

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies.

The Universitas 21 'Global Issues Programme'

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Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies

Global Competencies:

Awareness – what are the challenges facing global society?

Skill-set – ability to interact within an increasingly globalised environment

Sensitivity towards cultural differences

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies



Universitas 21

Estab. 1997

21 'leading research-intensive universities'

13 countries

650,000 enrolled students; 130,000 staff

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies



Universitas 21 Goals (1997)

- a global focus and perspective
- a commitment to excellence in all we do
- a commitment of those involved to collaborative and co-operative work and spirit while ensuring there are clear outcomes
- a determination to achieve added value
- a constant striving for innovation and the creation of multilateral opportunities for members
- sustainability of activity

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies



Undergraduate Activities

- Student Exchanges
- Annual Summer Workshops (since 2003)
- Undergraduate Research Conferences (since 2005)
- Global Issues Programme (since 2004)

<http://www.universitas21.com/undergraduates.html>



Global Issues Programme

Under-graduate 'certificate' for high achieving students

Interdisciplinary and highly interactive fully online courses that help to 'equip graduates with knowledge and competencies which will enable them to work and participate as global citizens'



Global Issues Programme

Participating Institutions

University of Auckland*

Hong Kong University*

University of Melbourne

University of British Columbia

University of Nottingham

Lund University

Tecnológico de Monterrey

University of Queensland

* Since left the programme



Global Issues Programme

- 15 Online Modules
 - Global Citizenship*
 - Conceptions in World Politics*
 - Globalisation and Social Change*
 - Globalisation and Culture
 - Globalisation and the Law
 - International Peacekeeping
 - Globalisation & the World Economy
 - Asia, the Pacific and the West in the World History
 - Human Rights & International Politics
 - International Negotiation
 - 49 Campus-Based Modules
 - eg. University of Queensland
 - Global Cultures and Tourism
 - Managing in the Global Workplace
 - Economic Institutions and Global Banking
 - International Organisations and Political Cooperation
 - World Women
 - International Inequality
 - Health and Social Justice in Global Contexts
 - Globalisation and Economic Development
- * 'core' modules



Global Issues Programme

The U21 'Global Issues' Undergraduate certificate

Students take FOUR modules:

- no more than TWO from their own university

- at least TWO 'online' of which ONE must be a 'core' module



Global Issues Programme

Participating Institutions may impose their own 'pathways', or allow students to select from across the module provision

Compulsory 'core' modules

- Ensure a common learning experience for all students enrolled.
- Ensure the principal learning objectives of the GIP are met, irrespective of choice of elective modules.
- Provide 'foundation' level introductions to key themes.



Global Issues Programme

GIP addresses 'global competencies' in two ways:

Content

The modules tackle the issue of globalisation, and its attendant social, political, economic, cultural and environmental implications, from a broad perspective. Their focus is global, not regional, and they seek to encompass a wide range of theoretical perspectives.

Pedagogy

They provide opportunities for collaborative work in multi-disciplinary and multi-cultural teams and using interactive material and technologies.

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies

Challenges of using 'virtual exchanges' to develop
global competencies

Technical:

- Investment in Online provision
- Administrative capacity
- Real time teaching across a different time-zones

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies

‘Being in different parts of the world became more of a handicap than a plus. Indeed, it is hard to have discussions when there is 12 hours time difference. I would, for example post something before going to bed and by the time I had woken up, most of the discussion would already be over’

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies

Challenges of using 'virtual exchanges' to develop
global competencies

Technical:

- Investment in Online provision
- Administrative capacity
- Real time teaching across a different time-zones
- Diverse approaches to teaching, learning, assessment etc.

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies

‘It was ... apparent that students had been brought up to foster certain academic approaches which were interesting to compare and debate.’

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies

Does the GIP develop global competencies?

‘For Global Issues it was intriguing to discuss issues with people from all around the world ... The discussions were enriching and helpful’

‘The global aspects were really emphasised and as most students were from around the globe, or at least at different global Universities, there was a clear trend towards ‘global thinking’.

The format, ‘allowed people to bring different case studies to the table – it is often easier to talk about what you are familiar with and people from all over the globe are familiar with different global aspects.’.

Virtual Exchanges for the Development of Global Competencies

Where can we go from here?

- Lack of 'genuine' diversity within student body
- opening GIP out to non-U21 institutions?
- 'Graduate' GIP?