

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: Participatory Futures

Course Number and Section:

GLE

3001G 550

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

We live in a fast-changing world with interconnected crises, some are calling it a permacrisis¹. The ability to understand, shape, anticipate, accept and adapt to change is a skill that every leader should constantly cultivate personally and collectively. Even more so in a society where the information overload constantly pulls our attention in a new direction favouring short-termism and immediate results over longer term benefits.

“A broad range of researchers, artists, technologists and philosophers are now converging on the idea that short-termism may be the greatest threat our species is facing this century.” (NESTA, 2019)

1. permacrisis: an extended period of instability and insecurity, especially one resulting from a series of catastrophic events. Collins Dictionary’s word of the year for 2022

Thinking about and shaping the future should be a whole-of-society endeavour to ensure the benefits are widespread and decisions have legitimacy by including as many perspectives as possible.

During this course, students will learn about the importance of honing their future-oriented thinking to improve decision-making and taking action. Students will practice different tools to develop their own future-thinking skills and to develop participatory futures. Including how to: identify signals of change, stay up to date with the main future forces, imagine vivid future scenarios, use backcasting methods and adopt a flexible mindset to avoid a resistance to change and to different perspectives.

Learning Outcomes:

Identify the main global trends and future forces

Use the tools and activities practiced during the course to improve their own future-thinking and anticipatory skills in their personal and professional lives

Have a basic of understanding of anticipatory and other future-thinking related skills

Describe multiple examples of people and initiatives around the world that employ their future-thinking skills to solve their challenges now and in the future

Textbooks and Course Materials:

This course is based primarily on the following materials:

1. McGonigal, Jane. *Imaginable: How to See the Future Coming and Feel Ready for Anything—Even Things That Seem Impossible Today*. Spiegel & Grau, 2021.
2. Engle, Jane, et al. *Sacred Civics: Building Seven Generation Cities*. 1st ed., Routledge, 2022.
3. Ramos, Jose, et al. *Our Futures: By the People, for the People - How Mass Involvement in Shaping the Future Can Solve Complex Problems*. NESTA, 2019.

Additional course materials can include a variety of source materials such as reports, academic articles, book chapters, videos, podcasts and graphic novels and will be made available via OWL's weekly checklist.

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Short Multiple Choice Quizzes		20%
Future's Report	06/21/24	25%
My Trip to the Future Essay	06/21/24	25%
In-Class Future Simulation I	06/06/24	10%
In-Class Future Simulation II	06/13/24	10%
In-Class Future Simulation III	06/20/24	10%

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Tuesday, April 2, 2024