



The Millennium Project

Global Futures Intelligence System
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Curriculum for the “Azerbaijan Foresight” (AZFOR) Course

Duration: 1 year (2 semesters)

Objective: professional training and studying in the field of global futures research with application to economy and strategic planning, and with specific focus on Azerbaijan

Imperative: globalization and associated contemporary and future global challenges require collective proactive actions and collaborative approaches, as well as just-in-time knowledge and information exchange systems to adequately understand and address the accelerating changes globally and their respective implications and impacts locally and to different spheres of activity.

Form: teaching is carried out in the form of an on-line university course for students (primarily) in English language through scheduled video-conference classes delivered by foreign experts. When possible, some of the teachers will be physically present.

General Overview of the 1-Year Course:

Semester 1: Global Futures Research Issues and Local Applications

- The origins, evolution, and status of futures research
- The underlying concepts, advantages, limitations, and implicit assumptions
- An analysis and outlook for the 15 Global Challenges assessed by The Millennium Project
- Concrete application through individual projects

Semester 2: Futures Research Methodologies

- Description and application of futures research methods
- Quantitative and qualitative techniques
- Concrete applications through class and individual projects

Bibliography:

- Reading material will be indicated for each class individually
- All students get free access to the entire Global Futures Intelligence System (GFIS) <https://themp.org> that comprises detailed description and research on the 15 Global Challenges, all the Futures Research Methods, all the cumulative research by The Millennium Project over the past 17 years, as well as a large database of references and web resources

Curriculum and Schedule of the Course

Semester I: Global Futures Research Issues and Local Applications

Objectives:

- ✚ Understand Futures Research
 - What is Futures Research?
 - What are its purposes?
 - A brief history of Futures Research
 - A few words about Futures Methods
 - Philosophical assumptions
- ✚ Understand the 15 Global Challenges facing humanity:
 - the current situation
 - future prospects
 - the inter-linkages among the challenges
 - the forces shaping global futures and their local implications
 - policies and actions for addressing the challenges
 - gaps and prospects of international regulations and negotiations related to the 15 Global Challenges
- ✚ Final exam: individual 2-minutes video simulation of briefing to the President

Classes:

(Note: in parenthesis is indicated the number of the respective Global Challenge)

Class 1: Introduction to Futures Research

Class 2: Global Foresight and Decisionmaking (5), Global Ethics (15)

Class 3: Sustainable Development & Climate Change (1), Water (2), Population and Resources (3)

Class 4: Economic Development (7) and Factors of a New Economic System

Class 5: Democratization (4), Gender (11), Education (9), Health (8)

Class 6: Peace and Conflict (10), Trans-organized Crime (12)

Class 7: Science & Technology (14), ICT (6), 2025 S&T Scenarios

Class 8: Energy Issues (13) and 2020 Global Energy Scenarios

Class 9: Final exam

The students present a 2 minutes video on the challenge(s) of their choice as a simulation of briefing to the President

Semester II: Futures Research Methodologies

Objectives:

- ✦ Describe and demonstrate quantitative and qualitative futures research methods
- ✦ Understand about 20 futures methods and combination of methods
 - their brief history
 - description
 - usage
 - strengths and weaknesses
 - use in combination with other methods
 - possible futures of the method
- ✦ Individual and group projects using at least two methods to explore future possibilities for Azerbaijan. The final exam consists of 2 parts:
 - participation in a group project (two projects per class)
 - Class Project 1: prepares a State of the Future Index (SOFI) for Azerbaijan
 - Class Project 2: prepares Azerbaijan-Armenia Peace Scenarios
 - an individual project (2 minutes video), a briefing to the President on Future Prospects and Strategies for Azerbaijan

Classes:

Class 1: Review Semester 1, Introduction to futures methods

Class 2: Environmental Scanning, Text Mining, Collective Intelligence

Class 3: Futures Wheel, Delphi & Real-Time Delphi

Class 4: Cross Impact Analysis and Trend Impact Analysis

Class 5: Scenarios and Normative Forecasting

Class 6: State of the Future Index

Class 7: Mid-term Exam

Class 8: Statistical Modeling, Agent or Rules-based Models, IFs

Class 9: Wild Cards and Prediction Markets

Class 10: Participatory Methods, Gaming and Simulations

Class 11: Chaos and Non-Linear Systems; Frontiers of Futures Research

Class 12: Final Exam and Discussions

The students form two teams: one computes the State of the Future Index for Azerbaijan, while the other one writes peace scenarios for the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Both will use a RTD and a combination of at least two other FRMs. The final presentation will be a 2 minutes video on their respective subject of research.