

İZMİR YÜKSEK TEKNOLOJİ ENSTİTÜSÜ

HUM 250

CIVIC INVOLVEMENT PROJECTS

COURSE OUTLINE

(3+0)0 credits 5 ECTS

Instructor: Dikmen Yakalı, PhD, Assoc. Prof. of Communication Studies

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to help students build a theoretical foundation in volunteering and social contribution, and to enable them to evaluate civil society practices through the perspectives of ethical principles, inclusion, and sustainability. To this end, the course engages students in direct communication and collaboration - outside the university campus, in the field - with diverse social groups and civil society actors through various social responsibility projects and their different stages. The course also encourages students to connect community-based practice with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to develop socially responsive, needs-based project ideas individually or in groups. Throughout the semester, students will examine how civil society initiatives contribute to goals such as No Poverty (SDG 1), Quality Education (SDG 4), Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10), Climate Action (SDG 13), and Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17), while also learning to evaluate projects through the lenses of ethics, inclusion, and sustainability.

METHOD:

Lectures, In-class Discussions, Case Studies, Multimedia Resources, Interactive Workshops with Guest Lecturers, Group Presentations, Digital Tools & Visual Materials

TEXTS:

1. The Palgrave Handbook of Volunteering, Civic Participation, and Nonprofit Associations - David Horton Smith, Robert A. Stebbins, Jurgen Grotz (Eds.) Palgrave Macmillan / Springer, 2016.

2. New Frontiers in Social Innovation Research - Alex Nicholls, Julie Simon, & Madeleine Gabriel (Eds.). London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

EVALUATION:

- Final Project (Written Project File): 50%
 - Project Presentation: 30%
 - Participation and Engagement in In-Class Activities: 20%
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TEACHING PLAN

WEEK 1: Introduction. Course objectives.

WEEK 2 : What Is Social Responsibility? Civil Society Ecosystem

- Defining social responsibility, volunteering, and social contribution
- Civil society ecosystem: NGOs, foundations, cooperatives, social enterprises
- The role of civil society in addressing social challenges
- Introduction to basic theoretical approaches to volunteering and civic participation

WEEK 3: Civil Society and Social Impact

- Understanding social impact: outputs, outcomes, and long-term impact
- How civil society organizations create change
- Linking local community action to global sustainability agendas
- Guest NGO/Foundation: Case-based discussion; examples of impact in nonprofit and community work

WEEK 4: Needs Assessment and Problem Definition

- Identifying community needs and defining social problems
- Problem tree analysis: symptoms, causes, and root causes
- Distinguishing urgent needs from structural problems
- Guest NGO/Foundation

WEEK 5: Stakeholder Mapping and Co-Design with Communities

- Stakeholder mapping: identifying key actors, beneficiaries, and partners
- Community-based design and participatory approaches
- User/persona development and preparing field interviews
- Guest NGO/Foundation
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WEEK 6: Project Cycle Management and Logical Framework

- Project cycle management: planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation
- Basics of Project Planning: Logical Framework and Theory of Change
- Setting objectives, indicators, assumptions, and means of verification
- Guest NGO/Foundation

WEEK 7 : Ethics, Inclusion, and Accessibility

- Ethical principles in fieldwork and community engagement
- Consent, privacy, safeguarding, and responsible data use

- Inclusion, accessibility, and working with vulnerable groups
- Guest NGO/Foundation

WEEK 8 : Resource Development, Volunteering, and Sustainability

- Volunteer engagement and management
- Partnerships, sponsorships, and micro-budgeting
- Sustainability in community-based initiatives
- Guest NGO/Foundation

WEEK 9: Communication, Advocacy, and Storytelling

- Communication strategies for social responsibility projects
- Advocacy, public messaging, and campaign framing
- Responsible storytelling and representation ethics
- Guest NGO/Foundation

WEEK 10: Impact Measurement and Adaptive Project Design

- Basic tools for impact measurement: surveys, interviews, observation
- Indicators and simple monitoring methods
- Learning loops: test, measure, learn, improve
- Guest NGO/Foundation

WEEK 11: Project Design Studio I

- Students work individually or in groups to identify a field-based project idea
- Refining the social problem, target group, and intended impact
- Initial project concept aligned with one or more SDGs
- Instructor feedback workshop

WEEK 12: Project Design Studio II

- Developing the implementation plan
- Roles, timeline, partnerships, and resource planning
- Drafting indicators and defining expected outcomes
- Peer review and feedback session

WEEK 13 : Field Experience

- Field-based engagement, observation, mini-pilot, or community interaction
- Collecting feedback from stakeholders or target groups
- Reflecting on field realities, constraints, and ethical considerations
- Connecting field findings back to project design and SDG targets

WEEK 14: Project Presentations