

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

5CLST005W Democratic Engagement in an International Context



MODULE CONVENOR

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Welcome and Introduction

This handbook provides all the information you need regarding the module's content and assessment requirements.

It includes the module's aims and learning outcomes, assessment weighting and assessment criteria, the lecture and seminar topics, essay questions, reading lists, rules for referencing and bibliography, and also includes the university assessment regulations.

Why Study this module?

This hybrid multidisciplinary face-to-face and online module engages students 'democratically' by promoting values, practices, and participation locally and internationally. In addition, it develops students' collaborative leadership skills by empowering them to work collectively and creatively from universities and organisations globally with countries such as Vietnam, Turkey, Thailand, and Uzbekistan. The choice of country may vary from year to year, depending on the political and environmental conditions. However, the focus will be on exploring countries and encouraging students to make meaningful comparisons vis-à-vis their cultural settings.

A series of workshops will introduce students to the country and the discipline they study, including history, society, languages, politics, international development, sociology, criminology, psychology, business studies, economics, and modern languages. Apart from providing pre-recorded lectures, academics also support and supervise the student's coursework.

The module will culminate with a field trip visit by the students to one of our partner institutions to complete their research. This allows students to apply the concepts they are learning in the classroom to real-world situations. It also exposes them to different perspectives, ways of thinking, and opportunities to network with professionals in their field of study.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module, the student will be able to:

1. Appreciate the value of collaborative working in an international context;
2. understand and value the dynamics of knowledge creation in transnational and cross-cultural settings;
3. demonstrate their leadership skills by working collectively, co-creatively (with equality, diversity and inclusion at the forefront);
4. develop creative solutions for managing projects in a wide range of cultural contexts, specifically with an international focus;
5. make connections with international partners, including locating the value of their learning for the 'real' world;
6. take the lead in developing opportunities for international collaboration, with research and knowledge exchange at the forefront.

What do we want to achieve?

Upon successful completion of the module students will be able to demonstrate the following Level 5 learning outcomes, including:

- A detailed understanding of the contemporary agenda of global security and the key issues in the study of contemporary politics and international relations in the context of cognate disciplines
- A critical awareness of conflicting narratives of the state, governance, security and geopolitics, particularly since the Cold War, in relation to society and to the international community
- Knowledge and understanding of different political systems and the regional dynamics of International Relations, with specific focus on the politics, society and culture of Europe, the Middle East, Asia and/or Africa
- An understanding of the responsibilities of global citizen, especially as it relates to conceptions of civic responsibility and global engagement through cross-cultural and cross-national perspectives
- An appreciation of the role of social science methodologies, particularly comparative method, and of political research skills in the research process
- An understanding of the varieties of approaches to constructing and interpreting the international system, especially through concepts and theories derived from the social sciences
- The ability to use communication and information technology, including audio-visual technology, for the retrieval and presentation of information, including, where appropriate, statistical or numerical information, and to synthesise material from a wide range of sources in academic and professionally relevant tasks.

Teaching Pattern

The module is delivered in a hybrid mode in a workshop format with close coordination and collaboration between the University of Westminster and the selected partner institutions. It will cover five significant areas and an optional section: an international student conference to encourage students to present their research findings.

1. Democratic engagement in a cross-global context

In the first two weeks, students are expected to write a summary of 400 words blog about the module and democratic engagement and collaboration within a cross-global context. During workshops, students will review each other's blogs to become familiar with each other and what is expected from them.

2. Learning beyond boundaries

Students will develop their understanding of the social and historical evolution of the country where they will be conducting their fieldwork.

3. Transnational and cross-cultural collaboration

We aim to include one student from a partner university to work in each team. Depending on student numbers, we anticipate that groups will be between 2-3 students each. Students identify relevant literature related to their discipline and the project they are undertaking. They will also develop the relationship between the research project and cultural settings and explore through a

detailed examination. The module leader will meet each group online to check their progress once every two weeks.

4. Preparing for collaborative learning and leadership

Students will play an active role in developing an international field trip's understanding and teaching agenda. This will involve scheduling events, including experiential opportunities for Westminster students and students at the partner university.

5. Field trip

The fieldwork of 8-10 days will be based on study visits, guest lectures from local universities and workshops and will provide students with opportunities to explore modes of learning beyond the university.

6. Democratic Education Network annual conference and publication

Students will be encouraged to present their research findings in a symposium that will be structured as a one-day workshop with 'critical friends' or 'discussants' at DEN's annual conference. The conference will be hybrid to ensure students and project collaborators from partner universities will join us. Students' final report will be considered for Publication in DEN's annual book.

The lectures will serve as an introduction to the country chosen for the fieldtrip and the practicalities of undertaking an intensive research programme in an international setting. The fieldwork will be based on study visits, guest lectures from local universities and seminars and will provide students with opportunities to explore modes of learning beyond the University.

Teaching and learning methods

All the sessions will be in a workshop format, with students allocated to chair and take notes at each session. The module leader will provide an overall structure and agenda for the sessions, but students will be expected to actively lead each workshop. The materials, module handbook, session agenda, and guidelines will be available on a dedicated Google drive (to enable access for our international partners) and Blackboard. The sessions will be face-to-face and online interaction with students and staff from our partner university.

Students will attend workshops. Lecturers introduce essential knowledge, theoretical perspectives and debates as a framework for further study.

Part One: Introduction	
27th of Sep	1- Introduction to the module • Dr Farhang Morady
Part Two: explanations	
4th of October	2- Exploration and innovation in cross-cultural contexts • Dr Kalpana Surendranath
11th of October	3- Local and global dimensions of Higher Education • Dr Andy Pitchford

18 th of October	4- Education beyond boundaries - Dr Thomas Moore
25 th of October	5- Challenges of cross-cultural collaboration • Professor Dibyesh Anand
1 st of November	6- Student Engagement Week
Part Three: A Case Study	
8 th of November	7- Introduction to Thailand – Dr Farhang Morady & Dr Nadhawe Bunnag
15 th November	8- Bangkok and the University of Kasetsart – Dr Farhang Morady and Dr Nadhawe Bunnag
22 nd November	9- Methodology for Conducting Cross-Cultural Research - Dr Farhang Morady and Dr Nadhawe Bunnag
Students' presentation and preparation for the field trip	
29 th of November	10 – Preparing your presentation for workshop
6 th of December	11 – Preparing your presentation for workshop
12 th of December	12- Field Trip in Bangkok, Thailand

Online Discussion board

An online forum, or message board, or Google drive, where you can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. This is different from normal class-rooms, face-to-face discussion or chat rooms in that messages are longer than one line of text, and are at least temporarily archived.

Online workshop when possible, will be an avenue to check your understanding of the lectures, examine different issues raised and encourage engagement and critical thinking.

Workshops: Every other Wednesdays: 13:00-15:00 (with breaks), online Blackboard Ultra

Attendance will be electronically recorded – please logon on time

Assessment Methods

Rank	Assessment Name	Assessment type	Weighting %	Qualifying Mark	Qualifying set (where the minimum mark required applies across multiple assessments)

001	Portfolio: write and review 4 blogs of 400 words each	Portfolio	25%		B1 - 17-10-23 B2- 23-10-23 B3-17-11-23 B4-20-12-23
002	Presentation (10 minutes)	Presentation	25%		Bangkok
003	Report (1,500 words)	Coursework	50%		9-01-2024

Assessment rationale

The assessment methods have been chosen to ensure the best possible alignment in relation to the assessment of student achievement concerning the module's learning outcomes. There are two types of assessment in this module – formative and summative

Assessment criteria: what criteria will be used to assess my work on this module?

CW1: Portfolio: write and review blogs.

- The module leader and students will facilitate a variety of blogs during workshop sessions to support in the learning process.
- Peer review of the blog, learning and feedback.
- Must reflect students' understanding of the module, the subject they study, and their project plan.

How to answer Blog 1

- students are expected to read the module handbook and demonstrate their understanding of the course and the expectations.
 - Ensure you have read the module handbook and demonstrate your understanding of the course and the expectations.
 - Cover the key areas or sections of the module and the relevant concepts and theories.
 - Explain the nature of the coursework and why it is designed the way it is. Also, discuss the rationale behind coursework 1, 2 and 3.
 - Discuss how field trips can help you with your learning.

How to answer Blog 2

- summarise the critical points covered in sessions 2, 3, and 4.
- Discuss the key points of sessions 2, 3, and 4 and their relevance to Psychology, Criminology, Sciences, Law, Politics, and IR.
- When you are writing your blog, please read and refer to the weekly readings that we have recommended.
- Explain the importance of these points to the field trip.

How to Answer Blog 3

- Discuss the critical points of sessions 5, 7, and 8 and their relevance to Biomedical Science, Cognitive and Clinical Neuroscience, Criminology, International Relations, International

Relations and Development, Law, Politics, Politics and International Relations, Psychology and Psychology and Counselling.

- When you are writing your blog, please read and refer to the weekly readings that we have recommended.
- Explain the importance of these points to your presentation and the field trip.
- **Blog 4:** Summarize your reflection on the module and the field trip.
- In what ways the module has developed you academically?
- Specifically, what has the field trip taught you, and how do you plan to use this experience in the future?
- What have you learned that will support you in the year 3 course?

CW2: Presentation

- Presentation (10-minute presentation followed by a Q+A session).
- Provide a summary of the research project considered to develop whilst on the field trip.
- Provide and reflect critically on the concepts and theories related to the project.
- Defend a detailed analysis of the debates surrounding the project.

CW3: Report

- A project report based on research contextualised in the relevant literature and reflecting upon findings from working with international colleagues and the field trip;
- Demonstrates understanding of team working, with reflection on collaborative approaches used in developing the project;
- must be written up individually to reflect upon the theoretical and methodological issues involved in researching specific issues of the country and their subject of study;
- it must have correct use of the English language and is written in a clear and scholarly style.

Link to the online reading list

Reading Lists are available on Blackboard.

The current reading list for this module can be accessed via:

<https://rl.talis.com/3/westminster/lists/E0542D84-DF68-B110-0AC2-915EB9C3EA92.html?lang=en&login=1>

Additional Reading

Week 3

Ritzer, G. (2015) *The McDonaldisation of Society: An Investigation into the Changing Character of Contemporary Social Life*. London: Pine Forge Press.

George Ritzer, Petar Jandrić & Sarah Hayes (2018) The velvet cage of educational con(pro)sumption, *Open Review of Educational Research*, 5:1, 113-129, DOI: [10.1080/23265507.2018.1546124](https://doi.org/10.1080/23265507.2018.1546124)

Week 4

For tomorrow's class, please, could you read pages 3-13 (chapter 1) from Ivan Illich's *Deschooling Society*:

https://monoskop.org/images/1/17/Illich_Ivan_Deschooling_Society.pdf

watch this 12-minute video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-C2i9Iq9vY>

Week 5

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be available via Blackboard within 3 weeks of submission (15 working days). Feedback can also be obtained by discussing with a module leader during feedback and support hours.

Word Limit Policy

Each assessment will have a specified word length range (i.e. a word count which includes the main text and notes but excludes the bibliography). The department does not permit a margin of 10% over the stated word limit: the word count is the absolute maximum. Students should be aware that the marker will not consider any work after the maximum word limit has been reached within the allocation of marks. Please note that the exclusion of concluding material in excess of the permitted maximum word count may substantively reduce the quality of the coursework submitted. It may also mean that the eligible part of the submission fails to include information needed to meet the stated learning outcomes for the assessment. In this way, students will be penalised for a failure to be concise and for failing to conclude their work within the word limit specified.

SUBMISSION OF COURSEWORK

All coursework on this module is submitted via Blackboard only. It will automatically be scanned through the Turnitin Plagiarism Detection Service software.

i. You DO need to include your name and student ID on the first page of your assignment.

To submit your assignment:

i. Log on to Blackboard at <http://learning.westminster.ac.uk>;

ii. Go to the relevant module Blackboard site;

iii. Click on the 'Assessments' link on the left-hand side;

iv. Click on the link to the relevant assignment;

v. Follow the 'upload' and 'submit' instructions.

A two-minute video showing the submission process can be found by following this link:

ii. <http://www.youtube.com/user/SSHUniWestminster#p/u/0/l-ZQs4nSWL4>

You will receive separate instructions about how and when you will receive feedback on your work.

It is a requirement that you submit your work in this way. All coursework must be submitted by 1pm on the due date. If you submit your coursework late but within 24 hours or one working day of the specified deadline, 10% of the overall marks available for that element of assessment will be deducted, as a penalty for late submission, except for work which obtains a mark in the range 40 – 49%, in which case the mark will be capped at the pass mark (40%).

If you submit your coursework more than 24 hours or more than one working day after the specified deadline you will be given a mark of zero for the work in question.

Late work and any claim of mitigating circumstances relating to coursework must be submitted at the earliest opportunity to ensure as far as possible that the work can still be marked. Late work will not normally be accepted if it is received more than five working days after the original coursework deadline.

Once the work of other students has been marked and returned, late submissions of that same piece of work cannot be assessed.

Online feedback via GradeMark

The Department of Politics and International Relations offers online feedback on written coursework via GradeMark (accessed via Blackboard). Failure to submit your essay via Blackboard will mean that your coursework will not be graded and subsequently will not count towards your assessment for this module.

FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING COURSEWORK

In addition to the information contained in this Module Handbook, which is specific to the assessment for the module, you need to be aware of general guidance and policies for coursework submission in Politics & IR.

Instructions and guidance relating to these and other procedures can be found in the **PIR Red Book**. You should consider this your 'How To' guide. The *PIR Red Book* can be found on the [Politics and International Relations Blackboard site](#).

The current version of the **Politics and IR Course Handbook** provides detailed information about regulations relating to:

- Submitting your work
- Late submission
- Plagiarism and referencing
- Mitigating circumstances
- Word limits
- Essay grading

The *Politics and IR Course Handbook* can be found on the [Politics and International Relations Blackboard site](#).

For information about Academic progression, condoned credits, and referral opportunities, see the [Handbook of Academic Regulations](#) (section 17).

USEFUL INFORMATION & CONTACTS

Fitzrovia Registry, fitzregistry@westminster.ac.uk 020 7911 5884, first floor, 115 New Cavendish Street: all the rules on modules/changing modules/course, changing seminar group + mitigating circumstances.

Disability: if you have an undeclared disability and/or are in need of support, you sign-up for a drop-in appointment or a longer appointment by calling 02350668800 or emailing DLS@westminster.ac.uk. You can also sign-up for a disability advisor appointment, a Specific Learning Difficulty advisor appointment, or a Specialist Study Skills appointment. For those who suspect they have dyslexia and dyspraxia, there is a preliminary screening (not a diagnosis) that they can do online and they can discuss the results in person. The DLS also provide mental health mentors who help registered students manage the impact of their conditions on their studies. For more information visit: www.westminster.ac.uk/disability.

Counselling & Wellbeing (counselling@westminster.ac.uk): if you need any support with mental health/counselling issues, the University has a free counselling service at the Cavendish Campus. For more information visit: westminster.ac.uk/counselling.

