

# ABOUT GLOBAL STUDIES

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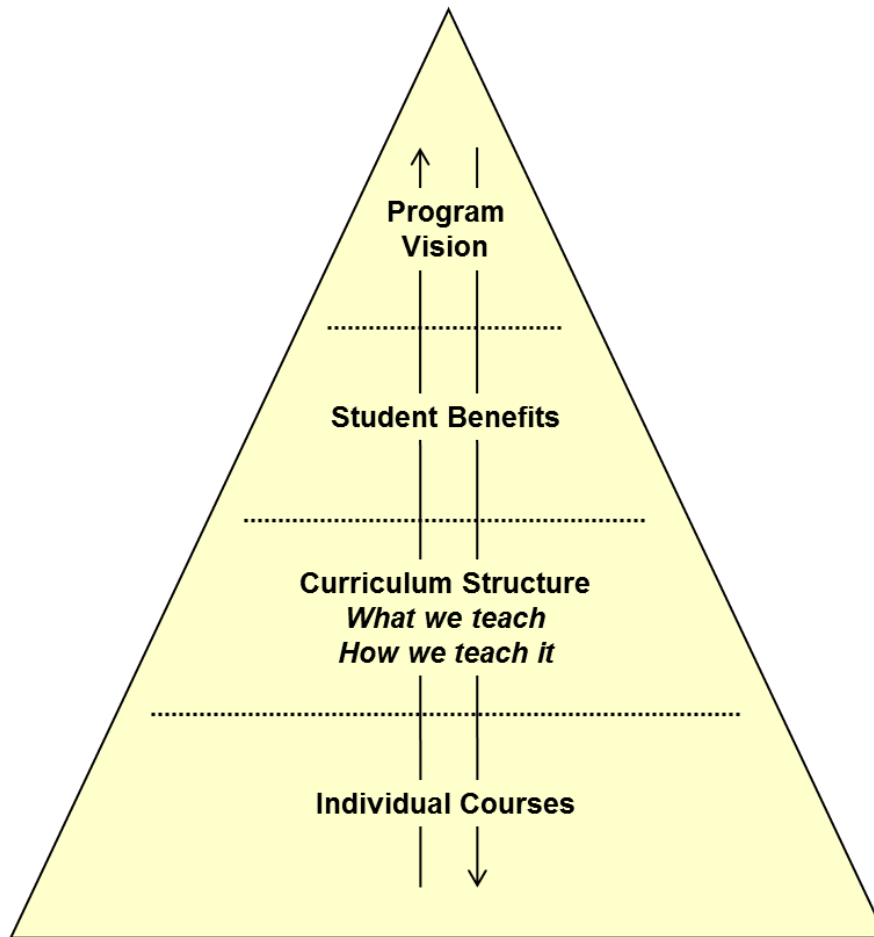
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## **INTRODUCTION**

It is perhaps easiest to explain our Global Studies Program by means of its four interrelated components, as illustrated in the diagram below:

- (1) program vision
- (2) student benefits
- (3) curriculum structure
- (4) individual courses.

## Visualizing our Global Studies Program



The program vision is a statement of our program's identity, purpose, and goals. This vision defines, and is informed by, the benefits that students will, and desire to, gain through their association with the program. The program vision and student benefits are delivered through the curriculum and its complement of individual courses. Each course is expected to make clear where in the curriculum it fits, what student benefits it delivers, and how it relates to the program vision. Each of the four components of our Global Studies Program is described in more detail below.

## **VISION**

Our program vision is described below through our mission statement, our definition of Global Studies, and the history of the development of the field and our department.

### **Our UNBC Global Studies Mission**

Our world is rapidly globalizing, bringing exciting opportunities and daunting challenges. Global and International Studies, hereafter referred to as Global Studies for short, seeks to tackle this brave new world in all its complexity. We train students to be global citizens, global thinkers, and global problem-solvers, and prepare them for global careers in academia, government, business, and the non-profit sector, among others. A unique feature of our program is that we train students in foreign languages, for language is the entry-point for understanding the world's cultures and equips students for studying and working abroad.

Global Studies is a holistic and timely field of study whose scope is the whole Earth and whose eyes are on the future, aiding a global transformation toward healthy, just, peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable societies for all. The focus of our program is on the 'big picture', international to global. Students emerge from our program with knowledge of the macro-level structures, actors, processes, ideas, issues, and events shaping our planet and its societies, and are accomplished in multi-disciplinary, multi-perspective, local-to-global, critical ways of thinking.

### **What is Global Studies?**

Our department defines Global Studies as:

*A holistic, multi-disciplinary, multi-perspective field of study that seeks to understand, in global scale, our natural and social worlds, their historical and contemporary interconnections and flows of activity, with the aim of analyzing and offering solutions to transnational and transcultural problems and critiquing and offering perspective on salient features of our globalizing world, and ultimately is dedicated to the goal of enhancing responsible social action feeding into global transformation toward healthy, just, peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable societies for all.*

This definition can be parsed into six main characteristics of Global Studies.

1. *Whole Earth Scope*

Global Studies is oriented to the planetary scale, which entails linking local to global and global to local.

2. *Past-Present-Future Span*

Global Studies links past to present to future. Knowing the past is essential to understanding the present is essential to guiding humanity's trajectory into the future.

3. *Multi-Disciplinary, Multi-Cultural Outlook*

Global Studies draws on and integrates multiple domains of knowledge and approaches to knowledge creation across cultures and societies.

4. *Theme or Issue Focus*

Global Studies tends to be organized around themes or issues as opposed to an orderly progression through a structured set of knowledge as is common in traditional disciplines.

5. *Problem-Solving and Perspective-Enhancing Motivation*

Global Studies seeks to address societal problems, especially large-scale, complex, and interconnected problems, and to enhance perspectives on our worlds.

6. *Global Transformation Goal*

Global Studies encourages individual social responsibility to aid transformation toward a global society that is healthy, just, peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable.

## **History of Global Studies**

What propelled the creation of the field of Global Studies and the establishment of the Department of Global and International Studies at UNBC?

### **History of the Field of Global Studies**

Global Studies emerged as a product of the state and trajectory of our contemporary world. It first appeared as a field in the 1990s and its development accelerated tremendously in the 2000s manifested by increasing numbers of university programs called Global Studies, by academic associations dedicated to Global Studies, and by journals and university textbooks focused on and using the term “Global Studies”. The field developed largely as an academic response to globalization, a phenomenon widely recognized only after the end of the Cold War, and to large-scale, interconnected societal problems, also widely acknowledged starting in the 1990s. The enthusiastic acceptance of Global Studies snowballed into what could be called a “global studies movement” in academia.

The concept of globalization is arguably the central concept of Global Studies. Globalization is a process of increasing global-scale interconnectedness and interdependence of people and places driven largely by technological advances in transportation and communication in which individuals are increasingly impacted by global and international events and circumstances, and, importantly, are increasingly aware of world connectedness.

Large-scale societal problems are in part a consequence of globalization. Problems have increased in scale, speed, complexity, interconnectedness, and potential for catastrophe. Fear of possible negative consequences is a driver of the global studies movement. Such problems include climate change, biodiversity decline, disappearing cultures, rise of extremist ideologies, internet governance especially related to privacy and cybersecurity, mass refugees and involuntary global migration, food security, failed states, growing gap between the rich and poor, and probability of a global pandemic. New perspectives and new approaches are essential to solving these tangled problems. One of the tasks of Global Studies is to develop new ways of thinking about and solving such problems.

## **History of Global Studies at UNBC**

Our UNBC Global and International Studies Program is part of the global studies movement. Our original International Studies Program began life when the university opened in 1994. The curriculum remained basically the same until replaced by a completely new Global Studies curriculum in 2015. The idea of re-orienting our program to Global Studies was first floated in January 2007. We were beginning to feel that the International Studies Program needed updating to reflect significant changes in the state of the world since the early 1990s. It took eight long years before our re-visioning and curriculum overhaul was complete. The new program was approved by the University in November 2014, and was opened to students in September 2015.

We are often asked, why don't you just call yourselves Global Studies instead of Global and International Studies? There are two main reasons for using the longer title. First, for administrative simplicity—retaining the designation “International Studies” allows us to maintain the link to our old acronym, INTS. Believe it or not, to change our acronym, to say GLOB, would have required approval by the Province of British Columbia whereas keeping the old acronym only required approval by the University. Second, for historical continuity and alumni friendliness—retaining “International Studies” highlights that we did not jettison our old program but built off it, and tells our alumni that the old program that they graduated under did not disappear.

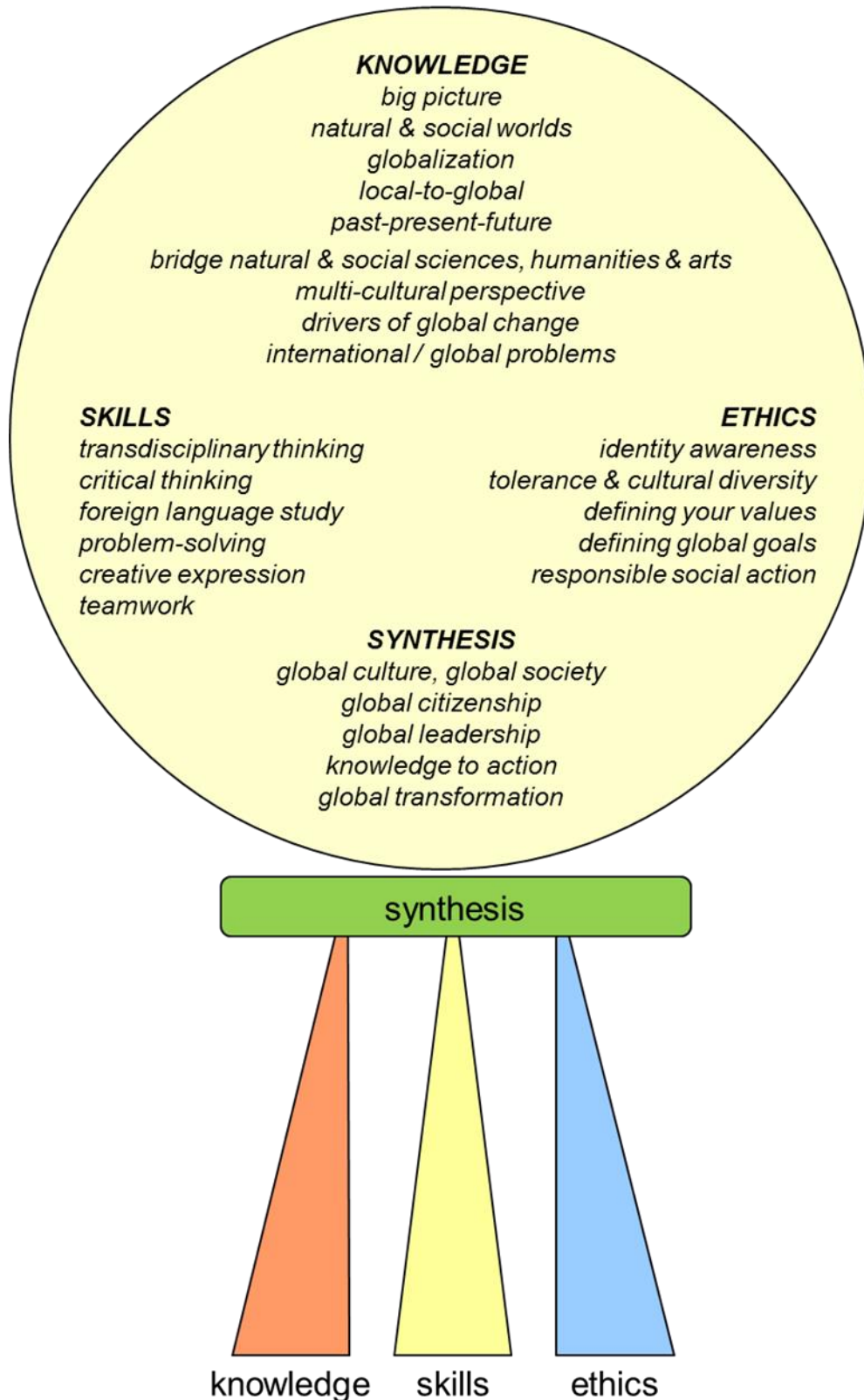
We in the Department of Global and International Studies see ourselves as experts in the ‘big picture’ and its connections to myriad ‘little pictures’. In other words, we link the macro, meso, and micro scales. We cross disciplines, cultural boundaries, societal sectors, and theoretical perspectives. We are generalists who specialize in understanding large-scale, long-term structures and processes, analyze the drivers and impacts of global change, integrate across multiple scales and disciplines, and teach the global overview. We synthesize environmental, cultural, social, political, economic, sociological, gender, and scientific/technological perspectives, among others, and bridge the natural sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities. Integral to our mission is the study of language as a practical tool for understanding human diversity.

## **STUDENT BENEFITS: Why take Global Studies at UNBC?**

What are the benefits to students of majoring, minoring, or taking courses in Global Studies? First and foremost, our program equips students to understand and engage our globalizing world at whatever level they choose, from simply a desire to be a better informed citizen to seeking a career in the field.

What do we teach and what will students have learned (learning outcomes) as a result of their association with Global Studies? One way to visualize the benefits of the program is in terms of four components of global education: knowledge, skills, ethics, synthesis. But before going into details, though, the ‘word diagram’ below shows you some of what you will learn:

## 4 Benefits of Global Studies



## 4 Benefits of Global Education

As mentioned above, we visualize the benefits to students of our program in terms of four components of global education (or more graphically, three pillars and one lintel), as follows:

1. **KNOWLEDGE:** acquisition and application of global knowledge of the natural and social worlds;
2. **SKILLS:** acquisition and application of transdisciplinary and critical thinking skills, and of skills related to problem-solving, communicating, and teamwork;
3. **ETHICS:** enhancement of ethical reasoning powers and commitment to socially responsible action, including cross-cultural sensitivity;
4. **SYNTHESIS:** integration of knowledge, skills, and ethics aimed at global transformation.

## Benefits for UNBC Students

### Acquire and apply GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE

defined as

- knowing our natural and social worlds, and their interconnections across space and time,
- gaining a detailed understanding of the process of globalization,
- comprehending the local-to-global dimensions of issues,
- understanding the large-scale, long-term forces that have shaped our global past, are shaping our global present, and will shape our global future,
- evaluating the linkages between current events and general theories, patterns, issues and trends,
- wrestling with the concepts and emergence of global culture and global society.

### Acquire and apply GLOBAL SKILLS

defined as

- developing your ability to think critically,
- developing transdisciplinary thinking—knowing and practicing the content, theories, and methods of multiple disciplines relevant to global issues, including but not limited to anthropology, economics, environmental studies, gender studies, geography, history, political science, and sociology,
- cultivating the ability to see issues from multiple perspectives,
- developing proficiency in one or more foreign language (speaking, reading, writing),
- applying multidisciplinary training to international and global problem-solving,
- learning to communicate in a variety of forms—for example, research writing, public speaking, poster presentation, and artistic expression,
- being able to materially express an idea, pattern, or conclusion (for example, translate a research paper into a poster),
- being able to work in teams,
- gaining practical international experience, such as through study abroad or internships.

### **Expand and engage your GLOBAL ETHICS**

defined as

- enhancing your ethical reasoning powers and commitment to responsible social action,
- cultivating your awareness of identity-related dimensions of human interaction,
- being able to compare, interpret and apply cultural knowledge, and appreciate cultural diversity,
- developing the ability to define ideal futures, for you as an individual, for humanity as a whole,
- grappling with the meaning and attainment of global goals such as equity, justice, peace, prosperity, security, and sustainability.

### **SYNTHESIZE global knowledge, skills, ethics**

defined as

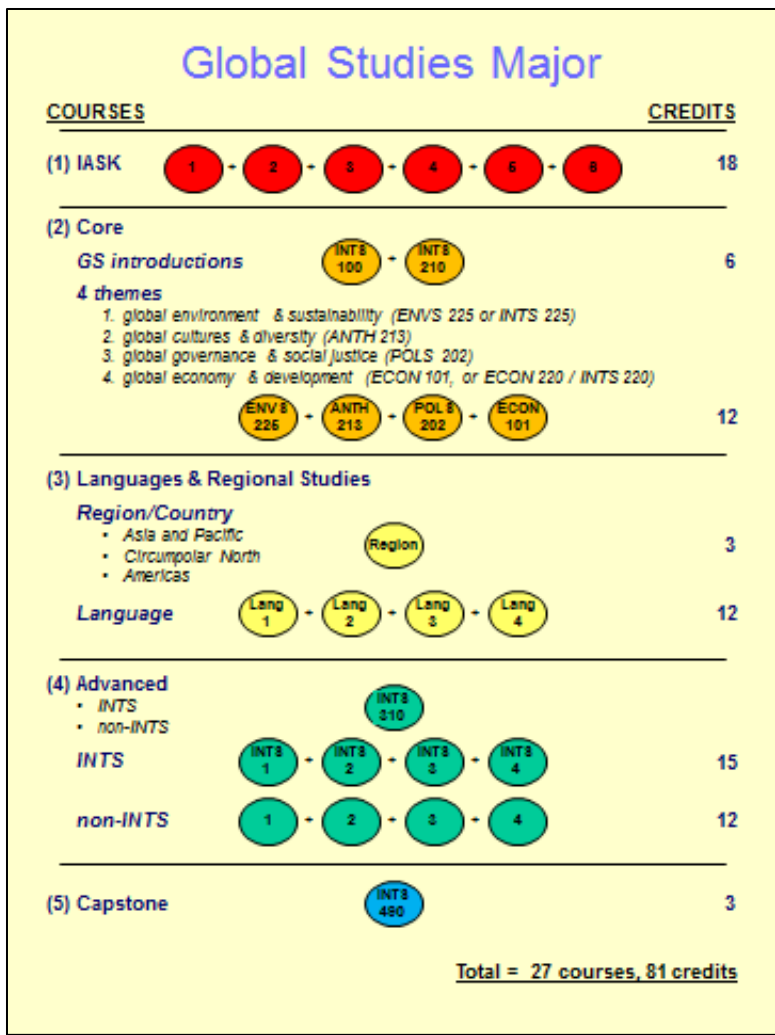
- achieving proficiency with the subject matter and global goal of the four themes around which our Global Studies curriculum is organized (global environment & sustainability, global cultures & diversity, global governance & social justice, global political economy & development),
- developing a sense of global citizenship needed to function in our cosmopolitan world,
- integrating knowledge, skills, and ethics into actions,
- applying actions to global societal transformation.

## **CURRICULUM STRUCTURE**

Our Global Studies curriculum for our major is explained below and illustrated in the accompanying diagram.

### **Diagram of Global Studies Major**





A pdf of the above diagram can be found at:

<http://www.unbc.ca/sites/default/files/sections/international-studies/aboutglobalstudies-images.pdf>

## Description of Global Studies Major: What we teach

### 5 Categories of Courses

Five categories of courses constitute the program, as follows:

1. Foundation IASK courses
2. Core introduction and theme-based lower-division courses
3. Language & regional studies courses
4. Advanced INTS and non-INTS upper-division courses
5. Capstone course.

This collection of ‘distributed’ (where distributed means students take courses both inside and outside our department to complete the major) provides an introduction to the ways of thinking in the liberal arts, a grounding in the core concepts of global studies and the four major

themes or domains around which our curriculum is organized, training in languages and exposure to the culture(s) of one or more region/country of the world, and access to advanced knowledge and skills in Global Studies. All of this is capped off with our 'global capstone' course, which is required of all majors in their final year.

Here is a more detailed explanation of each course category.

### **(1) IASK Courses**

To begin their Global Studies journey, we give our students a solid and well-rounded foundation in the basics of the liberal arts through the IASK (Integrated Analytical Skill & Knowledge) Program. IASK is incorporated into the Global and International Studies major. IASK consists of 6 courses and 18 credits taken over two semesters, preferably a student's first two semesters at UNBC. A student must take all six courses. You cannot choose to take just one or two of the courses; you have to take the full set. IASK serves three main purposes: (1) to give students a general orientation to the ways of thinking in the social sciences and humanities, (2) to introduce students new to UNBC to university life and the resources available at the university, and (3) to provide students with a supportive cohort of fellow students during their first year with whom to work, study, and play since all students take all courses together.

### **(2) Core Courses and 4 Themes**

To clarify and codify the mind-boggling array of knowledge relevant to Global Studies, our curriculum is organized around four themes:

1. global environment & sustainability
2. global cultures & diversity
3. global governance & social justice
4. global political economy & development.

Each of our chosen themes combines an area of subject matter (e.g., environment) plus a global goal (e.g., sustainability). These themes are presented in our introductory global studies courses and in a required set of lower-division courses, one related to each theme. There are other ways to slice the Global Studies pie of knowledge besides these four themes; however, this is the way our department chose. Other broad categories that could be used include health, science & technology, and information & communication. In our program, students learn to integrate across themes, and can specialize in one or more theme if they so choose.

The core courses consist of 2 introductory global studies courses:

- INTS 100 (Introduction to Global Studies)
- INTS 210 (Globalizations)

and 4 theme-based courses:

- ENVS 225 (Global Environmental Change: Science & Policy), cross-listed with INTS 225 (Global Environmental Challenge: Sustainability)
- ANTH 213 (Peoples and Cultures)

- POLS 202 (Canada in Comparative Perspective)
- ECON 101 (Macroeconomics), or ECON 220/INTS 220 (Global Economic Shifts).

### **(3) Language & Regional Studies Courses**

The language and regional studies courses provide detailed exposure to one or more region/country of the world. Our department is too small to cover all the major regions in the world so we pay special attention to British Columbia's immediate international neighbouring regions:

- Asia and Pacific
- Circumpolar North
- Americas.

Students majoring in Global and International Studies must complete four language courses (12 credits) and one lower-division regional studies course (3 credits). The ideal sequence is to take all four language courses in a single language and a regional studies course corresponding to that language. This sequencing is not required; however, at least two courses must be in one language.

### **(4) Advanced Courses**

Two types of advanced courses provide students more intensive training in Global Studies: (1) a set of INTS upper-division courses taken within our department (15 credits), and (2) a set of non-INTS upper-division courses taken outside our department (12 credits). The INTS courses offer concentrated attention on the concepts and approaches in the field of Global Studies, and the non-INTS courses offer general exposure to areas and disciplines associated with Global Studies.

Global Studies-specific training within our department is obtained through:

- INTS 310 (Origins and Evolution of Our Globalizing World)
- 4 additional INTS upper-division courses.

Global Studies exposure outside our department is obtained through:

- 4 courses chosen from a list of 70+ approved courses (see the Undergraduate Calendar under Global and International Studies for a list of these courses).

### **(5) Capstone Course**

To cap off their Global Studies career at UNBC, majors are required to take INTS 490 (Global Capstone) in their final year before graduation. Students will engage in research projects that express their cumulative learning in global studies.

## **PROGRAM PEDAGOGY: How we teach**

Our department values how we teach (pedagogy) as much as what we teach (subject matter). The challenges of our rapidly globalizing world demand development of new teaching techniques. We actively seek out and experiment with new ways of teaching, combining them

with traditional and time-tested techniques. In the Global Studies Program you will be exposed to not only new knowledge but also novel methods of learning that knowledge. We encourage our instructors to experiment with new ways of teaching in the classroom. You will be exposed to a wide variety of teaching techniques, such as:

- assumption busting
- concept mapping
- creating plays and skits
- debating
- designing posters
- DO IT exercises (exercises in which you Define problems, Open your mind to many possible solutions, Identify the 'best' solution, Translate it into effective action)
- role playing
- simulations
- storyboarding
- writing journals.

## **INDIVIDUAL COURSES**

A description of all INTS courses can be found at:

[https://ssb.unbc.ca/banprod/dev\\_web.course\\_finder.calendar?subject=International%21Studies](https://ssb.unbc.ca/banprod/dev_web.course_finder.calendar?subject=International%21Studies)