

Curriculum: Community Building Course (face-to-face setting)

At the start of their studies, universities offer new students support in the form of information, advice, and orientation events. The aim of these formats is to bring new students in contact with each other and introduce them to important contact points, contact persons and study structures. Orientation weeks, first-semester welcomes and orientation tutorials are an integral part of the induction phase at many Higher Education institutions. They are usually organized by student representatives, programme coordinators and central counselling centres. In the ENTRANTS project, the project team explored the question of how existing orientation offerings could be enriched and expanded in a meaningful way.

A community building course could be a useful format to enhance students' sense of belonging.

1. Course preparations: from the course name to the learning platform.

The project team decided to call the community building-course at the UDE "University of Duisburg-Essen: "You belong to me! - Seriously now?". The advisory groups advised us to take a catchy and little provocative name that attracts students to it.

1.1 Learning Outcomes

The course aims at the following learning outcomes:

- Students are able to make full use of university services and support structures to help them along their studies.
- Aware of their own strengths, they look beyond the boundaries of their own self.
- Knowing the structures, processes, and functions of the university as a place of science and research, they actively participate in shaping everyday life at the university.
- Students discover their fellow students as cooperation partners on their path of research-based learning through university-life.
- They develop a sense of belonging to their university.

1.2 Course Structure

The course comprises five sessions. Each session takes two hours and can be offered throughout the semester. The course was offered in cooperation with the Institute for Academic Skills. Through this cooperation, the course participants were able to acquire two credits in the supplementary area. The examination requirement for the course was the presentation and submission of a scientific poster. The five sessions focused on the following topics:

- First session: Introduction to the topic and getting to know each other.
- Second session: Explore your strengths and learn about the concept of "Forschendes Lernen" (Inquiry-based learning).
- Third session: University - an organisation like any other?
- Fourth session: Who is who? About gardeners, librarians, and science managers.
- Fifth session: Discovering the university through research.

1.3 Moodle course

An accompanying Moodle-course was set up. It is used during the two-hour sessions for feedback, exercises, inputs and small quizzes. It is not designed as a self-study course. It consists of five sessions mirroring tasks and assignments in each session. Another session puts its focus on how to create scientific posters. And finally, information on well-being is available as well. The team used images and interactive elements (h5p tools) to create an inviting Moodle course.



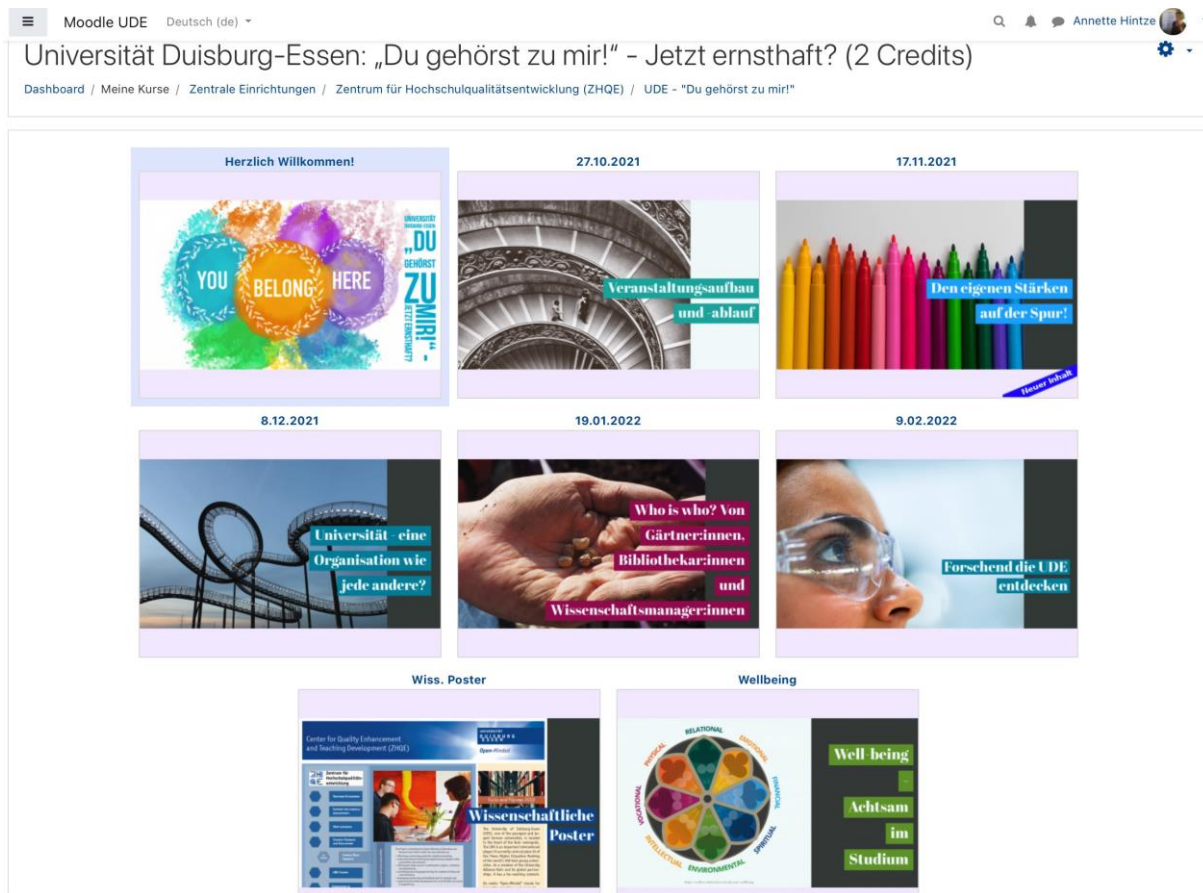


Figure 1: Screenshot of the Moodle-course-platform landing page

The project team developed the following announcement for the course:
 “At the University of Duisburg-Essen, academic work is done. Learning to listen, read, speak, write and research leads to academic success. Sounds simple, but it's not.

Membership of the university starts with enrolment. This is a formality. Feeling like you belong and knowing your way around are important for successfully organising your everyday life as a student.

In this event, we will explore the University of Duisburg-Essen and give you the opportunity to be curious and ask your own questions. The first step will be to examine your own strengths and discover new ones. In the following part of the event, your own strengths profile will help you to find each other in groups and try out academic work together.

This includes input, group work, discussions and the documentation of results relating to the University of Duisburg-Essen.

As part of the event, we also invite you to take a look behind the scenes of our own project work in university development.”

2. Course sessions in detail

A curriculum for a synchronous online course as well as a face-to-face course was developed. The didactic design of the two types differs only slightly. The core elements of both options relate to the research-based exploration of one's own university and the work with one's own strengths. Both formats rely on the Moodle course.

2.1 Face-to-face-setting

First session: Get to know each other and introduction to the course.

In the first session an overview of the course and the learning platform (Moodle), of upcoming tasks, and assignments will be given. The session includes different opportunities for students to get to know each other, to understand their interests in attending the course, and to get to know the lecturers and their work at university.



First session: Get to know each other and introduction to the course		
Duration	Activity	to-do's
10 min	Introduction Short overview of the course and the Moodle learning-platform	Design a welcoming Moodle course with exercises, inputs and work packages. Bring your laptop and beamer to the classroom. Think about creating a collaborative atmosphere (group desks)
10 min	Icebreaker Name game: Write down names from famous persons (or names related to course material) on sticky notes. Make sure to use diverse names (different genders, different, ethnic and biographical background, different nationalities, etc so that all students can connect with and will know the persons you chose). Students place a sticky note on their forehead and interact with their classmates, asking questions to understand which person they are embodying. See also other ideas: https://tophat.com/blog/classroom-icebreakers/)	Find the right icebreaking game for your course and prepare a task sheet/ flip chart with explanations.
30 min	Group sessions Students get to know each other better within randomly created groups. They have to answer the question: „Which are the three most important things one needs to know about the university of Duisburg-Essen?“ (they answer with https://www.mentimeter.com)	Prepare the Mentimeter question and explanation for the group activity.
10 min	“Well-being“-break with finger yoga exercises (e.g. https://youtu.be/LehkTdGXxjc)	Try the exercise together with the students.
20 min	Discussion Talk about the group activity results	Share the Mentimeter results.
30 min	Input and Q&A Describe your work at the university.	Prepare a presentation about your faculty/institute and your job there.
10 min	Assignment Explain the strengths finder and talk about the assignment for the next session: Discover what you are great at. Find out what is unique about you to be successful in your study and personal life.	Decide what strengths finder works for you. We used the Gallup strengths-finder and designed an interactive h5p-element for the Moodle course (https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/de/254030/strengthsfinder.aspx).

Table 1: Description of the first session (face-to-face)

Talentcheck



Menschen mit einem stark ausgeprägten Fokus setzen sich Ziele und verfolgen diese, während sie eventuell erforderliche Korrekturen vornehmen. Sie legen zunächst Prioritäten fest und handeln dann in Übereinstimmung mit diesen.

<https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/de/253064/Thema-Fokus.aspx>

People exceptionally talented in the Focus theme can take a direction, follow through and make the corrections necessary to stay on track. They prioritize, then act. ership of what they say they will do. They are committed to stable values such as honesty and loyalty.

<https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/252239/focus-theme.aspx>

<https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/252320/responsibility-theme.aspx>

Wiederverwenden Einbetten

Strategie - Dank Ihrer strategischen Begabung sind Sie in der Lage, sich durch jedes erdenkliche Dickicht durchzuschlagen und spontan den direkten Weg zum Ziel zu finden. Diese Fähigkeit ist nicht erlernbar, es ist vielmehr eine bestimmte Art, zu denken und die Welt zu betrachten. Sie können aus Ihrem Blickwinkel dort Muster erkennen, wo für andere nur ein unübersichtliches Durcheinander herrscht.
(aus: <https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/de/253178/Thema-Strategie.aspx>)

Fokus - Wohin gehe ich? Diese Frage stellen Sie sich täglich. Als zielorientierter Mensch brauchen Sie klar umrissene Ziele, ohne die Sie sich schnell frustrieren lassen. Und so verbringen Sie jedes Jahr, jeden Monat und jede Woche mit Ihrer Lieblingsbeschäftigung - Sie legen Ihre Ziele fest. Unabhängig davon, ob Ihre Ziele kurzfristig oder langfristig sind - die wesentlichen Charakteristika sind immer dieselben: Ihre Ziele sind eindeutig definiert, sie sind messbar und in einen Zeitplan eingebunden.
(aus: <https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/de/253064/Thema-Fokus.aspx>)

Autorität - Aufgrund Ihrer natürlichen Autorität übernehmen Sie gerne Verantwortung. Sie haben auch keine Probleme damit, andere mit Ihren Ansichten zu konfrontieren, ganz im Gegenteil. Sobald Sie sich eine Meinung gebildet haben, müssen Sie diese unbedingt anderen mitteilen. Und wenn Sie ein Ziel ins Auge gefasst haben, lassen Sie nicht locker, bis Sie Ihre gesamte Umgebung darauf eingeschworen haben.
(aus: <https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/de/252788/Thema-Autorität.aspx>)

Zukunftsorientierung - Fasziniert von der Zukunft lassen Sie Ihren Blick gerne über den Horizont hinausschweifen. Sie malen sich bis ins Detail aus, welche aufregenden Möglichkeiten die Zukunft für Sie bereithält. Es kann sich hier, in Abhängigkeit von Ihren Stärken und Interessen, um die verschiedensten Dinge handeln - um ein optimiertes Produkt, ein reibungslos funktionierendes Arbeitsteam, ein besseres Leben oder eine bessere Welt - allein die Vorstellung wirkt in hohem Maße inspirierend auf Sie und lässt Sie Ihrem Ideal entgegenrücken.
(aus: <https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/de/253067/Thema-Zukunftsorientierung.aspx>)

Verbundtheit - Sie sind davon überzeugt, dass es für alles, was geschieht, einen Grund gibt. Sie glauben daran, dass alle Menschen miteinander verbunden sind. Einerseits besteht die Menschheit zwar aus einzelnen Individuen, die über einen freien Willen verfügen und für ihre Entscheidungen die Verantwortung tragen. Darüber hinaus sind jedoch alle Menschen ein Teil von etwas Größerem, für das die verschiedensten Bezeichnungen existieren.
(aus: <https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/de/252320/responsibility-theme.aspx>)

34 Talentthemen | The 34 CliftonStrengths Themes

Figure 2: Screenshot of the strength-check

Second session: Explore strengths and learn about the concept of “Forschendes Lernen”

The second session is about reflecting on one’s own talents and preparing their own self-enquiry projects at University of Duisburg-Essen. After focusing on their strengths, students learn about the concept of “Forschendes Lernen (Inquiry-based learning)” (by Ludwig Huber) and how to arrive at a good research question.

Second session: Explore strengths and learn about the concept of “Forschendes Lernen”		
Dura- tion	Activity	to-do’s Tasks/questions for the students
5 min	Short introduction Overview of the session	
15 min	Check-in: „What are your TOP5-strengths?“ Course evaluation with Moodle (Q&A-function) and discussion of the results	Prepare a short questionnaire with Moodle about the strengths included in the assignment.
30 min	Group activity Strength-Talk with another student (tandems) about the strength-feedback from family members and friends	Divide the student into groups of four students. Did they get surprising feedback concerning their strength from their family and friends? What did they learn about themselves?
10 min	Discussion Talk about the group activity results	Facilitate the discussion. Ask the students whether it has been easy to find and talk about their strengths. Have they any ideas, to use their strengths during this course and in their small research endeavours?
10 min	“Well-being“-break 50 ways to take a break (https://www.brainenergysupportteam.org/archives/16107)	Talk about favorite breaks with your students. Do they use other ways to relax? What helps them to remember making breaks?
30 min	Input and Q&A: What is “Forschendes Lernen (Inquiry-based learning)”? How do I find my research question?	Prepare a presentation about “Forschendes Lernen” and about finding research questions. Literature for “ <u>Forschendes Lernen</u> ” and for <u>developing a research question</u> .
15 min	Group activity Brainstorming in small groups about their first ideas for their research questions and writing them down on a whiteboard	Provide the task for the group activity, moderation cards and pens.

10 min	Question-Cluster: Cluster the questions and develop them further.	Collect the moderation cards and cluster the questions together with your students on a moderation wall. Explain them how to narrow the question so that they can work with them.
5 min	Assignment Develop the question further in preparation for the upcoming session	Explain the assignment and ask the students to send you their specified question prior to the next session via e-mail. You will collect them and give them detailed feedback at the next session.

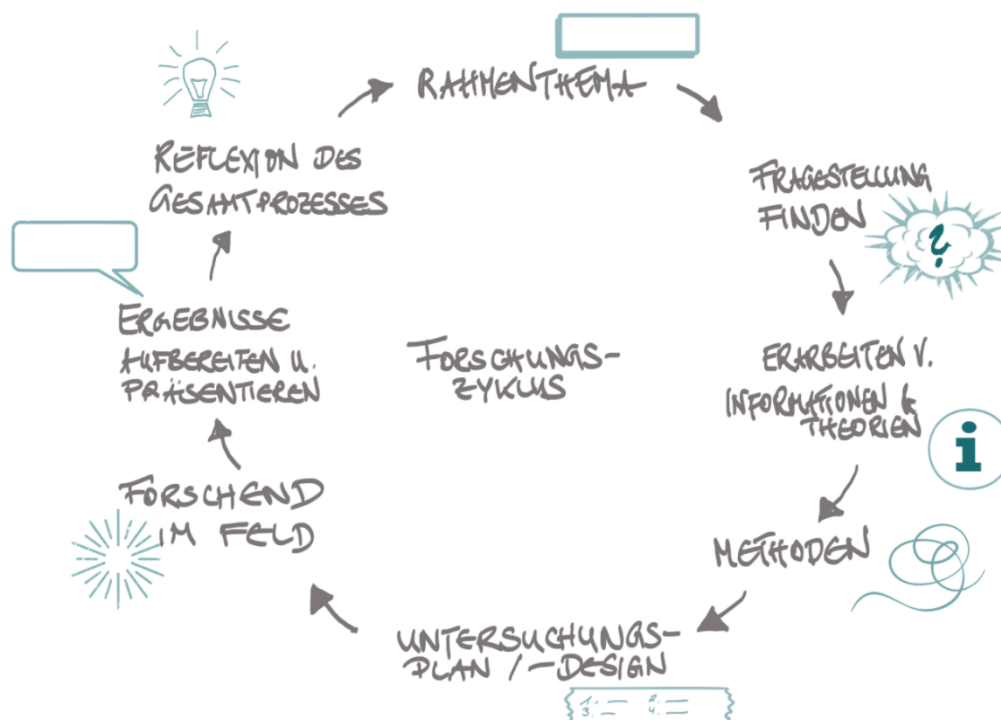
Table 2: Description of the second session (face-to-face)

Moodle UDE Deutsch (de) ▾

Was ist forschendes Lernen?

„Forschendes Lernen zeichnet sich vor anderen Lernformen dadurch aus, dass die Lernenden den Prozess eines Forschungsvorhabens, das auf die Gewinnung von auch für Dritte interessanten Erkenntnissen gerichtet ist, in seinen wesentlichen Phasen
– von der Entwicklung der Fragen und Hypothesen über die Wahl und Ausführung der Methoden bis zur Prüfung und Darstellung der Ergebnisse in selbstständiger Arbeit oder in aktiver Mitarbeit in einem übergreifenden Projekt – (mit) gestalten, erfahren und reflektieren.“

In Anlehnung an Huber, Ludwig (2009, S.11): Warum Forschendes Lernen nötig und möglich ist. In L. Huber, J. Hellmer, F. Schneider (Hrsg.), Forschendes Lernen im Studium. Aktuelle Konzepte und Erfahrungen (S. 9–35). Bielefeld: Universitäts-Verlag Weblar.



In Anlehnung an Huber, Ludwig (2009, S.11): Warum Forschendes Lernen nötig und möglich ist. In L. Huber, J. Hellmer, F. Schneider (Hrsg.), Forschendes Lernen im Studium. Aktuelle Konzepte und Erfahrungen (S. 9–35). Bielefeld: Universitäts-Verlag Weblar.

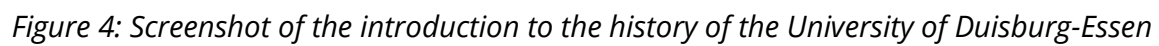
Figure 3: Forschendes Lernen (Inquiry-based learning)

Third session: University an organization like any other?

This session deals with the students' own self-enquiry projects. In addition, the history of universities in Europe and the history of the UDE are the topics of this session.

Third session: University an organization like any other?		
Dura- tion	Activity	to-do's Tasks/questions for the students
5 min	Short introduction Overview of the third session	
15 min	Specifying questions: Feedback on assignment and provide examples how to narrow down the research question.	Explain your feedback and answer questions. You can collect all the questions in Moodle and add your feedback to each question. So, the students can learn from all the feedback not just their own.
30 min	Group activity Students are working on their questions with „critical friends“	Divide the group into groups of four students. Explain them how feedback with critical friends works. For example use this explanation .
10 min	“Well-being“-break: What are my energy boosters? (e.g. https://www.mciinstitute.edu.au/mci-live/how-to-boost-mental-energy-levels-before-your-exam)	Talk about good energy boosters that could be used before exams. How do they boost their energy level?
25 min	Discussion Talk about the group activity results	Facilitate the discussion. Ask students whether they have questions. Would they like to share AHA!-moments (as in moments when they realized how to specify their questions)?
30 min	Input and Q&A: History of universities in Europe and history of the University of Duisburg-Essen	Prepare a presentation about the history of universities in Europe and the history of your own university or show a video (German/English)
5 min	Assignment Start researching along your questions and gather data, information, pictures for the posters.	Explain the assignment.

Table 3: Description of the third session (face-to-face)



Fourth session: Sense of belonging, university structure and contact persons

In the fourth session students reflect in the first part on their sense of belonging to the university and get to know in the second part selected contact persons they did not know yet.

Fourth session: Sense of belonging, university structure and contact persons			
Dura- tion	Activity	to-do's Tasks/questions for the students	
5 min	Short introduction Overview of the fourth session		
30 min	Sense of belonging: Watch and discuss the TV2-Denmark-Video https://youtu.be/jD8tjhVO1Tc	How are you connected? Talk about what we all have in common with each other.	
15 min	Group activity What can you do to strengthen your sense of belonging to the UDE? What can the UDE do that you feel welcome here?	Divide the students into groups of four. Provide flipcharts, pens and explain the task.	
10 min	Discussion Talk about the group activity results	Facilitate the discussion and summarize the ideas.	
20 min	"Well-being"-break Personal value assessment (e.g. https://einguterplan.de/werte-test/ or https://personalvalu.es)	Explain the self-test and discuss some of the result.	
30 Min	Input and Q&A: Insights into the structure of the university and a short presentation of contact persons, they might not know yet	Prepare a presentation about the structure of your university and about contact persons.	
10 Min	Assignment Finalizing research and poster.	Answer final questions and show them good practice for scientific posters on your learning platform (examples, videos, ...). Clarify assessment criteria in terms of poster and poster presentation.	

Table 4: Description of the fourth session (face-to-face)

Universitätskommissionen			Vertretungen		
Kommission für Forschung, wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchs und Wissenstransfer	Kommission für Lehre, Studium und Weiterbildung	Kommission für Entwicklungsplanung und Finanzen	Personalrat der Mitarbeiter*innen in Technik und Verwaltung	Personalrat der wissenschaftlich und künstlerisch Beschäftigten	Gleichstellungsbeauftragte
Kommission für Diversity Management	Gleichstellungskommission	Qualitätsverbesserungskommission	Schwerbehindertenvertretung	Vertretung der Belange studentischer Hilfskräfte	Vertretung der Belange von Studierenden mit Behinderung oder chronischer Erkrankung
	Kommission für Informations-, Kommunikations- und Medientechnik				

Stand: 07.06.2021
Dezernat Personal und Organisation
Technische Umsetzung: comella.hans@uni-due.de

Who is who? - Mitarbeiter:innen an der Universität Duisburg-Essen



Heike Alberts, Tobias Heibel, Dr. Anja Laroche | ABZ

Karte 7 von 16

[Wiederverwenden](#) [Nutzungsbedingungen](#) [Einbetten](#)

Figure 5: Screenshot of the who is who part of the fourth session.

Fifth session: Poster presentation and feedback

In the fifth session, students present their posters about the research project they did at the UDE.

Each student/each tandem has 3 minutes time to talk about their research projects. After their presentation, they can come up with a short evaluation of their own work. They can use the following review criteria (poster concept, format, style, combination of text and pictures, overview of the result and further steps, and so on). After the student's self-evaluation the lecturer(s) provide(s) feedback and discuss(es) ideas how to improve the poster.

After the fifth session, students have time to revise their posters. The final deadline of submission could be - as in our case - a month later.

For the fifth session the lecturer(s) can decide whether they print the student posters and create a gallery walk in the course room or if they prefer to use a projector and a laptop to show all the poster on the course room's wall.

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.
Project Number: 2020-1-AT01-KA203-07805213

3. Literature

Brown, Brené (2015): Daring Greatly. How the courage to be vulnerable transforms the way we live, love, parent, and lead. London

Goodenow, Carol (1993). Classroom belonging among early adolescent students: Relationships to motivation and achievement. The Journal of Early Adolescence, 13(1), 21-43, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0272431693013001002>

Western University Canada/Teaching and learning center (2023): Community building. <https://teaching.uwo.ca/teaching/engaging/building-community.html>, 26.07.2023



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.
Project Number: 2020-1-AT01-KA203-07805214