



AIUTA

IAUTA

ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES UNIVERSITES DU TOURISEME AGE
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE
ASOCIACION INTERNACIONAL DE LAS UNIVERSIDADES DE LA TERCERA EDAD
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG DER SENIOREN UNIVERSITATEN
ASSOCIAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE DELLE UNIVERSITA DELLA TERZA ETA
国际老年大学协会

AIUTA—IAUTA

Working Paper N° 8



Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age



Professeur François VELLAS

Université du Troisième Age TOULOUSE

Avec le concours de : Bilal ALI AHMAD

Jérémy BOER

CHenxu WANG

Table of Contents

I.	Academic Programmes.....	3
1)	University of the Third Age of Toulouse (France).....	4
2)	Cambridge University of the Third Age (England)	5
3)	Melbourne University of the Third Age (Australia)	8
4)	Shandong University of the Third Age (China)	10
5)	University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava (Slovakia) ...	12
II.	Health Education.....	15
1)	Melbourne and Cambridge Universities of the Third Age.....	16
2)	Shandong University of the Third Age.....	16
3)	University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava	17
III.	Physical Education	18
1)	Toulouse University of the Third Age	19
2)	Melbourne and Cambridge Universities of the Third Age.....	19
3)	Shandong University of the Third Age.....	20
4)	University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava	20
IV.	Arts, Handicrafts and leisure Activities	21
1)	Cambridge University of the Third Age	22
2)	Shandong University of the Third Age.....	24
V.	Languages and Computers.....	26
1)	Toulouse University of the Third Age (France).....	27
2)	Cambridge University of the Third Age (England)	27
3)	Shandong University of the Third Age.....	28
4)	University of the Third Age at Comenius University	29
VI.	Visits and tours	30
1)	Toulouse University of the Third Age	31
2)	Melbourne University of the Third Age (Australia)	31
3)	University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava	32



International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

Curricula of Universities of the Third Age are not only based on academic and educational programs but also on health, physical, cultural and leisure activities.

I. Academic Programmes





This section analyses the academic programs of the following U3As: Toulouse, Cambridge, Melbourne and Bratislava University.

1) University of the Third Age of Toulouse (France)

The major activities offered by French U3As are lectures in large lecture halls because of their close link with Toulouse public universities. During the 2015-2016 academic year more than 60 additional senior students will take part in one or several extra activities such as Tai chi, languages and IT, but lectures will regularly attract over 400 students at the University's conference amphitheater. The themes of the lectures are quite diverse: history, philosophy, art, religion, law, economics, science, and so on... Lectures for 1 hour 30 minutes, twice a week and over 42 weeks in a year.



In November 2015, Toulouse U3A offered the following lectures:

- The Great Schools of Music: 'The San Carlo of Naples', by a Professor in History of Law, who is also qualified in Music and History of Music
- 'The importance of illustration – year 1945', by a Professor of Art history
- 'Ukraine, Crimea and Russia – 16th to 18th centuries – pre-history of a modern conflict', by a Professor of Geography
- 'Study of a painting – the death of Hyacinth by Tiepolo – between irony and mystery' by the Curator of the university's library
- 'Humanism, trans-humanism: what future for humans?' by a Professor of Philosophy



- 'Atermisia Gentileschi: a female painter in the 17th century' by the Curator of the university's Library
- 'The evolution of police custody – historical perspective' by a Professor of Criminal Law.

In March 2016, Toulouse U3A offered the following lectures:

- The Sistine Chapel of Michelangelo-Part 2 with video by a professor of Chief Curator
- Magma to the volcano with video and micro question public with geology professor
- France has the year of presidential by a professor of law
- Know yourself, thyself even Socratic by Doctor of Philosophy
- Queen Christine of suede-1ere part with video
- Daring to eat the XXIeme century by retired doctor, specialist in nutrition and sports medicine
- The Covent-garden london by Professor Emeritus in History of Law
- Toulouse large trial in XIX century: French state against heirs of P.P.RISQUET on the Canal du Midi from property with video by international lawyer

2) Cambridge University of the Third Age (England)

Cambridge U3A offers a wide variety of courses (368 different courses) and only a handful of academic lectures. These are described on its website. Lectures organized by the Cambridge U3A for the 2016 Spring Term (from January to March) include:

- 'Planetary Vistas' – The landscapes of other worlds (astronomy)
- 'Citizens, Subjects or Blindfold Sheep?' (law and philosophy)
- 'Transforming the National Trust' (concerning the U3A National Trust)
- 'The Unicorn in Art and History'
- 'Cultural Change and Human Health throughout the past 15,000 years' (medicine)
- 'Stem cells and Human Health' (biology)
- 'The Great Stink of London: Bazalgette and Cleansing of the Victorian Metropolis' (history)
- 'What are the Risks' (philosophy)
- 'Along the Thames past Charing Cross and on to Santiago' (history and travelling)
- 'Epigenetics: Telling your genes what to do' (biology)
- 'Modelling with Mathematics'

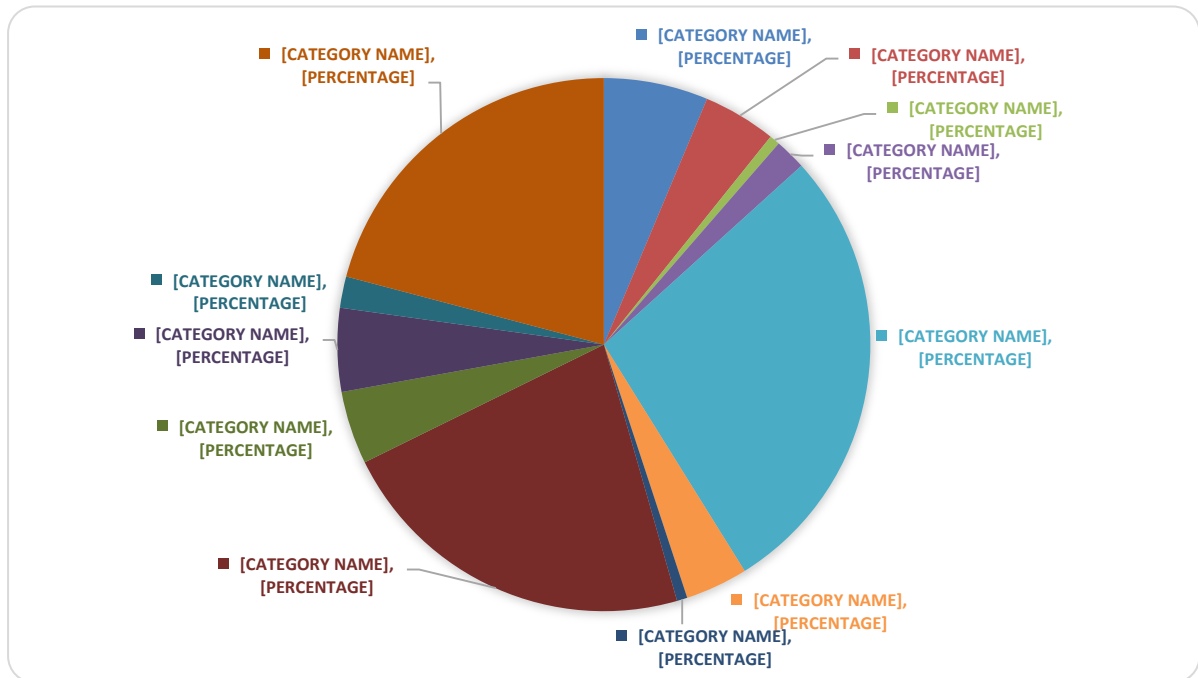


International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

Cambridge U3A offers fewer academic lectures than Toulouse U3A (once, sometimes twice a week). However, the number of courses is higher. Although these courses are held in small groups and may not be under the tutelage of professors, they are often related to academic subjects such as history, science or economics. Among the 368 courses provided by the Cambridge U3A, 158 belong to this category (43%). However, these courses are usually offered for 1 or 2 terms of three months each whereas activities such as fitness are year-round.

The distribution of Cambridge U3A's academic themes by number of courses is as follow:



Examples of courses offered by Cambridge U3A include:

- Current Affairs
 - Human Rights in the UK
 - Current Affairs Discussion Group
 - Behind the News
 - The Future of Cambridge
- Economics
 - Economics Discussion Group
 - Economics with Justice



- The Pharmaceutical Industry
- The Armchair Economist

- Education
 - Schooling: Present and Future

- Environment
 - Global Warming and a Sustainable Future for our Planet
 - Learning to Live with Less
 - Reducing your Carbon Footprint

- History
 - A Brief History of Ireland
 - Cambridge History
 - Peter the Great to Catherine the Great
 - Rome: the Making of the City
 - South American History 1800-1900
 - Spanish Civil War
 - Warfare in the Ancient World

- Investment
 - Third Way Investment Club
 - Investment Strategies and Discussion
 - Introduction to Investment Trusts

- Linguistics
 - A Handle on Spoken English

- Literature
 - Book Club
 - Beowulf Literature
 - Dickens, the Law and Legal London
 - Great Plays of the Twentieth Century
 - Kipling Reading Group
 - Myths, Fairy Tales and Lost Religions

- Mathematics
 - Ancient Greeks Bearing Maths



- Mathematics is not Physics!
- Maths can be fun
- Statistics and the Media

- Philosophy
 - Basic Philosophical Issues
 - Logic for Beginners
 - Philosophy Down the Ages
 - Bible Overview

- Psychology
 - Intercultural Awareness
 - Introduction to Social Psychology
 - Understand Yourself a Bit More!

- Science
 - Astronomy
 - Botany
 - Chemistry of Everyday Things
 - Climate Change
 - Dinosaurs
 - Fascination with Molecules
 - Human Evolution
 - Osteoporosis

3) Melbourne University of the Third Age (Australia)

Melbourne U3A does not offer academic lectures although certain courses related to academic subjects such as history and science. These subjects are listed among other courses such as languages and leisure activities. For the purpose of this report, a distinction between academic and non-academic subjects can be made.



International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age



The academic courses offered by Melbourne U3A, from March to November 2016 include:

- Poetry and literature
 - 'A pilgrimage to the waste land', lectures dedicated to English tales
 - 'Great works of literature'
 - 'Lancelot, Guinevere and courtly love'
 - 'Poetry across the centuries'
 - 'Talking about secrets', lectures dedicated to stories of espionage and political drama

- Philosophy
 - The basics
 - 'Wisdom of ages', the famous philosophers from Antiquity to modern times
 - 'History of ideas', the significant ideas of the world in science, metaphysics, etc.

- Current Affairs
 - 'Affairs of the day'
 - 'In the news'

- Economics (basic economics)

There are 11 academic lectures delivered every week at Melbourne U3A. These lectures account for only 14% of the 78 different activities on offer, which is very low. Therefore, it seems that academic subjects are not a priority at Melbourne University.





U3As based on the British model do not offer as many lectures as French U3As as a proportion of their total activities. This is a consequence of the French U3A model not being based on volunteering and having to remunerate professors and teachers. The per capita cost of lectures in French U3As is low because 300 or 400 people can fit in a lecture hall. In contrast, the per capita cost of a course delivered to a small group of just 20 to 30 people is high. For this reason, courses in small groups are charged at €300 at Toulouse U3A (for 1 hour 30 minutes a week). Because lectures are cheaper, both organizers of U3A programs and students in France tend to favor lectures over courses delivered in small groups.

In Britain and Australia, teachers are volunteers and therefore, the cost of a lecture is the same as the cost of a course for small group. Because British and Australian U3As do not necessarily cooperate with universities, finding lecture halls can be difficult so it is easier to find space for smaller groups of people. Furthermore, both teachers and learners tend to prefer courses delivered to small group rather than lectures in large halls as the atmosphere is more relaxed and participants can easily interact.

4) Shandong University of the Third Age (China)

In Chinese U3As academic subjects are not valued as much as in western U3As. Generally, few lectures are offered. Academic subjects are studied in small groups. The Shandong University of the Third Age is the oldest U3A of China and also one of the largest with 19,000 senior students, 655 classes and 60 subjects. However, it offers only one subject that can be classified as an academic subject:

'Investment: how to invest in the currency, stock exchange and real estate markets'





There are a number of reasons why elderly Chinese students do not value academic subjects as much as their western counterparts:

I. Learning practical things

Most Chinese seniors are interested in practical subjects. Many of them join a U3A not only for the pleasure of learning, but also for very practical purposes. One reason may be to improve health or memory; another may be to learn new skills in order to produce something and make a profit, for instance painting, making potteries, ceramics, music, and so on... The investment course is also intended to be practical. This is one of the major differences between western and Chinese U3As.

II. Lower Education

Most Chinese elders were in their 20's during the communist rule under Mao Zedong, especially during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1975. Throughout this period, Mao supporters demonized academic knowledge as an anti-revolutionary force. China was a poorly developed country and millions of students were sent to work in the countryside. Most citizens started working at a very young age, did not have much spare time and therefore did not have the opportunity to engage in intellectual activities and develop interest in learning and education.

III. Low opinion on conferences

The first Chinese U3As were created exclusively for retired civil servants. Today, most U3A students in China are still ex-government employees. During their career civil servants attended many meetings and lectures for their work. These meetings and lectures were often considered dull and boring. Therefore, many retired civil servants have little interest in attending lectures and wish to do other things when they join a U3A.

IV. No culture of debate

There are a great number of discussion and debate groups on literature, philosophy, politics, and economics, amongst other subjects in British U3As. Debate is an essential part of the European culture since Greek philosophers. This culture of debate is at odds with both the Confucian and Communist concept in Chinese culture, which places more value on obedience and conformity rather than on free-thinking. Even today, China still has a centralized single-party regime with limited freedom of press. Chinese citizens have very limited power to influence Government, therefore discussing politics or economics may seem pointless.



V. Little cooperation with Universities

Chinese U3As usually do not provide academic lectures therefore Chinese U3As have little or no cooperation with public universities and it is difficult for them to hire qualified academic professors.

5) University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava
(Slovakia)

The U3A offers a three-year study program, which is adjusted to both the capabilities of the elderly and to the facilities of Comenius University. The study plan of each year usually provides for 14 three-hour lectures to be presented each fortnight. During their first year students attend basic lectures (general study) in each of the offered disciplines. The second and third years are devoted to the study of optional disciplines and students enroll in the study of specialized topics. After three years of study attending non-formal learning courses participants are issued certificates. Each year almost 2,000 elderly students have a choice of 39 study subjects, which are prepared mostly in cooperation with Comenius University's faculties.



U3A offers three-year non-formal learning in similar topics to those of undergraduate courses and are delivered by university lecturers either from Comenius University's or from partner universities. Each year 300 lecturers provide their services to the U3As. As the Slovak U3A model is not based on volunteering, professors and teachers have to be paid. The U3A does not offer online courses, but the documents and study materials from the lectures are freely available on the U3A's website: www.cdv.uniba.sk/utv



International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age



The University of the Third Age at Comenius University offers the following courses:

Archaeology	Assertiveness training
Astronomy	Business skills of seniors
Economics	Computers and information technology
Ethnology	Creative writing
Expressive therapies	Development of business skills
Financial learning	Environmental science
General medicine	General history
History of religions	Gerontology
History of fine art	History of Opera
History and culture of Austria	History and monuments of Bratislava
Horticulture and gardening	History of Literature
Journalism	Japanese culture
Law	Latin and ancient Roman history
Medicinal plants	Medicine
Musicology	Pharmacology
Philosophy	Psychology
Regeneration of the strength of seniors	Slovak history
Spas	Tourism and services
Social work	Yoga
Theatre and music through the ages	Zumba Gold

Other optional activities have been created based on the experience of U3A management and the interests of the students such as short courses and summer course. Short courses



International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

are mainly digital literacy, digital photography, social networks and Internet usage amongst others...

The pedagogical process is complemented by other educational and social activities. In addition to the lectures and seminars it offers, the U3A organises workshops and panel discussions, visits to other universities, informal meetings, visits to theatres, thematically conceptualised trips, cultural events and other activities initiated by U3A students and graduates in their own Club of UTA. The club organises additional events and social meetings with interesting and important persons as well as tours, visits to the museums and the 'Global Walk Event', which takes place every year on the first weekend in October in collaboration with the WHO-lead GINA (the Geneva International Network on Ageing) based in Geneva

II. Health Education





Health education is very important for seniors. Some Universities of the Third Age like Toulouse have strong links with Faculties of Medicine and University Hospitals. They offer relevant lectures for senior students such as building awareness of major illnesses affecting the elderly like Alzheimer's.

1) Melbourne and Cambridge Universities of the Third Age

Melbourne and Cambridge Universities of the Third Age do not provide courses on 'health education'. However, they provide various courses focused on improving health such as yoga and meditation courses as well as other physical education courses.

The description of the yoga course offered by Melbourne U3A identifies the following benefits:

'Yoga may help you in many aspects of your life - relaxation, flexibility and connection with body and mind. Yoga classes will follow the classical approach of demonstrating and performing a safe and comfortable asanas by focusing on foundation, asana structure, breathe awareness, body and spine alignment. The class will begin with Shavasana - the corpse pose - deep relaxation; joint rotations (preparing the physical body for a safe asana practice); warm ups/limbering; asanas and finishing with Viparita Karani - legs up the wall or meditation to calm the body and the mind.'

2) Shandong University of the Third Age

Shandong U3A has one course and nine classes of health education. This course involves both western and Chinese traditional medicines. It includes subjects such as:

- risk reduction of cardio-vascular diseases
- risk reduction of cancer
- reduction of arthritis
- improvement of memory and risk reduction of Alzheimer's disease

Health is a very important concern for Chinese seniors. However, theoretical courses such as health education are much less popular than physical education courses, which also aim at improving health.



International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

3) University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava

The U3A tries to assist in the students' health and general wellbeing by providing them with various exercises, treatments and regeneration programs. The U3A offers seven classes on health education.



III. Physical Education





Specific physical activities are provided by Universities of Third Age to help senior students stay in shape. Dedicated tutors provide gym courses on behalf of the U3As.

1) Toulouse University of the Third Age

Toulouse University of the Third Age offers several physical education courses. Some are included in the basic services such as soft gymnastics and walking every week, as well as guided walking tours every month; others are optional, for example, Tai chi and self-defense.

A strong link has developed between the U3A and the Department of Sport at the University. Physical education trainers are dedicated to teach gym courses to seniors groups at different levels of fitness using the university's equipment.

2) Melbourne and Cambridge Universities of the Third Age

Physical education is not a major part of Melbourne U3A. It offers only two yoga courses every week and one course on meditation. It also offers an activity called 'neighborhood strolls', which are guided walking tours designed to improve physical health while learning new things.

Physical education plays a more important role at Cambridge U3A. It offers 40 physical education courses including:

- Badminton
- Cycling
- Swimming
- Yoga
- Contemporary dance
- Third Age dance
- Soft gymnastics
- Climbing
- Tai chi
- Kung Fu
- Tabletennis
- Gentle walking
- Tennis





3) Shandong University of the Third Age

Physical education is a major part of the Shandong U3A. It includes courses on:

- Body dance
- Ballet
- Latina dance
- Waltz dance
- Yoga
- Belly dance
- Tai chi
- Tabletennis
- Softball

Shandong U3A has plenty of equipment and facilities available to students to practice sport, and these are also available to students not taking specific courses. These facilities include:

- Swimming pools
- Badminton courts
- Pool tables
- Tennis tables
- Tennis courts
- Dancing rooms
- Martial Art rooms, etc.
-



4) University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava

Physical education is one of the important activities of the U3A program. It offers two yoga courses, a Zumba gold course, two Regeneration of seniors' strength with Tai chi courses, swimming and daily access to the university gym with morning practical exercises. During the summer holidays the U3A prepares summer course to build up strength with yoga exercises, Nordic walking, swimming and aqua fitness.



International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

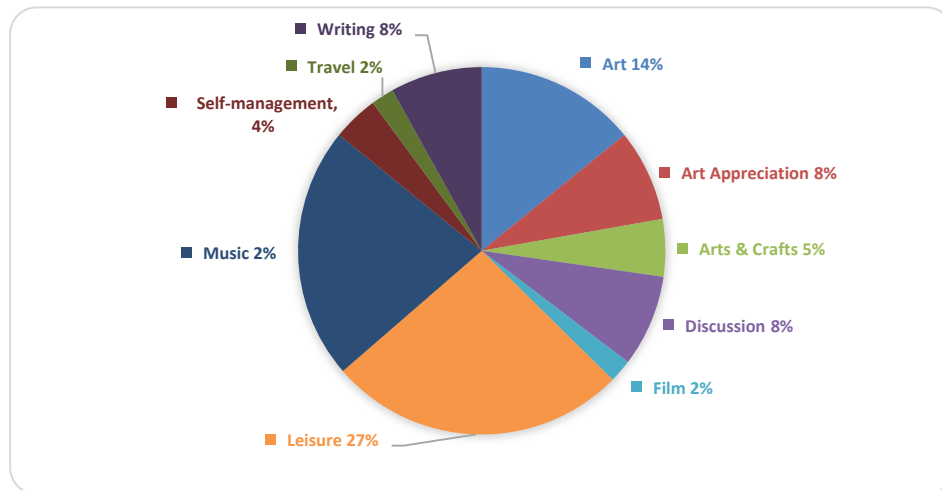
IV. Arts, Handicrafts and leisure Activities





1) Cambridge University of the Third Age

There are 99 courses offered by Cambridge U3A that can be classified as arts, handicrafts or leisure activities. The chart shows the popularity of the courses:



The following are examples of courses offered by Cambridge U3A:

- Art
 - Abstract art
 - Digital art
 - Drawing
 - Painting
 - Sketching
 - The human figure
- Art appreciation
 - Celto-Saxon manuscripts
 - Illuminati manuscripts
 - Looking at art
 - A closer look at portraits
- Arts and crafts
 - Ceramics
 - Stitching
 - Patchwork



International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

- Knitting
- Film
 - Treasures of the silent cinema
 - Movie group
- Leisure
 - Bridge
 - Backgammon
 - Card Games
 - Cryptic crosswords
 - Scrabble
 - Mahjong
 - Croquet
 - Bowling
 - Gardening
- Music
 - Choir
 - Jazz
 - Classical music
 - Music theory
 - Opera





2) Shandong University of the Third Age

Arts, handicraft and leisure courses are the cornerstones of Chinese U3As. They account for 56% of the total of courses in Shandong University. These courses can be divided into four categories:

- Writing, carving and painting
 - Chinese calligraphy
 - Regular writing
 - Cursive writing
 - Sigilar writing
 - Seal carving
 - Landscape painting
 - Painting of flowers and birds
 - Portraits
 - Esquisse
 - Traditional Chinese painting

- Music and singing
 - Singing
 - Music theory
 - Peking opera
 - Lü Opera of Shandong Province
 - Lü Opera of Henan Province
 - Choir
 - Piano
 - Electronic piano
 - Erhu (Chinese traditional instrument)
 - Hulusi (Chinese traditional instrument)
 - Zheng (Chinese traditional instrument)
 - Peking Erhu (Chinese traditional instrument)
 - Accordeon
 - Chinese guitar
 - Harmonica
 - Saxophone



International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

- Literature and poetry
 - Chinese literature
 - Writing poetry
 - Reading poetry
- Handicrafts
 - Papercut
 - Chinese knots
 - Sculpture
 - Tea art
 - Making painting's frames
 - Making jewelries
 - Making bracelets

In addition, the Shandong U3A provides equipment and facilities for other types of leisure activities such as billiards, card games, mah-jonggs, etc.

The predominance of arts, handicraft and leisure activities (especially music) in Chinese U3As is a major difference with western U3As, especially the French U3As. This reflects the taste and interests of Chinese seniors who enjoy practical activities much more than theoretical activities.



V. Languages and Computers





Foreign languages and IT courses are very important as they offer senior students the to enjoy new activities such as travel and international exchanges.

1) Toulouse University of the Third Age (France)

Toulouse U3A currently offers two language courses: English and Spanish. It also offers a course in Information Technology. These courses take place once a week for 1 hour and 30 minutes.

English class is very popular from beginners to advanced level. Information Technology classes open new worlds through the Internet and social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Skype, FaceTime and others.

2) Cambridge University of the Third Age (England)

Cambridge U3A offers four courses in Information Technology and 67 courses in languages, which accounts for 20% of total courses.

The following are examples of courses offered by Cambridge U3A:

- Information technology
 - Archiving your photos
 - Historical maps on the Internet
 - Smile programing
 - Using a GIS for geographic and historical data

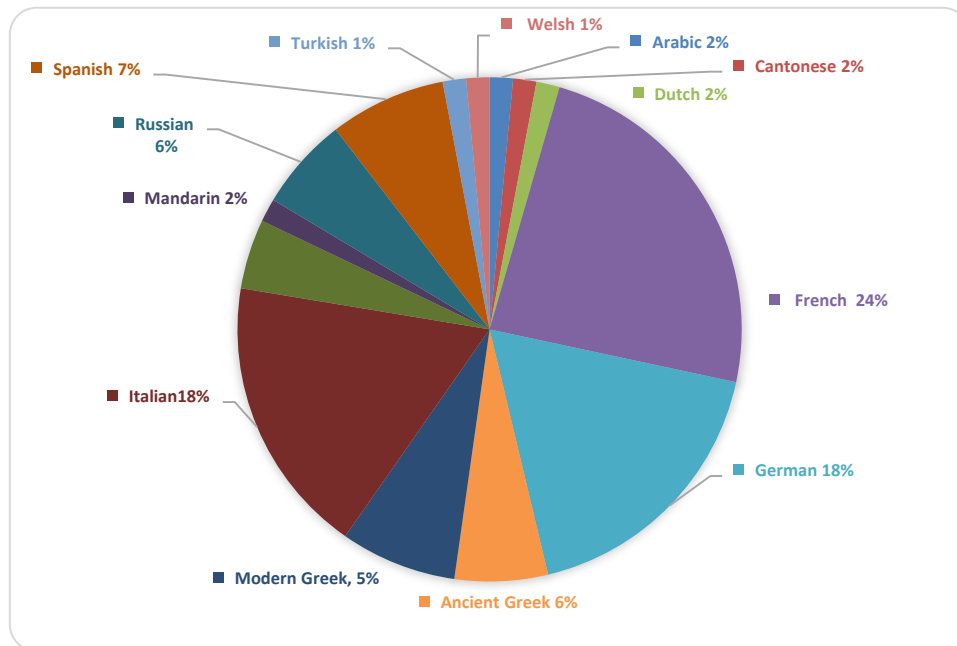
- Languages





International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age



3) Shandong University of the Third Age

Shandong University of the Third Age offers three different courses on Information Technology:

- Computing, how to use simple computer tools (internet, email, Microsoft Office, etc.)
- Software (course dedicated to specific software such as photoshop)
- Photography (how to use a digital camera and take beautiful pictures)





International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

The Shandong U3A also offers several language courses:

- English
- Japanese
- Korean

4) University of the Third Age at Comenius University

Language courses are very popular among Bratislava seniors, especially German and English and courses are available at different levels. Eight English and German classes and one Latin class are offered by the U3A.

Information Technology is comprehensively covered with a three-year study program comprising six ICT programs classes. In addition, short programs on Digital Photography, Internet and Social Networks (Face book, Skype, etc. offers) are also offered by the U3A.



VI. Visits and tours





1) Toulouse University of the Third Age

Toulouse U3A offers a monthly schedule of guided tours, which is included in its basic program. The guide in charge of the tour is a Professor of Art History who is paid €110 to organize one tour per month to Toulouse landmarks. These tours do not require transport or meals and involve walking during the afternoon. They usually attract between 25 and 30 participants. They are free of charge, except for entrance fees to museums and monuments, which are charged to the visitors and cost between €2 and €10.

Toulouse U3A also offers optional tours to surrounding towns three or four times a year. The towns are usually located less than 150 km from Toulouse and include Albi, Rodez, Cahors, Foix, Carcassonne, Condom, Castres, and Cordes sur Ciel. These one-day tours, which include transport, lunch and dinner, are organized by a guide (Professor of History of Art) and a transport company. They are charged between €60 and €100.

Every year, Toulouse U3A offers its students the opportunity to join the AIUTA delegation (International Association of Universities of the Third Age) to take part in its annual conferences in countries as diverse as Poland, China, Japan, Brazil, and Spain. Typically, plane tickets are paid separately by the U3A students themselves whereas the rest of the trip is organized both by a U3A's volunteer in cooperation with the parent U3A in the foreign country.

2) Melbourne University of the Third Age (Australia)

Melbourne University of the Third Age offers a monthly guided walking program called 'neighborhood strolls', which introduces the history of Melbourne, lasting 2 hours in five of Melbourne's older neighborhoods and finishing at a local café. Areas visited include Northcote, Williamstown, Clifton Hill, Yarra River and Collingwood. This program is free of charge for U3A's members.

Melbourne U3A also offers travel opportunities. For example, in 2016, it is selling a tour to the Norfolk Island which is an autonomous island located between Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia. This tour is organized by the Norfolk Island's Travel Centre and open to the entire Australian Universities of the Third Age network. Its purpose is to visit the new Norfolk Island U3A, which is a member of the Australian network. The tour will last 7 days and will include flights, accommodation, local transport, food, visits to Norfolk Island landmarks, several outdoor activities, and courses in the new Norfolk Island U3A.



International Association of Universities of Third Age

Curricula of the Universities of the Third Age

3) University of the Third Age at Comenius University in Bratislava

Lectures are supplemented by outside excursions, which are an essential part of the study of culture, archaeology, astronomy, history of art, history of Bratislava, spas, UNESCO sites, and history of opera among others.

