

# **Media Management Education in International Perspective – A Comparative Analysis of Curricula in the US and Germany**

## **Abstract**

*University level educational programs related to creative industries and media have seen significant growth over the last decade (e.g. Flew 2019) internationally – both in terms of numbers of students enrolled as well as in diversity of curriculum designs. Though many of the management-oriented programs refer explicitly to “media management” or more indirectly via labels as media and innovation, media and technology etc., the composition of courses within programs exhibit striking differences between programs offered within a given country and even more so in international comparison.*

*As curricula have some inertia due to lengthy development and accreditation processes, they do not change simultaneously with most recent media sector developments. Hence not surprisingly, they do not reflect the dynamic developments in the diverse media industries as well as the field of media as a whole that are upcoming across time (e.g. Albarran 2019).*

*Whilst curricula can at least to some extent be expected to address the imminent industry needs in terms of more holistic competencies (e.g. Foust & Bradshaw, 2020; Freberg & Kim, 2017) as well as of specific skills, they may also take a less practice-oriented approach and rather generally address media management from one of the academic foundations of its interdisciplinary roots in management science, economics, media and communication theories or more recently in computer and engineering sciences (see already Förster & Rohn, 2015). By doing so, they may focus more on the creation and production of certain media, on the organizational context, the strategies of business decisions makers or the effects of media and be rather critical with respect to media as a business. Media management curricula, interpreted as manifestations of a certain perspective on the current situation of the media but even more how they may evolve and, in some cases, also how they should do it, can be seen as proxies for strands of scholarship. Curriculum design may underline and manifest institutional legitimacy within and beyond the host universities. Analyzing program curricula can shed light on how the responsible academics behind them perceive the dynamics of media in society and economy and the resulting managerial challenges coming along with it. Curricula may also reflect the specific situations of the media in a given country or more specifically its type of media system.*

*This study was designed to learn more about how the media management curricula vary within national contexts of Germany and the USA through a content analysis of curricula.*

*We will present the first phase of an international comparative study of Germany and the US. Thy study is guided by the following research questions: (1) How can the characteristics of a study program be captured adequately to allow national as well as international comparison? (2) Which topics cover as mutually exclusive and as collectively exhaustive as possible media management curricula in an international context? (3) Which recurrent patterns, clusters of similar curricula, as wells as differences can be observed and along which dimensions of content or competencies respectively?*

*The comparison of more than 45 systematically selected "media management" programs will exhibit the different emphasis that is given to applied management, to theoretical foundation and methodology, to certain media sectors, general competencies, to more practice-orientation or more critical reflection. A discussion will embed the findings on the level of curricula within the context of media in Germany and the US.*

**Keywords:** media management, education, curricula, media industry

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