

IL014-15 Global Connections: A Transdisciplinary Approach

23/24

Department

Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Heather Meyer

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Globalisation has changed our perspectives and experiences of the world through multidimensional, fluid and complex processes that interlink cultural, economic, ideological, political, social and environmental factors. In our increasingly interconnected world, the importance of developing, promoting and enhancing our intercultural awareness and understanding of global connections shouldn't be underestimated. In the wake of counter-globalisation forces and the rise of the national populist movement, a rich and pluralistic appreciation and understanding of 'the global' will be relevant to all Warwick graduates in their personal and professional lives.

'Global Connections' offers a transdisciplinary approach to learning through an innovative and research-led discussion format which encourages students to share insights as co-collaborators. Workshops, multidisciplinary peer group work, and practical activities guide the learning experience, and are facilitated by specialists from a range of subject areas who are engaged in globally-oriented projects. Students are encouraged to integrate their own disciplinary knowledge, personal experiences, and reflections as they examine the complexities of global connections throughout the module.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This module aims to:

1. Critically explore and evaluate how the notion of the 'global' is conceptualised, approached and practiced in the 21st Century, how boundaries are attached to this concept, and where this fits within local, regional and national frameworks and imaginaries.
2. Develop a theoretical and practical understanding of globalisation and global connectivity, as seen through various thematic lenses.
3. Foster problem-based learning that will broaden perspectives, interests, skills and knowledge that reach between and beyond disciplines and subject areas, in order to examine the complexities and interrelatedness of globally-oriented issues.
4. Adopt an approach towards conceptualising knowledge as progressing from one-dimensional, fragmented, and boundary-forming to complex, connected, collaborative and boundary-blurring.
5. Provide an opportunity for students to independently develop, reflect on, explore, manage, and validate their own interest areas, creativity, knowledge base, and skill set.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: 'Global Connections': A Transdisciplinary Approach

This introductory week will explore the two overarching themes of 'global connections' and 'transdisciplinarity'. Students will be introduced to key 'globalisation' theories and begin exploring perceptions of what a 'global connection' means in today's world. This week will set the foundation for the module, including a discussion on transdisciplinary assessment.

Week 2: Global Cultural Flows

This week will explore the notion of 'Culture': how we define and understand it, the extent of its complexity in a globally-connected world, and the power structures that are embedded within these understandings. This week will be contextualised by a case study involving transnational cultural flows.

Week 3: Trade, Commerce and Commodities

This week will explore commodities, trade and commerce as a globally-connected theme, and the power structure that it constructs- creating a global disparity between actors. A sample case study is Caroline Knowles' (2009) 'Journey of a Flip Flop', which explores the global processes linked to the production of a flip flop.

Week 4: Peace and Conflict

This week will explore the theme of Peace and Conflict as related to 'global connections'. It covers areas of global organised crime, the role of identity in conflict, the changing nature of warfare, as well as peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It also looks at the human consequences of conflict.

Week 5: Migration

This week explores the interplay between migration and global connections. It will examine how certain diasporas are contextualised and perceived as 'global', 'regional', 'national', 'local' issues and responsibilities. It will explore the multi-faceted issues associated with South-South mass-migration as a result of complex globally-oriented issues. It will build on the previous week's topic, as mass-migration movements are often linked to Conflict.

Week 6: Global Knowledge Economy

This week will explore the theme of education as a globally-connected, powerful economy which is embedded within power structures supported by external bodies. It will draw on the previous week's discussion on migration, as the global knowledge economy relies on international and transnational communication and mobility. This week will therefore contextualise this problem as related to 'international education' – what this means, who receives it, who finds this type of education attractive, relevant and beneficial. Opportunity for mid-semester feedback.

Week 7: Health

This week will explore global connections under the topic of health and well-being. A possible case study could include an interdisciplinary look into global responses to pandemics - how measures are implemented, who takes responsibility, and the implications of these responses in local, regional, national and international contexts.

Week 8: Climate

This week builds on discussions from Week 7's content on responses to global issues - this time examining how global climate change is affecting different regions of the world, who is taking responsibility, and how global action can be delivered.

Week 9: Media

This week will explore the media's role in reproducing and maintaining global connections. Students will be able to consolidate the module's content here by exploring how the issues covered so far have been reproduced within the media and the ensuing impact of this, globally, nationally, regionally and locally.

Week 10: Peer Review & Feedback / Module Summary

This week will be an opportunity for students to informally present their SDA work and to receive formative feedback from their peers. Students will get the opportunity to reflect on their learning journey over the course of the module, as a concluding activity.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- 1. Demonstrate a theoretical knowledge base and understanding of the complexities of globalisation and/or global connections.
- 2. Critically reflect on their progress, including its applicability beyond academia, in response to and engagement with module content, independent research, and collaboration with peers.
- 3. Critically analyse disciplinary/interdisciplinary boundaries (benefits and limitations) in addressing globally-oriented problems.
- 4. Reference and communicate ideas in a way that demonstrates a familiarity with and grasp

of professional and scholarly practice.

- 5. Apply an interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary approach towards their learning, including towards an independent research project.
- 6. Develop a coherent and informed argument and thesis in response to interrelated, global issues/problems.

Indicative reading list

Adamson, F.B. & Tsourapas, G. (2020) 'The Migration State in the Global South: Nationalizing, Developmental, and Neoliberal Models of Migration Management. *International Migration Review*. 54(3), 853-882.

Appadurai, A. (1996) *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation*. London and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Borkovic, S., Nicolacopoulos, T., Horey, D. & Fortune, T. (2020) 'Students Positioned as Global Citizens in Australian and New Zealand Universities: A Discourse Analysis'. *Higher Education Research and Development*. 39(6), 1106-1121.

Chapman, A. (2018) 'Climate change is triggering a migrant crisis in Vietnam'. *The Conversation*. [online] Available at: <https://theconversation.com/climate-change-is-triggering-a-migrant-crisis-in-vietnam-88791>

Collier, P. (2008) *The bottom billion: why the poorest countries are failing and what can be done about it*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gardner-McTaggart, A.C. (2021) 'Washing the world in whiteness: international schools' policy'. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*. 53(1), 1-20.

Gibbs, P. (2017) *Transdisciplinary Higher Education: a theoretical basis revealed in practice*. Cham: Springer.

Heise, U.K., Christensen, J., Niemann, M. (2017) *The Routledge companion to the environmental humanities*. New York: Routledge.

Kääpä, P. (2018) *Environmental management of the media: policy, industry, practice*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Kickbusch, I., Allen, L. & Franz, C. (2016) 'The commercial determinants of health'. *The Lancet Global Health*. 4(12), 895-896.

Knowles, C. (2014) *Flip-flop: a journey through globalisation's backroads*. London: Pluto Press.

Lechner, F.J. & Boli, J. (2019) *The Globalization Reader*. Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell.

Maxwell, R. & Miller, T. (2012) *Greening the Media*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Meyer, H. (2021) *The Global Imaginary of International School Communities*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Perkins, H.C., Thorns, D.C. 2012. *Place, Identity and Everyday Life in a Globalising World*.

Russett, B.M. & O'Neal, J.R. (2001) *Triangulating peace: democracy, interdependence, and international organizations*. New York: Norton.

Steger, M.B. (2017) *Globalization: A Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Steger, M.B. & James, P. (2019) *Globalization Matters: Engaging the Global in Unsettled Times*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stuckler, D. & Nestle, M. (2012) 'Big Food, Food Systems, and Global Health'. *PLoS Medicine*. 9(6), 1-4.

Te Punga Somerville, A. (2017) 'Where Oceans Come From'. *Comparative Literature*. 69(1), 25-31.

Unnikrishnan, D. *Temporary people: a novel*. Brooklyn: Restless Books.

Vora, N. (2013) *Impossible Citizens: Dubai's Indian Diaspora*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Whyte, K. (2017) 'Indigenous Climate Change Studies: Indigenizing Futures, Decolonizing the Anthropocene' *English Language Notes*. 55(1), 153-162.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Research element

All students will undertake an individual, supervised research project in the form of a Student-Devised Assessment (SDA). Students will work closely with their tutor to develop an interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary project in an agreed format which best articulates their ideas, and will satisfy the learning outcomes for this module. Students who do not choose a traditional academic writing structure for this project (e.g. essay, report) will be required to supplement their piece with an accompanying document which will satisfy the learning outcomes for this module.

Interdisciplinary

This module introduces the theme of 'global connections' through different interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary themes each week. Each week, students will be exposed to new interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary approaches towards the weekly problem-based topic by a specialist contributor (first, in the format of a pre-recorded lecture to be accessed asynchronously online, and then a face-to-face workshop to engage with these themes actively). They will then be given the opportunity to consolidate their knowledge and weekly readings in an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary format. Each specialist contributor will be asked to provide an interdisciplinary case study example contextualising the theories/concepts introduced, so that students are made aware of problem-based learning and the benefits/limitations of tackling them via a single disciplinary approach. Interdisciplinary learning calls for collaboration, and therefore students will be assigned into multidisciplinary working groups to complete weekly tasks together outside of class. Both assessment formats on this module will encourage students to examine issues in an interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary manner, and are designed to facilitate reflective thinking as a significant component of interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary work.

International

The 'Global Connections' module is, in its very nature, international. One of the central objectives is to explore the 'global' as it sits within/among imbalanced, uneven local, national and international orientations and frameworks. Each week, students will be exposed to case studies which are located within a global-local nexus – in the online pre-recorded lectures, in their multidisciplinary peer groups, and ultimately in the face-to-face consolidation workshop. In the consolidation session, they will reflect these perceptions as they relate to disciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary conceptualisations. The guest speakers come from different parts of the globe and their research will reflect this diversity.

This module is an official learning unit of the EUTOPIA European University Alliance, and as such an interdisciplinary project week is incorporated into this module which involves peer-to-peer learning across international borders. Students will have the opportunity to work with students based at other universities around Europe and who are from different disciplinary backgrounds on the theme of 'Migration'. The collaboration between students will result in a certificate of participation issued by EUTOPIA.

Subject specific skills

1. Understand and articulate global issues from a variety of perspectives.
2. Study globally-oriented topics of trade, conflict, migration, culture, health, media and climate in a scholarly manner.
3. Ability to contextualise theories, concepts and methodologies related to the aforementioned themes and overarching topic of 'global connections'.
4. Work with and reflect on case studies to formulate arguments and generate discussion.

Transferable skills

1. Apply critical reflection towards problem-based learning and the development of a transdisciplinary orientation.
2. Analyse a range of approaches towards a problem and appraise their effectiveness.
3. Consider audience in the communication of ideas, information and critical responses in different formats.
4. Challenge existing beliefs, conventions, norms in the pursuit of developing innovative, novel and original responses.
5. Take initiative of individual learning development (academic, professional, scholarly) in a resourceful and ethical manner.
6. Manage time effectively in reflective work, and developing a research project.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	10 sessions of 1 hour 30 minutes (30%)
Project supervision	2 sessions of 1 hour (4%)
Other activity	5 hours (10%)
Private study	28 hours (56%)
Total	50 hours

Private study description

Private study hours include viewing weekly pre-recorded mini presentations accessible on Moodle and delivered by specialist contributors; completing reading for timetabled teaching sessions and follow-up reading work.

Other activity description

Students will be assigned into small, multidisciplinary groups of 5. Each week, groups will meet up outside of class to complete a short activity designed by that week's interdisciplinary specialist contributor and the module convenor. These activities relate to the specialist contributor's pre-recorded 'mini lecture' which will have been made available to students on Moodle and any relevant assigned readings. These multidisciplinary groups give students the opportunity to go over the material together prior to class; collaborate and engage in interdisciplinary discussions with peers from different disciplines; and gain confidence in what are likely going to be very new themes prior to the group face-to-face session each week. Students will have the choice to meet face-to-face or online with their peers, and have autonomy to schedule their meetings as they see fit for their respective groups.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time
Reflective e-Portfolio	40%	40 hours

Weighting

Study time

Students will be required to create, manage and integrate learning reflections and responses in an e-Portfolio. The platform will be an approved format of their choosing (e.g. Mahara). The e-Portfolio will include responses to modular content (e.g. workshops, readings, peer reviews), their wider learning (e.g. transdisciplinarity), and track the development of their ideas and resources towards the production of their final SDA piece.

Student Devised Assessment

60%

60 hours

This is an inter/transdisciplinary research project, demonstrated through a negotiated format. This will be the final piece of assessed work submitted by the student. (2,500 words or equivalent).

Feedback on assessment

Students will receive face-to-face formative feedback/feedforward on their ideas and progression throughout the module by their Tutor. They will receive formative written feedback on their e-Portfolio content and progression, and face-to-face feedback on their proposals towards the final SDA. Students will also receive formative feedback in the form of a peer-review session in Week 10, as students present their preliminary SDA work to their peers. Each submitted Assessment piece will receive detailed written feedback/feedforward by their marker.

Students will also be participating in a pre-assessment task involving EUTOPIA partner universities, whereby they will design together a 'mini SDA' with their international peers across borders. They will then present their work to an international panel of Migration experts to receive feedback. This exercise is designed to prepare students for their final SDA assignment and acquaint them with the marking criteria.

Availability

Courses

This module is Unusual option for:

- UMDA-B990 Undergraduate Health and Medical Sciences
 - Year 2 of B990 Health and Medical Sciences
 - Year 2 of B990 Health and Medical Sciences
 - Year 2 of B990 Health and Medical Sciences

This module is Option list G for:

- USX2-Y202 Undergraduate Social Studies [2 + 2]
 - Year 3 of Y202 Social Studies [2 + 2]
 - Year 3 of Y202 Social Studies [2 + 2]
 - Year 3 of Y202 Social Studies [2 + 2]

This module is Unusual option for:

- Year 2 of UFRA-R101 Undergraduate French Studies