AURORA

• Reflection
• Multi-actor dialogue
• Interdisciplinary team-work • Public Communication

Interdisciplinary Community Service Learning

Maximize your Master's learning experience: an inspiring module for talented students

Are you interested in doing your Masters research, thesis or internship on societal challenges related to energy transition, food system transformation, mental health and inclusive societies?

Do you want to cross the boundaries of your discipline and the walls of university?

Do you want to be better prepared for your career after graduation?

Do you want to make a societal impact before you even graduate?

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

VU VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM

What is iCSL2?

Interdisciplinary Community Service Learning: Addressing Challenges Through Transdisciplinary Research (iCSL2) is a challenge-based learning course that can be followed next to any master program. This course gives you the opportunity to work on current pressing societal issues such as energy transitions, food system transformation, inclusive and resilient societies. These issues are multi-faceted and concern so many different actors that they can't be addressed effectively from a single perspective. Therefore, in iCS2 you are challenged to step out of your bubble and collaborate across and beyond the campus: you are part of a cross-disciplinary student team, but also work together closely with communities, companies, organizations, and governments. As such, you get the chance to start building a professional network.

In iCSL2, students collaborate in cross-disciplinary teams. Each team member devotes their own thesis, research project or internship to a sub-question of this challenge. Thus, in parallel to your thesis, you collaborate in the iCSL2 course, to integrate the insights from the different individual projects and consider the wider implications for the broad societal issue. By the end of the project you collectively deliver an interdisciplinary report and present the project results back to a scientific as well as societal audience in a Public Dialogue Event. This event is part of the NWO funded project Science with the neighborhood.

Research Topics

You can propose your own specific research topic and placement or can define this together with the iCSL2 team and our partners. Below you can see some ideas for research topics for each societal issue addressed in the course

Energy Transitions

- Technical and economic feasibility of carbon-neutral and gas-free technologies and heating systems
- Social acceptance of technology
- Individual and collective perceptions towards the transition (and sustainability in general)
- Multi-actor and cross-sector collaboration
- Justice dimensions (leave no one behind)
- Science-Policy-Politics interfaces

Food System Transformation

- Role of grassroots and social movements
- Urban agriculture community gardens
- Innovative / alternative institutional arrangements for food production and distribution (e.g. commons)
- Interventions and approaches to promote and sustain healthy eating
- Climate-friendly production and distribution of food
- Emerging technologies (and/or their social acceptance)
- Justice dimensions (leave no one behind)
- Science-Policy-Politics interfaces

Inclusive and resilient societies

- Safe and affordable housing
- Inclusive and sustainable transport systems
- Green and public spaces
- Integration of city, nature, accessibility and recovery/healing

Mental health and wellbeing

- Post-COVID effect on mental health and wellbeing
- Loneliness and approaches to address this growing issue
- Promotion of interconnectedness, openness and awareness on mental health and wellbeing
- Building mental strength and resilience in communities
- Interventions and approaches to promote healthier life-styles

How to join?

Participating in iCSL2 awards you credits that can be added to your master diploma or you can get a separate certificate. Completion of the course awards 6 ECTS. For more information and sign-up, visit our website (scan QR code) or contact: Eduardo Urias eduardo.munizpereiraurias@vu.nl