
Overview of LUC's Global Challenge Courses

Global Challenges are the major issues facing humanity across the globe that transcend national, organizational, and disciplinary boundaries. They embody a multitude of interlinked intellectual and practical challenges about how individuals, institutes, societies, political systems, and the physical environment interact, and influence the course of planetary and human events that substantially affect the safety and prosperity of future generations.

Block 1: Peace and Justice

Convener: Dr. Ed Frettingham

This course provides an introduction to peace and justice in world affairs. Both concepts have many meanings and are used in many different ways. In this course, we will examine what they have meant in the context of an international order of sovereign states, and how ideas about peace and justice are changing as this international order is transformed by the forces of globalization. We begin by examining the meaning of peace and justice in the Westphalian system of sovereign states, the system through which international life has been organized in the modern era. In this system, states were regarded as the most significant actors in international life, and they were distinguished from other institutions and groups by their sovereignty: they recognized no higher authority, and had independent control over what happened in their territories. Peace in the Westphalian system meant the absence of war between sovereign states, and justice meant equality among states and non-interference in one another's internal affairs.

Block 2: Sustainability

Convener: Dr. Bríd Walsh

We are living in an era of increasing population, urbanization, transportation, technology and consumption while experiencing increasingly fewer fundamental resources for humans like food, water, ores, and traditional forms of energy. On top of that, driven by human activities the Earth is undergoing a period of unprecedented environmental change, which by now accounts for all fundamental Earth systems and resource provision. This change, spanning from local to global scales, is one of the most pressing challenges for humanity, and the planet's ecosphere as a whole.

Block 3: Prosperity

Convener: Dr. Diana Branduse

Do human societies progress? It seems uncontested that some societies have made immense leaps forward over the last 200 years, reaching levels of wealth and welfare that had long been unthinkable. This is also particularly evident when considering various aspects of individual health, with the global average life expectancy increasing from 52.6 years in 1960 to 72.2 years in 2017. Technology, in all its guises, has been an essential driver of this progress. At the same time, however, it is clear that both welfare and health gains have been unevenly spread: while Norwegians on average live until they are 81 and face a 0.3% chance that their newborn baby will die before the age of 5, Malians only live for 51 years and face a 13% chance of child mortality. To account for this global inequality in development and health outcomes, social scientists argue that innovation and human welfare are contingent on the ways in which people work together, and the rules they construct to facilitate this collaboration (or 'institutions'). This course introduces students to the ways in which institutions shape human welfare and health and in how the 'right' institutions can be designed and reinforced. As such, it provides students with analytical tools to understand and address the global challenges of governance, health policy and international development.

Block 4: Diversity

Convener: Dr. Ajay Gandhi

Human variation is fascinating: we have infinite ways to imagine, organize, and express ourselves. Given this multiplicity, how do we begin to understand diversity? We might say it includes how we know and understand the world, and the way we interact and make claims in that world. Diversity includes how societies divide themselves and relate to others. It concerns moral consequences, political logics, and scientific rationales. And it pertains to the practices and spaces where difference matters. This course is a holistic introduction to how the humanities and social sciences have approached such topics. It examines diversity's experiential, epistemological, institutional, and ethical aspects.

	Peace (bk-1)	Sustainability (bk-2)	Prosperity (bk-3)	Diversity (bk-4)
Skills:	<p>Critically evaluate the central explanatory and normative frameworks for understanding international and global peace and justice.</p> <p>To research, develop and defend coherent, well-evidenced, and well-reasoned arguments on key controversies in international peace and justice.</p> <p>To communicate arguments effectively orally, and in writing</p>	<p>Begin to evaluate scientific evidence and provide descriptions of scientific assumptions and their importance</p> <p>Evaluate simple algebraic equations relating to sustainability and environmental impacts</p> <p>Begin to be able to synthesize and present data in intuitive ways</p> <p>Conduct a reasoned, fact-based debate between multiple stakeholders of an environmental and developmental challenge by comparing different viewpoints and contrasting different factual statements.</p>	<p>Critically read and evaluate scholarly literature in the social sciences with a focus on identifying driving assumptions and theoretical mechanisms.</p> <p>Critically present, interpret and assess basic social science comparative data and indicators.</p> <p>Practice academic writing, with a focus on both developing well-constructed arguments and on the critical evaluation of these arguments.</p> <p>Apply theoretical concepts to real-life scenarios and understand the challenges and limitations of such applications.</p>	<p>Students will gain proficiency in general humanistic and social science analysis.</p> <p>They will learn the vocabulary, techniques, and styles of fields including anthropology, sociology, history, literature, and journalism.</p> <p>An emphasis on debate and discussion improves confidence in listening comprehension and verbal argumentation, and capacity to assess what is convincing in social science and humanities research.</p> <p>Throughout the course, students write weekly reflections, as part of a course portfolio, to hone their reading comprehension, show awareness of authorial argumentation, and learn how to offer their own interpretive assessment.</p> <p>A final paper allows students to demonstrate interdisciplinary synthesis and empirically-driven theoretical analysis.</p>
Content:	<p>To identify the most important ways peace and justice have been conceptualized in modern international affairs, and how they are changing.</p> <p>Distinguish explanatory and normative accounts of international and global peace and justice.</p> <p>Understand the key features of realist and liberal approaches to international peace and justice.</p> <p>To identify and understand the key terms of debates about global justice in international ethics, and to be able to apply the major principles of the just war tradition.</p> <p>To understand the nature and role international law in global peace and justice, and how it is changing.</p>	<p>Describe what characterizes ecosystems and biodiversity and specify how human activities impact ecosystem functioning, freshwater resources, air quality, soils, nutrient cycling and organisms including global public health;</p> <p>Understand how we add to the body of scientific knowledge by using the scientific method of reasoning;</p> <p>Describe the causes, evidence, and consequences of global climate change for environmental and human systems (regarding water and food security, global public health);</p> <p>Name trends and implications of energy consumption, fossil fuel use, and renewable energies production as regards maintaining beneficial environmental conditions;</p> <p>Describe and discuss the role of different</p>	<p>Understand the diversity of scholarly approaches in conceptualizing and measuring human prosperity and development; and be able to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses and applicability to different contexts of these approaches. Link prosperity and health to the key challenge of human cooperation.</p> <p>Understand the logic of collective action and principal-agent models as analytical tools to study challenges in human cooperation.</p> <p>Consider three broad categories of solutions conducive to cooperation in prosperity and health, namely the market, state and community. Be able to identify the promises and pitfalls of each. Understand the trade-offs implied by choosing one solution over another and the degree to which they are mixed in real-life cases.</p> <p>Explore the role health plays in development and human prosperity and analyze real-world cases of market, state and community health policies.</p> <p>Learn about intervention strategies in development</p>	<p>This course gives students a comparative and interdisciplinary introduction to the experiential, epistemological, institutional, and ethical patterning of diversity.</p> <p>Students are introduced to four cross-cutting domains relevant to any aspect of social variation. These analytical entry points are: configuration, negotiation, representation, and creation.</p>

	<p>To demonstrate knowledge of the significance of human rights for international and global peace and justice, and the implications of humanitarian intervention for the Westphalian model.</p> <p>To demonstrate knowledge of the differences between political, ethical and legal approaches to international peace and justice.</p>	<p>stakeholders in decision-making processes related to environmental change;</p> <p>Understand how their own behaviour links to environmental change, and which steps can be taken to reduce their impact.</p> <p>Understand how their own behavior links to environmental change, and which steps can be taken to reduce their impact</p>	<p>and health and think about the responsibility that comes with promoting any such intervention.</p>	
Weekly topics	<p>Week 1: Introduction – Peace and Justice in a World of Sovereign States</p> <p>Week 2: Anarchy and Power</p> <p>Week 3: Institutions and Cooperation</p> <p>Week 4: Global Ethics</p> <p>Week 5: International Law</p> <p>Week 6: Human Rights</p> <p>Week 7: Conclusion – Peace and Justice beyond Westphalia?</p>	<p>Week 1: Introduction to Global Challenge Sustainability – focus on ecosystems</p> <p>Week 2: Biodiversity and agriculture</p> <p>Week 3: Climate change and human health</p> <p>Week 4: Our global energy use</p> <p>Week 5: The soil resource</p> <p>Week 6: Food waste and consumer decision-making</p> <p>Week 7: Tragedy of the commons</p>	<p>Week 1: What is Prosperity?</p> <p>Week 2: Why is working together so hard? Collective action and principal-agent problems</p> <p>Week 3: The Market</p> <p>Week 4: The State</p> <p>Week 5: Community</p> <p>Week 6: Prosperity & Health</p> <p>Week 7: Intervention strategies</p>	<p>Week 1: Empathy (Representation, Recognition, and Responsibility)</p> <p>Week 2: Orientation (Navigation and Conceptualization)</p> <p>Week 3: Demarcation (Divisions and Boundaries)</p> <p>Week 4: Fear (Consent and Morality)</p> <p>Week 5: Desire (Recognition and Imagination)</p> <p>Week 6: Estrangement (Freedom and Mobility)</p> <p>Week 7: Accommodation (Convergences and Adjustments)</p>
Assessment:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seminar participation: 10% (ongoing, weeks 1-7) 2. Group presentation: 15% (weeks 2-6) 3. Essay: 35% (2000 words, week 6) 4. Final Exam: 40% (2 hours, week 8) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-class participation: Weight: 10%, deadline: weeks 1-7 2. Ecological Footprint: Weight: 20%, deadline: Week 2 3. Scientific Paper Analysis: Weight: 20%, deadline: Week 4 4. Stakeholder Fact Sheet: Weight: 10%, deadline: Week 5 5. Stakeholder Debate: Weight: 10%, deadline: Week 6 6. Final Exam: Weight: 30%, Week 8 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class Participation: 10% (All weeks) 2. Factsheet: 15% (week 1) 3. Case application: 20% (week 3) 4. Solution Essay: 20% (week 6) 5. Final exam: 35% (week 8) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In-class participation – 10% – Ongoing 2. Midterm Exam – 20% – Week 4 3. Course Portfolio (regular postings and a summary reflection) – 35% – Week 7 4. Final Paper (2000 words) – 35% Week 8