

Global Crossroads Global Learning Courses Call for Participation

As the world becomes more globally interconnected, colleges and universities have increased efforts to provide students opportunities to develop the skills and awareness of self and others they will need to work across differences domestically and internationally. To this end, institutions of higher education are seeking ways not only to send their students out to experience the world, but to also bring the world to them. One mechanism to accomplish this that is receiving close attention is connecting students in geographically distant locations to collaboratively engage in critical and reflective learning in ways that provide a range of global perspectives and develop cultural competence.

Seven years ago, the Global Liberal Arts Alliance launched the Global Course Connections program with the first set of courses offered in fall 2013. Global Course Connections “connects” a course offered on an Alliance campus in one country to a course offered on an Alliance campus in another country, providing the courses with a unique cross-cultural dimension. Globally connected courses need not be the same course or from the same discipline; what matters is that the courses explore one or more topics through the lens of different cultural perspectives. Planned classroom interactions as well as the unplanned, informal exchanges that occur affect how students think about parts of the world very different from their own. This can be especially powerful when it leads to insights that challenge students’ thinking about their own culture, how they perceive themselves, and how they perceive those with a different cultural background.

Anecdotes shared by students and instructors in the early years suggested that the cross-cultural interactions inherently part of these course connections led to greater cultural competence. This was confirmed through a research project done by two GLCA faculty members that assessed courses in the Global Course Connections program. The project found that globally connected courses can have positive impacts on students with respect to developing cultural competence. The study’s findings align with those from other studies looking at global learning experiences.

The Global Learning Courses program is part of the Global Crossroads Initiative and is focused on internationalization of the curriculum at GLCA schools. Like the Global Course Connections program, the Global Learning Courses program seeks to complement internationalization efforts by connecting courses in ways that leverage the expertise and cultural diversity of the thirty colleges and universities in the Global Liberal Arts Alliance.

Courses offered through the Global Learning Courses program differ from courses in the Global Course Connections program in three respects.

1. Developing cultural competence must be an assessable outcome of all Global Learning courses.
2. Global Learning courses must have at least two thirds of their syllabi in common.
3. At least one of the schools in each connection must be a GLCA school. The partner may be any school in the Alliance (this includes the thirteen schools of the GLCA).

The departments offering connected courses need not be the same, and the courses may include additional topics and materials, reflecting disciplinary differences. Course instructors collaborate on the creation of a shared conceptual framework for their courses, including learning outcomes,

concepts, topics, readings/viewings, assignments, and rubrics. Assignments students work on in cross-course groups leverage cultural, geographic and/or disciplinary differences to enrich the conversation and deepen students' understanding of course content. Planning for Global Learning Courses will have a longer timeframe than Globally Connected Courses.

Course Topics

There is a wide range of topics that can leverage the expertise and cultural diversity of the Alliance in ways that create powerful learning opportunities for instructors and students. A short list of possibilities includes: gender, food, the environment, communication, human rights, freedom of the press, political systems, area studies, health and wellness, inequalities, and peace/conflict studies. It is expected that courses that fulfill a "global learning" graduation requirement will be good candidates.

Global Learning Course Requirements

Global Learning Courses should have the following characteristics:

Cultural competence is an assessable course outcome.

They share at least two thirds of their syllabi.

The common portion of the syllabi explores course topics through the cultures of the campuses' host countries and/or the disciplinary perspectives of the connected courses.

There is significant interaction between the students through joint assignments involving cross-course groups resulting in a collaboratively developed product. Collaboration must be between sets of partnered students and must go beyond mere exchange of information.

Materials developed for the common part of the course (syllabus, readings, viewings, assignments, guides, rubrics) will be shared through a repository using a Creative Commons License.

Course instructors attend an annual workshop. A GLCA instructor might also travel to a partner's campus to plan the course.

Course instructors and students participate in course and program evaluation.

Past courses have been most successful when enrollment has been limited to 20 and the numbers of students between the paired courses have been relatively close.

Support

Faculty members who offer a Global Learning course are supported through stipends and professional development opportunities.

Stipend for initial course development and delivery: \$2,500 per instructor – \$1,500 to develop the course and \$1,000 to offer it (for subsequent offerings \$500 to update the course and \$500 to offer it, as well as travel support for GLCA faculty member to go to the partner's campus).

Summer workshop to learn about cultural competence, to co-develop the syllabi and to design the course, including learning about relevant technologies. The workshop is usually held in June at an Alliance school outside the U.S. If needed, there is support for the GLCA partner to travel to their course partner's campus for additional course development before or after the June workshop.

How to Participate

Step 1: Expression of Interest – Complete the [course description form](#) to let us know that you would like to offer a Global Learning course. The form asks for course title, level, prerequisites, description, when the course is to be taught next, and expected enrolment.

Step 2: Find a Course Partner – You can suggest a course partner, or we can help find one. You can express preferences if you wish. For example, connect to a course in a specific area, department, or Alliance school.

Step 3: Submit a Proposal – Once you have a course partner, you and your course partner submit a proposal to offer the course.