

**1st INTERNATIONAL WEEK on Practice Oriented Higher Education at Széchenyi István University, in Győr/Hungary
February 2 – 5, 2015**

Practice Oriented Education at the Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics, Széchenyi István University, Győr, Hungary

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Colleagues,

Széchenyi István University currently operates with five faculties and institutions in the academic fields of law and political sciences, engineering, health and social studies, musical art and of course, economics. The presentation on behalf of the Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics will cover in detail the endeavours, at both undergraduate and graduate levels, our colleagues demonstrate to help ensure our students' soft landing at the labour market.

To begin with I shall touch upon our undergraduate majors, namely the BAs in *Business Administration and Management, Commerce and Marketing, Public Services and International Studies* that all include practice oriented educational methods. Among our graduate majors I shall elaborate the Masters in *Logistical Management, Marketing and Regional and Environmental Economic Studies* with the specific attempts applied to ensure a gentle shift from higher education to the world of work.

The undergraduate majors of *Business Administration and Management* and that of *Commerce and Marketing* include 7 educational terms as opposed to the regular six-term bachelor degrees. The 7th semester is an unbroken 12-week work placement programme facilitated by the Career Office of the University's Communication and Service Centre as well as by the deputy-dean of corporate relations at the Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics.

The mandates of the Career Office of the University that was formally established in 2004 go well beyond the formation of corporate contacts. In collaboration with the Students' Union a holistic life path planning assistance is also provided. The Career Office is in charge of the University's job expo career fair, the so called "recruitment days" that create a broader meeting point for companies and graduate job seekers as well as the PRACTING programme.

As you might already know, under the umbrella of the PRACTING programme, which has been supported by the EU's Phare programme, practice oriented education in the field of engineering dates back to 1996 at our University. Since the mid-90s over 900 students have benefitted from the arrangement which is a financially rewarded work placement scheme supported by the Practising Foundation. Currently 60 corporate partners offer a term-long employment to our students, and the scheme, which was earlier exclusively accessible to those who had studied engineering, is now open to the applicants of the Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics, too.

Controlling is definitely the most popular minor or specialisation of the Business Administration and Management Bachelor major at the Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics as its backbone is a corporate case study. Students are invited to pick out a corporation operating in manufacturing or services to further deliver corporate analysis in the fields of order and stock management, demand estimation, production and capacity planning, asset and turnover capital management, corporate finances, cash flow forecasting, employment planning and payroll management to mention a few.

The corporate analysis presented by the students is supported by a massive IT background, for instance IBM Cognos BI, SAP, Sibylla and Seneca to name some and it is evaluated by company leaders and managers associated with the head of the minor, who is the deputy-dean of corporate relations.

The complex corporate analysis that is the final exam and outcome of the Controlling minor is in fact a pride of our Faculty. In 2012 it was awarded by the Tempus Public Foundation of the Ministry of Human Resources as a course primarily preferred by the industry.

Our undergraduate major of **Commerce and Marketing** and the consecutive graduate programme of **Marketing** follow rather similar patterns to the previously described Controlling minor. Students of Marketing are required to complete market research and market segmentation assignments, formulate branding strategies and run marketing communications campaigns in a corporate environment supported by advanced marketing tools. Under the guidance of professionals students further get acquainted with the production of television and radio commercials.

Marketing students at a graduate level enjoy internships at companies where they may acquire knowledge of international marketing. Beyond learning to assess the domestic marketing environment students are involved in scrutinising the overseas potential of markets.

The undergraduate programme of **Public Services** or **Public Administration**, which is primarily safeguarded by the Department of Regional Sciences and Public Policy, aims to train public servants for governmental institutions and agencies, local and municipal authorities, regional development bodies as well as for the non-profit sector. The Department has an extensive collaboration with the West Hungarian Academic Institute of the Regional Research Centre of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Thus undergraduates of the Public Administration major are regularly offered research and financial assistant internships at the Academic Institute. In the latter framework students get acquainted with the tasks of scientific data research and processing, project funding and feasibility studies and in the organisation of scientific conferences.

Master students of *Regional and Environmental Economic Studies* major are further inspired to join the Hungarian Economic Association, the Hungarian Regional Science Association as well as the Hungarian Geographical Society.

For those students who wish to conduct studies in the non-academic, public field, similarly to the previously mentioned *Business Administration and Management* and *Marketing* majors, a wide range of field work possibilities is offered at the Civil Protection Department, at the Regional Hospital, at the Municipal Government and its Community and Water Supplier, at the Firefighters, at several NGOs targeting child welfare, religious institutions, as well as at the regional chamber of trade and commerce.

The students of the International Studies major are expected to master two European foreign languages at a reasonably high (B2) level to ensure their employability in an international working environment. Széchenyi István University is a founding member of the United Nations Academic Impact, an initiative that aligns universities, colleges and research institutes with the UN. Our affiliation consequently means that at least one annual activity is organised around the 10 UNAI principles. Students of the International Studies major are actively encouraged to

involve themselves in the latter events and join ASPIRE, the student branch of the United Nations Academic Impact initiative to be eligible to participate in conferences organized by the UNAI and its member institutions. Two of our International Studies Students were invited by the President of the United Nations Association of Hungary to participate in Mr. Ban Ki-moon's, the UN SG's lecture at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 2011.

Our students are further encouraged, and assisted in applying to scholarships funded by the EU or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. One of our International Studies undergraduates has won an internship at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade after being ranked second at an EU essay contest on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Hungary's accession to the EU. Last week the same student again won an essay contest sponsored by the Representation of the European Commission in Hungary and was granted a further placement in Brussels.

Similarly to our Marketing major the Master programme in Logistical Management ensures practice oriented education with the incorporation of enterprise case studies, backed up with ever novel industrial software packages, into the curriculum. The corporate sector again plays a relevant role in the education process. Student teams may compete in a multiple round contest assembled by the Logistical Club of Major Enterprises or join the industrial projects of the Transportation and Logistics College. Students are further funded by corporate logistical apprenticeship programmes.

As for the practical soft skills that are very much needed by employers a so called Manager Passport Programme is offered by the head of our Logistical Management Master. Though the programme is offered by the Kautz Gyula Faculty of Economics any undergraduate or graduate student in his/her final year of study may attend the Manager Passport scheme, which is a 40-hour course that focuses on the development of social or broadly speaking human skills.

And finally I should like to remember an annual student contest related to the Kautz Gyula College for Economics. The National Financial Case Study Contest has been organised for 13 years by the Kautz Gyula College for Economics. Student teams from all Hungarian and several Hungarian speaking institutions of higher learning assemble to work on a real-life financial problem offered by the panel of judges who represent dominant multinational and domestic enterprises.

Ladies and gentleman, before I thank you for your kind attention I would like to acknowledge the support of my colleagues who have provided me with invaluable information on their particular activities in practice oriented higher education.

Thank you!