

# Cross-Disciplinary Strategies

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

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## Curriculum

### **Bachelor Programme**

Duration: 8 Semesters

Programme Number: 033 700

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

Approved by the Senate of the University of Applied Arts Vienna  
on 02 May 2017

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## § 1. Objectives and principles

The bachelor degree programme „Cross-Disciplinary Strategies. Applied Studies in Art, Science, Philosophy, and Global Challenges“ 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 not just in individual areas of knowledge, but also beyond the arts.

The educational system's approach for this programme represents an answer to transformation processes that our globalized societies face today. To be able to deal with complex and global dynamics as well as differing realities, courses designed to give an overview offer interdisciplinary knowledge and provide insights into strategies and methods from a number of areas of knowledge. Basic principles of art, philosophy, natural sciences, engineering and the humanities are an integral part of the curriculum in order to familiarize students with various perspectives and epistemologies. In addition, basic knowledge regarding the challenges of an increasing fusion of man and machine will be imparted, with particular focus on the growing automation that is due to the refinement of artificial intelligence and progress in the area of genome editing.

The interdisciplinary approach of the programme aims at developing future-oriented work methods and the conveyance of new strategies designed to reach far beyond ordinary educational concepts, thus opposing the growing specialization and fragmentation of knowledge. This approach represents a contribution to shaping the future of our societies: Fragile social fabrics in a quickly changing world that are confronted with global challenges to an unprecedented extent are to be addressed: demographic change, migration, the protection of human rights, social injustices and poverty, climate change, or redefining human work in the era of robotics and digitalization.

Systematic and interdisciplinary courses provide students with insights into current strategies of relevant technological developments, into new economies and finances, as well as into political discourses of contemporary societies. The programme is supplemented by reflections accompanying the course of studies. Artistic strategies and practical knowledge are both significant learning objectives and basic work methods. These goals are conveyed in modular study units and enhanced through forms of complementary and collaborative teaching; they include artistic strategies like abstraction, ambiguity, alienation, destruction or performativity. The architecture of the study programme offers a new and innovative learning environment which combines theory and practice. It is supplemented by practical experience in various studios where students become familiar with a broad spectrum of media and materials.

In order to educate professionals who are able to navigate in a globalized and interconnected world and who possess the necessary qualifications to handle complex and global 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 (UG), the bachelor 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 represents a minimum duration of studies of eight semesters. Upon successful completion of the programme, and pursuant to § 51 para. 2 subpara. 10 (UG), the academic title „Bachelor in Cross-Disciplinary Strategies“, abbreviated „B.CDS“, is awarded.

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### § 3. Qualification profile

Graduates employ artistic skills, strategies and principles of artistic praxis and experience, plus broad knowledge regarding the basic principles of research from the areas of engineering, natural sciences, humanities and social sciences to identify, develop and bring about systematic and innovative approaches for the achievement of sustainable transformation and design processes. Graduates gain an understanding for the complex coherences of our globalized and tightly interwoven societies and are able to take a critical stance towards the multiple challenges of our time.

The intention is for graduates to pass through awareness-raising and qualification processes that will enable them:

- to identify and address relevant issues and strategies for change processes beyond the boundaries of disciplines,
- to systemize and communicate (knowledge transfer) the approaches developed, and to implement them according to the requirements of the respective context,
- to instruct and guide interdisciplinary work teams that are characterized by diversity and heterogeneity.

Due to the architecture of the study programme students have at their command a number of artistic skills and strategies, as well as interdisciplinary knowledge in respect of the basic principles of highly diverse knowledge areas, all of which facilitates a certain foresight while at the same time providing high adaptability to a wide range of disciplines. Graduates will be enabled to lead, in a stimulating and cooperative way, decision processes and strategic developments in complex matters such as politics, administration and new economic systems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They are qualified for fields of work in both the public and the private sector, e.g. at universities and external research facilities where research teams are interdisciplinary because of the complexity of the research subject. They also qualify for research departments and senior positions in the strategy development of commercial enterprises that design complex strategies for change processes and that have a need for ongoing renewal and change due to their organizational and content-wise orientation.

Further fields of work are available in the context of public administration bodies of the country, the federal states and larger urban spaces in respect of planning and decision-making processes of complex undertakings, plus in connection with political decision makers and panels that deal with diverging interests and complex tasks 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 think tanks and enterprises that advise business and politics regarding development scenarios and potential courses of action, plus in lobbies that are faced with a dramatic change in working and producing. Another field of work exists in cultural institutions that face a conflict of orientation between art, aesthetics, public sphere, politics and economic parameters, but offer suitable spaces to voice and make known to a wider public the global challenges confronting our societies today.

### § 4. Admission

(1) Within the framework of an entrance examination, the examination committee aims to establish the presence of a particular visual and linguistic aptitude, combined with an aptitude for combinatory intelligence.

(2) The entrance examination consists of two parts – a short biography with letter of motivation, and a personal interview. The positive evaluation of part one is the prerequisite for participation in part two.

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

In the short biography applicants are to present a written summary of their qualifications and main interests.

In the motivational letter applicants are to outline their expectations of the study programme and how they would apply the skills and competencies gained in this course of studies.

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## 2. Interview

Starting with a short oral presentation of the motivational letter submitted, the applicant will discuss with the examination committee her/his personal qualifications plus the main interests and their congruence with the study programme objectives. Based on the outcome, the aptitude for interdisciplinary, scientific-artistic work in a critical-reflective manner will be evaluated.

## § 5. Programme structure and study subjects

The course of studies comprises 240 ECTS (8 semesters) and is subdivided in:

### 1. Introduction phase

A one-semester-long phase of introduction conveys the main features of the differing topics of the study programme, the foundations of interdisciplinary working, plus project organization and means of cooperation in changing work groups. It consists of programme-related reflection (4 ECTS) plus courses designed to give an overview, introductions to working academically and artistic work, as well as introductions to work and project practice (26 ECTS).

### 2. Study modules

#### 2.1. Ways of knowing and meaning

Courses from the range offered by the University of Applied Arts in the areas of Art and Science History, Media Theory, Art and Knowledge Transfer, Political Theory and Philosophy may be selected.

#### 2.2. Natural science and technology

Experts from scientific fields such as Artificial Intelligence, Genetic Engineering and Genome Editing, Robotics and Neurosciences, etc., offer lectures with discursive elements, putting the respective specialist field into social contexts.

#### 2.3. Economy and politics

Experts offer lectures with discursive elements regarding issues of economic and political strategies, such as finance systems, new economy, etc.

#### 2.4. Global challenges

Experts offer lectures and workshops referring to topics of global challenges: inequalities and poverty, climate change, demographic change or the redetermination of human labor in the era of automation and digitalization etc.

#### 2.5. Modular study units regarding artistic strategies

In modular study units headed by teaching staff from the fields of art and theory specific artistic procedures such as abstraction, ambiguity, alienation etc. are dealt and worked with both theoretically and artistically. From the second to the seventh semester students are to successfully complete one modular study unit each semester in respect of artistic strategies.

#### 2.6. It is within the scope of modular study units to offer subject-relevant excursions.

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

### 3. Internships

Students may complete internships, as a recognizable part of the study programme to the extent of 8 ECTS max., at subject-related external facilities in artistic or other fields – provided the content and extent of recognition was approved by the programme advisory board prior to commencing the internship.

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#### 4. Programme-related reflection

Within the framework of the programme-related reflection each student is to keep a studies portfolio in which the experiences and competences gained during the course of studies are to be documented in writing or visually, analyzed and critically reflected in discussion groups organized by the programme coordinator.

#### 5. Cross-disciplinary capabilities

In each of the semesters 2 to 7 a workshop regarding cross-disciplinary capabilities is to be completed. In this workshop, moderated by persons experienced in interdisciplinary work, the students apply methods for creating interdisciplinary connections and explore – partly together with expert representatives – potentials of interdisciplinary linkages. The experiences gained in these workshops are to be documented in the studies portfolio (programme-related reflection). They form the basis for the concluding bachelor thesis. In the workshops attendance is compulsory and successful completion requires an attendance rate of at least 75 %. Parts of the workshops will take place as an event open to the public.

### § 6. Exam regulations

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

2. The academic accomplishment in examinations or courses with immanent examinations – except for the orientation tutorials and programme-related reflection – is to be evaluated on use of a three-tier scale consisting of „mit Auszeichnung bestanden“ (passed with distinction), „bestanden“ (pass) or „nicht bestanden“ (fail). At the announcement of the course the head of this course is to also announce, in writing, the method of ascertaining the academic accomplishment.

3. The academic accomplishment in the orientation tutorials and programme-related reflection is to be evaluated pursuant to § 73 para. 1, 3rd sentence, Univ. Act: Only the attendance record will be taken into account and be evaluated as „mit Erfolg teilgenommen“ (successfully completed /pass) or „ohne Erfolg teilgenommen“ (unsuccessfully completed /fail).

#### 4. Bachelor Thesis

4.1. The topic of the bachelor thesis is to be taken from the course contents of the curriculum and the thesis content must represent the interdisciplinary character of the programme.

4.2. If a student applies for a supervising tutor as support when working on the bachelor thesis, the vice-rector for academic affairs is to allocate one or more teaching staff members who are suitably qualified and have agreed to fulfill this function. Prerequisite is the student's written submission of a concept for the bachelor thesis that includes a schedule of time and content. The concept is to be submitted at least three months prior to the beginning of the semester in which the student plans to produce the bachelor thesis.

4.3. Prerequisite for admission to the bachelor thesis is the evidence that all exams and course assessments have been successfully completed.

4.4. Following a public presentation to an examination committee, of which the supervising tutor(s) will be part, the academic accomplishment of the bachelor thesis is to be evaluated on use of a three-tier scale consisting of „mit Auszeichnung bestanden“ (passed with distinction), „bestanden“ (pass) or „nicht bestanden“ (fail).

4.5. The bachelor programme ends with the positive evaluation of the bachelor thesis (approbation). This decision is made by the committee appointed by the rectorate member in charge.

### § 7. Language of the programme

The programme is taught in English. Students submit their written works in English language.

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## § 8. Organizational conditions (part of the university statute)

1. For organizational and content-wise coordination, the rectorate will appoint a programme advisory board and a programme coordinator.

2. For appointment of a programme coordinator, the programme advisory board will recommend to the rectorate a person with interdisciplinary competences and interests and who graduated from a university.

3. The programme coordinator is in charge of

3.1. Organizing the entrance examinations

3.2. Securing the operational running of the study programme based on the curriculum and decisions of the programme advisory board

3.3. Supporting the programme advisory board in preparing and submitting recommendations to the rectorate regarding the employment of teaching staff

3.4. Heading the teaching course of programme-related reflection as set out in the curriculum, as well as participating in the workshop „Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities“.

4. The programme advisory board consists of nine voting members and is composed in equal parts of the following persons:

- representatives from the group of university professors, as nominated by those university professors who have a seat in the senate
- representatives from the group of university lecturers, plus scientific and artistic staff, as nominated by the members of this group who have a seat in the senate
- representatives of the students, as nominated by the Students' Union (hufak).

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

4.1. The term of office for the members of the programme advisory board amounts to three years.

4.2. The programme coordinator is a programme advisory board member with a consulting vote.

4.3. The programme advisory board decides through simple majority on the following matters

4.3.1. Recommendations to the rectorate regarding the employment or assignment of teaching staff required to implement the curriculum

4.3.2. Recommendations to the rectorate regarding the assignment of members of the examination committee

4.3.3. Recommendations to the rectorate regarding the composition of the entrance examination committee.

4.4. The chairperson of the programme advisory board represents the study programme to the public.

5. Experts outside the university who are hired for teaching requirements of the curriculum, are granted teaching authorization that covers the contents of their teaching responsibility. They may use the title „Visiting Professor“ or „Visiting Lecturer“ when this is recommended by the programme advisory board. If necessary and in urgent cases the rector may employ persons as „Visiting Professor“ or „Visiting Lecturer“ and inform the programme advisory board after the fact.

**§ 9. Study Route**

First Semester (introduction phase)		ECTS
<b>Orientation Tutorial</b> introduction to resources and workshops/studios at the university	tutorial	2
<b>Introduction and Overview regarding Programme Topics</b>	lecture	4
<b>Basics of Scientific Writing</b>	lecture	2
<b>Introduction to Methods of Working Academically</b> analogue and digital	lecture & practice	2
<b>Introduction to Communication and Cooperation Strategies</b>	lecture & practice	4
<b>The World in Change</b> introduction to societal transformation processes of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century	lecture & discussion	4
<b>Introduction to Ways of Knowing and Meaning</b> Epistemology	lecture & discussion	2
<b>Introduction to Artistic Strategies such as Abstraction, Ambiguity, Alienation, Decomposition, and Performativity, etc.</b>	lecture & artistic practice	8
<b>Programme-Related Reflection</b>		2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>

Second Semester		ECTS
<b>Basics of Selected Subjects from Science &amp; Technology, such as Artificial Intelligence, Genetic Engineering and Genome Editing, Robotics, Quantum Physics and Neurosciences i.a.</b> During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs. OR <b>Main Features of Economic and Political Dynamics</b> compusory completion once during the whole study programme; multiple selection not permissible	lecture & discussion	7
<b>Critical Reflection on Relevant Global Challenges, such as: Demographic Change, Mass Migration, Human Rights Violations, Social Injustices and Poverty, Climate Change, Mass Unemployment and the Redefinition of Human Labor in the Era of Automation and Digitalization.</b> During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.	lecture & discussion	7
<b>Imparting Artistic Skills, Strategies and Principles of Artistic Praxis such as Abstraction, Alienation, Ambiguity, Contextualization, Deconstruction, Interaction, Participation, Appropriation i.a., in Combination with Theoretical Reflections.</b>	artistic practice & theoretical reflection	7
<b>Ways of Knowing and Meaning</b> Art and Science History, Philosophy and Political Theory	lecture & discussion	4
<b>Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities</b>	workshop	3
<b>Programme-Related Reflection</b>		2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>

Third Semester	ECTS
<p><b>Basics of Selected Subjects from Science &amp; Technology, such as Artificial Intelligence, Genetic Engineering and Genome Editing, Robotics, Quantum Physics and Neurosciences i.a.</b>                      During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.                      OR  <b>Main Features of Economic and Political Dynamics</b>                      compulsory completion once during the whole study programme; multiple selection not permissible.</p>	<p>lecture &amp; discussion 7</p>
<p><b>Critical Reflection on Relevant Global Challenges, such as: Demographic Change, Mass Migration, Human Rights Violations, Social Injustices and Poverty, Climate Change, Mass Unemployment and the Redefinition of Human Labor in the Era of Automation and Digitalization.</b>                      During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.</p>	<p>lecture &amp; discussion 7</p>
<p><b>Imparting Artistic Skills, Strategies and Principles of Artistic Praxis such as Abstraction, Alienation, Ambiguity, Contextualization, Deconstruction, Interaction, Participation, Appropriation i.a., in Combination with Theoretical Reflections.</b></p>	<p>artistic practice &amp; theoretical reflection 7</p>
<p><b>Ways of Knowing and Meaning</b>                      Art and Science History, Philosophy and Political Theory</p>	<p>lecture &amp; discussion 4</p>
<p><b>Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities</b></p>	<p>workshop 3</p>
<p><b>Programme-Related Reflection</b></p>	<p>2</p>
<p><b>TOTAL</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>

Fourth Semester	ECTS
<p><b>Basics of Selected Subjects from Science &amp; Technology, such as Artificial Intelligence, Genetic Engineering and Genome Editing, Robotics, Quantum Physics and Neurosciences i.a.</b>                      During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.</p>	<p>lecture &amp; discussion 7</p>
<p><b>Critical Reflection on Relevant Global Challenges, such as: Demographic Change, Mass Migration, Human Rights Violations, Social Injustices and Poverty, Climate Change, Mass Unemployment and the Redefinition of Human Labor in the Era of Automation and Digitalization.</b>                      During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.</p>	<p>lecture &amp; discussion 7</p>
<p><b>Imparting Artistic Skills, Strategies and Principles of Artistic Praxis such as Abstraction, Alienation, Ambiguity, Contextualization, Deconstruction, Interaction, Participation, Appropriation i.a., in Combination with Theoretical Reflections.</b></p>	<p>artistic practice &amp; theoretical reflection 7</p>
<p><b>Ways of Knowing and Meaning</b>                      Art and Science History, Philosophy and Political Theory</p>	<p>lecture &amp; discussion 4</p>

<b>Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities</b>	workshop	3
<b>Programme-Related Reflection</b>		2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>

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**Fifth Semester** ECTS

<b>Basics of Selected Subjects from Science &amp; Technology, such as Artificial Intelligence, Genetic Engineering and Genome Editing, Robotics, Quantum Physics and Neurosciences i.a.</b> During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.	lecture & discussion	7
<b>Critical Reflection on Relevant Global Challenges, such as: Demographic Change, Mass Migration, Human Rights Violations, Social Injustices and Poverty, Climate Change, Mass Unemployment and the Redefinition of Human Labor in the Era of Automation and Digitalization.</b> During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.	lecture & discussion	7
<b>Imparting Artistic Skills, Strategies and Principles of Artistic Praxis such as Abstraction, Alienation, Ambiguity, Contextualization, Deconstruction, Interaction, Participation, Appropriation i.a., in Combination with Theoretical Reflections.</b>	artistic practice & theoretical reflection	7
<b>Ways of Knowing and Meaning</b> Art and Science History, Philosophy and Political Theory	lecture & discussion	4
<b>Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities</b>	workshop	3
<b>Programme-Related Reflection</b>		2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>

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**Sixth Semester** ECTS

<b>Basics of Selected Subjects from Science &amp; Technology, such as Artificial Intelligence, Genetic Engineering and Genome Editing, Robotics, Quantum Physics and Neurosciences i.a.</b> During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.	lecture & discussion	7
<b>Critical Reflection on Relevant Global Challenges, such as: Demographic Change, Mass Migration, Human Rights Violations, Social Injustices and Poverty, Climate Change, Mass Unemployment and the Redefinition of Human Labor in the Era of Automation and Digitalization.</b> During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.	lecture & discussion	7

<b>Imparting Artistic Skills, Strategies and Principles of Artistic Praxis such as Abstraction, Alienation, Ambiguity, Contextualization, Deconstruction, Interaction, Participation, Appropriation i.a., in Combination with Theoretical Reflections.</b>	artistic practice & theoretical reflection	7
<i>Optional: guest of the class (Art Studio Practice: one-off intensification during the study programme)</i>		
<b>Ways of Knowing and Meaning</b>	lecture & discussion	4
<i>Art and Science History, Philosophy and Political Theory</i>		
<b>Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities</b>	workshop	3
<b>Programme-Related Reflection</b>		2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>

**Seventh Semester** ECTS

<b>Basics of Selected Subjects from Science &amp; Technology, such as Artificial Intelligence, Genetic Engineering and Genome Editing, Robotics, Quantum Physics and Neurosciences i.a.</b>	lecture & discussion	7
<i>During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.</i>		
<b>Critical Reflection on Relevant Global Challenges, such as: Demographic Change, Mass Migration, Human Rights Violations, Social Injustices and Poverty, Climate Change, Mass Unemployment and the Redefinition of Human Labor in the Era of Automation and Digitalization.</b>	lecture & discussion	7
<i>During the whole study programme at least three different subjects must be selected from the available range. Multiple selection of the same subject is only permissible when the degree of subject intensification differs.</i>		
<b>Imparting Artistic Skills, Strategies and Principles of Artistic Praxis such as Abstraction, Alienation, Ambiguity, Contextualization, Deconstruction, Interaction, Participation, Appropriation i.a., in Combination with Theoretical Reflections.</b>	artistic practice & theoretical reflection	7
<i>Optional: guest of the class (Art Studio Practice: one-off intensification during the study programme)</i>		
<b>Ways of Knowing and Meaning</b>	lecture & discussion	4
<i>Art and Science History, Philosophy and Political Theory</i>		
<b>Cross-Disciplinary Capabilities</b>	workshop	3
<b>Programme-Related Reflection</b>		2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>

**Eighth Semester (bachelor semester)** ECTS

<b>Bachelor Thesis</b>		26
<i>The topic of the bachelor thesis is to be taken from the course contents of the curriculum, and the thesis content must represent the interdisciplinary character of the programme.</i>		
<b>Programme-Related Reflection</b>		4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>30</b>