

Report Summer School in Costa Rica

November 2021

What motivated us to participate in a summer school in Costa Rica on the topic "Values and Human Rights Education in Teacher Training for the University of the Present and Future"? We are both interested in human rights education and democracy education and for the profession as teachers it is important to develop personally apart from the theory. We were therefore very pleased to be accepted to participate in the international summer school. Participants from various universities in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Osnabrück University took part in the project.

Due to the pandemic, the first part of the summer school was held digitally in July / August.

Through lectures and workshops prepared by experts, we were introduced to the theoretical basics, and especially the exchange with other students from Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua was an enriching experience.

Fortunately, the second part of the summer school could take place in Costa Rica in November. Together with Ms. Prof. Kunze we landed on 18.11.2021 in San José, the capital of Costa Rica. The next day the summer school at the Universidad de Costa Rica (UCR) started, which took place mostly at the "Instituto de Investigación en Educación" (INIE). Due to the size and the distribution of the buildings, the UCR almost makes the impression of its own city district. We used the free weekend intensively to visit the nature in the region around San José as well as the national park Manuel Antonio at the Pacific coast, which fascinated us very much. On the following days, we dealt with possibilities of didactic implementation of human rights and values education in schools and focused on the relevance of sustainability for global coexistence.

On Wednesday, we left for Matambú, a small indigenous village in the northwest of Costa Rica. There a family who made their farm with coconut palms and avocado trees available to us as a place to learn and work welcomed us. The goal of the summer school was to plan and implement our own teaching unit on the topic of human rights. Since there is a lot of discrimination against indigenous communities in Costa Rica (especially among younger people), it was important for us to strengthen the students' own cultural individuality. We set the goal of strengthening the learners' awareness of the right to cultural participation and expression as well as individual development. Of course, we were aware that existing structures cannot be changed in this short time, but it was important to us to encourage the students to think about this topic.

On our last day in Matambú, we evaluated the summer school together. As a highlight, we held a "noche cultural" in the evening, where we ate together with members of the indigenous community and the Costa Rican students tried to teach us students from Germany Latin American dances.

Not only the landscape and the climate, but also cultural differences have caught our attention repeatedly, e.g. the typical dish "Gallo Pinto" (rice with beans and various side dishes), which can be eaten at every meal in Costa Rica. The summer school was a unique experience and chance to learn more about basic concepts like human rights and value education. At this point we would like to thank everyone involved for the opportunity to participate in the summer school!

Gesa Müller, Viviane Mersch

