

Course title: Collective Intelligence, Global Challenges, and Planetary Wellbeing

Language of instruction: English

Professor: José L. Martí, Agnès Díaz Castellano

Professor's contact and office hours: josepluis.marti@upf.edu; agnes.diaz@upf.edu; TBD

Course contact hours: 45

Recommended credit: 6 ECTS credits

Course prerequisites: there are no prerequisites for this course

Language requirements: Cambridge Certificate or equivalent level

Course focus and approach:

This is an interdisciplinary course that will combine international relations, international law, democratic theory, political philosophy, new technology and political science in order to analyze the planetary challenges that we face, especially in the public sector, and the kind of institutional responses that might be most adequate to solve them. The approach will rely on three different frameworks: United Nations' Initiative for the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), Pompeu Fabra University's [Planetary Wellbeing Initiative](#), and Professor [Beth S. Noveck's methodology](#) for finding and implementing more innovative, effective, and legitimate solutions to public problems through collective intelligence. The course will follow an active methodology based on problem-based and project-based learning as well as on collaborative learning.

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Course description:

We live in a new era characterized by globalization and the digital revolution, and by the emergence of new planetary challenges and threats that require global, collective and effective solutions. These planetary challenges and threats include climate emergency, global health, nuclear security, global inequality, migratory movements, tax evasion, global terrorism, digital security and privacy, etc. All these challenges are global, complex, and interrelated. They need a response that is also global, intelligent and effective. An adequate management of them requires a holistic approach such as the United Nations's framework of Sustainable Development Goals and UPF's proposal for "planetary wellbeing". This course will study how global institutions, as well as nation states, cities and others actors, can face global challenges like those mentioned above. Their responses will need to be creative and intelligent. This is why this course will focus on the new ways in which collective intelligence, crowdsourcing methods and public involvement in decision making in general can enhance the quality of global responses to these challenges. Students will be exposed to some successful practical examples of collective intelligence enhanced through new technologies, like the idea of

Crowdlaw, which might combine data analysis, machine learning, AI, Blockchain and even virtual reality with the aim of improving public decision making.

The course will also focus on the conditions under which international organizations, states and cities can make or contribute to make international legal decisions that might provide solutions to these problems in a way that preserves democratic legitimacy and justice. For that purpose, this course will combine the study of global governance, and new technologies with political philosophy, legal philosophy, international law and international relations. After being exposed to all these existing solutions, students will be asked to be creative and work collectively to learn from each other and to find the best solutions to the problems they choose to work in. Each student will have to work on a particular problem, but he/she will share with the rest of the class his/her work and proposed solutions and all students will help each other to refine their final proposals

Learning objectives:

1. Understanding how the world has changed and how it now faces new global, complex challenges that require quick, collective, and effective solutions and a holistic concern for planetary wellbeing
2. Learning how the methods of collective intelligence in general, and the new technologies in particular, can help to find more legitimate and more effective solutions to those global problems
3. Learning how to explore, identify and analyze alternative solutions and find the most adequate and creative for these global challenges

Course workload:

The workload will be divided into four main assignments:

1. Students are expected to attend the class sessions having accomplished in advance the assignments indicated below. They are also expected to engage and participate actively in the class discussions, and to collaborate with and help each other in improving their presentations and papers.
2. Students will be required to write and submit a final essay, in the form of a **policy paper of around 5,000 words** on a topic related to any of the course's contents. In this policy paper, the student will be asked to defend a proposal for the amendment of a concrete legislation or institution that relates a global challenge. A concrete problem of institutional or legal efficacy, justice or legitimacy must be identified, and a concrete proposal for its solution must be defended. A very practical approach will be desirable. To learn more about the requirements of a policy paper, please read this: <http://govthesis.site.wesleyan.edu/home/policy-paper/>
3. Students will be expected to present the progress they make on the final paper in three occasions throughout the course: an initial presentation with a broad description of the

problem in week 4, a mid-term presentation with a more refined definition of the problem and a tentative proposal of solutions in week 7, and a final presentation with a complete picture of the final paper and a focus on implementation challenges and the proposed practical strategies. Students are encouraged to collaborate among each other to mutually improve their respective papers, giving feedback to their classmates after their presentations.

4. Finally, each student will have to record **a video-presentation (maximum five minutes long)** with a defence of the policy paper, trying to make it innovative, creative, and persuasive.

The final essay and the video-presentation are due by December 5. They shall be submitted following the teacher's instructions that will be shared in the class.

Teaching methodology:

The course will be based on a problem-solving and project-based methodology and it will substantially rely on collaborative learning. All the work done by students, and most specially the final policy paper, will be problem-solving-oriented and the result of collaborative tasks developed with the group.

Assessment criteria:

Class participation and collective feedback: 10%
Initial, mid-term and final presentations of the project: 30%
Final policy paper: 40%
Video-presentation of the final paper: 20%

BaPIS absence policy

Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. Missing classes will impact on the student's final grade as follows:

Absences	Penalization
Up to two (2) absences	No penalization
Three (3) absences	1 point subtracted from final grade (on a 10-point scale)
Four (4) absences	2 points subtracted from final grade (on a 10-point scale)
Five (5) absences or more	The student receives an INCOMPLETE ("NO PRESENTADO") for the course

The BaPIS attendance policy **does not distinguish between justified or unjustified absences.** The student is deemed responsible to manage his/her absences.

Only absences for medical reasons will be considered justified absences. The student is deemed responsible to provide the necessary documentation. Other emergency situations will be analyzed on a case by case basis by the Academic Director of the BaPIS.

The Instructor, the Academic Director and the Study Abroad Office should be informed by email without any delay.

Weekly schedule:

WEEK 1

Session 1: Course presentation and the importance of planetary challenges (Tue, Sept 27)

1. Course presentation
2. The importance of planetary challenges
3. Collective intelligence to solve public problems
4. Why justice and political legitimacy are also important?

Required Assignment:

- Carefully read the course's syllabus

Session 2: A New Global Scenario (Thu, Sept 29)

1. From the Westphalian World to a Global Scenario
2. Planetary Challenges and the Need of Global Governance
3. Topic for discussion: How is globalization affecting/changing our nation states?

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No Required Assignment:

Optional:

- Held, David and Anthony McGrew, "The Great Globalization Debate: An Introduction", in Held, David and Anthony McGrew (eds), *The Global Transformations Reader*, London: Polity Press, 2003, pp. 1-14 and 32-42.
- Scheurman, William, "Globalization", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2014, accessible at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/globalization/>

WEEK 2

Session 3: The digital revolution (Tue, Oct 4)

1. Digital Revolutions
2. The rise of algorithms: the ethics and politics of AI
3. Blockchain, DAOs and the law
4. Virtual reality and multiverses
5. The Need for Global Regulations
6. Topic for discussion: How are new technologies in general, and AI in particular, going to transform our political and legal institutions?

Required Assignment: watch these two short videos:

- https://www.ted.com/talks/howard_rheingold_on_collaboration#t-1040624
- https://www.ted.com/talks/yochai_benkler_on_the_new_open_source_economics

Optional:

- Rheingold, Howard, *Net Smart. How to Thrive Online*, Cambridge (Mass.): MIT Press, 2012, Introduction (pp. 1-3, and 12-26), and ch. 4 (pp. 147-187).
- Benkler, Yochai, *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006: ch. 1, pp. 1-28.
- Watch this video from Rob Reich: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5GZcYGQZUkM>

Session 4: The Sustainable Development Goals and the idea of Planetary Wellbeing (Thu, Oct 6)

1. United Nations Framework for the SDGs
2. Pompeu Fabra University's Planetary Wellbeing Initiative
3. The distinction between justice and legitimacy

Required Assignment:

- Explore this website. Read about the history of the SDGs and about each of them and their targets and indicators: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- Read this short paper Josep Maria Antó, José Luis Martí, Jaume Casals et al, "The Planetary Wellbeing Initiative: Pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals in Higher Education", *Sustainability*, 13, 6, 2021: <https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/13/6/3372>

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Optional:

- "The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022".

WEEK 3

Session 5: The idea of Collective Intelligence (Tue, Oct 11)

1. The notion of collective intelligence
2. Sources of collective intelligence and ways to strengthen it
3. Examples of CI applications

Required Assignment:

Read NESTA, "The future of minds and machines. How artificial intelligence can enhance collective intelligence?", 2020. Accessible at:
https://media.nesta.org.uk/documents/FINAL_The_future_of_minds_and_machines.pdf

Optional:

- Watch this video from Eva Grobbink (Nesta):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NJ85rVHw6Y>

Session 6: Defining a Public Problem (Thu, Oct 13)

1. What is a public problem?

2. The crisis of trust in public institutions: the public problem solver and public entrepreneurs
3. The four stages of participatory public decision making
4. Defining the public a problem: why it is necessary and why it is so hard

Required Assignment:

- Watch this video from Beth S. Noveck (The GovLab):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGmc_q6SlvQ
- Read Beth S. Noveck, *Solving Public Problems. A Practical Guide to Fix Our Problem and Change Our World*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021, ch. 4.

Optional

- Beth S. Noveck, *Solving Public Problems. A Practical Guide to Fix Our Problem and Change Our World*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021, chs. 1-3.
- Watch this video from Matt Andrews (Harvard University):
<https://covidcourse.thegovlab.org/modules/actionable-problems.html>
- Watch this video from Alph Bingham (Innocentive):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tYj_6Pbf04

WEEK 4

Session 7: Initial presentations and exercises (Tue, Oct 18)

Session 8: Initial presentations and exercises (Thu, Oct 20)

WEEK 5

Session 9: Human Centered Design and Using Data Science (Tue, Oct 25)

1. The idea of design thinking
2. Human-centered design methods
3. The importance of Data Analytics
4. Using data to define and solve problems

Required Assignment:

- Read Beth S. Noveck, *Solving Public Problems. A Practical Guide to Fix Our Problem and Change Our World*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021, chs. 5 and 6.

Optional

- Watch this video:
https://www.ted.com/talks/david_kelley_human_centered_design?language=en
- Watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8V0DSroTbxQ&list=PL2zpEc-7YPYI8-hJaVF7H9epCcvbhHLO&index=3>

Session 10: Crowdsourcing, collaboration and codesign (Thu, Oct 27)

1. Open innovation methods and crowdsourcing

2. Collaboration and cocreation
3. The idea of crowdlaw

Required Assignment:

- Read Beth S. Noveck, *Solving Public Problems. A Practical Guide to Fix Our Problem and Change Our World*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021, ch. 7.

Optional

- Watch this video from Beth Noveck: <https://covidcourse.thegovlab.org/modules/smarter-crowdsourcing.html>

Session 11: Identifying effective solutions and implementing them (Fri, Oct 28)

1. Fast field scanning
2. Identifying, analyzing and evaluating solutions
3. Implementing solutions collaboratively (with partners)
4. Evaluation and evolution

Required Assignment:

- Read Beth S. Noveck, *Solving Public Problems. A Practical Guide to Fix Our Problem and Change Our World*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021, chs. 8-10.

WEEK 6

Session 12: Training the new generation of leaders and problem solvers (Thu, Nov 3)

1. Experimental organizations and the “innovative mindset”
2. Training of problem solvers and learning collaboratively by doing
3. Scaling up problem solving and globalizing solutions

Required Assignment:

- Read Beth S. Noveck, *Solving Public Problems. A Practical Guide to Fix Our Problem and Change Our World*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021, excerpts of chs. 11-12.

WEEK 7

Session 13: Mid-term Presentations (Tue, Nov 8)

Session 14: Mid-term Presentations (Thu, Nov 10)

WEEK 8

Session 15: Climate change and climate emergency (Tue, Nov 15)

1. The situation of global climate emergency: present and predictable future

2. The issue of climate justice
3. A call for action

Optional:

- Read Simon Caney, "Climate Justice", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2020, accessible at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice-climate/>

Session 16: Global health and pandemics (Thu, Nov 17)

1. The COVID19 pandemic and global emergency
2. How the World Health Organization works?
3. How to make international organizations more legitimate?

No Required Assignment

WEEK 9

Session 17: Global justice and global inequalities (Tue, Nov 22)

1. Peter Singer's Drowning Child Argument: humanitarian duties versus duties of justice
2. The Rawlsian debate on global justice: Charles Beitz' application of the difference principle, John Rawls' Law of Peoples, and Thomas Pogge's arguments on global responsibility
3. The statist reaction: the realist argument, the institutionalist argument, and the nationalist argument (David Miller's response)

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Optional:

- Read Brock, Gillian, "Global Justice", *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, 2015, accessible at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justice-global/>

Session 18: Protection of human rights and international criminal law (Thu, Nov 24)

1. The concept and foundations of human rights
2. How to protect and enforce human rights globally?
3. International criminal law and the International Criminal Court

Optional:

- Read Andrew Fagan, "Human Rights", in the *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, accessible at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/hum-rts/>

Session 19: Refugees, migrations and the justification of borders (Fri, Nov 25)

1. Global migrations and the refugee problem
2. The institution of political asylum
3. The justification of borders

Optional:

- Read Christopher H. Wellman, "Immigration", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2019, accessible at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/immigration/>

WEEK 10

Session 20: Final paper presentations (Tue, Nov 29)

Session 21: Final paper presentations (Thu, Dec 1)

Last revision: September 1st 2022