

OSNABRÜCK



UNIVERSITY



PLANNING

A GLOBAL CLASSROOM SEMINAR

Institut für Geographie

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On the way to your own Global Classroom seminar

How can students who do not (or cannot) participate in a study-related stay abroad be given an international perspective? At many universities, there are explicit plans to integrate internationalization@home into subject studies through cross-border digital forms of teaching, such as global classrooms and blended mobility. However, these teaching formats have hardly been tested in teaching practice.



Global Classrooms are courses that are held in cooperation with teachers and students from one or more foreign universities. They are also called Virtual Exchange, Joint Classroom or Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) events.

Are you interested in conducting a Global Classroom yourself? Within the project »VirtuGeo – Advanced Virtual Teaching Collaboration in Geography«, funded by the Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony, the Universities of Ankara and Osnabrück have tested the conception and implementation of a Global Classroom seminar. In this brochure, you will find the most important tips on what to consider when planning your Global Classroom.

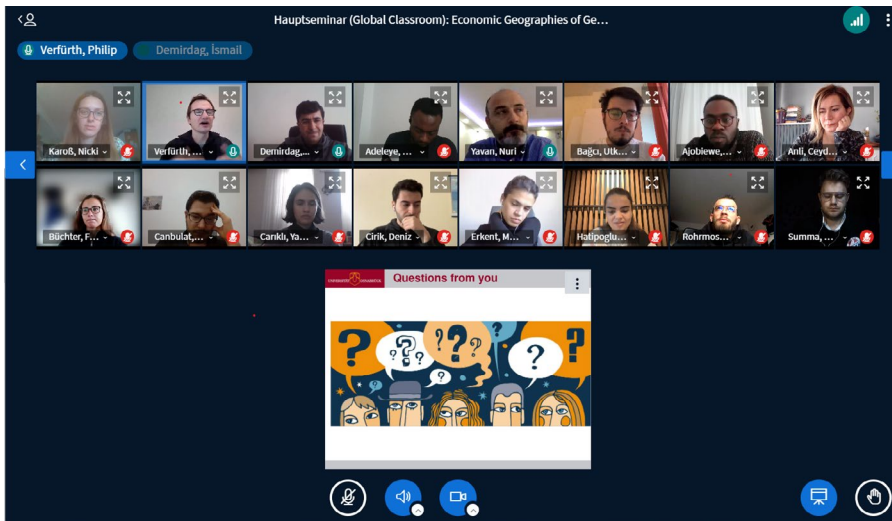


Fig. 1: Students and teachers from the Osnabrück and Ankara University in a Global Classroom session

With whom to cooperate?

Finding international partners

For planning and conducting a Global Classroom seminar, cooperation with international partners is a key element of the virtual teaching format. International partners can be found through already established networks, for example existing Erasmus partners and research cooperations. If no suitable existing cooperation partners are available new partner can be found, for example through participation in international conferences and workshops. In the case of the Global Classroom seminar with the University Ankara, the joint classroom could be built on a long existing cooperation in research and teaching. The existing relationship of trust was helpful for planning and conducting the Global Classroom seminar. Generally, it is easier to establish such collaborations within a discipline. However, experiences from the IFIT project (www.ucc.ie/en/ifit/) with so-called »Innovating Field Trips Virtual Student Project Weeks« also show that interdisciplinary cooperation can be quite fruitful, as students then learn to combine knowledge from different disciplines in the seminars.



Fig 2: Cooperation partners can be found in various ways. One possibility is international conferences to get to know potential partners

Everyone on board?

Joint preliminary preparation

Once you have found international partners, the preparation of your Global Classroom seminar can begin. It is recommended to coordinate the content and the organizational aspects of the course as early as possible. This can be done online and/or during a face-to-face meeting. Either way, the most important is to take enough time to prepare.



Global Classroom courses enable students to gain international and intercultural experience regardless of their financial possibilities, social and family conditions, and physical limitations.

What contents are to be conveyed to whom?

Learning content and objectives: As a first step, the partners should agree on a topic that they can teach together. The second step is to plan the learning content and the learning objectives of the seminar. Ideally, the partners complement each other regarding the learning content. Topics that affect the locations of all participating universities and thus also the lifeworlds of the participating students are particularly suitable. This makes it possible for them to contribute and to contrast their respective perspectives. This contributes to a stronger reflective ability of the students.

«I hadn't done a semester abroad or anything like that before and that was one of the reasons I signed up for the course. Overall, I think the course was great.»

Participant of the Global Classroom seminar

In the cooperation between Ankara University and Osnabrück University, the topic of globalization in German-Turkish economic relations was chosen because both partners have complementary research and teaching experience on the topic. Moreover, globalization is a topic on which all students have prior knowledge and is relevant in their everyday lives. In terms of learning objectives, partners should not only ask themselves what students should know and be able to do after participating in the Global Classroom seminar. They should also clarify what soft skills they should acquire through the special learning situation and how these should be particularly promoted (e.g., intercultural skills, moderation skills, presentation skills).



Fig 3: A wide variety of topics can be covered in Global Classroom teaching formats. The Global Classroom seminar in cooperation with Ankara University focused on the topic of globalization using the example of German-Turkish economic relations.

Target group: An important question that needs to be answered during the preparation phase, is who the target group of the course is. It must be clarified in advance to which students in what phase of their studies the course should be aimed. In doing so, not only the students' prior knowledge of the subject should be considered but also their language skills.

»Speaking English at the course was a very nice experience for me. I'm usually shy and it helped me to be more confident.«

Participant of the Global Classroom seminar

Teaching concept: Various teaching concepts are possible for Global Classroom courses. Teaching can take place entirely online or be offered in hybrid formats (also called blended learning). Both synchronous (lessons take place simultaneously for all participants) and asynchronous elements, that is elements that are independent of time and place, can be used. It is also possible to give students tasks that they must work on in cross-site teams. This can even include smaller research tasks, for example surveys, that are carried out at different locations and evaluated together. For the Global Classroom seminar with Ankara University, a student-centered seminar concept was developed based on the inverted classroom model. Teaching videos were created for students to prepare for each session. During the sessions, the content of the videos was discussed and reflected upon. In doing so, cross-site small group work was an important didactic element.

»Actually, the group work was really great. I saw that many people think differently and approaching things in a very diverse way.«

Participant of the Global Classroom seminar

What are the general conditions of the course?

Timing and duration of the course: The timing and duration of the course must be well coordinated between the partners. Global Classroom seminars can be held for an entire semester. However, they often last only a few weeks or days due to different lecture schedules. The Global Classroom seminar of Ankara and Osnabrück University took place in October and November. During this period, weekly sessions were held for up to 3 hours.

Technical requirements: To conduct a Global Classroom seminar, a good digital infrastructure is necessary. It is important to ensure that all participants have a sufficient Internet connection. In addition, it must be possible to store the learning materials in a central location that all participants can access. At Osnabrück University the integration of Turkish students and teachers into the Stud.IP teaching platform was possible via guest access. This made the collaboration much easier. In addition, Osnabrück University offers the opportunity to professionally record and edit teaching videos, which was very important for the realization of our teaching concept.



Fig. 4: Ensure that the necessary technical infrastructure is available. Here, a workstation for recording and editing teaching videos in the Media Lab of the »Interprofessional lab of teaching and learning for health and human services · Osnabrück« (ILTHOS) is shown.

Grades and Exams: It should also be clarified in advance whether all students need a grade to pass the seminar and if so, how the exams should be structured. In the Global Classroom in cooperation with Ankara University students were required to take an oral exam or to write a term paper. The exams were administered and graded by the lecturer at the student's respective university.

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