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Responsible for the module
„participation and social responsibility“
in education of teachers
at the Pädagogische Hochschule
Heidelberg

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Letter of recommendation for SOS Violence

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In June 2014 Yony Tsouna, CEO of the Israeli NGO "SOS Violence - Center for Violence Studies in Israel" conducted a three-day-seminar at the Pädagogische Hochschule in Heidelberg/Germany. "SOS Violence - Center for Violence Studies in Israel" was established a decade ago with the goal of transforming Israeli classrooms into safe and nurturing environments for their students, by disseminating specially developed, innovative techniques to Israeli Jewish and Palestinian teachers and students all over the country.

Violence is a topic that is not only of high relevance in Israel, but also in different areas of life in Germany. Therefore violence is a central topic in the studies of many educational professions. We decided to invite Mr. Tsouna after reading the overwhelming feedback and recommendation from the Evangelische Hochschule in Ludwigsburg/Germany and after having a personal meeting with him and his assistant Ms. Hartmann. During this meeting Mr. Tsouna presented the unique especially practical approach developed over the last ten years by "SOS- Violence". We have been convinced of the concept immediately – as well as the participating students from the course of studies who gained numerous new perspectives on issues of violence prevention.

At the Pädagogische Hochschule Heidelberg there were all in all 30 students present throughout the seminar, which took place for three full days. The students could also claim credits for their participation.

The theory and practice of "SOS-Violence" presented throughout the seminar are of great significance in the field of teaching and class management. The participating students became effectively empowered to use the methods as multipliers in educational frameworks. Because of the positive feedback of all course participants at our university we decided to integrate this seminar as part of our study modules as well for future semesters. All our students, pursuing teaching certification, will have the possibility to participate and receive credit points in the seminar of SOS Violence. The seminar seems to us being highly relevant for students from the first and second year, but also for students who are already studying for their master's degree in educational sciences.

The course is instructed entirely in English, enhancing beyond its educational content also the intercultural competences of our students. This makes this workshop-seminar a valuable

event for our university. Considering the feedback of the participants the foreign language had never been a barrier for the learning process. Especially the verbal and written feedback as well as the official seminar evaluation from the participating students demonstrate what big impact and influence the seminar had on them:

- The whole seminar was a great success for me. I got to know great people and I am convinced of the fact that this training is endlessly important.
- Because of the practical experience and the following reflections, I had the chance to project my thoughts in different situations. This enables me now to meet the children's needs better.
- This seminar was by far the best, most meaningful, most practical, most enlightening seminar of my whole studies. I am impressed of Yony Tsouna and learnt incredibly much for my future job.
- The seminar opened my eyes, I have to reflect myself, my personality and how I affect others. Already during the seminar I tried to implement this. Moreover I got more aware of the importance to ask questions.
- By far the best seminar I've ever had!
- I am very amazed how competent Yony is and with how much heart he is doing his work. I can just recommend this seminar.

This was the feedback we received by our students. It convinced us to continue with SOS Violence also in the forthcoming years and to recommend it deeply to every university or other academic institution obliged to the issue of violence prevention education.



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