

Business Projects in Corporate Development in the master program Business Administration at the University of Cologne

Information for students (Summer Term 2017)

What is a business project?

In a business project, you develop answers to current management questions and problems from actual companies. Business projects typically address the areas human resource management, business management and -development as well as organization and logistics. You will work together in a team of 3-4 students.

It is the target of the project to employ business and management theory rigorously to relevant management issues. Within each business project, participants will gain practical project management experience, will hone their professional competences, and work in close interaction with the partner company.

Each business project team is tutored by an academic advisor who will assess the academic performance of the students.

Eligibility, application, and allocation

Business projects are offered as an elective in the major Corporate Development by the departments constituting the Corporate Development area. Business projects are usually offered in the winter term. Upon successful completion of the course, students will receive **12 ECTS points**. The workload of this course will approximately be around 2-2.5 work days per semester week.

The business projects offered in the upcoming winter term are announced by the participating departments by the beginning of September. The announcements are issued centrally on the business project portal (see https://www.ilias.uni-koeln.de/ilias/goto_uk_cat_1923615.html; or Magazin > WiSo > BWL > Allgemeine BWL, Unternehmensentwicklung und Organisation > Bewerbungen Business Projects -- Registrations for Business Projects). You can register within the timeframe stated below via ILIAS. Registration for a business project requires you to indicate your project preferences. Furthermore, you will have to upload a personal data sheet. This data sheet should include all courses and grades achieved in your Master studies. Based on this information, we will allocate you to a business project by the end of September.

Short overview: Dates and deadlines for Summer Term 2017

March 30, 2017	Announcement of the business projects offered (ILIAS)
March 15 to April 15, 2017	Application period (ILIAS)
April 20, 2017	Publication of allocation resp. composition of project groups (ILIAS)

Organization and procedure

Upon allocation to a business project, your academic tutor will contact you to coordinate a first project meeting. Usually, the first details for an official kick-off meeting with the partner company, milestone deadlines, and project boundaries have been agreed upon with the corresponding company. These issues will be discussed during the team's first meeting with the academic tutor to prepare the official start of the project. A project's milestones are:

- (1) Preliminary meeting with the academic tutor (students and academic tutor)
- (2) Kick-off meeting (students, company, academic tutor)
- (3) Intermediate presentation (students, company, academic tutor) and
- (4) Final presentation (students, company, academic tutor).

Evaluation

A business project is a team project. This implies that all team members will be awarded *one grade*. In the rare event of large differences between the performance and/or contribution of individual team members, we however allow for more differentiated grading to repel free-riding behavior. The final grade is composed equally by the following three evaluation areas:

1. Project management

- team coordination
- behavior towards company
- acceptance or consultant's role

2. Final report

- coherence
- structure
- argumentation
- conceptual approach/theoretical foundation
- pursuit of project aims

3. Final presentation

- presentation as team
- reaction to / handling of inquiries
- structure, etc. (see No. 2).

Evaluation criteria are:

Practical quality:

- results represent added value for company
- originality/creativity
- in-company effectiveness

Academic quality:

- consistency
- depth of argument
- methodology
- transfer of theoretical knowledge

Process management:

- service orientation
- stress management
- overcoming obstacles
- result-orientation
- use of appropriate tools
- ability to cope with limited resources/insecurity

Social competence:

- teamwork
- communication
- self-organization

Contact

For general questions concerning the Corporate Development business projects please refer to the Department of Corporate Development and Business Ethics (coordinating department).

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