplinary Strategies

Curriculum for the master's programme

Duration: 4 semesters

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§ 1 Objectives and principles

The master's programme Cross-Disciplinary Strategies. Applied Studies in Art, Science, Philosophy, and Global Challenges addresses key issues of education, art and theory, as well as of participating in and helping to shape society in the early 21st century. Cross-Disciplinary Strategies is based on a multidisciplinary curriculum that gives equal space to the content and methods of art and those of the humanities and social and natural sciences. In this sense, the programme is a reaction to the increasing fragmentation of science and knowledge that aims to handle the societal challenges of our time.

The master's programme is project-oriented, strongly practice-based and offers the individual student the opportunity to shape their course of study. Epistemology, methodology and the history of science comprise the foundation to which specific issues of art, natural sciences, humanities, social sciences, economics, and current social and political developments refer. The Angewandte's strongly practice-related teaching approach provides an experimental framework for the programme. Cross-Disciplinary Strategies gives the students an overview of knowledge, including in particular digital technologies and the resulting transformation processes, enabling graduates to communicate their knowledge using a range of methods and artistic strategies and to apply it in cross-disciplinary, participative projects. The programme aims to prepare graduates for an independent role in mediating or translating between and within global enterprises with different specialist backgrounds. It aims to enable them to research complex relationships, to make these visible, reflect on them and embed them in cooperative processes. The students are introduced to practice-related topic issues through internships, workshops and excursions, and enter into professional relationships.

The programme is geared to graduates of the Cross-Disciplinary Strategies bachelor programme as well as graduates of other fields who would like to supplement their specialist knowledge and place it in a new context. The students are supported by structured reflection on their work that is anchored in and takes place throughout the programme. A core component of the programme is the development of independent practice that is prepared in the work on interdisciplinary semester projects. For these projects, the programme promotes and supports dialogue and collaboration with actors in civil society and the fields of art, academia, politics and the economy.

Cross-Disciplinary Strategies collaborates with other universities in Austria and abroad as well as with non-university research institutions, public authorities and non-profit foundations. These collaborations open up possible fields of employment such as work with NGOs, think tanks, state administrative bodies, international institutions and companies that advise actors in the economic, cultural and political fields on development scenarios and potential courses of action. Another potential field of employment includes institutions that articulate the global challenges facing our societies and familiarise a wider public with them. For example, the digital transformation is changing the conditions in which academia, the economy, politics, culture and society function. This development demands applied knowledge that can locate the consequences of digitalisation in a wider social context, communicate this to different target groups in the political and economic fields and in civil society, and make them accessible to discussion and participation.

§ 2 Legal basis, scope and academic degree

(1) Pursuant to §54 para. 1 subpara. 11 of the Austrian Universities Act 2002 (UG), the Cross-Disciplinary Strategies master's programme is assigned to the Interdisciplinary Studies group. The programme comprises 120 ECTS credits, equivalent to a minimum of four semesters to complete the programme.

(2) Upon successful completion of the programme, and pursuant to §51 para. 2 subpara. 11 (UG), graduates are awarded the academic degree of Master of Arts, abbreviated to MA. Since the programme is located at a

university of arts, evidence of artistic aptitude within the meaning of §4 of this curriculum is a prerequisite of admission to the programme.

§ 3 Qualification profile

(1) Graduates of the Cross-Disciplinary Strategies master's programme are equipped to apply academic and artistic approaches to cross-disciplinary work, and to implement this expertise in projects and in practice. They link theory and practice and can provide the necessary content and methodology for this purpose.

(2) Graduates are equipped:

- to find innovative and creative solutions for problems using a practical cross-disciplinary approach
- to advise and lead interdisciplinary working teams that are diverse and heterogenous
- to develop cross-disciplinary research approaches
- to establish and carry out collaborative work with a range of interest groups
- to apply artistic strategies and to communicate the principles of artistic practice
- to carry out academic and scientific work both independently and in teams.

(3) Graduates:

- have a good grasp of the principles of software development
- are practised in dealing with data for statistical analysis, machine learning and visualisation
- take the initiative and take on both responsibility and mediation in complex cooperative processes
- are familiar with the principles of project management and can apply these in a range of roles
- have gained international experience through the international nature of the study environment
- are able to critically evaluate existing concepts and to rethink these in the context of a changing knowledge base.

§ 4 Admission

(1) Requirements for admission to the master's programme are:

- evidence of relevant linguistic and visual aptitude to be demonstrated in a board examination pursuant to §75 UG
- a completed artistic or academic degree programme at a recognised tertiary educational institution in Austria or abroad
- evidence of proficiency in English at level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

(2) The admission examination comprises two parts, i.e. a written section and an interview with a practical test. A positive evaluation in the first section is the prerequisite for admission to the second section. The applicant's aptitude for cross-disciplinary work and critical reflection are assessed on this basis:

- a) In the first part, applicants are to submit official certificates for the previous, completed degree programme to verify their general qualification for entrance to the CDS master's programme, provide evidence of English proficiency at level B2 (CEFR), include a brief biography and a motivation letter, as well as a portfolio with academic and artistic or practical work, and a draft of a cross-disciplinary

project. The motivation letter should present the applicants' previous knowledge, experience of projects and collaborations within and beyond their previous degree programme, their expectations of the programme and how they could apply the knowledge and skills gained after completing it. In the project draft, applicants should give more detail of possible fields of action during the study programme based on their individual interests and previous educational achievements and sketch out their idea for their master's thesis, taking into account the requirements of cross-disciplinary content and methodology and its possible impact on society. Applicants are not obliged to implement the ideas presented here.

- b) The second part consists of an interview with the admission examination board - based on a presentation of the submitted documents and a practical test - to establish the alignment of the applicant's individual qualification, study motivation and main area of interest with the programme's objectives.

(3) Graduates of the bachelor's degree course "Cross-Disciplinary Strategies. Applied Studies in Art, Science, Philosophy, and Global Challenges" have already demonstrated their suitability and are eligible for admission to the master's programme pursuant to § 63 para 2 UG. Nevertheless, they are also required to complete the first and second parts of the admission examination.

§ 5 Language of instruction

The programme is taught in English. Students are to submit their written work in English.

§ 6 Programme structure

(1) The programme comprises 120 ECTS and is structured in four semesters of which the first is the focus semester and the last is designated for the master's thesis. The programme enables students to select their own focal points to a great extent: possible options are offered during the programme based on individual interests and the topic chosen for the master's thesis. Students are supported in making these decisions in the context of the "programme-related reflection" module. Students must complete courses from the six fields of study (see § 7) and one elective field (see para. 2). In all four semesters, the "Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities" module brings together content and experience and provides cross-disciplinary links. This module is also held alongside the production of the master's thesis in the fourth semester, embedding it in the cross-disciplinary context.

(2) Students without a bachelor's degree in CDS or an equivalent undergraduate degree are to use the electives primarily to gain additional competencies in the study areas 1 to 6 (however, they may not select the study field that is closest to their existing degree). Students whose first degree programme is in CDS or similar may freely select electives from the courses offered by the Angewandte or other universities in Austria or abroad.¹ The first semester (**focus semester**) is primarily intended for this purpose. The agreement on the focus semester takes place at the start of the programme, based on the student's previous studies and the draft project presented in the admission examination.

(3) In each of the four semesters, students are to take part in a practice-related, collaborative module from **Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities**, each comprising ten ECTS. In this context, the study content is linked in cross-disciplinary semester projects, in some cases in group work. Lecturers in the study areas and additional guest lecturers contribute to the project work with lectures, workshops or feedback sessions. In these, topics are examined, methodologies compared, projects developed, discussed and scrutinised from a range of viewpoints in different disciplines. Using their own initiative to a great extent, the students link their knowledge,

¹ Depending on the stipulations of the registration requirements in each case.

experiment, analyse and formulate new links. The semester projects must include content from at least two of study areas 1 to 3.

(4) Courses completed during the previous study programme cannot be counted towards the master's programme.

(5) The required study performance is presented in the annex.

§ 7 Fields of study

(1) The programme is structured in the following **fields of study**:

- 1: Artistic strategies and approaches to art

We reflect on artistic procedures and ways to communicate them and apply them in practice; we develop critical terms with a view to analysing art works and phenomena, above all in the field of contemporary art. A range of concepts in cultural studies and fine arts are compared and discussed.

There is a one-off option to take this aspect further in the context of the CDC semester project during the programme as a guest student (Art Studio Practice) at one of the Angewandte's art classes, comprising 8 ECTS.

- 2: Science and technology

Connections between elements of artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics, bioinformatics / genome editing / programming, neurosciences, models and visualisation etc, and locating them in their societal context.

- 3: Economics and politics

Connections between elements of economic and political strategies; financial systems, social distribution, political geographies etc. One focus is on fields where digital technologies are interwoven with economic and political processes.

- 4: Philosophy

The philosophy courses focus on epistemology, the history and theory of science, research methodology, ethics and political theory.

- 5: Communications and cooperation strategies

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

- 6: Transcultural studies

§ 8 Internships

Internships are recognised pursuant to § 78 paras 3 and 4 UG. In addition, one internship during the whole programme of at least 150 working hours in an artistic or non-artistic field at a non-university institution working in a related field may be recognised as CDC module.

§ 9 Master's thesis

(1) The topic of the master's thesis is to be taken from study areas 1 to 3; however, one topic focus must relate to the study area "Artistic strategies and approaches to art". The topic content must reflect the cross-disciplinary character of the programme.

- (2) The master's thesis comprises 20 ECTS.
- (3) The request for the topic and supervision for the master's thesis may be submitted once the student has attained 60 ECTS. A synopsis that also lays out the cross-disciplinary aspects of the selected topic in some detail must be submitted with the application.
- (4) The supervision of the master's thesis is carried out by a cross-disciplinary team of at least two and no more than three instructors who cover the core competencies for developing the topic. One of the supervising tutors must have a subject-relevant authority to teach (*venia docendi*).
- (5) The networking and combination of the supervisors' different viewpoints takes place in the context of Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities (master's seminar). This provides a practical application situation in order to shape and reflect on cross-disciplinary working and communication processes.

§ 10 Exam regulations

- (1) Exams for the individual programme modules will be held in written or oral form by the heads of the modules. Exam content, methods and assessment criteria are to be announced in a suitable form before the start of each semester.
- (2) Success in the modules with immanent exam character is to be assessed on a three-tier scale consisting of "mit Auszeichnung bestanden" (passed with distinction) "bestanden" (pass) or "nicht bestanden" (fail).
- (3) Successful completion of the programme-related reflection module is to be assessed pursuant to §73 para. 1 sentence 3 UG. Positive assessments are designated "mit Erfolg teilgenommen" (successfully completed); negative assessments are designated "ohne Erfolg teilgenommen" (not successfully completed).
- (4) The master's examination is the culmination of the master's programme. The master's examination comprises the modules completed during the master's programme and a defence of the master's thesis before the examination board which must include at least the supervising tutors and representatives of study areas 1 to 3.

§ 11 Organisational conditions

- (1) The rectorate will appoint a programme advisory board and a programme coordinator to coordinate the programme content and organisation.
- (2) The rectorate will appoint a university graduate with interdisciplinary competencies and interests as programme coordinator based on the programme advisory board's recommendation.
- (3) The programme coordinator is responsible for:
 - a) organising the entrance exams
 - b) securing the operational running of the study programme based on the curriculum and the programme advisory board's decisions
 - c) supporting the programme advisory board in preparing and submitting recommendations to the rectorate regarding the appointment of teaching staff
 - d) coordinating the "Programme-related Reflection" and "Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities" modules.
- (4) The programme advisory board comprises nine voting members and is composed in equal parts of the following persons:
 - a) representatives of the university professors who are nominated by those university professors who

have a seat in the senate

- b) representatives of the university lecturers including scientific and artistic staff, who are nominated by those members of this group who have a seat in the senate
- c) student representatives as nominated by the Students' Union.

(5) A representative of the Working Group on Equal Treatment Issues is a member of the programme advisory board with a consulting vote.

(6) The term of office for members of the programme advisory board is three years. The board will elect a chairperson from among its members for this period.

(7) The programme coordinator is a member of the programme advisory board with a consulting vote.

§ 12 Coming into effect

The curriculum comes into effect on 1 October 2021.

Annex: scope and distribution of ECTS points for achievements

	ECTS
Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities (CDC)	40
Study area 1-3 (1: Artistic strategies and approaches to art; 2: Science and technology; 3: Economics and politics)	30
<i>At least 6 ECTS in each study area</i>	
Study area 4 (Philosophy)	8
Study area 5 (Communication and cooperation strategies)	4
Study area 6 (Transcultural studies)	4
Programme-related reflection	4
Elective field	10
<i>Students with no previous CDS degree must achieve 8 ECTS in study areas 1-6 + 2 ECTS free choice of electives</i>	
<i>Students with first CDS degree: 10 ECTS free choice of electives</i>	
Master's thesis	20
TOTAL	120