

Midterm seminar

Interreg project RUC / CAU

Double master's degree in Business Administration

Date: 15th of June 2021

Time: 11:00 to 13:00

Place: Zoom, online seminar

Meeting facilitator: Margit Neisig

Minute taker(s): Trine Krogh Håkansson

Participants present:

German scholars:

1. Prof. Carsten Schultz, Technology Management.
2. Prof. Jost Henrich Heckemeyer, corporate accounting and corporate taxation.
3. Prof. Frank Meisel, Supply Chain Management.
4. Prof. Stefan Hoffmann, Marketing.
5. Research assistant and doctoral candidate, Christoph Reinert, HRM and Organization.
6. Doctoral candidate, Tinka Krueger, Innovation and technology management.
7. Doctoral candidate, Sophia Ackerhans, Innovation and technology management.

German Partner:

8. Volker Ratje, Wirtschaftsförderungsagentur Kreis Plön GmbH

Danish scholars:

9. Prof. Ada Scupola, Serviceinnovation, Digitalization
10. Prof. Flemming Sørensen, Service Innovation and tourism
11. Prof. Jacob Dahl Rendtorff - Business Ethics, SDG's and Management
12. Assoc.Prof. Johannes K Dreyer – Finance, ESG
13. Assoc.Prof. John Dam Scheuer – Organization Theory and change
14. Prof. Kristian Sund - Strategy and Business Models
15. Prof. Lars Fuglsang - Innovation, service, Experience

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16. Assoc.Prof. Jette Ernst, Organization, Technology and Human Interaction
17. Ass.Prof. Mette Apollo Rasmussen - Leadership and Organization Studies
18. Assoc.Prof. Margit Neisig, Head of Study – Leadership, HRM, Technology, Sustainability
19. Research Assistant, Martin L Kristensen – Leadership, Organization and HRM
20. Ass.Proc. Sameer Azizi - Business Ethics and Corporate Responsibility
21. Assoc.Prof. Matias T Jørgensen – Marketing and Sustainable Tourism
22. Stud. merc. Trine Krogh Håkansson

RUC Administration:

23. Senior Advisor, Shirley Pollak – Administration and legal issue concerning double/joint degrees

Danish Partners:

24. Dorthe Skovrød Christensen, Senior consultant, Regional Development, Region Zealand
25. Lill Andersen, Chief Consultant, the Department of Analysis and Management Secretariat, Business Hub Zealand.
26. Lone Gjerulff Bak, Chief Consultant, Guldborgsund Municipality
27. Birgitte Edswald, Chief Consultant, Project Manager Projektleder for Knowledge Platform Guldborgsund, Guldborgsund Municipality

Agenda of the meeting:

- 1) 11.00 – 11.20 Welcome and Introduction to the project by Margit Neisig
- 2) 11.20 – 11.45 Presentation of the results from the surveys by Martin L Kristensen and Sophia Ackerhans/Tinka Krueger.
- 3) 11.45 – 12.30 Discussion in groups:
Scholars with related research fields from RUC and CAU discuss:
 - **Which are our synergies and complementarities? How can we use the collaboration?**
 - The findings, and how you see, we can meet the interests of students and companies through a joint/double degree and potential research collaboration.
 - Ideas for the project to include.
- 4) 12.30 -12.50 Plenum (Margit Neisig convenes)
- 5) 12.50 – 13.00 Summing up/conclusion and briefly about the next phase of the project by Margit Neisig and Carsten Schultz

1: Welcome and Introduction to the project by Margit Neisig

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Margit Neisig welcome the participants for the online seminar about the joint project between RUC and CAU universities regarding a double master's degree in Business Administration.

Neisig introduces the core project team and the program of the seminar

Also, she explains the timeline of the project collaboration.

2: Presentation of the results from the surveys by Martin L. Kristensen, Sophia Ackerhans and Tinka Krueger

2.1 Results Business Survey:

- More than one hundred companies participated in the business survey (total for both countries).
- More than 50% of the participants already have a business relation with Denmark or Germany.
- More than 60% of the companies need employees with MBA or a cand.merc education.
- Crucial competencies and skills for future candidates among others:
 - Germany:
 1. Project Management skills.
 2. Critical thinking.
 3. Analytical skills.
 - Denmark:
 1. Analytical skills.
 2. Language skills.
 3. Cultural skills.
- Future employment fields for a Double MBA:
 - Germany:
 1. Project management
 2. Marketing & market analysis
 3. Administration
 - Denmark;
 1. Marketing & market analysis.
 2. Project management and International business and business development.
 3. Management and Leadership.
- Importance of future employees' close ties to Germany and Denmark:
 - Germany: In total 20% important
 - Denmark: In total 9% important
- Around 20-30 % of the companies will likely hire an employee with a MBA (cand.merc) degree.

- Around 3-17% of the companies will likely hire an employee with a MBA with a double degree form CAU and RUC.
- Name of companies interested in the education: Kalundborg Forsyning, Danish Crown, A/S Bevola, Frese, Excocell A/S, Sortimo A/S, Harboe Brewery, Granby Pack A/S, Techvolver, CHYMEIA A/S, Norden Fjord Invest, Wirtschaftsförderung, Nordfiresland, Autoliv, AOK, H. Wilhelm Schaumann GmbH, 1CONNECT Software GmbH, Id-netsolutionsGmbH, Brock Müller Zigenbein Rechtsanwälte.

2.2 Results Student Survey:

- Five hundred thirty-seven students participated in the Student Survey – the number in total from Denmark and Germany.
- Participants are from the universities (RUC & CAU) and professional bachelor programs at Copenhagen Business Academy, Copenhagen School of Design and Technology, and Zealand Business College.
- Plan to study abroad:
 - Germany: 43% of the students plan to study abroad.
 - Denmark: 30% of the students plan to study abroad.
- Attractiveness for RUC students to study at CAU:
 - 22% would like to study for an MBA at CAU
 - 24% would like a double MBA between CAU and RUC.
- Plans after current education:
 - Germany: 72% will likely or very likely start a master's degree program.
 - Denmark: 42% will begin a master's degree, and 31% will enter professional life.
- Top 3 desired future jobs:
 - Germany:
 1. Project management
 2. Marketing
 3. Analysis / Research
 - Denmark:
 1. Marketing
 2. Leadership
 3. Project management
- Most important reasons to choose the Double Master's Degree:
 - Germany:
 1. Career opportunities.

- 2. Gaining experience abroad
 - 3. Dual academic masters' degree.
- Denmark:
 - 1. Building and strengthen personal international relationships.
 - 2. Opportunity to increase knowledge of the Northern part of Germany.
 - 3. Receiving a double master's degree from both universities
- Most reasons against the Double master's degree:
 - Germany:
 - 1. Financial aspect.
 - 2. Limited choices - If the course selection in English is limited at RUC
 - 3. Unknown university.
 - Denmark:
 - 1. Finding a place to live while staying at Kiel University.
 - 2. If the course selection in English is limited at Kiel university.
 - 3. Due to my privacy, friends, and family, the study abroad will be a change too big.
- Some reasons mentioned by the participants to choose the Double Master's degree:
 - Visited the country and got to know it.
 - Better career opportunities.
 - Better preparation for future working conditions on the global market through language practices and experience.
 - Double diploma and international experience.
 - Closer international ties with the CAU and the neighbor country, choosing from subjects, lectures, and seminars at the RUC, complementing the CAU, more profile specialization.
 - Flexibility in choosing master's subjects, the excellent reputation of Double Master's Degrees, increased internationalization.
 - International job chances, individual reputation.
 - Choose courses that aren't offered in Kiel.
 - Further insight in research, gain experience with different study programs.

2.3 Main conclusions:

- More than 50% of the participating companies in both countries are already connected to respectively Denmark and Germany.
- More than 60% of companies already employ staff with an MSc. Economics.
- The participating companies want to hire graduates in project management, marketing, international business, and business development.
- The companies fairly emphasize that the candidates have close connections to respectively Denmark and Germany.

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- There is a potential market for candidates with a different profile, as some of the companies currently do not have access to candidates with the desired abilities and competencies.
- More than 30% of students plan a stay abroad in both countries in connection with their current study.
- The German and Danish students also find Denmark and Germany relevant as targets for a stay abroad, as 9% of the students find Denmark and Germany relevant. Furthermore, about a third of the students planning a stay abroad from RUC's study finds Northern Germany particularly relevant and would choose a double MSc. Economics, where CAU was one of the universities.
- About 50% of the students surveyed in both countries want to start a master's degree after their current education.
- Opportunities
 - Building and strengthen personal international relationships.
 - Gaining experience abroad and increase knowledge of Germany and Denmark.
 - Receiving a double degree.
- Threats
 - Finance.
 - Accommodation.
 - Selection of courses taught in English.
 - Having to leave friends.
 - Knowledge of the university

Questions and comments

After the presentation of the results, Neisig asks if anyone have questions to ask or comments they would like to share?

1. Prof. Carsten Schultz, Technology Management asks: How many students could we expect if we offer this master program – can we guess this number out of these results?
 1. **Tinka Krueger answers:** Denmark is attractive for German students. It is listed as the number three country for a study period abroad - may be due to the fact, that Denmark is not that far away. Also, the knowledge about the country seems to be important. From the German perspective, there is a willingness to study abroad. Also from Denmark, we see an interest in the northern part of Germany. I would not be desperate about the numbers. More than 20% says that they will have it in their mind to choose a double degree without any exact knowledge of the curriculum.

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Margit Neisig adds: If around 10% of the students are interested, my calculation tells me that about ten Danish students will participate per year. (If it is the same from Germany, it may be around 20 students in total per year in a starting set-up, maybe increasing when properly marketed), but if we are reusing the study activities from the present curricula, a double degree will not be too costly.

1. Assoc. Prof. John Dam Scheuer – Organization Theory and Change, asks if we know what kind of competencies profile the company are missing? Is there any way we can find out?
 1. **Tinka Krueger answers:** Yes, I will just share these slides again. One of the crucial competencies asked for generally, is for the German side: Project management, critical thinking and analytical skills. From the Danish side it is: Analytical skills, Language skills and Cultural skills.
Particularly for the double degree, it is for the German side: Project management, Marketing & Market analysis and Administration. For Denmark, it is: Marketing & Market analysis, Project management/International business & Business development, Management & Leadership.

Martin L. Krisensen adds: I also think that if we look at the jobs that the companies want the masters to enter, then we can see that marketing and project management is needed. We shall give them competencies within these two fields. And of course, we, later on, will have focus groups and interviews with companies where we will dig deeper into this topic.

3: Discussion in groups:

Margit Neisig represents the scholars with related research fields from RUC and CAU discuss:

- **Which are our synergies and complementarities? How can we use the collaboration?**
- The findings, and how you see, we can meet the interests of students and companies through a joint/double degree as well as potential research collaboration.
- Ideas for the project to include

Groups for group work at zoom:

Group 1: (Innovation, Technology, entrepreneurship, service- & org. development):

Sophia Ackerhans , Carsten Schultz, Jette Ernst, Ada Schupola, Werner Sperschneider, John Dam Scheuer, Lars Fuglsang,

Group 2: (Accounting, finance, taxation, strategy, business models):

Trine Krogh Håkansson, Jost Henrich Heckemeyer, Johannes K. Dreyer, Kristian Sund.

Group 3: (HRM, Organization, Leadership, Project Management):

Martin L. Kristensen, Christoph Reinert, Margit Neisig, Mette Apollo Rasmussen.

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Group 4: (Supply chains management, marketing, consumers, CSR, SDG's, Business Ethics):

Tinka Krueger, Stefan Hoffmann, Frank Meisel, Jacob Dahl Rendtorff, Sameer Azizi, Matias T Jørgensen.

Group 5: (Relationship with businesses and public authorities – does the idea/vision still seems promising? How may we strengthen the relationship?):

Dorthe Skovrød Christensen, Volker Ratje, Lill Andersen, Lone Gjerulff Bak, Shirley Pollak, Birgitte Echwald.

4: Plenum (Margit Neisig convenes)

Group 1: (Innovation, Technology, entrepreneurship, service- & org. development):

- The chairs at RUC and CAU share research interested in innovation management, digital innovation, and service & experiences.
- We also have much in common regarding the courses, e.g., practical innovation management course, where students spend some days at a particular company and have to develop a disruptive idea, which they pitch in front of a jury in the end (very practical experience for students which also meet the needs of the companies for project management experiences).
- We discussed that it would be nice to have mixed teams for these kinds of courses. Of course, we would have to provide these English courses, which might be an issue for the small firms in Northern Germany. However, we concluded that the benefit of such innovation project management courses would be great for the students.
- In terms of the potential of the double degree, we asked ourselves if there is a minimum number of students who have to enroll in this program (later, Shirley mentioned a min. of 30 students from RUC – we will have to find out this number for CAU).
- Tendency towards double degree instead of joint program as the distribution of certificates is much easier in the end (this is also the information Tinka & Sophia received from the CAU international office). This would mean that students spend 1-2 semesters abroad and attend the offered courses. Course accreditation must be ensured beforehand.

Group 2: (Accounting, finance, taxation, strategy, business models):

- The education must be flexible in that it should be possible to chose courses taught in German, English, and Danish. As few mandatory courses as possible would be the best scenario to secure that the students can tone their education and professional life after ended master's degree program.
- It would be a nice idea with seminars for all students attending the program. The seminars could be held both in Germany and Denmark with educational competencies from both universities.
- RUC and CAU have many similar interests to mix and use for an international program. Both universities could easily benefit from this cooperation.

Group 3: (HRM, Organization, Leadership, Project Management):

- Margit Neisig introduces the group work and presents research interests.
- Mette Apollo Rasmussen asks questions to the participants in the company survey. She suggested that it be relevant to involve companies from central Jutland and contact the Business Council Ikast, Herning, Brande.
- Neisig asks Christoph Reinert how many researchers they have in the soft areas (HRM, organizational behavior, project management). First, Reinert introduces his own and the other members of the research unit's research interests. Then, the other participants present themselves and their research interests.
- Reinert comments on the similarities between the participants' research interests and presents an idea of close collaboration with companies. Finally, Neisig comments on the proposal and says that this will fit well with the problem-oriented project work, which is a central part of RUC's pedagogical profile.
- Reinert has to leave the meeting due to teaching but presents a marketing idea. For example, a day could be arranged where students can be shown around, and see the universities.
- Rasmussen expresses concern about the expected number of students (earlier in the meeting, Neisig has mentioned a potential number of 10 Danish students from start and likewise from Germany – increasing later on). In continuation of this, Neisig asks whether Rasmussen thinks we should continue with the project. Rasmussen explains that she sees it as a prestigious project for RUC and that there will be a marketing effect at RUC. Neisig reassures, that the costs will be limited, as a double degree mainly reuses the courses and study activities already in place.

Group 4: (Supply chains management, marketing, consumers, CSR, SDG's, Business Ethics)

- Which are synergies/complementarities?
- How can we use the collaboration?
- Good idea?
- Chance to elaborate new collaboration → potential for concrete collaboration on teaching side (sustainability, globalization), it's not obvious, different angles of globalization/internationalization.
- An interesting program for students could work out well.
- Difficult for students: semester calendar and timeline.
- Other departments should also consider setting up the curricula (Department of People and Technology).
- Focus on students willing to get some international experience without getting too far away from their comfort zone.
- Curriculum which is something new (not new courses, but something new) combination of existing courses → fits together in a new way: concrete idea how curriculum looks like.

Group 5: (Relationship with businesses and public authorities – does the idea/vision still seem promising? How may we strengthen the relationship?):

We discussed the following two questions:

- 1) Is the idea still promising?
- 2) How can the idea be promoted?

Ad 1)

- A need of digging deeper into the questionnaire results was expressed in the group.
- Maybe there is a need of taking a step back and asking ourselves how to develop the project of interest to companies.
- Maybe there is a need of describing more detailed the contents of the Double Degree MBA
- We had the reflection that the students considered the social and cultural skills more important than the professional skills.
- We had the reflection that the students seemed to be more interested in modules/part of curriculum rather than in a whole degree. We therefore had the question: “Do we need a whole degree, or would it be sufficient with modules/part of curriculum”?
- There may be something regarding the timing: Finalization of The Fehmarn Belt project/region is more years ahead of us and therefore difficult to relate to also, in terms of a ‘Fehmarn Belt emerged education programme’.
- One thing is theory and another thing is practice: the companies may not see a need in theory right now, however later in practice, if a newly graduated Master of a Double Degree in Business Administration knock at their door, when ‘the new Fehmarn Belt region’ is a reality.
- There may be something about contradiction of terms – in this specific project, where education talk into business. We should consider that input on needed skills for a Double Degree MBA comes directly from companies themselves.

Ad 2)

- We could contact business organizations such as ‘Dansk Industri’ and ‘Dansk Erhverv’ (Danish Chamber of Commerce) for a collaboration on reaching out to their members (companies) to have their input to the Double Degree MBA, to have the questionnaire filled by more companies and to hopefully have the idea promoted.
- We could appoint ambassadors, who are high-ranking persons (VIPs) to promote the idea
- We could make use of storytelling by creating a “Persona”, who should serve as an archetypal Double Degree MBA student, in order to reach out to a right and potential student target group.

5: Summing up/conclusion and briefly about the next phase of the project by Margit Neisig and Carsten Schultz

- There is potential and interest in teaching and research collaboration between the two universities.

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- The Danish business survey must be expanded to cover the capital area and central Jutland to provide an accurate and fair view of the potential interest in a double master's degree (for now only companies in the Region of Zealand have been surveyed).
- We are a little behind schedule, especially in the legal field, but it will be caught up in the autumn.
- In the autumn we will start to elaborate on a prototype curriculum and have focus group interviews with students and interviews with companies, while also finalizing a report before end of November.