

## **Bard College Berlin OSUN Certificate in Civic Engagement**

Civic engagement can be defined as “working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes” (Thomas Ehrlich, “Civic Responsibility in Higher Education,” 2000).

The goal of a **Certificate in Civic Engagement** is to provide a structured path for students to merge curricular and co-curricular civic pursuits and to deepen their knowledge and understanding of civic engagement. The certificate program, which would be acknowledged on a student’s transcript, provides a formal structure and means to recognize student engagement, and can be adopted throughout the Bard network.

The certificate sets out expectations that students will be 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 a theme related to civic engagement and/or the practice of it. Students are required to develop firsthand experience with civic engagement through co-curricular activities outside of the classroom setting and to use their experiences to inform their academic work.

During their time at Bard College Berlin, students will pursue a series of courses and co-curricular activities that will enable them to create a dialogue between the understanding and practice of civic engagement.

### **Requirements:**

**1. Courses:** Four courses that focus on a theory or practice of civic engagement. Courses must be either 3 or 4 US/6 or 8 ECTS credits. *At least one course needs to be an OSUN network or OSUN course.* Courses for the certificate must include:

- OSUN Network course or OSUN summer course on **Civic Engagement**
- Three courses that either a) study the theories of civic engagement, democracy, and social action, such as the OSUN network course on **Global Citizenship** or **Human Rights Advocacy**, or that b) connect classroom learning/theory with practice, such as the **Berlin Internship Seminar: Working Cultures, Urban Cultures**.

Courses for BCB students to choose from in AY 2023 include (courses marked in bold are expected to be regular offerings):

Spring 2023

- **IS331 Berlin Internship Seminar: Working Cultures, Urban Cultures**
- **GM362 The German Public Sphere**
- **PS119 Nation-States and Democracy**
- **PS185 Introduction to Policy Analysis**
- **PS306 The European Union: Its Institutions, Laws, and Citizens**
- **PT351 Civic Engagement**
- **SE294 Social Justice & Transnational Feminism**
- **SO202 A Lexicon of Migration**
- AR330 Global Visual Politics
- FA157 Dance & Community Building—Utopian Practice in the 21st Century
- PS335 Poverty, Inequality and Social Policy in the United States
- PT328 When the People Rule: Popular Sovereignty in Theory and Practice

Fall 2023

- **IS331 Berlin Internship Seminar: Working Cultures, Urban Cultures**
- **PT150 Global Citizenship**
- **PT241 Feminism and Community**
- **PT320 Discussing Deutschland: What Germans Are Talking About Today**
- **PT325 The European Union: Institutions, Policies, Procedures**
- PS388 Contemporary Political Polarization and How to Address it
- PT160 Transnational Feminism Is for Everybody
- SE291 Social Justice and the Body

## **2. Culminating Project**

Every student enrolled in the certificate program will complete a culminating activity - an engagement analysis. In their junior or senior year, students will prepare a 10-page analytic essay or other form of work (SWOT analysis, film accompanied by a short essay) linked to their engagement activities. They will be required to make a public presentation of this culminating activity.

**3. Co-Curricular Activities:** Students participate in at least 100 hours of co-curricular civic engagement activities during the course of their study. The civic engagement activity can be developed through

Options for activities:

- Student project coordination (ie through Civic Engagement Fellowship)
- Participation in student projects at BCB
- Participation in BCB-organized volunteer programming in Pankow and Berlin
- independent community engagement activity or volunteer work
- on-campus programming with Civic Engagement office
- co-curricular workshops on leadership and project management
- Engagement for social change through other activism: organization/participation

in events or conferences (example REAL TALK), writing, publishing, producing for and about topics of social change

- Training done through Civic Engagement Fellowship / Global Fellowship programs
- Suitable internship through BCB (if not previously applied to fulfil coursework requirements)
- Summer volunteer programs or an OSUN Community Action Award

Ideally, engagement activities will be linked to course work or the senior thesis. Students will track co-curricular engagement hours and submit verification from supervisors using an online tracking tool.

There are a number of OSUN funding opportunities available to support civic engagement activities or summer internships (for example BCB Civic Engagement Fellowships, OSUN Community Action Awards, or micro grants), students are encouraged to use this support.

### **Admission to program:**

There is one application deadline per year. In 2023, the deadline was on March 15.

During the second semester of the First Year or in the Sophomore year, certificate candidates are required to submit a two page application to the OSUN Certificate in Civic Engagement Advisory Committee, which includes an essay - analogous to the moderation paper, outlining why they want to pursue the certificate - and an outline of courses and activities they intend to complete to fulfill the requirements. The application will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee for the Certificate in Civic Engagement. At the time of applying, students should already have completed or be in the process of completing one of the course requirements and 20 hours of co-curricular activities. To ensure curricular coherence, each student will be required to obtain approval from their academic adviser and the BCB Civic Engagement Office. These approvals will need to be uploaded into the application portal.

### **Recommended Complementary Activities/Programs:**

- Network Courses
- Bard Globalization and International Affairs Program
- BCB Internship Program
- International Network Conferences
- Community Action Award for Summer Internships
- On Campus Workshop Series

**You need more info? Check out [this presentation](#) to learn more about the Civic Engagement Certificate!**