

## Mission Statement of The European Graduate School (EGS)

*“According to Epicurus, Gods exist, but they are in the interspace of the world. I think this is how the European Graduate School functions: It is integrated into academic machinery, but a place apart. Not part of the usual machinery - and I think that this position is excellent.”*

Slavoj Zizek, Professor of Philosophy and Psychoanalysis, European Graduate School, Saas-Fee

The **European Graduate School EGS** is an accredited private but non-profit University with two divisions:

***Arts, Health and Society (AHS)***

and

***Media and Communication (MC)***.

**The European Graduate School EGS**, established in 1994 and since 2007 organized as a Swiss foundation, offers in its campus in Saas-Fee – high up in the Swiss alps – a uniquely dynamic academic setting that allows a creative encounter with the foremost representatives and thinkers in Expressive Arts (Coaching, Consulting, Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding, Education, and Therapy) and in Media and Communication (Architecture, Art, Contemporary Philosophy, Cultural Studies, Film, Literary Theory, Literature, Media Studies, Performance Art, Photography, and Video). The interdisciplinary and comprehensive programs are distinguished by the cordial interaction of eminent faculty members with students who are the best of their generation.

**The Arts, Health and Society Division** offers graduate and postgraduate degrees and certificates: Master of Expressive Arts Therapy, Master of Expressive Arts Coaching and Consulting, Master of Expressive Arts in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding, Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) and Doctorate (PhD) in Expressive Arts.

**The Media and Communication Division** offers graduate and postgraduate degrees in the Master in Media and Communication and PhD in Media and Communication programs. Both programs facilitate creative breakthroughs and theoretical paradigm shifts, and bring together its master and doctoral students with the visionaries and philosophers of the media world.

**The Application and Admission process** at the European Graduate School EGS is stringent and personal. We consider only fiercely independent and mature students who work well within an intensive residency program located in Saas-Fee, Switzerland. Our students choose their own emphasis and area of concentration when they select their Master Thesis and Dissertation projects. Our students, a true international mix, are outstanding graduates as well as actors, architects, artists, authors, college instructors, computer programmers, critics, directors, editors, filmmakers, graphic designers, journalists, musicians, NGO activists and managers, philosophers, photographers, psychologists, social workers, teachers, theatre directors, dancers, web designers, and writers. The language of instruction is English, though theses can, in principle, also be written in French or German.

**Financial Aid** is available for students of high promise from various sources, including US Federal Student Loans for students residing in the USA.

## Mission Statement Media and Communication Division

The Media and Communication Division of the EGS pursues a comprehensive and fundamental approach to communication studies by taking its orientation from Media Philosophy, which emphasizes the human condition and life technologies. Under the rubric “media,” it integrates emphatically all art forms, from poetry to cinema, from music to experimental architecture, from writing to the digital media. Its program of instruction introduces students to cutting-edge thought that is always global in perspective. Celebrated faculty from American and European Universities and art institutions are joined by renowned filmmakers, artists, writers, musicians and new media activists in the aim of stimulating learning and creative encounters at the very highest levels.

The Division offers Masters and Doctoral degrees in Media and Communication and a Doctorate in Digital Design. We understand both “media” and “communication” in a very broad sense that renders possible cross-disciplinary approaches to the arts, to socio-cultural phenomena and to “digital humanities”. Students benefit from extensive exposure to philosophical and theoretical models informing contemporary critical thought in the arts, humanities, and social sciences, and enjoy the privilege of working with the thinkers who are actively defining these approaches. In the context of the Media and Communications Division, theory becomes a form of practice and critical thought joins with the most advanced creative forms of our time. Vital exchanges in an open atmosphere with leading thinkers make the seminars of the Media and Communications Division a unique experience valued by students and faculty alike.

Our students come from a wide range of professional fields; they include journalists, college instructors, actors, programmers, producers, filmmakers, musicians, architects, photographers, social workers, and designers. The list can be broadened, but the common denominator is intellectual curiosity and a commitment to engagement with modern thought. While some students pursue an academic track, many use an EGS degree to complement their work in other fields. The broad range of forms of expertise brought to EGS seminars by students, and the rich mix of nationalities, creates a unique context of study. Leading theorists address accomplished students who are nonetheless non-specialists and thus undertake a form of “public” presentation that is accessible and still at the highest level. EGS students are consistently inspired by their experience in intense summer sessions and enjoy the benefits of a constantly growing international community. The program design is ideal for individuals who seek to develop their intellectual profile while pursuing other careers, or for students seeking an advanced degree for academic purposes. EGS sessions have the benefit of being condensed, but still offer normal levels of instruction within the EU framework. The degree of instruction is in fact superior to that found in the United Kingdom, for example.

## Mission Statement Arts, Health and Society Division

The field of **Expressive Arts** at the Arts, Health and Society Division at EGS has broadened from an initial therapeutic focus to a more general concern with arts-based processes of change in diverse areas - from therapy to education, to coaching and consulting, and to conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Our programs are thoroughly interdisciplinary, drawing on all artistic modalities and theoretical perspectives, united by a concern for the effectiveness of the arts in bringing about change. We emphasize a phenomenological standpoint, allowing arts processes to unfold their own meaning through careful attention. Our foundation lies in *poiesis*, the capacity of human beings to respond to what is given to them and to shape their world and themselves. Above all, we aim to develop a sense of aesthetic responsibility in our students, the capacity to intervene in problematic situations in order to bring about solutions that lead to well-being. Our programs seek to restore confidence in *poiesis*. Art-making stems from the human capacity to shape both self and world. Training and research at the Arts, Health and Society Division of the

European Graduate School are based on that capacity and encourage students to take responsibility for shaping their development as learners in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.

Our faculty includes founders of the field of Expressive Arts with extensive experience on both theoretical and practical levels. Our programs are arts-based and take place within a community of adult learners from around the globe. Therapists, educators, coaches, consultants and those engaged in social change work together in a participatory way to develop their leadership skills and the confidence that will enable them to present their work effectively. We offer students the opportunity to take part in the creative development of this new and exciting field.

The Expressive Arts in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding (EXA-CT), one of the Master Programs, is a three year Master-program concentrating on the use of creative methods through the Arts to address conflicts within teams, communities and across cultures. The EXA-CT program provides students with frameworks for merging the Arts with conflict analysis interventions, trauma awareness and healing, humanitarian responses, and research. In short, EXA-CT students will learn ways to use the Arts for peace and co-existence. Distinguished faculty in the fields of the Expressive Arts and Conflict Transformation will provide instruction during three Summer School sessions along with support and supervision of an internship, thesis and community of practice throughout the year. Professional artists, peace workers, art therapists, mediators, educators, coaches and humanitarian workers are pursuing the program.

The Expressive Arts Therapy Master is an intermodal field combining the study of health, illness, resilience, and the Arts. Through the process of Art-making, an Expressive Arts therapist discovers how their clients can live in a better way, how the Arts facilitate change, personal growth and transformation. Expressive Arts Therapy has, as its foundation, the practice of the Arts and our response to this innate quality. This creative process supports us to respond and to shape our world in a way that is life-giving and healing. The intrinsic human capacity to create is at the centre of the therapeutic work and thus the creative urge becomes stronger than illness, disease or psychic disorder, empowering the client to come in touch with their inner strengths and gain insight on how these resources can impact and transform the larger disharmony.

The use of the Arts in Intermodal Decentering IDEC® is especially well suited to professional situations of Coaching and Consulting and applied for the Master in Coaching and Consulting. The Artwork itself is central to how the Coaching unfolds to find solutions, gain insight, widen perspectives and learn. This is called having an "art-analogue" attitude. With this expression we describe a basic attitude where the evolving (Art) process itself is leading the next step. In this attitude both, coach and client, serve the Art process in such a way that anything happening is taken as a guidance and opportunity and not as a failure or mistake. In addition, the coach needs professional conversation skills and a competence to install a holding and trustworthy professional relationship.

### **The educational mandate of the EGS**

The EGS endeavours to be a leading institution in graduate and post-graduate cross-disciplinary training. Proceeding from sound theoretical and philosophical bases, it pursues instruction that prepares students for a rich professional life in their respective fields. In its AHS Division, it uses innovative teaching techniques to explore arts-based processes of change (AHS), while the MC Division undertakes interactive seminar meetings that help students develop a global and cross-disciplinary perspective on the core questions facing contemporary thought and their meaning for society. The EGS's extensive human and technical resources in digital technology are directed to complementing its intensive hands-on training. The EGS aims to provide the most sophisticated forms of training available through a constantly evolving combination of sustained personal contact and digital communications. It also pursues an active networking strategy with other universities and research institutes in order to maximize opportunities for

its students. It works to preserve the very highest quality in the education it delivers, while remaining at the forefront of recent advances in knowledge.

### ***Purpose and objective of the EGS***

The EGS presents a unique form of research-led teaching in that it employs leaders in its respective fields who deliver instruction to advanced students, many of whom bring professional experience and significant educational background. It admits university and college graduates who have a bachelor's degree or equivalent qualifications for a course of university study leading to a Master's degree, a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies, or a Doctorate. The EGS trains students for professional work in their chosen fields (in accordance with the areas of disciplinary strength represented by its Divisions), but also welcomes students who seek to complement their extant qualifications or pursue new fields of study out of personal interest. By preserving the highest intellectual ambitions, the EGS serves accomplished students who seek a special academic experience and it seeks to serve a very wide range of interested individuals. With its unique form of research-led teaching, it seeks to advance thinking in all the fields it covers in its cross-disciplinary efforts.

### ***Research and teaching at the EGS***

Work at the EGS is informed by the highest ethical standards expected of an academic institution. Research and teaching are also dedicated to excellence in every dimension of their activities; they are entirely shaped by a commitment to remaining at the forefront of contemporary thought. The institution also strives to serve its student's professional and personal needs.

Research and Teaching at the EGS are cross disciplinary and constantly make bridges between academic reflection and the practical application of knowledge.

### ***Code of ethics***

The EGS seeks to align itself with ethical principles in its research and teaching and in all its other activities. The basic precept in its view is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations (UN) on December 10, 1948, which also formed the basis for the European Convention on Human Rights dated November 4, 1950. The EGS "strives", as worded in the last sentence of the Preamble to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, "by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms". In keeping with Article 2 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the EGS promotes equal rights and the mutual understanding of cultures and nations in all its work. No discrimination is tolerated at the EGS on the basis of gender, race, nationality, native language, creed or ideology.

### ***Principles of research***

The EGS upholds the basic principles of academic freedom, as predicated on the intellectual authority of its distinguished faculty and their commitment to the institution's code of ethics. Professors choose their research topics and pursue research-led teaching in keeping with their individual research programs. The EGS seeks to further contact among professors leading to joint research projects and exchange (which may be formalized or pursued in individual research projects—publications of the highly productive EGS faculty frequently bear witness to their exchanges with other faculty). Faculty are selected at the EGS on the basis of the pre-eminence of their publications, professional achievements, or creative activity. Their continuing association with the EGS depends upon their ongoing research and/or creative excellence. The high number of accomplished artists participating in the EGS means that the definition of "research" must include artistic forms of expression. Indeed, the EGS encourages experimentation in research forms.

### ***Principles of teaching***

The principle of academic freedom recognized in research also governs teaching. Teachers are bound to abide by the general code of ethics, but are not judged by their political views or commitments. Their manner of teaching is a matter of their own choice and style, though they must demonstrate care for the overall educational mandate of the EGS and the well-being of the students. The EGS seeks to foster a supportive and hospitable teaching space, recognizing that teaching may require many different forms of interaction. Mutual respect and recognition are expected in all teaching contexts.

English is the language of teaching at the EGS. Allowance is made for the fact that English is a foreign language for a number of students. Instructors must also take account of the international and multicultural mix of people in their courses. Inclusion is an overall aim in the institution's teaching endeavours.

### ***Unity of teaching and research***

As frequently noted in this document, teaching at the EGS is research-led. Students are quickly introduced to the most advanced research available in their fields, and encouraged to assimilate advanced research techniques (in forms of questioning and research procedure). This commitment to research-led teaching provides a uniquely high level of instruction, but also proves fruitful for the research programs of the individual professors.

### ***The student body***

The EGS has the following expectations of its students:

- an interest in learning processes where the focus is on practical application, research-based learning and creative ways of acquiring knowledge;
- a willingness to learn how to combine what they learn at the EGS with the experience they acquired in their former profession in order that they can combine this organic mixture professionally in the new academic career for which they are aiming;
- a readiness to take personal responsibility for planning and organizing their chosen study program in close liaison with the lecturers.

### ***The teaching staff***

The staff selected to teach at the EGS are world-renowned intellectuals, creative artists and writers with proven track-records in teaching at other universities. A high percentage of them hold the title "professor" in their respective institutions, though the EGS also seeks to bring younger, promising faculty into its ranks. These faculty must nonetheless have demonstrated special levels of excellence in other institutions or contexts.

The teaching staff share a commitment to research-based learning and seek to promote in their students an in-depth, questioning approach to their respective fields. Teachers and learners work closely together and form a cross-institutional learning network. The strength of the collaborative spirit at EGS is manifested by initiatives in team-teaching, which are encouraged.

***Quality standards***

The EGS reviews its study programs and research projects according to a set of academic and ethical criteria equivalent to the international, US and Bologna, quality standards for universities. Some of these criteria are set out in this Mission Statement and some are covered in the “EGS Quality Review Policy”.

The EGS guarantees university-level standards of quality in all its academic activities. It does not stand still on reaching certain quality objectives but is constantly working in innovative ways to develop its quality standards. It makes constant use of the findings of research into university quality standards. It applies internal and external evaluation processes to assess its working practices and outcomes. The EGS seeks to deploy internal and external evaluation in due proportion to one another.