

European Humanities University Certificate in Civic Engagement FAQ

EHU is a student-centered University for promoting civil society development through Humanities and Liberal Arts for students from Belarus and the region by bringing them together and offering international experience in study quality. The University is oriented at civically-minded students from Eastern Europe, distinguished by a commitment to the European values and Liberal Arts as well as rich on-campus life and alumni network.

Collaborating with the Open Society University Network, the university offers a Certificate in Civic Engagement that provides a structured path for undergraduate students interested in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of civic and community engagement.

Components of the Civic Engagement Certificate Program

This certificate aims to deepen students' understanding and practical skills in civic engagement by integrating academic coursework with co-curricular activities.

Students participating in the program:

- gain firsthand experience with civic engagement through co-curricular activities that extend beyond classroom learning, which can then be applied to their academic work.
- undertake a series of courses that help them forge new connections between their theoretical knowledge and practical application of civic engagement.

The certificate aims for students to become knowledgeable about theories of citizenship, democratic participation, civil society, and social action, familiar with their local community, and cognizant of ways in which the local, national, and global are linked. Courses that are a part of the certificate focus on themes related to civic engagement and/or the practice of it.

The certificate is acknowledged on each student's transcript.

Learning outcomes

1. Understand core concepts of civic engagement, civil society, civic agency, engaged citizenship and social action and their relationship to these concepts. (foundational knowledge);
2. Apply theory to practice by engaging with community partners through curricular and co-curricular experiences that develop their capacity to think critically about the context, impacts, challenges and opportunities of civic engagement activities (application);
3. Analyze types of civic actors (from small not-for-profits to transnational advocacy organizations), scopes of activities (local, national or global), and political (liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes) and economic environments (advanced

industrial democracies or developing countries) in order to help understand their capacity and that of others to act effectively (contextualization);

4. Reflect on what it means to be an engaged citizen and the ethical implications of civic engagement activities (empathic practice);
5. Conceptualize and integrate applied skills, research, practice, and reflection to develop their own sense of agency, leadership, responsibility, self-confidence and civic skills (learning to lead).

Eligibility

The application is open to first year, second year, and third year undergraduate students. Seniors are not eligible to apply. Third year students should weigh their anticipated course load and senior project plans. Prior to applying, students should have completed two of the course requirements and 20 hours of co-curricular activities. If the two courses have not been completed, students should state which courses they are anticipating taking that fulfill the Certificate requirements in their application. To ensure curricular coherence, each student must obtain written approval from their program adviser.

Requirements:

1. Courses: Four courses (24 ECTS credits total) that focus on a theory or practice of civic engagement. These courses can be a part of the regular curriculum of home institutions that are identified as fulfilling the requirements and/or OSUN and OSUN Network courses. At least one course needs to be an OSUN network course.

- One core course focusing on civic engagement and/or community engagement that will normally be the **OSUN and Network course on Civic Engagement** (or an approved alternative).
- Two or more **Community Engaged Courses (ELAS)** that connect classroom learning/theory with practice, such as the network course on Visual Storytelling for Civic Engagement.
- One course which studies the theories of civic engagement, democracy and social action, such as the **OSUN network course on Global Citizenship or OSUN network course Freedom of Expression**.

Please see the list of courses listed under “Course related requirements” below.

2. Final Reflection Paper:

Upon completion of the four courses and the 100 hours of co-curricular or extracurricular civic engagement activities, students will be asked to submit a written reflection paper addressing the learning outcomes for the Certificate in Civic Engagement program and how the courses and civic engagement activities taught them how to be an engaged citizen.

3. Co-Curricular Activities

Students participate in 100 hours of co-curricular civic engagement activities during their course of study. The civic/community engagement activity can be developed through an on-campus program, an independent community engagement activity, or an appropriate and approved internship. Students will also be expected to attend co-curricular workshops on leadership and project management offered by OSUN and their home institution.

Specifically, the Academic Department of Social Science, EHU Students Service, EHU Debate Union, EHU Science Shop, provides several opportunities for students to gain the necessary amount of hours either via internship or volunteering activities. In order to learn more about these opportunities, students should directly contact the OSUN coordinators via email: coordination.osun@ehu.lt

Course related requirements:

1. Courses: Four courses (24 credits) that focus on a theory or practice of civic engagement. This must include:

- a core course (6 credits);
- two ELAS (Engaged Liberal Arts and Sciences¹) courses (12 credits) beyond the core course (students can take more than one core course);
- one course (6 credits) which studies theories of civic engagement, democracy and social action.

Core Courses (including):

- Civic Engagement (Network Course)

Sample ELAS Courses:

HMD Social Entrepreneurship (Network Course)

HMD Visual Storytelling for Civic Engagement (Network Course)

HMD Second Year Seminar: Introduction to Social Sciences

SMD International Public Law (6 credits) (BA "Law") - en

SMD International human rights law (6 credits) (BA "Law") - en

SMD European Non-Discrimination Law (6 credits) (BA "Law") - en

SMD Political institutions (6 credits) (BA "World Politics and Economics") - ru

SMD Public Policy Process (6 credits) (BA "World Politics and Economics") - en

SMD Cities and Digitalization (6 credits) (BA "Media and Communication") - en

Sample Courses on Theory of Civic Engagement, Democracy, Social Action (some examples below)

HMD Global Citizenship (Network Course)

HMD Freedom of Expression (Network Course)

SMD EU Institutional Law (6 credits) (BA "Law") - en

SMD European Union Politics (10 credits) (BA "World Politics and Economics") - en
SMD Political sociology (6 credits) (BA "World Politics and Economics") - en
SMD Theory of the Experiment: the Laboratory and the City (Collaboration with Bard College, US) (6 credits) (BA "Media and Communication") - en
SMD Gender, Society, Culture (6 credits) (BA "Media and Communication") - ru