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Curriculum of 1 September 2014

Chapter 1: Purpose

1.1. The purpose of the Master of Arts in International Business Communication – Corporate Communication programme is to:

- expand students' theoretical and practical knowledge of and skills within corporate communication, i.e. all types of communication involving private or public companies, organisations and institutions acting as senders, recipients or the subjects of such communication
- provide students with the qualifications needed to undertake – individually and/or in collaboration with others – relevant functions within corporate communication at a strategic and/or operational level in private or public companies, organisations and institutions on the basis of the knowledge and skills acquired
- provide students with the qualifications needed to carry out scientific research

1.2. To fulfil this purpose, the student must in the course of the study programme acquire:

(a) knowledge of:

- strategic corporate communication in both an internal and an external perspective
- integrated communication planning (from overall communications policies to communication plans in connection with specific situations)
- central areas of specialisation within corporate communication and relevant sub-areas
- the strategic management of companies, organisations and institutions, especially with regard to communication processes
- the structures, functions and development of companies, organisations and institutions, especially with regard to communication processes
- areas within business economics and/or language and/or neighbouring areas which are relevant to the theoretical and/or practical study of or work with strategic corporate communication
- scientific methods for the production and analysis of knowledge in, about, and from companies, organisations, and institutions

(b) skills in:

- critically appraising comprehensive and complex communicative issues and requirements
- planning comprehensive and complex internal and external communication tasks
- solving comprehensive and complex internal and external communication tasks in oral and written English from the perspective of strategic management
- analysing the reception of texts (e.g. in the form of a particular image or a particular reputation)
- measuring the contribution of corporate communication in supporting corporate strategy

- working independently both individually and in collaboration with others at management level

1.3. For the profiling part of the study programme (third semester), the following profiles are offered:

Profile: Integrated Marketing Communication

The purpose of the profile is to provide the student with the specific qualifications, in addition to the previously mentioned general competencies, required to perform the strategic and/or operational management of communication processes and assignments within integrated market communication for private-sector companies.

Profile: Global Communication in a Corporate Perspective

The purpose of the profile is to provide the student with the competencies required to manage, develop and operate the function of internal and external intercultural communication in multinational and global organisations.

Profile: Human Resource Communication

The purpose of the HR Communication profile is to provide the student with the specific qualifications, in addition to the previously mentioned general competencies, required to perform the strategic and/or operational management of HR communication processes and assignments in private and public-sector organisations.

As an alternative to a profile it is possible to choose a **project-based study**. The purpose of the project-based study, in addition to the previously mentioned general competencies, is to provide the student with the qualifications required to use a critical and reflective approach to the relationship between theory and practice within key aspects of the strategic communication of companies and organisations.

1.4. The Master of Arts in International Business Communication programme concludes with a thesis. The purpose of the thesis is to:

- develop the student's ability to independently seek and collect information and to work scientifically with academic knowledge
- develop the student's ability to independently and critically analyse academic issues
- develop the student's skills at producing written communication in a clear and cohesive academic form
- develop the student's oral presentation skills and ability to discuss academic issues in a clear and cohesive academic form

Chapter 2: Admission

To be admitted to the Master of Arts in International Business Communication programme, the student must hold a Bachelor's degree awarded for completing a study programme which comprises elements within communication on a level corresponding to, e.g., the BA in Marketing and Management Communication programme, the BA in International Business Communication programme or the BA in International Communication and Multimedia offered by Aarhus University. Bachelor graduates with at least 60 ECTS of communication elements and a sufficiently high level of proficiency in English may apply.

Aarhus University may, in special cases, admit students who do not meet the above requirements, but who have acquired equivalent academic skills.

Chapter 3: Structure

The Master of Arts in International Business Communication programme is a two-year study programme divided into three parts: 1) a basic part, 2) a profiling, part 3) a thesis.

The programme must be concluded no later than five years from commencement.

The programme comprises a total of 10 exams.

3.1. Basic part

The basic part corresponds to 60 ECTS and comprises seven exams.

3.2. Profiling part

The profiling part corresponds to 30 ECTS and comprises two exams.

Students are free to choose one of the three profiles offered: the Integrated Marketing Communication profile, the HR Communication profile and the Global Communication in a Corporate Perspective profile. Alternatively, students can choose the project-based study.

To register for the project-based study the student must have been registered for 40 ECTS within the basic part of the study programme. The project-based study must be completed in a public or private-sector enterprise, covering at least 12 weeks with at least 30 weekly working hours.

A minimum number of students must sign up for a profile to be taught.

3.3. Thesis

The thesis corresponds to 30 ECTS.

Chapter 4: Contents

4.1. Basic part

Corporate Communication

The purpose of this course is to provide students with insights into strategic corporate communication from an external, internal and integrated perspective, aiming at the coordination of such communication in private and public-sector companies, organisations and institutions. Topics include: corporate branding, value-based communication, communications planning, change communication and crisis communication.

Strategic Management of Organisations in a Communicative Perspective

The purpose of this course is to provide students with the fundamental insight into classical and critical approaches to strategic management in a communicative perspective. The class will enable students to develop, implement and evaluate any corporate strategy with particular reference to managing communication processes.

Scientific methods

The purpose of this course is to provide students with skills in selecting and applying scientific methods in relation to data collection, analyses, assessments and measurement of communicative phenomena. The main focus of the course will be on qualitative methods, but specific relevant quantitative methods will be introduced.

Stakeholder Relations

The purpose of this course is to provide students with insights into stakeholder management and stakeholder mapping and to develop competencies in adapting corporate communication to the various needs and expectations of different stakeholders with the aim of establishing strategic stakeholder relations. Topics include: stakeholder models, issues management and stakeholder dialogue.

Electives

4.2. Profiling part

The purpose of the profiling part of the programme is to provide students with an opportunity for theoretical as well as practical specialisation within a specific field of corporate communication.

Profile: Integrated Marketing Communication

The purpose of this profile is to provide students with the qualifications required to undertake communication and management assignments in connection with integrated market communication and public relations in companies and organisations. The profile focuses on new theories and meth-

ods such as tribal marketing and co-creation of consumer and brand identities. This will give students an understanding of the key concepts within and premises of integrated market communication, including the concept of the market as a forum for conversations, relations and critical counter-cultures, ethical dilemmas and, not least, the complexity of integration which places heavy demands on the market communication management processes and their structural organisation.

Profile: Global Communication in a Corporate Perspective

The purpose of this profile is to provide students with theoretical and practical insights into the types of strategic corporate communication used in organisations' communication with foreign stakeholders (customers, suppliers, subsidiaries, international authorities, international NGOs, international media etc.) in terms of marketing, public relations and corporate branding in a multicultural environment. Within the framework of globalisation and network society, the teaching focuses on how organisations handle situations such as change management and change communication, value communication, the complex of local/global marketing, corporate reputation and issues management in the international arena.

Profile: Human Resource Communication

The purpose of this profile is to provide students with the qualifications required to handle HR assignments relating to management and communication in both public and private-sector organisations, using new approaches and methods within the field. Students will, among other things, get an understanding of important theoretical concepts such as motivation and dedication, trust, the psychological contract, HR law and the socio-cultural, financial and political development of HR. In addition, students will be given a number of HR dilemmas, such as organisational conflicts, restructuring, dismissals and mergers, which place demands on the organisation's communicative skills.

Project-based study

The purpose of the project-based study is to provide students with the qualifications required to associate practical challenges and problems experienced in connection with an educational stay of the students' choice with theories and methods within corporate communication. The project-based study will focus on the theories and methods dealt with during the first and second terms of the programme. The project-based study will provide students with the qualifications required to reflect on and discuss the implications of the theories for practice and the implications of the practical experience for the theories.

4.3. Thesis

The thesis is the final project. The topic of the thesis is chosen by the student within one or more of the fields of study covered by the programme.

Chapter 5: Teaching methods

Teaching methods include lectures, tutorials, seminars, workshops, projects, individual and group consultations and e-learning.

Chapter 6: English requirements

The evaluation of all papers includes an assessment of English proficiency and power of exposition (the student's ability to present material in a precise, balanced and well-structured manner).

Chapter 7: Exams

7.1. Exams are assessed by internal or external examiners.

Internal exams are assessed by the lecturer(s) or by the lecturer(s) and an internal examiner.

External exams are assessed by the lecturer(s) and one or more external examiners appointed by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation.

7.2. Students take six types of exams, including a thesis.

A paper on a set topic is an exam where the examinee must answer one or more questions prepared by the lecturer. A paper on an optional topic is an exam where the student has formulated one or more questions which have been approved by the examiner.

Oral and written exams can be taken individually or in groups. The exam descriptions state whether an exam is held individually or can be taken in groups. In both individual exams and group exams each student's performance will be assessed individually. When exams are taken in groups, the sections/parts contributed by the individual group members have to be clearly indicated.

The thesis may be prepared individually or in groups, but the oral defence is always individual.

The maximum number of students per group for written exams is four. However, the maximum number of students per group in connection with the thesis is three. **It must be clear which sections/parts are contributed by the individual group members so as to allow for an individual assessment of student performance.**

Types of exams:

- oral exam (set topic)
- written take-home paper (optional or set topic)
- project report with oral defence (optional topic)

- portfolio (optional topic)
- portfolio with oral defence (set topic)
- thesis with oral defence (optional topic)

The exam forms for the electives may vary.

Chapter 8: Study programme structure

The Master of Arts in International Business Communication programme consists of 10 exams, including a thesis.

The tables below provide an overview of the structure of the study programme.

Profile: Integrated Marketing Communication

1.sem	Corporate Communication 15 ECTS Portfolio	Strategic Management of Organisations in a Communicative Perspective 10 ECTS 12-hour exam	Scientific Methods 5 ECTS 4-hour exam
2.sem	Corporate Communication in Change and Crisis Situations 10 ECTS Project report with oral defence	Stakeholder Relations 10 ECTS One week written take-home paper with oral defence	Elective 5 ECTS Varying exam form Elective 5 ECTS Varying exam form
3.sem	Integrated Marketing Communication 20 ECTS Portfolio with oral defence		Elective 10 ECTS Varying exam form
4.sem	Thesis 30 ECTS		

Profile: Global Communication in a Corporate Perspective

1.sem	Corporate Communication 15 ECTS Portfolio	Strategic Management of Organisations in a Communicative Perspective 10 ECTS 12-hour exam	Scientific Methods 5 ECTS 4-hour exam
2.sem	Corporate Communication in Change and Crisis Situations 10 ECTS Project report with oral defence	Stakeholder Relations 10 ECTS One week written take-home paper with oral defence	Elective 5 ECTS Varying exam form Elective 5 ECTS Varying exam form
3.sem	Global Communication in a Corporate Perspective 20 ECTS Portfolio with oral defence		Elective 10 ECTS Varying exam form
4.sem	Thesis 30 ECTS		

Profile: HR Communication

1.sem	Corporate Communication 15 ECTS Portfolio	Strategic Management of Organisations in a Communicative Perspective 10 ECTS 12-hour exam	Scientific Methods 5 ECTS 4-hour exam
2.sem	Corporate Communication in Change and Crisis Situations 10 ECTS Project report with oral defence	Stakeholder Relations 10 ECTS One week written take-home paper with oral defence	Elective 5 ECTS Varying exam form
3.sem	HR Communication 20 ECTS Portfolio with oral defence		Elective 10 ECTS Varying exam form
4.sem	Thesis 30 ECTS		

Project-based study

1.sem	Corporate Communication 15 ECTS Portfolio	Strategic Management of Organisations in a Communicative Perspective 10 ECTS 12-hour exam	Scientific Methods 5 ECTS 4-hour exam
2.sem	Corporate Communication in Change and Crisis Situations 10 ECTS Project report with oral defence	Stakeholder Relations 10 ECTS One week written take-home paper with oral defence	Elective 5 ECTS Varying exam form
3.sem	Project-based study 20 ECTS Portfolio with oral defence		Elective 10 ECTS Varying exam form
4.sem	Thesis 30 ECTS		

Chapter 9: Exam descriptions

Basic part

Corporate Communication (15 ECTS)

External examination according to the Danish 7-point scale

Exam type: Portfolio, optional topic

Strategic Management of Organisations in a Communicative Perspective (10 ECTS)

Internal examination according to the Danish 7-point scale

Exam type: 12-hour exam, set topic

Scientific Methods (5 ECTS)

Internal examination according to the Danish 7-point scale

Exam type: 4-hour exam, set topic

Corporate Communication in Change and Crisis Situations (10 ECTS)

External examination according to the Danish 7-point scale

Exam type: Project report with oral defence, optional topic

Stakeholder Relations (10 ECTS)

External examination according to the Danish 7-point scale

Exam type: One-week written take-home paper with oral defence, set topic

Electives 20 ECTS

Varying exam forms

Profiling part

Profile: Integrated Marketing Communication

Integrated Marketing Communication (20 ECTS)

External examination according to the Danish 7-point scale

Exam type: Portfolio with oral defence, set topic

Profile: Global Communication in a Corporate Perspective

Global Communication in a Corporate Perspective (20 ECTS)

External examination according to the Danish 7-point scale

Exam type: Portfolio with oral defence, set topic

Profile: HR Communication

HR Communication (20 ECTS)

External examination according to the Danish 7-point scale

Exam type: Portfolio with oral defence, set topic

Project-based study

Project-based study (20 ECTS)

Internal examination according to the Danish 7-point scale

Exam type: Portfolio with oral defence, set topic

Thesis (30 ECTS)

The exam is assessed with external examination according to the Danish 7-point scale. The grade is based on the written part (2/3) and the oral defence (1/3).

Exam type: Independent paper on an optional topic with oral defence

Objectives:

The purpose of the thesis is to enable the student:

- to carry out extensive scientific research
- of a problem which is relevant to the study programme
- by applying scientific theories and methods in an independent manner.

Description of exam:

The thesis must be written in English and must include an abstract. All key references and analysed material must also be in English and be included in the thesis or as appendices.

The thesis may be prepared in groups of max. three students provided that the contribution of each student is clearly identified. The thesis is defended through an individual oral exam.

Read more about academic supervisor allocation, thesis registration, deadlines and submission of the thesis in the 'Thesis' section under 'Practical information'.

Topics:

The topic of the thesis must relate to corporate communication in a wide sense in an organisational, socio-economic or global context. The focus must be on a problem or issue of a theoretical and/or empirical nature.

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Scope:

If the thesis is written as an individual assignment, the scope is limited to 50 to 80 standard A4 pages (2,200 characters per page, excluding spaces) excluding the table of contents, bibliography, abstract and appendices, but including notes. The total number of characters must be indicated on the thesis. The thesis must comprise an abstract of max. 4,400 characters, excluding appendices. If the thesis is written by two students, the scope is limited to 75 to 120 standard pages, and if it is written by three students, the scope is limited to 100 to 150 standard pages. The total number of characters must be indicated on the thesis.

Duration:

The thesis is defended during an individual oral exam lasting 45 minutes, including the evaluation of the performance and the student's introductory presentation of approx. 15 minutes. There is no preparation time.

Evaluation criteria:

The evaluation will be based on the following elements in particular:

Written skills:

- the ability to present an accurate and well-defined problem statement
- the ability to acquire in-depth knowledge of the literature relevant to the topic
- the ability to choose and apply concepts, theories and methods relevant to the research of the problem(s) in question,
- the ability to analyse and assess applied theories, methods and empirical material
- the ability to take a critical approach when applying theory and empirical material
- the ability to argue in favour of the choices made
- the ability to present scientifically acceptable evidence of any claims made
- the ability to handle source material (e.g. references, notes and bibliography)
- the ability to present the material in a concise and logical manner
- the ability to express him or herself in an clear and linguistically correct manner
- the ability to prepare a brief and concise abstract.

Oral exam:

- the ability to present the problem(s) addressed in the thesis
- the ability to relate to, argue in favour of and reflect on applied theories, methods and results and to elaborate on the thesis and to put it into perspective during the discussion with the supervisor and the examiner

- how well the student masters the common principles of oral presentations and his or her ability to communicate

The grade is based on an overall assessment of the student's performance.

Description of individual marks:

12: Excellent

For an excellent performance displaying a high level of command of all aspects of the relevant material, with no or only a few minor weaknesses.

Detailed description:

The student demonstrates an excellent ability to work independently and critically within the framework of a well-defined problem statement. Further, the student demonstrates an in-depth knowledge of the topic in question, and a critical approach and confident application of the chosen theories and methods and of the empirical material. Finally, the student demonstrates the ability to relate to the thesis and to put the problem(s) at hand into perspective. The student demonstrates excellent English proficiency and communication skills. All formalities are complied with in relation to references, notes and the bibliography.

02: Minimum requirements

For a performance meeting only the minimum requirements for acceptance.

Detailed description:

The student is able to work independently and critically within the framework of the problem statement but only to a limited degree. Further, the student demonstrates limited knowledge of the topic in question, a lack of critical approach and is uncertain when applying the chosen theories and methods and empirical material. Similarly, the ability to relate to the thesis and to put the problem(s) into perspective is uncertain. There are no meaning-altering errors but the student demonstrates moderate English proficiency and communication skills. Minor inaccuracies in terms of complying with formalities may occur.

An overall assessment is made of the degree to which the student meets the above evaluation criteria, both in the thesis and during the oral defence. The assessment includes an evaluation of the abstract accompanying the thesis.

Chapter 10: General provisions

Exams

Students can sit the exams once a year with the possibility of re-taking the exams in the same exam period.

An exam being graded in accordance with the Danish grading scale is passed when a grade of 02 (two) or higher is awarded.

Re-exam

If a student has registered an exam and the student fails to obtain the mark 02, the student can register for a re-exam in the same exam term.

If the written part of an exam *takes place over more than one week* (involving, e.g., the writing of a project report), the following deadlines for submission apply in connection with the re-exam: Re-exam in connection with winter exams: **15 April**, and re-exam in connection with summer exams: **15 October**.

Syllabus for re-exams

Students have the right to sit an exam with the same syllabus as in the first attempt if they re-take the exam using the first two options, i.e. if the student re-takes the exam in the same exam period or in the following exam period. Minor adjustments and updates to the syllabus are not considered changing the syllabus and therefore may occur. It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher for more information about changes to the syllabus.

Individualisation of written group assignments/projects

It must clearly appear from written group assignments/projects which student has composed and has special responsibility for a larger subchapter within the Literature Review, Methods and Analysis chapters respectively. The individualisation must take place by indicating the student's name in the table of contents. The introduction, problem statement, scope etc. of the assignment/project together with the final discussion and conclusion are regarded as composed in unison by the group and should not be individualised. Each student must contribute with an approximately equal share of pages to the total number of pages in the final report.

By the oral defence of group assignments/projects the students will have a common responsibility for the entire assignment/project.

All members of the group are expected to have a thorough knowledge of all chapters in the assignment/project regardless whether the chapters are individualised or composed in unison. The student

responsible for an individualised chapter or subchapter is expected to have a detailed insight in the chapter/chapters and should be able to account thoroughly for the contents of the chapter. The overall quality of the report may impact individual grades.

No. of exam attempts

Students can sit individual exams, and submit a thesis, a maximum of *three times*. The Board of Studies may, in special cases, grant a fourth exam attempt.

Exam registration

Students are automatically registered for their first exam attempt for exams taking place in connection with or at the end of the semester in which a given course module has been offered. If students need to re-take an exam, they may only do so in the same or in a subsequent exam period after having registered for these exams.

Exam deregistration

The deadline for deregistering from an exam is no later than one week before the exam in question. If the student has registered for an exam without having deregistered from the exam in due time, the registration always counts as one exam attempt.

After September 1st 2015 it will, according to the study progress reform, not be possible to deregister from exams.

Violation of exam regulations

If an examinee fails to comply with the exam regulations, his or her paper may be rejected.

Illness

If the student is prevented from taking or completing an exam on account of illness or similar circumstances, the Board of Studies may, upon application, grant permission for late deregistration.

If the student is granted permission to deregister from an exam because of illness, the student has the right to sit the exam or submit the exam paper or project at a later date in the same exam period in compliance with the rules that apply to re-taking exams in the same exam period.

The application must be accompanied by documentation in the form of a medical certificate covering the day or period in question. Such a certificate is issued following personal contact with a doctor on the day of the exam.

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Credit transfer

The Board of Studies may grant a credit transfer for programme elements completed at another Danish or foreign institution of higher education. Such programme elements are recognised as having been ‘passed’ unless a grade has been given according to the Danish grading scale at the institution at which the programme element was completed.

Exam certificate

Aarhus University issues a degree certificate stating the exams passed and the grades awarded.

Students who do not complete the study programme are entitled to documentation of any exams passed. The documentation contains information about the nature of the exams in question and the grades achieved.

Complaints

Complaints concerning exam results must be filed with a form that is available at the Study portal.

Exemption from the curriculum

The Board of Studies may, in special circumstances, grant exemptions from those provisions of the curriculum which are not based on the ministerial order, but stipulated by Aarhus University.

Requests for exemptions based on the ministerial order must be submitted to the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation via Aarhus University and must be accompanied by the university’s comments.

Chapter 11: Commencement

The present curriculum is valid for students commencing the international study programme on 1 September 2014.

Chapter 12: Deadline for conclusion

This programme must be concluded no later than five years from commencement.