

Academic Consultancy Training and MOS Modules (I002870)

Course size	<i>(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)</i>		
Credits 12.0	Study time 336 h	Contact hrs	120.0h

Course offerings in academic year 2022-2023

A (semester 2)	English	Gent
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Lecturers in academic year 2022-2023

Okoth, Susan Sande	WAGENI01	lecturer-in-charge
de Jong, Peter W	WAGENI01	co-lecturer
Hofman, Ans JE	WAGENI01	co-lecturer
Tassone, Valentina C	WAGENI01	co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2022-2023

	crdts	offering
International Master of Science in Health Management in Aquaculture	12	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Consultancy training, academic consultancy attitude, information literacy, computer literacy and skills trainings, competencies for further development in working in jobs at MSc level. Project management, reflective learning by assessment of personal functioning

Position of the course

In the ACT course, teams of 5 to 7 students are assigned to execute a transdisciplinary-oriented academic consultancy project for an external commissioner (for example governmental, private and civil society organizations). These teams are composed on the basis of required disciplinary mix for the execution of the project and the preferences expressed by students. Through an application letter students indicate what their disciplinary knowledge will add to the execution of the project. Each team has an assigned process coach and a content coach/academic advisor relevant to the project.

The multidisciplinary and preferably multicultural team will carry out a design type project for their commissioner. This might be the design of new technologies, policy papers, business strategies, regional development arrangements, communication plans or draft research plans for integrated research programmes. Crucial is that teams bring together academic insights and practical knowledge, reach a synthesis of the compiled information in consultation with the commissioner, and translate this into an advice on future actions for their commissioner.

The ACT course is scheduled in such a way that students can combine the course with two MOS modules of personal interest as part of the ACT course.

Wageningen University offers MSc students a wide range of modular skills courses, training skills that are necessary for graduates to function in jobs at MSc level. There are skills trainings in Research Methodology and writing, Ethics and Philosophy, Personal development, Communication and Professional skills.

Contents

- assigned team functions: Prior to starting, the students will be assigned functions with a clear task description: team manager, secretary, (financial) controller, member;
- team meetings: During the course, teams have formal meetings, which the process coach can attend to. With the assistance of the coach, students regularly reflect on the functioning of the team and of individual members;
- meetings with commissioner: Students organize and prepare meetings with the commissioner. During at least the first meeting the coach will be present as observer;
- project proposal: Teams prepare a project proposal, a first concept is discussed with the

coach and commissioner. Project proposals should at least address the mission/vision of the group team, the aim of the project and consultancy research questions, the planning chart, the stakeholder analysis, go/no-go decisions and involved risks. The plan is further scrutinized by the commissioner, the coach and the available academic advisor. During project execution the team checks the project-plan and negotiates adjustments, also with the commissioner, when and if needed;

- skills training: A workshop is used to translate theory of project planning into the preparation of a project plan. Training sessions are organized for introducing theory and for exercising academic consultancy skills related to communication, teamwork and reflective learning, to support processes related to team building and handling complex collaborative environments. On request teams can be supported in methods in social research when and if needed;
- project execution: During project execution a certain division of tasks is needed, yet it is not desirable that only one or two persons work on the integration of elements. The transdisciplinary orientation of the projects requires that all members actively work on synthesis and participate in the formulation of the final product in consultation with the commissioner;
- project deliverables: In principle all teams deliver a project report and an oral presentation, in English, to their commissioner and coaches involved in the ACT. Alternative and possible additional deliverables for each project are defined in the project-plan in interaction with the commissioner and the process coach and academic advisor.
- individual assignments: Students compile a (self) assessment dossier. This includes the: application letter, expectation paper, reflection forms, mid-term reflection paper and final reflection paper. During the starting, mid-term and final interviews the coach gives feedback on the dossier. Elements of this dossier are discussed during team meetings.

Initial competences

Competence for admission to EM AquaH study program

Final competences

- 1 After successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:
 - define, and adjust when and if necessary, with a team and in interaction with a commissioner, the goal of their transdisciplinary-oriented project and a project proposal plan, including research questions, methods of analysis, expected outputs, budget, project planning and management;
- 2 contribute at an academic level to the execution of a transdisciplinary-oriented project, both in terms of process and content, by gathering, selecting and analysing information and by integrating this into final project deliverables;
- 3 discuss and defend their viewpoints and conclusions in a professional and academically correct way;
- 4 implement reflective learning by an assessment of their personal functioning in and contribution to a professional team and discuss reflections and feedback in writing and during assessment interviews;
- 5 demonstrate academic consultancy attitude and skills to execute the team project within complex collaborative environments.

Conditions for credit contract

This course unit cannot be taken via a credit contract

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Lecture: plenary exercises, Group work, Guided self-study, Excursion, Lecture, Pde tutorial, Self-reliant study activities, Project

Learning materials and price

All reading material is available on Brightspace, Learning Management System of Wageningen University and Research.

References

Will be available through Brightspace, Learning Management System of Wageningen

Course content-related study coaching

Teaching support and supervision of the groups are by experts/ teachers, PhD students and industrial partners connected to this course.

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Skills test, Report, Written examination, Assignment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Skills test, Report, Written examination, Assignment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Skills test, Report, Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible

Extra information on the examination methods

The final mark is calculated as follows:

- project proposal;
- product;
- team process;
- individual process;
- 2 skills training

All parts: written self-assessment, project proposal, product, team process, individual process and skills trainings, have to be sufficient (5.5 at least) to pass the course.

Calculation of the examination mark

The normal grades are between 0-10 and 12 ECTS achieved if all parts are passed (>5.5)