

Educational Goal

Master Seminar “Convincing Political Stakeholders“

Indispensable part of Stakeholder-Theory at the Institute of Marketing of the LMU

Dr Klemens Joos has been a lecturer at the Faculty of Business Administration at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich (LMU) since 2013, where he received his doctorate as Dr oec publ in 1998. Every year, in the block seminar “Convincing Political Stakeholders” in Brussels, he provides Master students with in-depth insights into the complex decision-making processes of the European Union (EU) as well as into the practice of successful representation of interests especially regarding tension between the EU institutions: European Parliament, Council of the European Union and European Commission.

The theoretical basis of the block seminar is the standard work published by Dr Joos in 2015 “Convincing Political Stakeholders: Successful lobbying through process competence in the complex decision-making system of the European Union”. For successful problem solving in a complex system, which the EU with its 27 Member States and its dynamic multi-level system undoubtedly is, a close interlocking of content and process competence is required. Because the best substantive arguments will not lead to success if they do not reach the right decision-makers in the right form at the right moment. Only then can they have a convincing effect.

The core idea is that a successful representation of interests is only possible if the change in perspective from the interests of the person concerned to that of the common good is successful (perspective change competence). Only in such cases, it can be assumed with sufficient certainty that decision-makers at all levels of the complex EU decision-making process are convinced. Therefore, successful political representation of interests must become a central point in the training of economists.

In the past, the homo economicus, who presupposes complete transparency of information, pursuit of profit maximization, and rational behavior, stood in the focus of teaching in economics. In recent years, however, behavioral economics, which strongly dissociates itself from the homo economicus, has in particular gained in importance.

The same applies to the model of the Stakeholder-Theory. At the 2019 “Business Roundtable“, 181 global top managers declared that the interests of shareholders (shareholder value) should no longer be the sole purpose of their companies, but the promotion of “all stakeholders, whose long-term interests are inseparable“. The Stakeholder-Approach was also addressed as a key issue at the World Economic Forum in Davos in early 2020. If now even in the USA - the motherland of profit-maximizing thinking - a new corporate philosophy focuses on all stakeholders, in the medium term this approach will also become established in teaching.

This paradigm shift was recognized early on by Professor Meyer at the Faculty of Business Administration at the LMU and has been implemented in the curriculum since 2004. Dr Joos' early focus on stakeholders¹ – i.e. those involved in a process in the broad sense – is proving to be both far-sighted and relevant. His procedural approach was therefore included as a necessary addition to the teaching of Stakeholder-Theory at LMU's Institute of Marketing in 2013. Because without knowledge of political decision-making processes and the European legal framework, it is – at the latest since the Treaty of Lisbon has entered into force in 2009 – hardly possible to manage a company. One only needs to look at the heavily regulated chemical and pharmaceutical sectors.

Dr Joos is convinced that it is indispensable to include the relevant decision-makers of legislative and executive branches as frame-setting secondary stakeholders for laws, regulations etc. in research and teaching on a long-term basis. This will lead to a stronger focus on the importance of process competence in intermediary systems. The LMU's Institute of Marketing is doing important pioneering work in this area with its Master Seminar “Convincing Political Stakeholders“.

¹⁾ Joos, K. (1998) *Interessenvertretung deutscher Unternehmen bei den Institutionen der Europäischen Union. Mit Beispielen aus der Versicherungs-, Energie- und Verkehrssicherheitsbranche*, Berlin (pp. 85-87)