

Elements/Draft of course-descriptions (draft):

## M.Sc. in Economics and Business Administration

### - People and Business Development

<b>Course 1: <i>People strategy in context</i> (15 ETCS)</b>
<b>Learning objectives</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulate a research question that has relevance to the course focus on various contexts for people strategy</li> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge of the courses' theories about people strategy through conducting a theoretical based analysis of the research question</li> <li>• Motivate the choice of theory used to address answer the research question</li> <li>• Ensure a logical coherence between problem statement, analysis and conclusion.</li> <li>• Discuss the theoretical and practical implications in relation to people strategy within the course's field of study.</li> </ul>
<b>Course content, flow and didactics</b>
<p>Key for understanding the role of HRM is to understand that HRM is more than a function or a department in an organization. It is a way of creating value through combining people with the context they are part of. The value-creation of practices of HRM such as recruiting, retaining, and talent development is always relative to its context. In this course we analyzing five such contexts: the societal development, the business or political environment, the specific organizational dimensions, team structures, and the psychological make-up of the individuals employed.</p> <p>HRM-practices and design can make a unique contribution to any organization that adds to and enhances the value added by management to the organization in general.</p> <p>While the skills and knowledge that makes HRM-practices possible are important, their ultimate relevance are determined by the value they add to the purpose of the organization and its stakeholders. In the course HRM practices such as recruitment and talent management will be discussed in light its potential value creation. Key concept discussed in the course will be HRM from the outside-in, the role of organizational capabilities, the psychological safety of teams and the ingrained habits and routines of individuals in everyday organizational life.</p> <p>In general the course will take its point of departure from these concepts and use them to distinguish the context of each organizational case. The analysis then proceeds to inquire how a particular context affects HRM-policies, processes, and activities that have developed or strategically selected by management. The final element of the analysis is to analyze which outcomes the chosen HRM-practices and people strategies have for the affected stakeholders.</p> <p>The concentration works with the assumption that the students are familiar with basic organizational theory, management theory, and basic HRM-concepts. This module will link key HRM-practices to people strategy in specific organizational contexts and widen the students' conception of what HRM can be and achieve in specific contexts.</p>
<b>Teaching strategy</b>
<p>The key concept is HRM-context analysis. The course learning design builds on a series of case-examples that students analyze in class and study groups. The cases act as a material through which students can get an understanding of how various contexts influences the design and value of HRM practices. Teachers apply the case analyses in a way that covers the broad HRM-practice areas. Each case analysis sub-module consists of a knowledge-gathering lecture and discussion and a</p>

team-based focused analysis of the case. The students present the results of the analysis and get feedback. The analyses lead up to a final all-around HRM-context analysis, which serves as preparation for the exam.

The cases can have very different forms: Text-cases, live-cases, cases based on secondary sources, but also cases designed for teaching. The crux of the matter is whether a case illustrates the complexity and distinctiveness of an organizational context and that important HRM-practices can be studied in the case.

Teaching will be blended consisting both of online and onsite elements.

### **Course 2: People, performance and organizational value (15 ETCS)**

#### **Learning objectives**

- Explain, structure and combine the key concepts, issues and models related to measuring and calculating performance and firm value effects of human capital in organisations
- Identify and analyze design problems related to job- and person-based structure, performance evaluation and compensation using the concepts and models from the course
- Critically reflect upon various design solutions proposed by theories and models applied at the course in terms of their value and relevance in specific organizational contexts (case-sensitivity)

#### **Course content, flow and didactics**

##### **Teaching strategy**

The module also applies a case-analysis based organization of learning similar to module 1. The focus is likewise on how the different topics plays out in a variety of different organizational contexts. A major difference is more weight on economic quantitative analysis of people strategy decisions, - initiatives and activities. While many topics are based on formal academic conceptualizations, the module also applies a long range of concrete and practical examples of economic value-analysis, like for instance cost benefit analysis, scorecards and business cases in the teaching.

The teaching methods reflect debates, case studies, and a constant dialog between theory and practice. The lectures introduce concepts and models decisive for understanding people, performance and value issues and outline their theoretical assumptions. Through cases and exercises students train the application of concepts, theories, and models in order to design value creating performance management and incentive systems in organizations.

##### **Feedback during the teaching period**

The students will get the opportunity participate in several feedback sessions (including multiple choice test and an essay assignment) to give students a better overview of whether they are following the expected learning curve. In addition, during dialog lectures and case discussions students will get continuous feedback regarding their understanding of the topics. At the end of the course a review and Q&A session is planned.

**Course 3: HRM in strategic transformation (15 ETCS)****Learning objectives:**

- Demonstrate understanding of the why, what and how of strategic business transformation and its implications for HRM
- Critically evaluate the consequences of digitalization for HRM and organizations in general
- Design and organize inputs needed to support evidence-based decisions for business transformation in legal, ethical and sustainable way

**Course content, flow and didactics**

The overall key-concept of the module is the need for change in the form of **strategic business transformation**. The module seeks to cover the relevant antecedents to HRM-relevant strategic change in organizations, notably digitalization, the central analytic tools that HRM can apply and the central organizational levers that HRM can pull in order to enable organizational development and transformation.

Strategic business transformations are increasingly about digital transformation, disrupting the standard roles and functions of HRM. The module considers the future role of HRM, engaging with the new competencies needed by HRM practitioners, e.g. strategic business development, digitalization, organizational design, change management and HR-analytics. Specifically, the module will cover the following elements:

1. What is the role of HRM in business development in the digital era? (strategic perspective, disruption, new business models, platform economics, reality of organizations dealing with transformations & change)
2. What does digital transformation mean for HRM? (digitization vs. digitalization, value capture vs. value creation, efficiency vs. competitive advantage)
3. How can HR leverage data & analytics to deliver value? (machine learning algorithms, RPA, two cultures in predictive analytics: data mining vs. conceptual model building, automation vs. augmentation).
4. What are the organizational constraints and enablers of strategic business transformations? (OT, organizational design, change management)

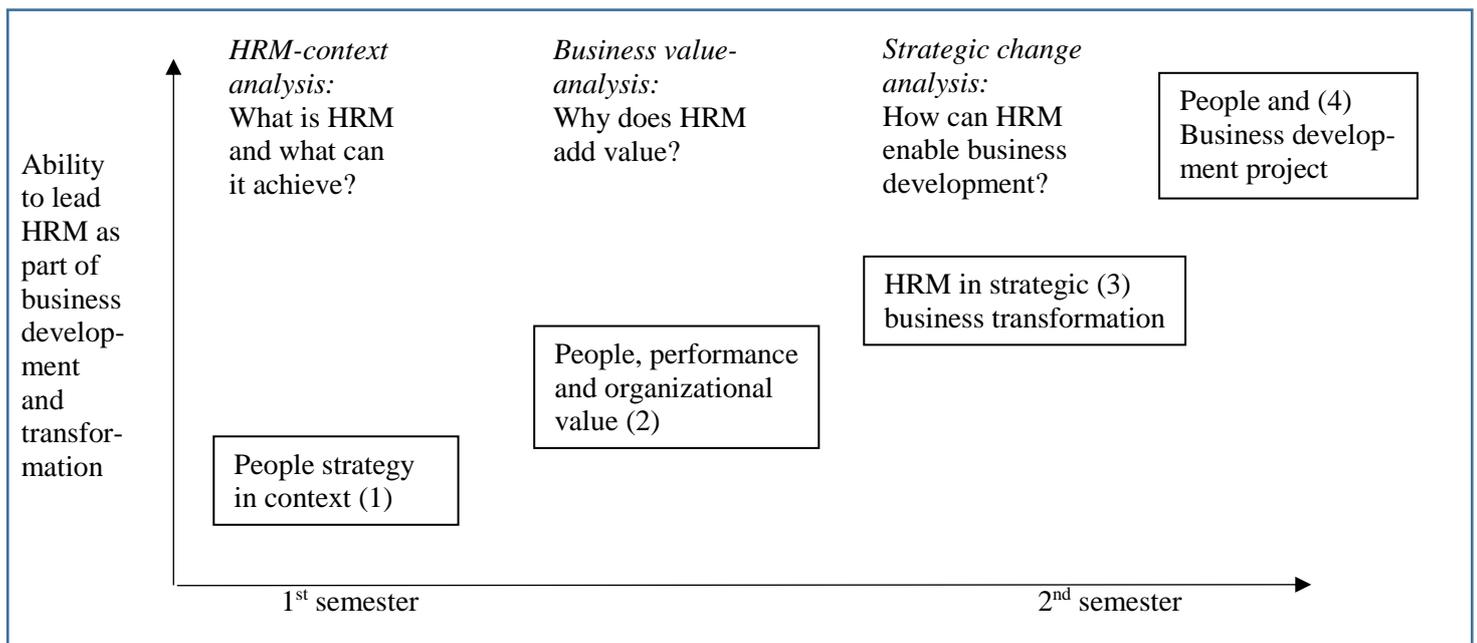
The module is based on the assumption that basic analytics skills are covered earlier (before the concentration at e.g. "HA-almen, CBS" and in module 1-2, for instance taught in blended learning).

**Teaching strategy**

Like the two preceding modules case-based teaching is front and center for module 3. We use a wide variety of cases: live cases with guest speakers, targeted mini-cases for skills building, as well as classic printed cases. Exercises/workshops will be an important element of the learning process in order to create room for practicing analytics and data handling skills. In terms of the teaching space, we use extensively blended learning (basics, refreshers and lecturing online; face-to-face teaching for group work, case discussions, and other interactive learning processes).

<b>Course 4: People and Business Development Project (15 ECTS)</b>
<b>Learning objectives:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to undertake a full analysis of the people, business and development aspects of a real-world business transformation case</li> <li>• Work closely together with stakeholders in the case, partly on site, in the analyses, planning and execution of the business transformation</li> <li>• Perform a data- and theory based reflection of the experiences and results of the analysis and the change-process.</li> </ul>
<b>Course content, flow and didactics</b>
<p>The three preceding modules build a capability in applying conceptual and analytical insight into HRM and Business development to practical organizational cases. The business development project is an opportunity to exercise this capability in full scale and range, while still receiving the structured feedback, reflection and supplementary theoretical input needed to hone this capability to be ready for the final test: The concluding thesis.</p> <p>The “people and business development project” is a project carried out in close collaboration with a host organization about a HRM and business development and transformation problem which the organization is undertaking or contemplating. The work of the student will be based on part fieldwork-based research and part academically founded consultation. The field-work will include doing research on-site at least half of the time of the project, e.g. attached to a relevant unit/staff in the host –organization. The resulting work are required to be analytical and evidence-based drawing on the learning and capabilities built in the preceding three modules focus on context, value and change both in terms of theory and analytical competence.</p> <p>Furthermore, the result will be tested in an examination assessing academic quality as well as the practical value as assessed by the host organization.</p>
<b>Teaching strategy</b>
<p>The students work in pairs on each project (advisory teams), so that the students can play different roles during the process, keeping the academic research focus, while also staying close to the processes in the organization. The concentration administration select the cases from a group who have reacted on a tender sent out in the beginning of first semester (we will take advantage of the alumni-database). The groups are established by the beginning of second semester and the research/advisory phase of the project runs in fourth quarter.</p> <p>A two-stage feedback structure beginning with an early pre-qualification of the research question and strategy of the project are evaluated before the actual fieldwork begins. The final examination will be a presentation of the results in front of a censor and include representation from the host organization and will be open for peer-students. The teaching team will host three 1 day-seminars which will include short thematic input targeted at broadly relevant questions of people and business development in actual organizational settings (based on the three modules and on the knowledge we have of the projects). A second activity will be peer-feedback sessions where the teams present and gives feedback on each other’s projects (e.g. 4 teams of 2).</p> <p>The teams negotiate the project together with the host-organization following a precise set of demands defined by the concentration concerning the content of the project, the respective roles and responsibilities of the parties, the sequence of the process.</p>

Figure 1: Framework of the concentration: People and Business Development (PBD)

**Suggested literature:**

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- Kellogg, K. C., Valentine, M. A., & Christin, A. (2020). Algorithms at work: The new contested terrain of control. *Academy of Management Annals*, 14(1), 366-410.
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