



ECTS CARD

STUDY PROGRAMME

European Interdisciplinary Studies, Natolin campus (Advanced Academic Master)

YEAR

2022-2023

COURSE TITLE

Future Studies and Foresight Analysis

SEMESTER

1

COURSE PROFESSOR(S)

SZOSTAK Rick

ACADEMIC ASSISTANT(S)

HERRMANN Katja-Elisabeth

COURSE TYPE

Workshop

MAJOR(S)

Not applicable

ECTS CREDITS

No ECTs

TEACHING HOURS

8 hours

INDIVIDUAL & GROUP STUDY TIME

TUTORIAL(S)

COEFFICIENT

Not applicable

LANGUAGE(S)

EN

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The objective of this course is to provide students with basic knowledge and allow them to explore the importance of the field of 'Future Studies' through an interdisciplinary lens. To achieve this, the course will aim at identifying the existing trends in this particular field and how these interact with future scenarios. To this end, the course will highlight the key techniques employed by policymakers and academics in the field of 'Future Studies' including future wheels, backcasting wheels, scenario planning, the Delphi method, and action plans.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will learn the key elements of the field of Future Studies.
- Students will learn how to identify societal goals, policies for achieving these, trends and wild cards that will affect our policies, and strategies for policy advocacy.
- Students will learn about key exercises employed in futures analysis such as the Future Wheel, Scenario Planning, and the Delphi Method.
- Students will learn the value of gathering diverse people (and especially people with diverse educational backgrounds) together and engaging in respectful conversations about the future.
- Students thus prepare themselves for employment in a variety of European Union and other agencies that engage in future analysis.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

N/A

TEACHING METHOD(S)

We will do several group exercises in class. The professor will encourage questions and interaction while lecturing.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

N/A

COURSE CONTENTS

The Course will have six main components:

1. Key Elements of Future Studies. We will provide an overview of the field, with an emphasis on core elements that provide some unity to the field (such as systems analysis, and a variety of group exercises).
2. Identifying Societal Goals. We cannot work toward a better future without first identifying what sort of future we want. We will discuss how we can seek to identify societal goals.
3. Strategies for Achieving Goals. What sort of strategies might be pursued to achieve these goals? How can we identify useful strategies, and how can we ensure that these interact in a way that pursues multiple goals?
4. Identifying Trends. We cannot just examine how to move from the world of today to a desirable future but must account for how the world is likely to change. What trends can we observe, how are they likely to unfold, and how will they interact?
5. Coping with Wild Cards. The future will also surprise us. Some types of surprises (epidemics, natural disasters, etc.) can be prepared for. We can also prepare for surprises in general.
6. Advocating for Desirable Policies. If we have identified useful strategies that can take us from plausible futures toward desirable futures, how can we convince voters and policy-makers of their value?

COURSE MATERIALS (readings and other learning resources/tools)

The only required reading for the course is Rick Szostak, *Making Sense of the Future* (2022), available Open Access at <https://www.routledge.com/Making-Sense-of-theFuture/Szostak/p/book/9781032033488#sup>

Students will find that the first chapter, and the opening and closing sections of other chapters, are the most important. Note that the website also contains most of the **PowerPoint slides** that will be used in the course.

Students who like watching videos may enjoy an interview I did about the book at <https://rss.com/podcasts/reflections/511460/>