

Proposal number:	520118-EM-1-2011-1-ES-ERA MUNDUS-EMMC
Proposal title:	GEMMA: Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies
Coordinator:	Prof. / Dr Adelina Sánchez Espinosa
Applicant organisation:	Universidad de Granada

Award Criteria
A.1 Academic quality - Course content (30 % of the max. score)
<p>This long-time running Erasmus Mundus European Master Program called "GEMMA: Master's Degree in Women's and Gender Studies" coordinated by the university of Granada has been established as such in 2007 and has gained an excellent reputation since that time. It is one of the most well-known interdisciplinary and international MA programs in the area of Gender Studies, fills a gap and offers unique research and learning possibilities. The objectives of this course are very well presented; all links to other networks are given. The needs analysis has been carefully prepared. External studies underline the importance of this program.</p> <p>The proposal outlines the joint European Master programme GEMMA in Women and Gender Studies against the background of key initiatives and forums in Europe such as the explicit EU gender mainstreaming agenda and corresponding European actions for humanities and social sciences in Europe, e.g., Socrates Thematic Networks, European Gender research conferences and an EM with an action 3 component in the previous EM programme generation. The expertise and the involvement at various and always key levels in the field show the long standing experience and collaboration this Consortium has been gaining over the last 15 years. The institutions participating have an excellent reputation in the field and the Master has been considered by the evaluating body of the previous EM programme.</p> <p>The added value is clearly illustrated in that GEMMA brings together approaches to feminism from various European perspectives by the most prestigious universities in the field of gender studies. Multilinguism and a new network of European scholars that have constructed new modules in the beginning of the GEMMA also further enhance the course programme by including third country parties. The Consortium is extremely well connected to all relevant areas of teaching and research in this field and involved in a great variety of activities. Different reports are quoted to stress the singularity of this program. GEMMA is a project which continuously is updated to meet actual needs.</p> <p>Structure, content and mobility phases are explained in a very convincing way. Internships are included in the program; the employability factor plays an important role. Students have the possibility to spend time in third countries according to their research interests. Mobility phases are clearly structured and flexible. A stay at two universities in the same country is excluded, and</p>

summer schools are also available. Annexes are added to demonstrate mobility paths.

This shows that the geographical coverage is impressive and the course structure is made very clear and transparent with core components at each home university followed by specializations in the 2nd and 3rd semester and the Master thesis in the 4th semester. The Consortium offers a total of 54 mobility paths with 3 official languages of instruction.

The target group could have been more clearly defined (which level and which background).

Internships as elective courses are mentioned with socio-economic partners but not mandatory. The learning outcomes are classified under the heading knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, practical skills and transferable skills. Learning outcomes are well explained and follow closely the Tuning methodology. All necessary information is given. Special annexes are added. Students can find jobs in the labour market or in the academic sector. Results from an alumni survey are given. A great variety of job possibilities is enumerated. This program presents a good mixture of academic and job-related content.

Supporting evidence from surveys with regard to employability and future employment possibilities complements the added value of the EM Master both in the field of higher education and on the labour market.

This is an excellent Consortium with a wide range of competent and experienced partners. The Consortium of GEMMA is composed of 8 full partner universities that are all highly ranked in the sector of Gender Studies. Additionally, partners 9 to 26 act as associate partners. They are third country universities, institutes, companies, and publishers that contribute to the program. The overall coordination work is done by Granada. The role of the partners is described in a very detailed manner. Prestigious visiting scholars and colleagues are invited to participate. The program is funded by Action 3 GEMMAN World.

The interaction of GEMMA with various professional sectors has been reinforced in the past, filling the gap between academia and the labour market. Several companies, institutes, public administration offices are listed which, a.o., provide internships, research projects, ICT support, on different levels. A huge network has been created. A good element is the classification of the support role of the socio-economic world on various levels in the EM degree by distinguishing between financial support, involvement in the course evaluation, internship providers, and ICT support.

#### A.2 Course integration (25% of the max. score)

GEMMA is specially conceived as an Erasmus Mundus Master Course and is prepared in common by all partners of the first phase. All were members of another network, ATHENA Thematic Network, and gained considerable experience together in this thematic network where they worked on a common curriculum. Therefore, GEMMA can be defined as a tailor made course for this purpose. Its core modules and the broad choice of optional courses are chosen together. Especially careful joint supervision is carried out in relation to the MA thesis.

The course is truly integrated in that the students receive the same basic education at all home institutions regardless of their specialization and ensuing mobility track.

GEMMA is recognized in all participating countries. So far, double degrees are awarded (in relation to the two universities visited by the students), a joint degree is in preparation. Different local recognition procedures are explained in detail. A list of the titles of the diplomas/degrees that are awarded is included.

There is joint supervision for the Master thesis with a main supervisor from one institution and a support supervisor from another institution. The defence of the Master thesis is organized according to the local rules and regulations of the university of thesis submission. It is an added value that the thesis can be written in any of the three languages of instruction. The Consortium has developed a specific document with the Consortium regulations for the defence of the theses which are published on the Consortium's website. A central, virtual and very effective management tool in the admission procedure is the generation through an online system unique registration number which allows students to check the status of their application on the GEMMA's website.

Joint examination methods and mechanisms are in place for many years. ECTS has been in effective use in all places; a special grading and conversion table has been designed and is used. Common rules concerning assessment and supervision of theses have been discussed and established. Some more details concerning the methodology of course assessment should have been included. The Consortium has defined common selection criteria for the recruitment of the student to ensure overall coherence as each partner selects the students in their respective institutions, plus a second evaluator from the institution in which the student would like to carry out their studies as well.

The Consortium has also designed its own grade conversion table to make the different grading systems transparent to everyone involved based on the students relative performance in their peer group.

Based on the existing EU/UN Diploma Supplement model the Consortium has created a new model that includes information such as the validity period of the accreditation (which however is not relevant in all countries) and information on the level of the Bologna cycles.

A good point is also the elaboration of common rules and regulations with regards to the thesis and its submission.

Students' participation costs have been calculated in a fair manner (a total of 4000 Euro for EU-students, a total of 8000 Euro for non-European students). Granada is in charge of the whole process. The overhead money will be used to finance two annual meetings of the Consortium. The Consortium offers grants to students who do not benefit from EM grants. It is positive that a GEMMA fund has been established to meet financial needs and to improve the overall course.

Consortium grants are said to be granted to non-EM scholarship holders but nothing is said about reducing tuition costs for EM students of both categories so that they correspond exactly to the respective amount of the EM scholarship (category A/category B). It is certainly an element of good practice that the distribution of tuition fees between the partners is directly related to the number of students registered at each university and that fees are paid by all students to the Consortium (via the institution the student is registered at who then transfers the amount on to the coordinating institution).

#### A.3 Course management, visibility and sustainability measures (20 % of the max. score)

The organization of cooperation mechanisms is fully explained. Granada and its partners share the responsibilities. Different tasks are explained in detail. Several bodies have been created (scientific coordinator, technical coordinator, Erasmus Mundus unit in Granada, local coordination offices at partner universities, governing body). It is positive to stress that the Spanish government supports this course by financing administrative staff in Granada. Each associate partner provides their own structures. The composition of the above mentioned bodies is related in detail. The content of the Consortium Agreement is explained (agreement can be found in the annexes). The management

tools are described (a SWOT analysis is under preparation). Students are involved on all levels and are responsible for a variety of extra-curricular activities, too.

It is a good idea to appoint an administrative officer for the overall running of the programme at the coordinating institution along with an Erasmus Mundus Unit at the International Relations Office. Besides the scientific coordinators at partner institutions, there is a Technical Coordinator that provides expertise and support for managing this complex partnership of 8 full and 7 associated partners. Additional staff that are funded from other sources at the coordinating institution, e.g., via women studies or postgraduate office, also supports the overall management at Granada. The governing body is a Steering Committee made up of eight scientific coordinators and chaired by the scientific coordinator of Granada; associated members are the contact persons.

The Consortium Agreement is now being updated and adapted for the inclusion and commitment of new members which will be the actual challenge for the future. Here it would have been good to include more information of how this commitment, especially with the new members, will be enhanced.

The financial contribution of the coordinating institution and the partner institutions are described in detail. It is a very cost intensive program due to the fact that many courses and many activities are offered in the different locations. Oviedo and Granada are co-financed by public sources; a general estimate of the costs incurred, is included. The aim of the Consortium is to gain financial independence. Each partner looks for complementary funding; a list has been attached.

Some co-financing is provided by other postgraduate programs and external funding and as GEMA is also integrated into the Department of Gender Studies there are good chances to continue beyond the actual EU funding period.

A clear development and sustainability plan has been established. Grants and special funding to run the program have been acquired. The Consortium plans to professionalize even more the given structures to assure the continuity of this course after the end of the funding phase. Mechanisms are clearly explained.

Since the promotion is very good and thanks to the embedding into networks, this is a plausible way of approaching the sustainability objectives. It is hoped in the long run to decrease the current relatively high running costs of the programme by an increasing intake of students.

External sources are mentioned several times but whether this will actually work out cannot, understandably, be assessed at this stage.

Course promotion measures and marketing strategies have been very well tested during the past four years and improved. Strategic partners like publishing houses have been added as associate partners. All relevant institutions (e.g., events, consortia) are aware of the existence of this course and help to promote the program.

Thus, there is a good website in place which is known in relevant gender and feminist circles for the past four years. There is an impressive variety of marketing tools GEMMA has been using to be attractive not only for third country but also for EU students.

#### A.4 Students' services and facilities (15% of the max. score)

GEMMA uses a special website to distribute information to all interested potential students. Details are given. Personnel and alumni are involved in this process. Special offices are working on this issue

at each partner university.

Besides the special website which contains all necessary information also on course content both for applications and students, access to the Moodle platform to exchange information is especially helpful for preparing the second mobility phase/third semester by the partner institution.

Students are asked to sign a well elaborated Student Agreement in which all rights and obligations are defined. A model is added to this application. The Learning Agreement contains the main aspects with a clear focus on administrative and scholarship related issues.

Services are provided to incoming students via the GEMMA central office and the de-centralised offices plus the respective international offices. A special handbook has been created to meet the needs of the students. Various other services are mentioned which have been designed for GEMMA students. The insurance scheme is fully explained.

There is no special support for the EM students in the overall international student welcome and mentoring systems at each partner institution, but each women centre has international staff or a professor in charge of international affairs which is definitely a strength. The overall packages are well illustrated and complementary. Regarding the language support and offers, the institutions vary considerably in terms of free courses and support and there are no reduced rates for EM students at, e.g., the University of Hull. A good element are the English conversation programs run by Rutgers University with one-to-one conversation partners from the US facilitated through a programme with a commitment of one hour per week at least. However, there is no common approach and a language tutor at each partner institution would be a useful element of guidance and development here.

The language policy of the Consortium is described. Working languages are English, Spanish, and Italian in which communication is made. Languages of instruction are also those of the local partners. It is explained in detail how language support is given in each institution. Students are encouraged to learn more languages and will have the possibility to attend classes mainly for free. Facilities are excellent. Different possibilities of learning languages are listed and explained in detail.

Networking issues are described in a quite exhaustive manner. A creative network of Euroculture students and alumni has been established on different levels of participation (e.g., Facebook, participation in meetings.). A real community has been created and is taken care of. Facilitating contact between new and old students at the graduation ceremony is also a very good idea.

A.5 Quality assurance and evaluation (10 % of the max. score)

A very elaborated and efficient system of internal evaluation procedure is in use and integrated at the local level. Very many details are given and well explained. Results from previous evaluations are indicated which helped to improve the program. Reports are regularly made. Local evaluation procedures are described, too.

As for the external evaluation, in the first phase of the EM programme, GEMMA has been selected to be evaluated by the EACEA via Ecotec and the positive outcomes are annexed to this proposal, summarizing all main aspects in a SWOT report. Thus, the Steering Committee along with two external experts will follow the ECOTEC methodology for the future.

The external quality assurance system which is described in detail on national and international levels is based on the Tuning methodology. Accreditation procedures on the national level are mentioned and pointed out. External evaluators are involved; a special GEMMA SWOT report is in

preparation which will help to prepare the next phase of this program. .

Other comments on the proposal

In the field of Women's Studies and Gender Studies in a European and global perspective GEMMA can be seen as one of the most well-known and successful Erasmus Mundus Master Courses and can be considered as a pilot project and model.

The proposal is very well presented and elaborated with an impressive number of old and new partners who build on a long standing reputation as Master in Gender Studies already in the first phase of the EM programme. An element of good practice is the integration of the Master in a vast network of activities and relevant bodies and institutions and it is convincing that this is currently the Master at European level in Gender and Women Studies par excellence, as has been pointed out by the ECOTEC studies after the first phase.

The challenge now will be to integrate the new partners and ensure an overall joint and coherent approach. The division of work with mechanisms and support points to the fact that the coordinating institution is apt and capable with appropriate funds to ensure the smooth running of the programme. Due to the relatively high operating programme costs there will be a need for a solid sustainability plan in the future, but due to the enormous marketing and « brand awareness » of this Master degree programme in the field the Consortium stands a good chance of securing co-financing in the future.