

# CASE STUDY IN GERMANY: STUDENT PROJECT FROM GHANA AND KENYA

## Ghanaian Students' Internship Experience in Germany

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### **Abstract**

The exchange program was aimed at giving students an international exposure through teaching and intercultural communication and to also enhance the existing relationship among the partner schools. The program lasted for a period of six months from September 2016 to February 2017. The main part of the program was the International Management program which comprised of four courses. The program offered us an opportunity to travel to four European countries to broaden our academic and social network.

### **Background**

The University of Cape Coast (UCC), School of Business, enjoyed a healthy relationship with Hochschule Bonn-Rhein-Sieg, University of Applied Sciences (H-BRS) in Germany over the past few years. This relationship has been strengthened with students from both institutions embarking on an exchange program at the other (partner) university to gain international exposure in Europe and Africa. It was such a relationship that accorded us the privilege to represent UCC in at H-BRS.

The exchange program commenced with a German language course for approximately three weeks followed by the International Management program. Our class was made up of students from USA, France, Italy, Germany, Finland, China, Jordan, Kenya, Bulgaria, and the Netherlands.

### **Duration in Germany**

The exchange was from the 6<sup>th</sup> of September 2016 through to the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 2017.

### **Activities in Germany**

- The International Management program  
The International Management program comprised four different courses put together. It was made up of International Marketing, Project and Cases, International Strategy and International Trade, Finance and Investment.
- Scenario planning  
We also learned the principles, concepts, and techniques of scenario planning and how to use them in real-world situations.
- Intercultural communication

This course was aimed at exposing students to the various cultural norms, beliefs, and concepts as well as communicating across cultural boundaries.

- Leadership and organizational behavior

This was also meant to introduce students to the leadership and management concepts and their applications as well as how individuals and groups behave and how such behavior impacts the organization.

- H-BRS-UCC-UoN conference

We played an active role in the H-BRS, UCC and UoN conference from November 10–11, 2016, as we served as a welcoming team to the delegations from the University of Cape Coast and the University of Nairobi. The conference also afforded us the privilege to interact with the head of DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service), representatives from the Ghana chamber of commerce, and representatives from the German Chamber of Commerce. Our service was duly acknowledged by the organizers of the conference.

### Teaching methods

Nature of the course: The courses were very practical. The courses were designed in a way for the students to appreciate how the concepts related with the real-world situations

### Assignment

1. International Marketing: A Pakistan textile company approached H-BRS to undertake a research on the challenges they could face in exporting their textiles to the German market. Our class was charged with the task to carry out a primary and secondary research for the Pakistan company and come out with a marketing plan.
2. International strategy: Each group was presented with a company to undertake a comprehensive analysis of their business strategy and relate it with the 7-concepts of unifying framework.
3. International trade, finance and investment: Presentations were held during every lecture; topics were sometimes assigned to students teams during the lecture and each team had 30 minutes to prepare for the presentation.
4. Project and cases: The class was assigned to groups of two and each group was mandated to present a term paper on a chosen topic.

### Travels as Part of the Program

We had a seminar and lodged in a hotel facility outside our city (Bonn) for three days together with Business Psychology students who served as our consultants in carrying out the entire research (the Pakistan company's plan to export textiles to the German market). We had the opportunity to visit the largest coal factor in Europe as part of the program of the International office. We traveled to four European countries, France (Paris), the Netherlands (Amsterdam and Maastricht), Belgium (Brussels), Switzerland (Zurich). During our visit, we met some alumni of UCC, more exactly the school of business who shared with us some of their experiences.

### **Exams and Nature of Exams**

The exams were similar to the exams in UCC. Most of the questions that were asked in the exams were issues which we discussed in class. Some of the questions were related to the assignments given in class, which meant that it was practically impossible to answer the exams questions without actively taking part in the assignments.

### **Differences Between the Teaching Methods at UCC and H-BRS**

The method of teaching in H-BRS was mainly practice-oriented with little room for theoretical teaching. Assignments given were real work or world situations to help students appreciate the happenings in the real world. Teaching in UCC, on the other hand, is not entirely practically related in comparison to H-BRS.

### **Conclusion**

The exchange program was very insightful as we improved on our intercultural communication skills, our presentation skills, and also built on our network in all regards, from academia, business and social interrelations.

### **Recommendations**

1. The finance and accounting masters course should be more quantitatively situated with much emphasis on quantitative methods and econometrics as most of the course outline of the schools visited had more than 6 -credit of those courses per semester.
2. There should be a collaboration between UCC and the industry to help students decide or settle on research topics, so that the findings of their research will be of great interest to the Industries. This was evident in some of the schools (University of Bonn).

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