

# Connecting and collaborating

## Teaching learning activities (Also linked to empathy and change agency)

### Humans of Maastricht

Inspired by the *Humans of New York* photography blog by Brandon Stanton (www.humansofnewyork.com)

Designed to help the students become more aware of the everyday diversity that exists around them. It aims to reduce stereotypes and prejudice toward unfamiliar or misunderstood groups by fostering a sense of connectedness and empathy with strangers.

The task is to approach five people, couples, or families whom the students do not know and whom they consider different from themselves. They are supposed to interview the people and take a photo of them. Additionally, they have to write a reflection report in which they analyse their experience and relate it to the concepts of the course (in this case Social Psychology at UCM).

The students will share their experience with tutorial group members in the form of a PowerPoint presentation.

Based on: <https://www.actionteaching.org/award/humans-of-northeast-pennsylvania>

For more information and teaching activities: <https://www.actionteaching.org/>

### Teaching Social Change: The Practical Activism Assignment

The objectives of this activity for students include: (1) to understand how inequities, power, and privilege shape social institutions; (2) to synthesize and apply diverse theoretical concepts to real-world situations to bring about practical social change; and (3) to learn the value of collective action in facilitating sustainable change

In the Practical Activism Assignment, students spend eight weeks working together as a class to imagine and facilitate social change. Through a collaborative process, students select a social institution and identify one or more problems affecting the well-being of its community members. Using course concepts, students develop an action plan that describes why they selected their institution and how they will work to create socially-just change for members of the community it serves. As part of this collaboration, students decide on an agreement model (consensus, majority vote, etc.) to determine how they select the institution and action. Once class members have agreed on an institution and plan for action, they present their proposal to the instructor prior to engaging in social change. Students are assessed on how well their action plan aligns with course material and themes, and how effectively their actions facilitate social change. As a result of the assignment, students successfully lobbied their school administration for the establishment of a [Student Diversity Center](#) and [Diversity Action Plan](#), among other outcomes

Information is derived from: <https://www.actionteaching.org/award/practical-activism>

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## **Team collaboration**

Collaboration in a team can be enhanced by creating a team charter (see for instance <https://asana.com/resources/team-charter-template>) and by reflection on team processes in agile retrospectives like the speedboat exercise (e.g., <https://www.techagilist.com/agile/scrum/sailboat-or-speedboat-sprint-retrospective/>)