

# **ESEX Program: Reflexions about student participation in extensionist activities in a university institute of scientist health**

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**Abstract.** The following article aims to report the experience of the ESEX Program (extension students) developed by the Department of Extension University of the Instituto Universitario Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires (IUHIBA). Through the analysis of different data collection instruments used by the work team, we will describe and reflect on the scope of the calls created since 2021 by the Department with the purpose of implementing extension projects with the communities of reference of the Institute. These projects arise from the needs detected by the different communities and are prepared through a two-way dialogue between teachers and local references with the active participation of students, both in training and interventions. We believe that this experience represents a significant contribution to the role that the University must assume with its community, providing valuable and socially responsible learning opportunities that generate transformative actions at the local level.

**Keywords:** local community, university extension, education, role of the university

## **1 Introduction**

The Instituto Universitario del Hospital Italiano de Buenos Aires (IUHIBA) is a private institution of superior education. It is dedicated to the training of professionals in the area of health. Currently the careers are: Medicine, Biomedical Engineering (IBM) and the licensed of Nursing, Pharmacy, Biochemistry, Bioimaging and Surgical Instrumentation.

In Argentina, since the reform of 1918, the University Extension is one of the three fundamental functions of the university along with teaching and investigation. This perspective impulsed the actions of the university extension in different institutions. Within the institute the Department of Extension University is made up of an interdisciplinary team formed by health and social science professionals.

The experience that motivated this work had diverse antecedents. In the first stage, teacher training spaces were organized such as the Workday of Actualization in Extension and the Workshop "From idea to the action" along with the area Teacher Training and Updating area of the Department of Education. The creation of the ESEX Program in 2021 is one of the most important lines of work of the Department and its objective is to formalize and encourage the extension activity of teachers and students of the IUHIBA.

## **2 Theoretical Framework**

We consider extension from a critical perspective, as a transforming educational process, where there are no stereotyped roles, and everyone can learn and teach. It contributes to the production of new knowledge, linking academic and popular background (UDELAR, 2010).

The extension processes, such as the one we are going to describe, have as their purpose the construction and consolidation of participatory spaces for the planning of interventions to contribute the social transformation of those sectors of the population that systematically suffer processes of postponement, exclusion, domination and exploitation (Colacci & Filippi, 2020).

The projects included in this program connect the social agenda with the academic, through Educational Social Practices (PSE). Those practices allow the articulation of curricular contents with the needs and demands of society.

The priority axes of our Department taken up in the projects are: Citizenship, Gender and Sexual Diversity, Culture and Interculturality, Environment and Health, Promotion of Active Aging, Human Rights and Vulnerability, Health Promotion.

## **3 Methods**

### Description of the experience

The convocation begins with the elaboration of projects according to the needs of the communities of reference and the mentioned priority axes. It lasts for a full semester, in order to ensure that students can complete the entire process. Student participation has the particularity of being registered as a Supplement to the Title, approved by the Higher Council of the Institute in its Resolution 24/20 and its amendment No. 23/21.

For the presentation, each teacher completes a form detailing the fundamentation, the participating teaching team, project objectives, learning objectives, activities to be carried out, schedule, bibliography and evaluation format

of the intervention and student performance. . At the end of the intervention, the data is transferred to a systematization file along with a photographic record.

## 4 Results

The main results in relation to student participation will be described, starting from the second semester of 2021 to the present. It should be mentioned that a total of four convocations for projects were made, but in order to fully analyze their development, we will only take those made during 2021-2022 since the last one is working out.

**First Convocation:** there were four projects: "Culture brings us closer: Workshop of reading and social inclusion"; "Culture brings us closer: Critical reading cycle with a gender perspective", "Health communicators" and "Workshop: Recreation and play as a space for cognitive stimulation". A total of 15 students participated, mostly from medicine and nursing.

**Second Convocation:** We made two convocations, one for each quarter. The projects presented were: "Health Communicators"; "Health check in the community". "Culture brings us closer: Workshop of critical reading with a gender perspective" and "Sign language in the health field". A total of 27 students participated. New participating disciplines are added: IBM and Lic. in Surgical Instrumentation. Some projects were new and others were presented as a continuation of the previous call. The health surveys were carried out in a publicly run primary school and the "communicators(...)" project in a retirement center.

**Third Convocation:** 33 students belonging to medicine, pharmacy and biochemistry participated. The projects were: "Health Communicators"; "Health check in the community"; "Culture brings us closer: projected identities"; "Die of Rage: fiction or possible reality"; "Let's learn CPR in the community, we can help save a life"; "Blood ties: donation campaign". Those happened in different areas: a residence for the elderly, a Foundation that promotes the social inclusion of the most vulnerable sectors and a public square in the City of Buenos Aires.

Number of participants per call

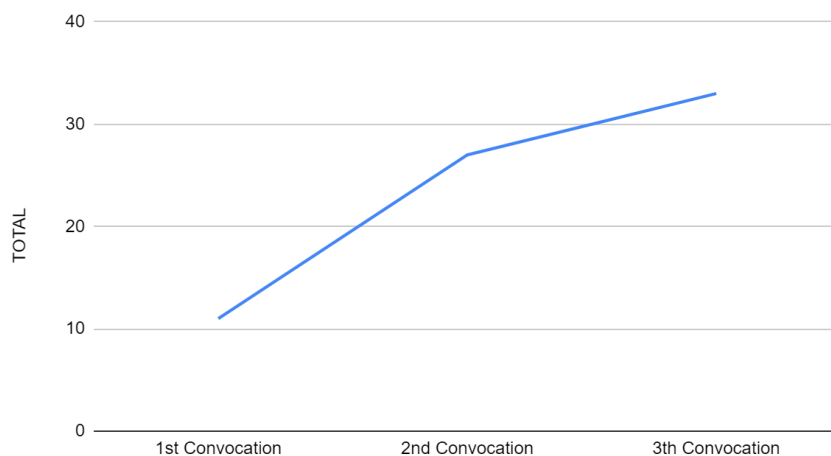


Figure 1. Total participation of students in the different calls of the ESEX Program. Years 2021-2022.

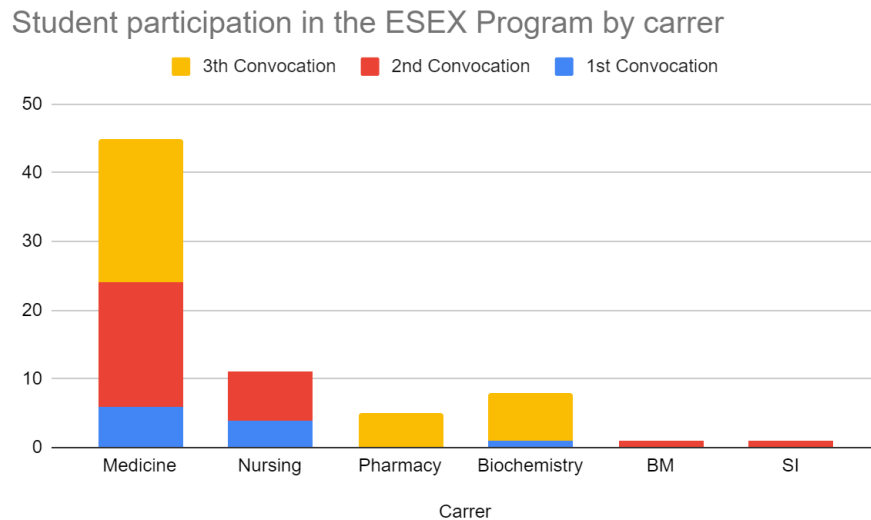


Figure. 2. Participation of students according to careers in the different calls of the ESEX Program. Years 2021-2022.

## 5 Discussion

The premise that motivates this project is that the presentation of interdisciplinary calls, diverse in their themes, favors that a greater number of students are interested in participating. At this point we wonder if the themes of the new projects are of greater interest to students such as medicine or nursing as part of their professionalization in health care.

## 6 Conclusions

Through the ESEX Program, a growing participation of students has been achieved in the extension of the Institute. This proposal and the regulation of hours in the title supplement leads to thinking about the curricularization of extension in our institution as a possible goal. Regarding the department, it promoted the formalization of different activities and allowed greater visibility within the educational community.

## 7 Limitations and Future Research

Although both teachers and students participate voluntarily and show motivation, we found difficulties because they are not curricular activities. It is important to continue to encourage and increase student participation. To this end,

we propose to continuously survey the demands of the community, students and teachers, enrich the projects and their calls, and thus encourage a greater number of students to participate in them.

## **References**

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