

NIE201 Interdisciplinary Processes for a Better World

Level: 2

Credit Units: 5 Credit Units

Language: ENGLISH

Presentation Pattern: EVERY REGULAR SEMESTER

Synopsis:

Societies and people are increasingly operating and living under conditions that are characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). In an interconnected and interdependent world, geopolitical, economic, and existential issues converge in a confluence of challenges which the world urgently needs to address. In this environment, the ability to effectively apply interdisciplinary understanding to offer fresh, holistic perspectives and solutions for often intractable challenges becomes paramount. In this course, students will critically assess what and how issues are defined, by whom, and for whom through interdisciplinary collaboration and facilitation.

This course stretches impactful and meaningful learning strategies to application for interdisciplinary collaboration. Drawing on literature from Integration and Implementation Sciences (I2S), this course exposes students to considerations for interdisciplinary thinking, practice, and applications to foster the capacity to address complex and dynamic futures through synthesising disciplinary and stakeholder knowledge, understanding and managing diverse unknowns, and providing integrated support for evaluating and communicating complex issues with selected stakeholders.

At the end of the course, students will be able to: (a) identify disciplinary boundaries and approaches to crossing them; (b) appreciate the challenges and opportunities of adopting interdisciplinarity; (c) apply interdisciplinary approaches to analyse, evaluate and communicate complex issues such as environmental, social, economic, and political challenges; and (d) collaborate effectively to innovate for a better world.

Topics:

- Interdisciplinarity: approaches and applications
- Sources of diversity and their impact on perspectives and expression of difference
- Disciplinary values, assumptions and interests
- Heuristics, mental models, assumptions and expectations: identifying problem types, framing, reframing and responding
- Positionality and power: forms, spaces and levels of power – over, to, and with
- Systems thinking and leverage points: a holistic approach to collective impact
- Boundary spanning behaviours: sensemaking context and trends
- Understanding, making decisions, and managing for diverse unknowns and unintended consequences
- Facilitating interdisciplinary communication and collaboration
- Knowledge co-production: synthesising disciplinary and stakeholder knowledge
- Communicating to simplify complexity
- Systematically learning from success and failure: risk analysis and change management

Learning Outcome:

- Discuss multiple ways of framing and understanding an issue
- Contrast personal and discipline-specific values and assumptions
- Identify positionality, and the roles of the individual, team and system in interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation
- Practice perspective taking strategies to facilitate the integration of diverse perspectives and disciplinary understanding
- Execute a knowledge co-production process with diverse stakeholders to analyse, frame/reframe and communicate complex issues
- Demonstrate knowledge synthesis in pursuing and communicating collective goals

Assessment Strategies (Evening Class):

Components	Description	Weightage Allocation (%)
Overall Continuous Assessment	GROUP BASED ASSIGNMENT 1	25
	GROUP BASED ASSIGNMENT 2	25
	TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT 1	50
Total		100