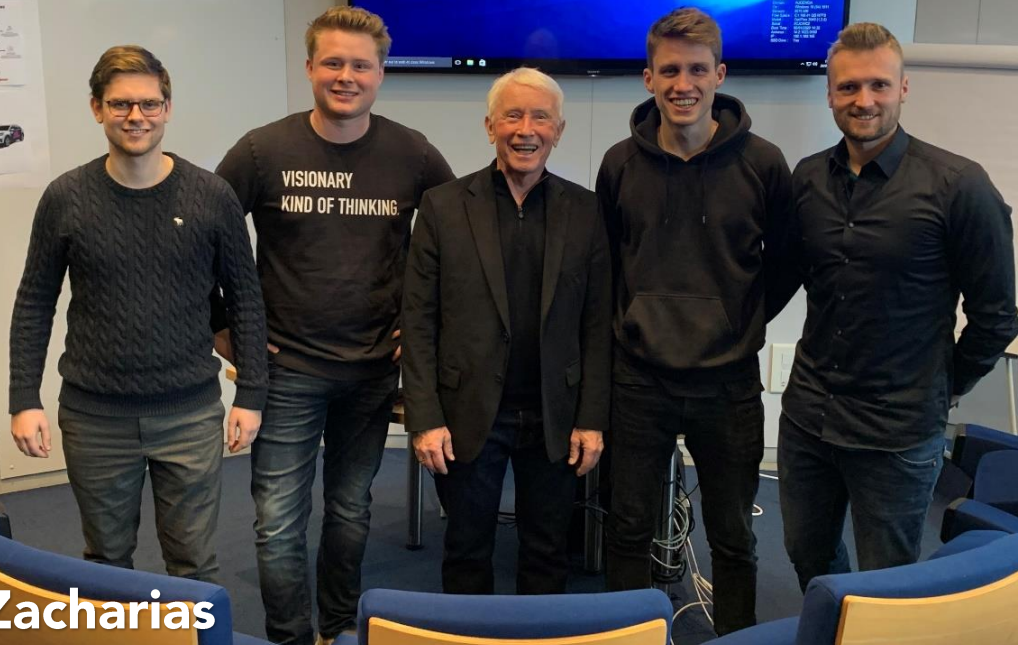
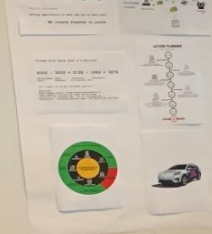


FICAR



Léon Zacharias

University of St. Gallen, Switzerland
Winter programme 2020

Léon Zacharias

University of St. Gallen, Winter 2020

How did you hear about the Winter programme? Why did you choose to apply?

During my exchange year at Stellenbosch University, South Africa, I was looking for another opportunity to learn about new cultures and interesting topics at another university other than my home university. After a bit of research I found out that Audencia Business School in Nantes, France, was offering a Winter programme in January. Luckily, it fitted between my exams at my home university and, after a brief assessment, I got approved!

What is your major at home? What did you think about the level of classes/way of teaching?

My major at home is Business Administration. It's a major which is less theoretical but more practical and, I think, it is important for the business life. The University of St. Gallen is quite famous for its Master studies and its connections to the global economy. Audencia Business School is the same kind of school in France, that's why I chose this school.

Did your university recognize the credits earned during the programme?

Luckily, my university credited the course *Leadership and Organizational Change* with 4 ECTS. Nevertheless, it was not easy to get the credits as Audencia is not an official partner university.

What did you think about the group of students? Were the different academic and cultural backgrounds a challenge?



I enjoyed the work with students from all over the world although it was sometimes a bit complicated to work together. Other cultures from the other side of the world work in a different way and, therefore, the techniques varied a lot. Nevertheless, we learned a lot from each other!

Did this experience help you better define your expectations for the future? Your perception of your studies / way of teaching?

As I said before, working for the first time with highly different cultures was a good and important experience. The way we do certain things like preparing a presentation, discussing or even eating together is completely different. Also the expectations vary depending on the culture. In future group work with intercultural teams, I will handle the progress in a different way to get the most successful outcome. Working with intercultural team members should be a must for each student!

Where did you stay during the programme?

I was in Nantes for only 5 nights, that's why I chose an Airbnb next to Audencia. During the winter break in January, many students rent out their apartments to incoming students for a cheap price.

What is your professional plan?

First of all, I need to finish my studies. In February 2020, I graduated from the University of St. Gallen. After the end of my practical training in Munich in consulting, I will start my Master at the University of St. Gallen. At the same time, I will work at the University for the Institute for Supply Chain Management (ISCM). I'm currently thinking about doing my doctorate afterwards and work in a research department - but we'll see! My long term plan is to go back to the roots: Supply Chain and Logistics branch, where I already did a three year practical training in a German shipping company in Hamburg.

You joined the programme as a fee paying student: can you tell us approximately how much it cost you in total? Do you think it was worth the price?

During the 5 days in Nantes, I learned a lot academically but also personally. Working in intercultural groups is highly important these days. It cost me around 1200€ with flights, accommodation and the study fee. It is a lot of money for a student, but a cheap way to get 4 ECTS.

What did you like the most about the Winter programme?

Meeting people from all around the world was very unique. But also learning more about French culture was a memorable adventure.

Would you like to share with us your best memory from the programme?

My best memory...hmm... I have a lot of good memories! I think the presentations in class and the following group meeting in the city center of Nantes are unforgettable: you have a lot of fun with people from all over the world!



Any advice for students who are thinking about joining the Winter programme at Audencia?

I can highly recommend to all people applying to the Winter programme to be motivated and willing to learn new and interesting things. With a good attitude, everyone can get a good grade. However, people who are only willing to get credits put brakes on the whole group success.

never stop daring