

EASSW-UNAFORIS 2017 European Conference
Social Work Education in Europe:
Challenging Boundaries, Promoting a Sustainable Future
Paris, 27-29 June 2017

Educating for 'Practice Development' and 'Social Innovation'

Insights into the consecutive Master Programme
run by the UAS Northwestern Switzerland:

MA Social Work with emphasis on Social Innovation

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- **Context**

- Switzerland: On a large scale, social work education has been at academic level since 1998 ⇒ integration of the schools of social work into the then newly established Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS)
- Switzerland was among the first to sign the Bologna declaration (1999)
- 2005: Bachelor programmes in Social Work
180 ECTS Credits
generalist
preparing students for direct practice
- 2008: Consecutive Master programmes in Social Work
90 ECTS Credits
generalist
with a specific emphasis
 - ☛ School of Social Work UAS Northwestern Switzerland:
emphasis on **Social Innovation**
 - ☛ closely tied to the overarching research focus of the school

- **Social Innovation**

Social Innovation

Innovation *in* Social Work

‘Innovation’ refers to

- new types of methods, courses of action, procedures, instruments, offers, programmes, services, or organisations
- designed and developed drawing on new knowledge or new combinations of knowledge
- in a participatory/collaborative process
- aligned with attaining the central social work values and creating added value for service users

(see, for example, Parpan-Blaser/Hüttemann 2010; Parpan-Blaser 2011)

Social Innovation (continued)

- Innovations are 'disruptive' and 'transformative'. However, these aspects are relative to time, place and field.
- Process is 'risky'. The character of the result is not known at the begin, 'usefulness' and 'success' of the result are not certain.

(see, for example, Rothman/Erlich/Theresa 1979; Maelicke 2005; Brown 2010)

Triggers for Innovation in Social Work

- ineffective social work offers and unmet needs of communities, service users, target groups
- new or shifting social problems
- new or shifting needs of communities, service users, target groups
- inputs from further education, team discussion about 'cases', diverging practices, inter-institutional exchange, systematic evaluations
- new staff
- changes in the legal / regulatory framework / funding
- public discourses, media attention

(Parpan-Blaser/Hüttemann 2010)

- **Key competences and curricular elements**

Competences

- The 'double' profile of the programme
 - competences to initiate, lead and implement processes of further development and innovation in social work
 - scientific and research skills
(supporting social innovation and providing access to the 3rd cycle/doctoral programmes)
- Drawing on the Dublin and Lisbon descriptors and the NQF, the full competence profile coins 8 knowledge domains, professional skills, social competences, self-competences

Core competences

- Regarding the competence to further develop or innovate social work practice, three competences are core
 - competence to **evaluate** social work practice
 - competence to **design and develop** new methods, courses of action, procedures, instruments, offers, programmes, services, or organisations drawing on scientific knowledge and other forms of knowledge
 - competence to **implement** such processes and their outputs

Modules

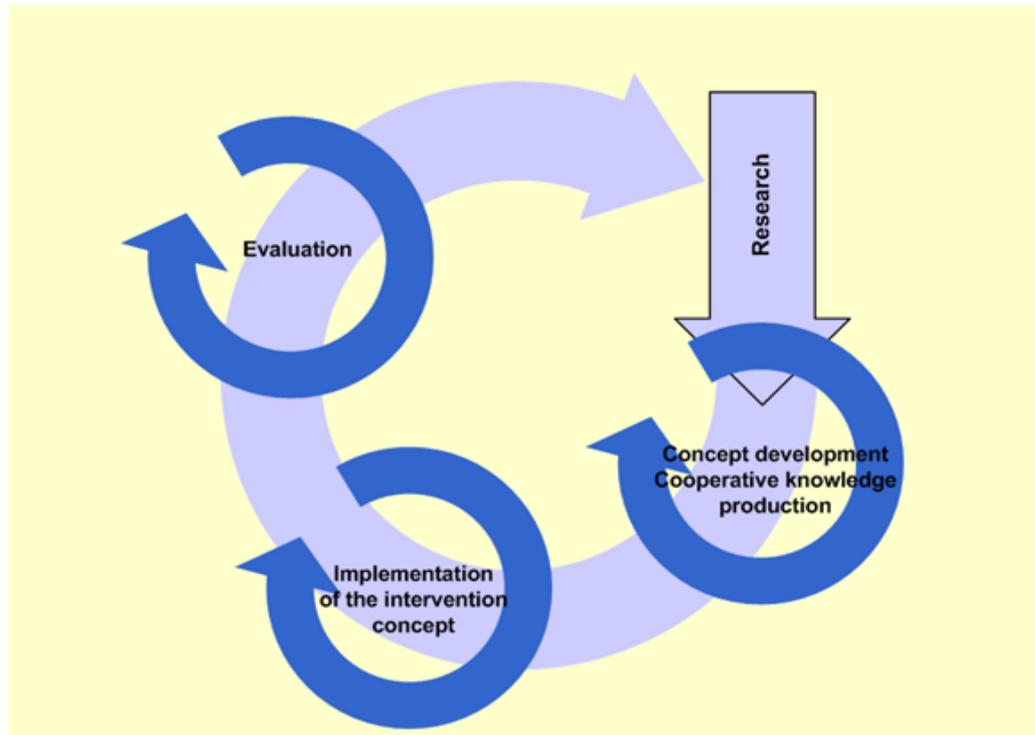
01	Social change, 3 ECTS
02	International Social Work and Social Policy, 3 ECTS
03	Philosophy of science and empirical reserach in Social Work, 3 ECTS
04.1	Quantitative research methods, 3 ECTS
04.2	Qualitative research methods, 3 ECTS
05	Theories of Social Work, contemporary debates, 3 ECTS
06	Planning and leading innovation processes in social services, 9 ECTS
07	Concepts and methods of research informed practice, 9 ECTS
08	Reflection and integration of knowledge (Portfolio), 3 ECTS
09	Reserach workshop, 15 ECTS
10	Master Thesis, 15 ECTS
11a+b	Project field placement, 15 ECTS
S	Summer School
W	Winter School

} 3 ECTS each



Module: Concepts and methods of research informed practice – design and development

- Intervention research (Rothman/Thomas 1994; Fraser et al. 2009)
- Intervention mapping (i.e. Peters 2015)
- The tree transformative steps (Staub-Bernasconi)
- Research-based Intervention development (Gredig/Sommerfeld 2008; Gredig 2011)



(Gredig 2011)

Module 'field placement': Implementing innovation processes in service organisations

- Students implement a part of a Practice-Optimization-Cycle
 - Evaluation of courses of action, procedures, instruments, offers, programmes, and formulation of clues for design and development
- Design and development of courses of action, procedures, instruments, offers, programmes ...
- In the framework of a mandate from a service organisation
- Supervised from a university staff with experience of evaluation and design & development processes
- Output: an article on the content of the innovation; a paper including a reflection on the process and the design & development model used

(examples for articles published in Büschi/Roth 2013, 2015)

- **Labour market integration of graduates**

Feedback from graduates

Results from our survey of graduates (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014)
(N=58)

- High levels of employment (56 employed, 2 without employment)
- High levels of satisfaction with their position (M=7.68; 1-10)
- High fit of competences and job requirements (M=7.15; 1-10)

Challenges

- 'Social Innovation'
 - no a familiar term, not clear cut, sometime misleading, contested (technocratic)
- 'Risky' teaching
 - Social Innovation and related processes are still evolving, shifting, under investigation; experiences are still limited regarding implementation and teaching the concepts
- Work load
 - intensive, time consuming, demanding program
- Work in groups
 - assignments, evaluation, marking
- Drop outs

References

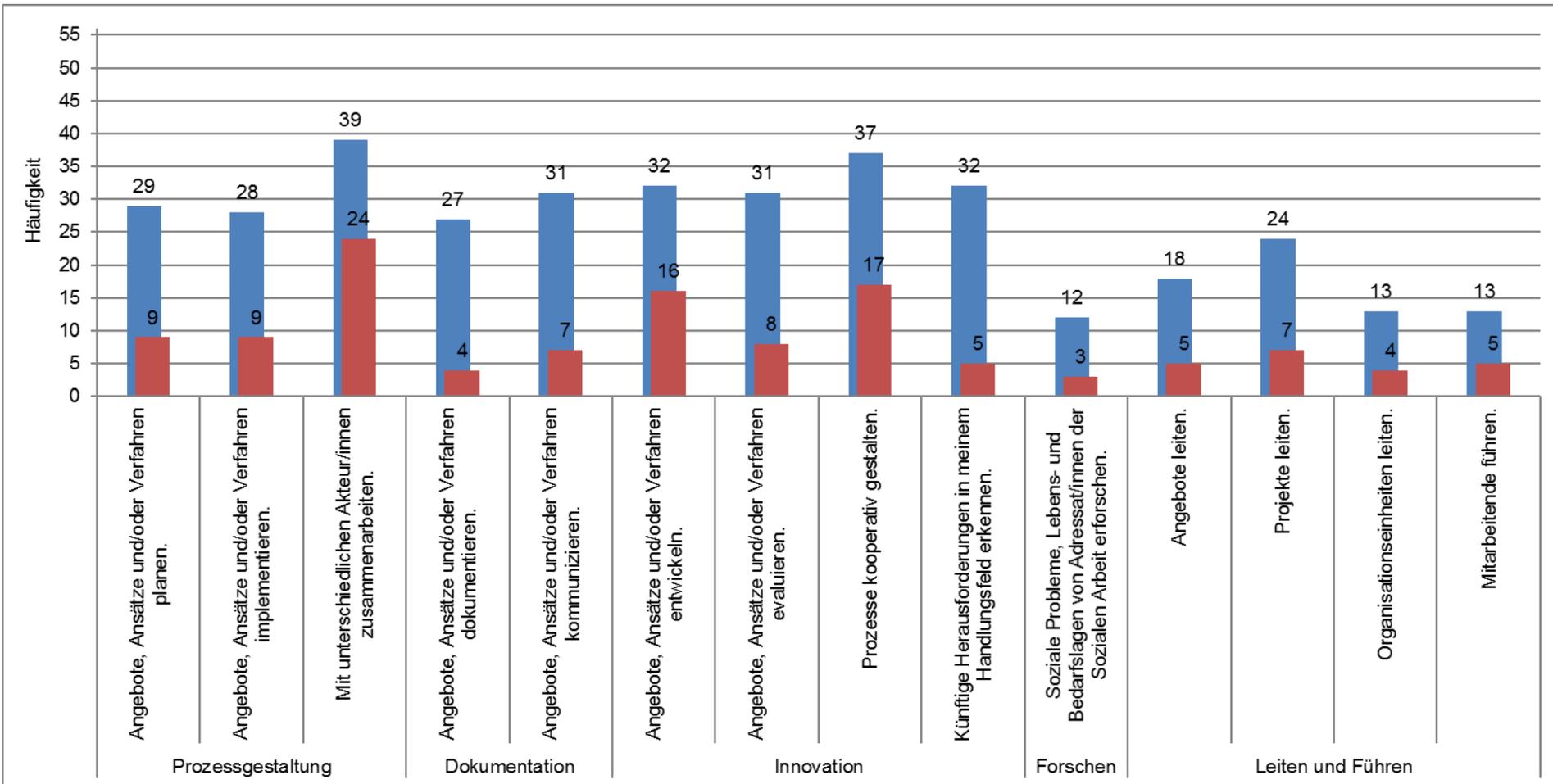
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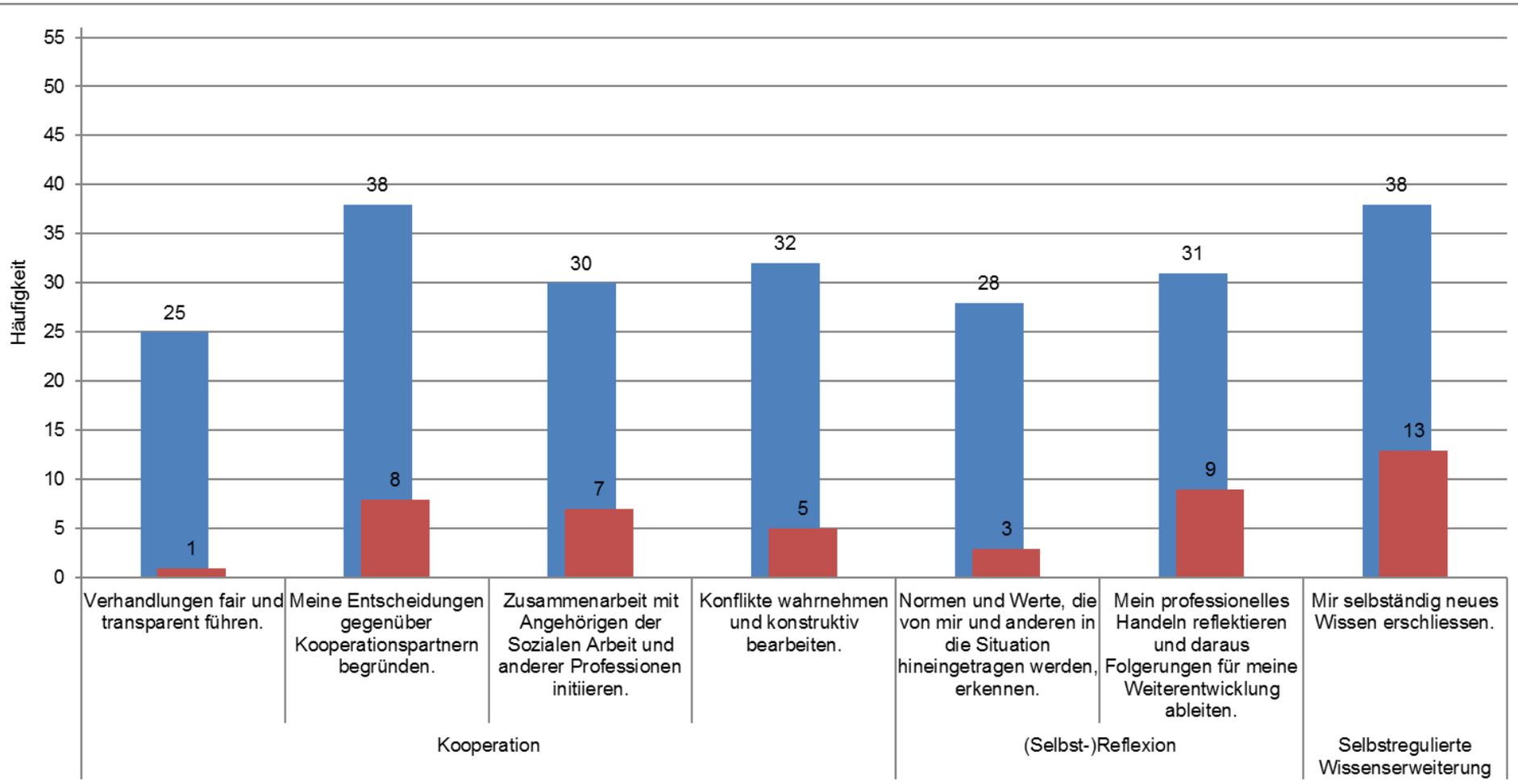
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Store

Feedback regarding the job requirements in terms of competences (1) (German)



Feedback regarding the job requirements in terms of competences (2) (German)



Technical information

- study modalities:
 - Full time: 3 semesters
 - Part time: 4–8 semesters
- Start in fall (September) and spring (February) possible
- Admission:
 - Bachelor degree in Social Work, overall mark 5 (C)
 - Bachelor or Master degree in a related social science discipline, 1550 hours of work in a field of social work, admission exam
- Student cohorts
 - 30–35 entering students per academic year
- April 2017: 107 students enrolled; 75% female; aged 25-53