# Supply Chain Games (Seminar)

## Course Description

Buying products and using services is part of our daily life. We purchase books, groceries, and computers and we use telephones, watch movies, and fly on planes. When doing so, we demand high quality and good service at a reasonable price. This is in essence what supply chain management is about: designing, producing, delivering and selling products and services – and doing so profitably. While supply chain management has emerged as one of the most important topics in business over the last decades, its complexities are not always easy to grasp. Especially when supply chains (or better: supply networks) involve many companies, when transparency is poor, data exchange is limited and decisions must be made at different points in time and by different actors, managing those supply chains can become a real challenge in practice.

Theories about how to effectively manage a supply chain are manifold – however, there is a risk that these ideas remain theoretical, as long as decision makers in real companies do not know how to put them into practice. Even more so, also other functional areas of an organization need to understand the dynamics and particularities of a supply chain in order to align their actions. For example, people in Marketing should consider the impact of a promotion and a resulting upswing in demand on the company's supply chain. Similarly, a production manager should for instance be aware of the consequences that large batch sizes have on inventories. All these actors along a supply chain are not necessarily experts in the field. But the good news is: We can teach them! We only need the right approach: The way how adults learn differs in several ways from early childhood learning. Adults tend to question much more what they are doing, motivation plays a different role and experiential learning or "learning by doing" becomes even more important.

In the seminar *Supply Chain Games*, we will pick core concepts of supply chain management and think about how we can teach them in a tangible and memorable way – for example by means of games that let us experience and feel the effects of good or bad supply chain management!

Students will work in groups of 3-5 on designing a game (or a similar teaching concept beyond the classical classroom approach) that is suited to teach a selected supply chain topic to practitioners (and students) interested in the field. For a successful completion of the seminar, students are required to invent and document (~10 pages) such a game/concept, present their idea in class and "test" it live with the other participants of the seminar.

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## Universität zu Köln

Seminar für Supply Chain Management und Management Science

# Course Administration

**Prerequisites**   Successful completion of at least one class in the supply chain area. Registration for the seminar is possible until February 28 – please use the application tool in ILIAS. A list with students that are accepted for the seminar will be posted around mid February on our website.

**Appointments**   The course will start with an introductory session including examples of well-known supply chain games. Afterwards, students can form groups and a specific topic will be assigned to each group. The (preliminary) schedule for the seminar is as follows, the seminar will be held in the McKinsey office, Christophstraße 17, Cologne:

March 24th, 2017, 09:30-15:00h   Introduction to SC Games

March 31th, 2017   *Assignment of topics*

June 23rd, 2017   *Write-up due*

July 14th, 2017, 09:00-17:00h   *Presentation of results in class*

We will schedule 2 additional TelCos during April and May

**Faculty**   Knut Alicke
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**Grading**   The course will count 6 credit points (LP). The overall grades are determined as follows:

Write-up (50 %)
Presentation and execution of game/concept (50 %)

**Language**   The seminar is taught in English. The write-ups and presentations are also in English.

**Literature**   Will be announced in class.

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