



AGST Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2021



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“Sustainable Industry Development”, “Comparative Development Studies“, and more
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- International Collaborative Courses at the GSA
- AGST Spotlight Interview
Prof. Paloma Fernández Pérez, University of Barcelona, Spain

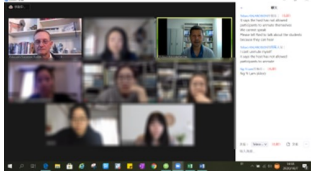


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The Sustainable Industry Development course taught by Mr. Edward Clarence-Smith is about circular economies and sustainable industrialization.

Mr. Clarence-Smith is a senior advisor on the circular economy and brings over forty years of experience in government, international organizations, and private sectors worldwide. His intensive course was delivered with six lectures and two group discussion sessions, which took place on Wednesdays starting on October 7 and ending on November 25, 2020.



Starting from the problem of increased resource consumption, Mr. Edward Clarence-Smith encouraged students to think about the relations between the economy and the environment. He took the students through each phase of a circular economy, like manufacturing, product design, use, repair and recycling, and agriculture. He discussed the strategies economic actors can adopt to transition to a circular economy and the policies governments could apply to promote the change. In addition to that, a series of cross-cutting issues were included and explored.

Due to the pandemic, the course was held entirely online via Zoom. Compared to in-person classes, online classes were more convenient, especially for students who were not in Kyoto. Throughout the course, students could raise questions in Zoom's "chat" function at any time without disturbing the lecturer. Then these real-time questions would be checked and discussed during the Q&A sessions. While there were some technical troubleshooting moments, participants could actively engage seamlessly throughout the course and present their ideas about how to apply the circular economy principles to various industrial sectors.

Overall, students found the course informative and allowed them to develop an in-depth understanding of key concepts, strategies, principles, and policies for analyzing green industries, based on Mr. Clarence-Smith's individual experiences and the real-world data he presented.

Chunling Yu

Doctoral student, Graduate School of Economics

Comparative Development Studies

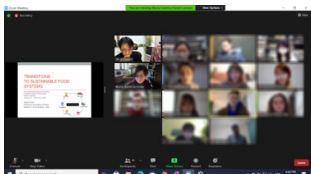
by **Prof. Hugh Campbell**
University of Otago

& **Prof. Maria Fonte**
The American University of Rome

Last semester's "Comparative Development Studies" course, which was offered through the Graduate School of Economics and sponsored by the Asian Platform for Global Sustainability and Transcultural Studies, was led by two visiting scholars: Professor Hugh Campbell from the University of Otago in New Zealand, and Professor Maria Fonte from the American University in Rome, Italy. The following is a summary of what topics were covered and what kinds of activities took place during the course.

Prof. Campbell, who led the first half of the course, helped students understand the relevant theories of modernity by looking at theories put forward by George Ritzer, Robert Putnam, Hannah Arendt, and James C. Scott; and then illustrated each of them with a particular crisis of "modernity." Prof. Campbell started the course by introducing "McDonaldization" and the "McDonaldization" of society. Later, the lectures and discussion explored technology and the loss of social bonds, authoritarian state, and state control. Prof. Campbell covered the foundations of sociological thinking within the discipline and referred to other relevant topics today, such as authoritarianism and totalitarianism, to spark the class and deepen students' understanding.

Prof. Campbell's session consists of lectures and short discussions. Using Zoom's breakout room function, students could participate in small group discussions regarding specific topics, and then some of the groups were asked to present their ideas and opinions. In addition to the in-class activities, students were also encouraged to write analytical summaries for the four key theorists' chosen readings. Since the course participants are from different backgrounds, both the analytical summary and the students' active participation stimulated the discussion throughout the whole course.

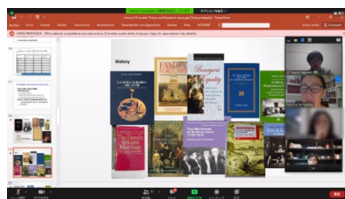


In the sessions led by Prof. Fonte, the focus was on the different frameworks for analyzing the current "turn" and "transition" in rural development and the global agro-food economy. For each class, participating students were tasked with presenting an analytical summary of the assigned articles. The articles discussed were about the different theoretical perspectives on directing the agro-food economy toward sustainability and social justice. Prof. Fonte discussed theories about sustainable food systems, sustainable diets, food citizenship, and analytical frameworks to conceptualize transitions to sustainability, particularly the Multi-level Perspective (MLP) and Social Practice Theory.

The class discussions during Prof. Fonte's session were enriching. Despite the class mainly being online, the Zoom platform effectively facilitated communication between the instructors and students. Overall, the class discussions allowed students to develop a comparative perspective on the global discourse on rural development and local food in the transition toward a sustainable food system.

Yitian Yang and Renee Tila Grace Salditos
Master's students, Graduate School of Economics

The last semester's "Historical Approaches to Business and Economics A" course, which was conducted on Zoom, was composed of two modules. The first examined family businesses and the second focused on firms. As one of the course participants, I will describe my experience taking this course.



In Module A, called "Family Business: Theory and History," we enjoyed the classes led by Prof. Paloma Fernández Pérez from the University of Barcelona. Every week, the professor delivered the lectures with enthusiasm, and we felt we had received new insights from the classes. We could get a whole picture of the study of a family business: the backgrounds of the research, available

databases, family business in developed and developing countries, etc. I found it interesting that many alcoholic drink producers in Spain and elsewhere are family businesses. Moreover, the local community tries to buy local beverages to support these small producers. I want to contribute to a local community by trying local beers and wines when I go to Spain.

In Module B, called "From Firm to the Global Value Chains," four classes were taught by Prof. Duncan Ross from the University of Glasgow. The professor showed us a profound understanding of firms. Sessions were composed of the theory of the firm, multi-national enterprises (MNEs), foreign direct investment (FDI), and global value chain (GVC). All topics had closely related to each other. So, we finally reached a very systematic understanding of a firm's activities in the modern economic world. Moreover, the professor facilitated an active discussion by asking some questions about how to interpret data on a particular subject. Those questions were interesting for me because it felt like I was solving a mystery. For me, the third class was impressive because of the surprising data about FDI. I thought of FDI as a way for MNEs to use cheap resources in developing countries (e.g., cheap labor). However, FDI in developed economies is more significant than in developing economies based on the IMF's data. So, my image was just a myth. The reality is more complex.

Overall, both sets of lectures offered us some thoughtful insights for analyzing a business. As this year's class was held online, it was convenient and made me feel less nervous. Moreover, we had enough time to read the materials that professors assigned us. So, generally speaking, the course was enriching. We can take those fruitful lectures wherever we want. However, there was less time to talk to professors before and after our sessions. When the class was held in-person, we could ask something before and after sessions. When it is online, there is a relatively short time to ask questions and make a personal relationship.



Historical Approach to Business and Economics A

by Prof. Paloma Fernandes Perez
University of Barcelona
& Prof. Duncan Ross
University of Glasgow

Naoki Hayashi
Doctoral student, Graduate School of Economics

Report from GSE

Announcing the first recipients of the Global Course certificate

In March 2021, two undergraduate students were the first to receive the Global Course certificate. The Global Course is an undergraduate certificate programme offered at the Faculty of Economics that aims to train the next generation of active global citizens.

To get the Global Course certificate, students must complete their bachelor's degree, study abroad for at least one semester and obtain credits from a university that has a student exchange agreement with Kyoto University, earn credits with high grades from courses taught in foreign languages at Kyoto University, and have an adequate level of English.

More students are expected to complete the programme and receive the certificate in the coming years.

For more information about the Global Course, please visit this page <https://agst.jgp.kyoto-u.ac.jp/global-course>

AGST Top Global Course

It is a pleasure to announce that six students completed the AGST Top Global Course on March 23, 2021. They come from the Graduate School of Economics, Graduate School of Letters and the Graduate School of Agriculture. This brings the total number of students that have completed the programme to 28 since it was launched in March 2017. More information about this programme can be found [here](#).



In an effort to provide opportunities for graduate students to share research with counterparts from other institutions, the Kyoto University Graduate School of Letters Joint Degree Transcultural Studies (JDTS) Program has recently initiated the Four Universities Graduate Workshop. This year's workshop took place from March 1st to 3rd in Nagoya. Presenters included fourteen graduate students affiliated with the Kyoto University JDTS Program, the Nagoya University Graduate School of Letters Japan-in-Asia Cultural Studies (JACS) Program, the Ritsumeikan University Graduate School of Core Ethics and Frontier Sciences, and the Tokyo University Department of Aesthetics. The event brought together a cohort of students and faculty who study the visual media cultures of film, animation, and gaming. Alongside them were students investigating topics in aesthetics, history, and literature.

I was among the faculty attendees who listened to a series of exciting and promising graduate student projects. I left the workshop with three observations. The first observation is that transcultural research projects benefit from transcultural research settings like the one provided by this workshop. Onsite conversations also left the impression that the workshop had helped attendees to reframe existing research questions and consider additional methodological possibilities. The second observation is that the workshop's (well-ventilated and socially-distanced) one-room format proved helpful not just for initiating conversations, but also for sustaining them across subsequent panels. I noticed upwellings of unexpected overlaps. It was clear, for example, that students of history or literature had much to talk about with students of film or video game design. The final observation might have gone without saying in a pre-Coronavirus age, but proximity is meaningful. Although we were talking through masks and across empty chairs, this workshop was a rare chance to be closer together for a few days.

Following this year's inaugural event, the JDTS Program is planning for the workshop to continue next year and beyond.

**Kyoto University • Nagoya University •
Ritsumeikan University • Tokyo University:
Four Universities Graduate Workshop**

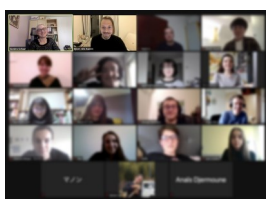


**Four Universities Graduate Workshop
(Field trip at Meiji mura)**

Kjell Ericson

Program-Specific Assistant Professor,
Center for the Promotion of Interdisciplinary Education and Research and Graduate School of Letters

Kyoto University • Strasbourg University • Heidelberg University: Joint Student Work- shops 2021 in Light of the Pandemic

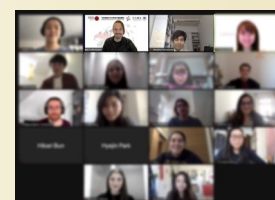


**Workshop with Strasbourg
University**

[Transcultural Studies](#) (HCTS). This year due to the ongoing pandemic, these workshops organized by Prof. [Björn-Ole Kamm](#) had to move online.

The workshops in 2021 engaged the not-so-surprising topic of "Living with Pandemics: Past, Present, Future." After reading *We Have Never Been Modern*, a treatise by leading science and technology studies scholar Bruno Latour (1983) on how environmental issues – including diseases and epidemics – bring together various actors and academic disciplines, such as natural sciences as well as politics that are usually thought of as engaging separate realities, two undergraduate students and a joint degree student from Kyoto met with a dozen graduate students from the HCTS (guided by Prof. [Takahiro Yamamoto](#)) and later with a similar number of MA students from the Japanese Studies department in Strasbourg under the tutelage of Prof. [Sandra Schaal](#).

Students presented on the impact of the current pandemic on people's lives and politics but also reflected on epidemics of the past, such as the plague, or on literature written by patients of Hansen's disease. Beyond the academic part the workshops also included a social session. Even though we had some lively discussions and participants stay connected beyond the workshops, we hope to again hold the workshops in person in Europe next year. A call for applications will be released in the fall of 2021 and we highly recommend this trip to Europe in 2022 to all interested students in the second or third year of their bachelor studies. From 2023 onwards the workshops will continue but more with a focus on graduate students.



**Workshop with Heiderberg
University**

Björn-Ole Kamm

Junior Associate Professor, Graduate School of Letters

From November 12th to December 3rd, 2020, Dr. Witsanu Attavanich, from Kasetsart University, offered an intensive course entitled “Special Lecture on Natural Resources Economics VB: Linking Climate Change, Food Security and Policies in Agriculture” via Zoom. This course aimed to help graduate students understand the issues covering climate change, food security, and agriculture with methods and applications to evaluate the impacts of climate change and the implications of mitigation and adaptation strategies. Besides, students could also learn methods and applications of program and public policy evaluation in agriculture within this course. Dr. Attavanich lectured in an exciting and easy-to-understand way, and students also benefited a lot from the active discussion and question part during the class.

The four-day course was composed of 8 lectures. In the first lecture, Dr. Attavanich explained the mechanism of climate change and introduced four methods, Just and Pope production function, Ricardian approach, econometrics methods, and optimization models to quantify the impact of climate. Then, in the following two lectures, he gave six detailed applications of the methods, for example, a study of quantifying the climate change impacts on sugarcane production in Thailand, research to evaluate the effects of climate change on US grain transport, and so on. In the fourth lecture, we learned the possible adaptation and mitigation options in agriculture by studying the emission reduction of greenhouse gases in Thailand’s agriculture. Some of the adaptation and mitigation options can be combined into our most potent weapons to fight climate change, and they got more and more prevalent in the world. Next, Dr. Attavanich gave us some ideas of the linkage among food security, climate vulnerability, and economic development outcomes in the fifth lecture. Moreover, he showed us how to develop a climate-induced food security index. Taking Thai agriculture as an instance, we learned the importance and feasibility of structural transformation to deal with climate change in the sixth lecture. Finally, in the last two lectures, Dr. Attavanich illustrated the methods used to evaluate a program and policy. He interpreted some applications by assessing the policies aiming to address the impact of climate change, where propensity score matching and subjective well-being methods performed crucial roles.

After joining the class and finishing four assignments, we not only improved our understanding of climate change, food security, and agriculture issues but also acquired the theories of the methods and how to apply them into the study in the real world.

Ao Liu

Master’s Student, Graduate School of Agriculture

Linking Climate Change, Food Security and Policies in Agriculture

by Dr. Witsanu Attavanich
Kasetsart University



Rural Sociology: Rural Areas in a Globalizing World

by Prof. Claudia Neu
University of Göttingen

The intensive lecture course “Rural Sociology: Rural Areas in a Globalizing World” was held online from February 8th to 11th, 2021. The instructor was Prof. Dr. Claudia Neu, Professor of Rural Sociology, Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development, University of Göttingen, Germany. It was a pity that we could not meet the professor in person but, thanks to Zoom, we could have meaningful classroom discussions despite the geographical distance.

In this course, designed as an introduction to rural sociology, Prof. Neu taught us fundamental sociological concepts and issues related to rural areas, but also referred to academic publications. This was usually followed by discussions about important current topics raised by her.

To begin with, Prof. Neu introduced five key concepts in sociology, which encouraged us to think critically about the concept of “rurality”, a basic epistemological exercise for learning rural sociology. On the 2nd day, we gained perspective about demographic change in rural areas. In this, Japan and Germany are very similar in terms of low fertility, high longevity, and shrinking rural areas. Remote rural areas in the two countries are facing similar problems such as declining infrastructure and medical services. Prof. Neu helped us understand that it would be useful to learn from Germany and other countries to achieve desirable future development of rural areas in Japan. On the 3rd day, we learned about rural poverty, including various concepts related to social relationships, such as social capital, social cohesion, and the idea of the “third place”. On the 4th and last day, Prof. Neu explained gender perspectives in rural sociology and the sociological implications of food consumption.

During the course, two graduate students at the University of Göttingen presented their research projects. One presentation was about the potential of road trains for rural development in Australia and Africa, and the other one was about women in agriculture in Germany. Not only did their presentations provide us new knowledge, but also their research attitude was novel and stimulating.

From the 2nd day through the 4th day, each participant gave a short presentation on a theme selected from three proposed options: demographic change, rural revitalization, and gender. These presentations, which included personal experiences, and the discussions that followed, provided an opportunity for us to deepen mutual understanding and interests.

The lecture course was comprehensive and covered a wide range of topics such as culture, identity, demographic change, migration, inequality, social innovation, gender, and food consumption. Therefore, students who were interested in almost any aspect of rural sociology could deepen and broaden their own interests. Above all, the discussion time between Prof. Neu and students from different countries provided a valuable opportunity for me to gain an international perspective.

Nozomi Iwao

Master’s Student, Graduate School of Agriculture

AGST Spotlight Interview

Prof. Paloma Fernández Pérez

Economic History at the University of Barcelona



In October and November 2020, the Graduate School of Economics (GSE) invited Prof. Paloma Fernández Pérez to give an online four-session lecture as part of the course entitled “Historical Approaches to Business and Economics A,” which is an AGST international collaborative course. At the end of her lectures, we asked Prof. Paloma Fernández Pérez a few questions.

Q1: What was the focus of your course this year?

Prof. Fernández Pérez: This year’s course focused on family businesses globally, including developed and developing countries, from a long-term comparative perspective. Family businesses are the dominant form of business everywhere, even in the United States, where large corporations are headquartered. They are also the most flexible, chameleonic type of business that adapts to various changes, such as cycles of expansion and mass production, or long cycles of economic depression. They are also able to withstand protectionist measures from public institutions and increasingly competitive globalized markets. In sum, the course was about understanding the dynamism and endurance of this type of business.

Q2: What were some of the highlights of the course?

Prof. Fernández Pérez: Students introduced exciting topics about how Japanese, Malaysian, and Chinese family enterprises that they know have used family traditions to carry out a diversity of businesses. I was especially fascinated with a class discussion about the various roles that married women play in small- and medium-sized family businesses in Japan and elsewhere. We continued the discussion by email and students shared some interesting bibliographical references.

Q3: How was your experience teaching on Zoom from Barcelona to students in Kyoto?

Prof. Fernández Pérez: Really great! The faculty and staff were very supportive. Students actively used the Zoom tools to interact. I enjoyed the experience.

Q4: Kyoto University will accept applications for entry in Autumn 2021 for the new master’s programme in “Global Markets, Local Creativities” (GLOCAL), which is to be conferred jointly with the University of Glasgow and the University of Barcelona. Could you briefly explain the history of this international academic collabora-

tion and your involvement in it?

Prof. Fernández Pérez: In the beginning, the University of Barcelona was one of the four initial institutions that applied to the European Union for an Erasmus Mundus international master’s programme. The other institutions were the Georg August University of Göttingen in Germany, Erasmus University in Rotterdam in the Netherlands, and the leading, coordinating institution, the University of Glasgow, from the United Kingdom. This programme would provide students with more international study options, allowing them to apply for competitive grants and obtain certificates from partner institutions.

Each of the four institutions has scholar-representatives specialized in international business history and family businesses. I represent Barcelona. These representatives have been engaged in various collaborative initiatives over the last two decades. We have been meeting in international congresses of international associations of business history, and some of us have also jointly published books and academic journal papers. I also organized several meetings between Kyoto University’s representatives and the people in charge of international relations at my university for setting up this joint master’s programme.

As the European Union has authorized the final agreement, Kyoto University and the University of Barcelona are officially connected and now part of an international network that maximizes students’ learning opportunities and to be part of a top-notch programme.

Q5: What do you think about the impact of the pandemic situation on cooperation between universities? Do you also feel that this pandemic and its effects will have a long-term impact on education and research activities in general?

Prof. Fernández Pérez: Over the last several years, Kyoto University and the University of Barcelona have had a strong collaborative relationship. Before the pandemic, there was already great foundation in place, thanks to an extensive history of joint achievements and shared visions.

While the pandemic has been generally disruptive, the technologies available, such as digital communication platforms and tools, have allowed us to adapt to the circumstances while staying on track with our main objectives.

As for education and research, I hope the pandemic, like those of the past, will facilitate ingenuity - not deter it. While the ongoing uncertainties can be very stressful and discouraging, now is not the time to give up, but instead to come together, innovate, and exchange. In closing, I believe international scientific collaboration has been and will continue to be vital for addressing today’s challenges and those in the future.

Tsilavo Ralandison
Program-Specific Senior Lecturer,
Graduate School of Economics