

## Academic Consultancy Training and MOS Modules (I002870)

**Course size** *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

**Credits** 12.0                      **Study time** 336 h

**Course offerings in academic year 2024-2025**

A (semester 2)                      English                      Gent

**Lecturers in academic year 2024-2025**

Kaempegaard, Camilla	WAGENI01	lecturer-in-charge
de Jong, Peter W	WAGENI01	co-lecturer
Kropman, Michel	WAGENI01	co-lecturer
Okoth, Susan Sande	WAGENI01	co-lecturer
Tassone, Valentina C	WAGENI01	co-lecturer

**Offered in the following programmes in 2024-2025**

	<b>crdts</b>	<b>offering</b>
<a href="#">International Master of Science in Health Management in Aquaculture</a>	12	A

**Teaching languages**

English

**Keywords**

**Position of the course**

**Contents**

In the ACT course, teams of 5 to 8 students are assigned to execute a transdisciplinary-oriented academic consultancy project for an external commissioner (for example governmental, private and civil society organizations). The teams are composed on the basis of the required disciplinary mix for the execution of the project and the preferences expressed by students. Each team has an assigned process coach and an academic advisor (content coach) 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.

We require students to be fully available during the hours ACT is scheduled (mornings in weeks 1,2,3 and 8; full days in weeks 4-7). By default most of the scheduled sessions (e.g. CPD sessions, team meetings, meetings with the coaches) take place on campus (unless ACT coordination instructs otherwise), and your presence in these sessions is mandatory. The ACT course is scheduled in such a way that students can combine the course with MOS modules. Note that there is an alternative version of ACT which is called 'Entrepreneurial ACT' (E-ACT). This version is offered only in some of the periods throughout the year (you will be informed about the available options via e-mail by your study advisor).

**Initial competences**

**Assumed knowledge on**

The student should master information literacy, computer literacy and presentation skills. English verbal and writing skills should be on a level which allows full

contribution to the ACT project and process development, and full independent functioning in a student team.

### **Mandatory knowledge**

Before applying for a position in an Academic Consultancy Training (ACT) project team, the student must have (disciplinary) knowledge in his/her field of study and should have successfully completed at least 12 but preferably 24 credits of MSc-level courses or a first MSc-thesis.

### **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**

Group work, Excursion, Lecture, Independent work

### **Extra information on the teaching methods**

- 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 (some of) these meetings the coach will be present as observer;
- Project proposal: Teams prepare a project proposal, based on a proposal development handbook. Project proposals should at least include: the problem to be addressed, the purpose of the project, the consultancy research questions, the planning chart, the stakeholder analysis, and the project risks. The proposal 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 designing a consultancy project into an actual project proposal. Training sessions are organized to introduce theory and practice of academic consultancy skills related to communication, teamwork and reflective learning, to support processes related to team building and handling complex collaborative environments. 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. Specifically, the use of Dutch for the report and presentation is an exception which can only be granted by the period coordinator prior to the period, based on specific needs of the commissioner.

- Individual assignments: Students compile a (self) assessment dossier. This includes the: 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. The language of the dossier should be English.

#### **Study material**

None

#### **References**

*Will be available through Brightspace, Learning Management System of Wageningen*

#### **Course content-related study coaching**

#### **Assessment moments**

end-of-term and continuous assessment

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

Skills test, Oral assessment, Peer and/or self assessment, Presentation, Written assessment, Assignment

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

Skills test, Oral assessment, Peer and/or self assessment, Presentation, Written assessment, Assignment

#### **Examination methods in case of permanent assessment**

Oral assessment, Skills test, Participation, Presentation, Peer and/or self assessment, 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 grading is based on:

- project proposal (15%) (assigned for 100% to coach);
- product (42.5%) (assigned for 50% to academic advisor, 25% to coach and 25% to commissioner);
- team process (10%) (assigned for 100% to coach);
- individual process (32.5%) (assigned for 50% to coach and 50% to mutual assessment team);

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

#### **Calculation of the examination mark**