Course 5: Knowing the context and partners

Academic coordinator: Dr. Angela Renata Cordeiro Ortigara, Università degli studi di Trento.

She holds a PhD in Environmental Engineering from the University of Trento. She has extensive research experience in wastewater treatment systems for domestic and industrial purposes. After completing her PhD, she expanded her area of interest to include the link between science and policy. She is currently working as a consultant for international organization, focusing on water-related development issues sustainable development.

Syllabus

Overview

One of the aims of the GDEE project is to develop and sustain links between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) involved in technical development work and universities, in order to better inform education practices on development topics in technical curriculums.

This course will focus on the importance of understanding contextual environments in development research and identifying within this context relevant actors and partnerships. By providing several possible models of interaction between universities and actors in development, these sessions will enable participants to enhance the effectiveness of research projects and the experience of student researchers.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the course the participant will be able to:

At the end of this course module we expect that participants will:

1.   Have increased their awareness of the relevant criteria to select partnerships in the International cooperation world.

2.   Possess basic information and be able to guide students on how to develop a first broad understanding of the geographical, environmental, social, economical, political and cultural context of the countries where students are going to develop their thesis.

3.   Be aware of the basic dynamics and principles governing interaction with and participation of stakeholders in the context of development projects, such as of "active listening" and conflict dynamics tools that can be useful in a specific case.

The course at a glance:

Session	Week	Topic covered
1	1	Universities and International Cooperation agencies partnerships: practical examples
2	1	Understanding the context differences
3	2	Understanding environmental conflicts
4	2	Interacting with different actors
5	3	Participatory approaches methods, tools and examples
0	3	Final Exam

Estimated time commitment

This course will run for 3 weeks beginning on May 5th, 2014. In total, the course should take approximately 20-25 hours to complete, including readings, assignments and activities. Each session is equivalent to two hours in the classroom plus 3 hours of personal study, broken down as follows.

N.	Activity	Estimated time commitment
1	Reading & Coursework	100 minutes
2	Explore Further Materials	60 minutes
3	Review Quizzes	20 minutes
4	Academic Activity	90 minutes
5	Participation in Discussion Forums	(Minimum of) 30 minutes

Course structure:

New lecture materials will be posted every Monday. Once posted, materials will be up for the duration of the course.

Each week, lecture material for two sessions will be posted. The lecture materials for each session will be comprised of one assigned reading, an Academic Activity, and a set of web resources, carefully selected to help participants deepen their understanding of the topics covered.

Session Review Quizzes will be posted online twice per week. They will be graded and passing the Review Quizzes is a requirement for passing the course. (For more information on course grading, please read the section entitled "Passing the Course").

The Academic Activity, included with each session, is designed to test your ability to put into practice what you have learnt during the sessions. **Only 2 of the 5 available Academic Activities will be graded. The course coordinator will announce the Academic Activities to be graded at the beginning of the course**. You will only be required to complete the 2 graded activities.

The Final Exam will take place in the last week of the course. It will be comprised of 30 questions covering all of the course material. Passing the Final Exam is a requirement of the course.

In addition to the graded activities, a discussion forum will run throughout the duration of the course. Each week, the course coordinator will post a discussion question related to the session topics. Participation in the discussion forum is not required to pass the course, and participants' discussion contributions will not be graded. However, students are **strongly encouraged** to participate in the discussion forum as the discussion and debate which will take place in the forums will greatly enhance student learning and topic engagement.

Quizzes/Assignments/Final exam:

Review Quizzes

There are 5 quizzes in total, each comprised of 10 questions and worth 10 possible points. 2 review quizzes will be posted each week, evaluating participants understanding of the weekly session topics. All quizzes count towards the final grade and can be attempted twice. The quiz format is a mixture of True/False and Multiple Choice questions.

Academic activities

Each session includes an academic activity for practicing key concepts learnt. Only 2 academic activities will be evaluated for grading. The course coordinator will indicate at

the beginning of the course which activity will be evaluated, as well as provide detailed instructions and evaluation criteria. The completed activity must be uploaded on the platform upon completion. Activities can be attempted only once; they worth a maximum of 10 points each, for a total of 20 points.

Final exam

The final exam consists of a mix of 30 True/False and Multiple Choice questions covering all the course topics. It worth a maximum of 30 points. It can be attempted twice.

Passing the Course

To pass the course you should:

- Have submitted all review quizzes before the due date

- Have submitted the academic activities before the due date

- Have submitted the final exam before the due date

- Obtain a grade of at least 70 points in total

Grading Policy

Students who successfully complete the course will be offered a Statement of Accomplishment according to the following grading policy.

Grading Policy	
Statement of accomplishment	at least 70 points
Statement of accomplishment with distinction	at least 90 points

Course 5: Knowing the context and partners – COURSE TIMELINE

Course Start: June 16th

Sessions	Learning Outcomes By the end of the course you will be able to:		Due **GA** (Graded Activity)
Orientation	• Navigate the course • Know the other participants	**WEEK 0**	• Read carefully the Syllabus • Complete the orientation questionnaire • Introduce yourself to others participants (Forum)
1. Universities and International Cooperation agencies partnerships: practical examples	• Describe the potential opportunities for universities to establish partnership schemes with other actors of the aid system. • Identify the essential features concerning the relevance of joint work between universities and other actors of the international cooperation system.	**WEEK 1**	• Reading & Coursework 1 (Release 16.06) • Quiz 1 (Release 17.06 – Due 20.06) GA • Discussion Forum (Release 17.06) • Reading & Coursework 2 (Release 16.06) • Quiz 2 (Release 20.05 – Due 24.06) GA • Academic Activity 1 (Release 19.06 – Due 25.06) GA
2. Understanding the context differences	• Understand the importance of context in fieldwork (particularly in engineering) • Communicate this importance to students • Evaluate the different contexts and adapt fieldwork/project plans accordingly		

3. Understanding environmental conflicts	• Recognize a conflicted situation as being a creative and expressive opportunity of the plurality of projects presented in a territory. • Identify conflicts already in the latency stage without waiting for triggering situations which lead to visibility or to destructive growth • Recognize some tools to prevent conflicts along with design and programming tools generally used by the environmental engineer	**WWEEK 2**	• Reading & Coursework 3 (Release 23.06) • Quiz 3 (Release 24.06 – Due 27.06) GA • Discussion Forum (Release 24.06) • Reading & Coursework 4 (Release 23.06) • Quiz 4 (Release 27.06 – Due 01.07) GA • Academic Activity 2 (Release 26.06 – Due 02.07) GA
4. Interacting with different actors	• Active listen and understand different stakeholders • Use active listening tools to keep multiple options alive • Change rooted habits of perception-evaluation • Create the enabling environment for the establishment of "self –generative learning community"		
5. Participatory approaches methods, tools and examples	• Understand the evolution of participatory planning • Recognize the basic rules of participatory planning and its dynamics • Interpret the critical role of communication between technical experts and people in the community throughout the decision making process • Illustrate the participatory techniques and approaches	**WEEK 3**	• Reading & Coursework 5 (Release 30.06) • Quiz 5 (Release 01.07 – Due 04.07) GA
Final exam			• Exam (Release 02.07 – Due 06.07) GA • Post-course evaluation survey (Release 06.07)