Maastricht University

Community-based learning
City deal: Creating Knowledge Project

Students are asked to develop a project plan with the local community in order to improve the quality of life in Randwyck or Mariaberg. Students can collaborate with students from other disciplines (e.g. Public Health students from UM or Built Environment students from Zuyd). Project themes can be: vitality, loneliness, safety, inclusivity and urban nature. The City Deal project stimulates collaboration between higher education institutions and Trajekt, neighbourhood networks, and social and safety teams.

Activity type
E.g., internship, action research project.

Activity duration/study load
Students can be flexible in how they plan their activities over the course of a semester/6-18 ECTS.

Intended learning outcomes
Students working on a City Deal project:
- can engage with the local community during project development or research;
- have developed a deeper understanding of current issues in local society;
- can take perspectives of various (vulnerable) groups through active listening;
- understand how collaborative action with the community leads to more effective interventions or projects;
- can connect and collaborate with students from others disciplines to explore new perspectives, approaches and solutions for complex problems and can reflect on their own role;
- can apply theory into practice;
- can apply a design thinking perspective on projects with continuous process and effect evaluation;
- understand how project funding relates to feasibility and value of a developed project in the eyes of external stakeholders.

GCEd elements
Connecting and collaborating, active listening, complex problem solving, design thinking, interdisciplinary skills, commitment to inclusion, intercultural communication, perspective-taking, self-reflection and critical thinking.

Teacher preparation
Before the start of the project, the supervisor will be informed about the City Deal project and give feedback on the development plan written by a student and approves it.

Student preparation
Attend introduction sessions and workshops. Before the start of the project, the student will write a development plan in which he/she describes his/her personal learning goals.

Flow
In a kick-off week, students are introduced to the project, project themes and previous student engagement. In the second week, interdisciplinary working groups are formed in a "speed dating" session. In the third week,generation of project ideas is facilitated in a design thinking workshop. Students bring three key needs or pains of at least two different groups within the local community. Then tasks are divided and students will have physical or online meetings to develop a project plan. They will present their project plan to the neighbourhood, municipality and other stakeholders. Every year, a project idea will be elected for further development and implementation.

Assessment
Students will be graded based on their final report. The final report consist of the development plan, a description of the different tasks performed, and a reflection on their own performance, based on the learning goals that were formulated before they started.

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