

TEAM PROJECT

Teaching in Advanced Multinational Environments

Project Work

10 ECTS



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

TEAM – TEACHING IN ADVANCED MULTINATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

PROJECT WORK

Introduction

Students in higher education should be trained with the ability to synthesise knowledge from various areas of learning, thus enhancing their knowledge experience by acquiring skills such as collaboration, communication and independent learning. By doing so, students will be better prepared for lifelong learning and for the challenges they will face in their professional life. This training could be used in the higher education setting either by, ideally, eliciting the students to apply the above skills critically and creatively to real life situations, or, as it is the case of the present module, to their own academic background and pathway and their experience as Erasmus students. Project work becomes, then, an opportunity to connect their academic area of studies to the knowledge and skills experienced as Erasmus students, in addition to providing them with the abilities that are developed through the project methodology.

Objectives of the module

The Project Work module aims at two sets of objectives, some relating to the project methodology itself and others to the whole programme for Erasmus students.

Concerning the latter, it is expected that the module will enable students to glue and give an overall sense to the whole programme for Erasmus students at the host institution, to connect the students' area of studies with (one of the) modules and to stimulate students to deepen their knowledge of the areas covered in the programme, in order to give coherence to students' curriculum at home and that of the programme.

Concerning the area of project methodology in itself, the module will develop students' research skills, so as to use relevant information sources, to communicate effectively and to present ideas clearly and coherently, to practice collaborative skills through working in a team to achieve common goals, to learn on their own, reflect on their learning and take appropriate actions to improve it.

Learning Outcomes

The students' learning outcomes are divided in four broad areas: knowledge application, communication, collaboration and independent learning. By working in groups, students will also learn independently through self-reflection and evaluation of their own work processes.

In each of these areas and in a dynamic interplay with all of them students are expected to:

- Enlarge their knowledge of the areas covered by (the) other modules
- Connect their original area of studies with (one of the) modules
- Acquire the ability to make links across different areas of knowledge and to generate, develop and evaluate ideas and information so as to apply these skills to the project task
- Know and use relevant information sources
- Demonstrate improved research techniques
- Acquire the skills to communicate effectively and to present ideas clearly and coherently to specific audience in both the written and oral forms
- Acquire collaborative skills through working in a team to achieve common goals
- Be able to learn on their own, reflect on their learning and take appropriate actions to improve it

On the whole, during the process of planning, development and presentation stages, students will train a set of instrumental competences, such as cognitive abilities, methodological abilities, technological abilities and linguistic abilities; interpersonal competences, such as social interaction and co-operation; systemic competences,

such as combination of understanding, sensibility and knowledge and prior acquisition of instrumental and interpersonal competences required.

Content:and methodology

Given the nature of the module, content cannot be predicted, since it depends on the choice of the students. On the other hand, the methodology to follow provides some clues for the different activities and tasks that the students will be engaged in.

Methodology:

BRIGITTE ECKSTEIN presents four central methods and objectives of project work in universities: time limitation, groups work, autonomous work by the students and imparting of skills concerning methods and contents.

She writes: “‘Projects’ are tasks of research and development which are limited in time and with which students, individually or in groups, are introduced to the contents and methods of the subject and to autonomous work” (ECKSTEIN 1978).

Of the four elements to be taken into account by BALDERJAHN when defining the conception of a project, three are considered to be crucial in the present module: **Team work** – by which an overall topic should be subdivided into four to five partial problems which are easy to mark off and will be dealt with by the student groups, having the team groups to coordinate the distribution of the partial tasks; **Research and/or seminar papers** – by which theoretical background knowledge can be acquired by working on research and seminar papers. It is presented by the students in the plenary sessions. Here, the students should always deal with the issues which are required for the practical work in the project; **Project report** – where the solutions developed by the project teams are presented and discussed in the plenary sessions, and they are recorded in a project report.

Different activities will be carried out according to the stages of the project – initiation, planning, development and close out. At the initiation stage, students in large group will be briefed about the objectives of the course and chooses theme/topic to work on. At the planning stage, each student or group of students will describe project plan in one page (formatted form).

On the whole, students will:

- Conduct searches for relevant materials in libraries and on-line.
- Survey literature.
- Summarize those readings which seem to be most relevant to their current needs.
- Learn to pose problems as well as solve those set by the lecturer.
- Conduct increasingly complex even if small scale, research.
- Research and write papers, reports, dissertations of increasing difficulty (in terms of size and complexity of the material).
- Work with other students to co-produce a report/design/answer to a problem.
- Prepare and make oral presentations, either in groups or individually.
- Make constructive criticism of the work and others, and use the criticism of others productively.
- Chair and participate usefully in meetings (of seminar groups, for example).
- Lead or be useful members of teams.
- Work under time constraint to meet deadlines.
- Communicate questions and findings with others using a variety of media.
- Learn to criticize their own work.

Assessment:

Assessment will happen during group meetings and discussion sessions, based on the students' materials or information. It will have some of the following formats: discussion, questioning, observation, evidence of personal and professional engagement.

The following criteria will be taken into account:

- . value and meaningfulness of outcomes
- . clear connection between area of studies and programme
- . clarity of exposition
- . formal correctness

At the end of the module, students will submit a "self-evaluation" report.

- The successful completion of the assignment will grant students a total of 10 ECTS

References and Bibliography

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