IBAEM Regional Conference
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World Studies Extended Essay

An in-depth interdisciplinary study of an

issue of contemporary, global significance.
IB/Harvard Partnership

- World studies has been developed in partnership with Harvard University Project Zero.
IB/Harvard Partnership

The project aims to

- develop interdisciplinary inquiry i.e. the ability to conduct an investigation in which students integrate knowledge and modes of thinking from two or more disciplines and

- develop global consciousness which consists of three capabilities- global sensitivity; global understanding and global self
Research

- the world studies project has included site visits to participating schools and questionnaires to schools and students
- a report from Harvard Project Zero has focused on the students’ experience of preparing for and going through the process of researching and writing the world studies essay
Development in Schools

- started in UWC in Mahindra with a request in 2001 to authorise a world studies course located in the core of the hexagon
- 2002 IB agreed that there should be a world studies extended essay. First cohort entered essays in 2005
- 4 schools on board by May 2009-Mahindra, Jakarta IS, Koç, and Bloomfield
- 2008-2010 4 additional schools: OS Colombo and Aga Kahn Academy; Atlantic College and Washington IS.
Essential Features

- essays must address a topic of global significance
- have a clearly framed research question that addresses a global issue through a “local” example(s)
- draw on disciplinary expertise rigorously and selectively
- integrate IB disciplines productively
- show the development of global consciousness in a researcher’s reflection space
Framing a Research Question

- start with a global issue
- see how this plays out in a local context or contexts
- explore which disciplinary concepts/approaches will need to be used to investigate the topic
- narrow the study down and develop a focused research question
**TOPIC**

HIV-AIDS and religion: beliefs and knowledge about HIV-AIDS among members of different religious communities in Mombasa, Kenya.

**RESEARCH QUESTION**

What do members of three religious congregations (Hindu, Muslim, and Christian) in my city, Mombasa, believe, or know about, the causes, transmissions and cures of HIV-AIDS, and how might religious beliefs inform these people’s views?
Express yourself! Youth culture: a global phenomenon with local meanings everywhere.

RESEARCH QUESTION
How and why have two Japanese graffiti artists used American hip hop art for the purposes of self-expression and community organization in their country?
Interdisciplinary Research

- **purpose** - that is, knowing why the disciplines have been chosen
- **disciplinary grounding** - in the sense of understanding of concepts or theories of the disciplines used
- **integration** - of the disciplines to give more than the sum of their parts
- **thoughtfulness** - which in the best essays will involve reflecting on the usefulness of the disciplinary tools used
Global Consciousness

- **global sensitivity**—a sensitivity to local phenomena and experiences as expressions of developments on the planet
- **global understanding**—the capacity to think in flexible and informed ways about issues of global significance
- **global self**—a developing perception of self as a global actor and member of humanity, capable of making a positive contribution to the world.
Disciplinary Grounding Integration

Global Awareness

Global Understanding

nurturing global consciousness

Global Self

Purpose

Disciplinary Grounding

Integration

Theory of Knowledge

Creativity, Action, Service

Experimental Sciences

Individuals & Society

Mathematics & Computer Science

The Arts

World Studies Extended Essay

through an interdisciplinary approach

thoughtfulness

Languages

nurturing global consciousness

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Mainstream Launch

- world studies is now a mainstream EE option for first examinations 2013
- all documents plus a forum for teachers are on a dedicated OCC page
- there is a world studies chapter in the new edition of the guide published December 2010
- teacher support material published (in English only)
- screen cast and video