



Internationally Co-ordinated Curriculum Development For Modules in Intercultural Communication

Evaluation Report 2

This report will introduce an outline of the evaluation of the ICCD module 2 *Economic Development and Culture, Parts 1 & 2*. The module was evaluated at the end of winter term 2005–2006 for part I and end of summer term 2006 for part II.

3
1
1
1
5
5
7
7
7
3
)
)
)
)
l
2
3
3
3
1
ł

Introduction

Module 2, parts 1 + 2, *Economic Development and Dulture* was taught simultaneously at the four partner universities: Beijing Institute of Technology, China (BIT); Dresden University of Technology, Germany (TUD); University of Dhaka, Bangladesh (DU) and University of Limerick, Ireland (UL). Due to differently structured academic years at the four partner institutions, the module was taught during the academic year 2005/2006, covering the winter and the summer terms at BIT, TUD and UL and during the year 2006 at DU.

On a meta-level the module aimed at internationalising education in a globalised world. It was therefore implemented multimedia based, and with transnational, transcultural and interdisciplinary approaches to strengthen the mutual understanding of the participating students. To check whether this ambitious aim was achieved or not the module was evaluated twice.

All together 289 students attended the module. To evaluate the module and to be able to compare the results to those of module 1, the questionnaire of module 1 was adjusted to module 2's specificities during autumn 2005. Furthermore, not all attending students returned the questionnaire. For module 2, part 1, 114 questionnaires were returned, for module 2, part 2, 77 questionnaires. Selected results which are regarded as most representative for both parts of the module will be presented here.

(Dr. Birgit Häse)

General Summaries of Local Evaluations

Dresden University of Technology

Module 2 was implemented at Dresden University of Technology in winter term 2005/06 (2.1) and summer term 2006 (2.2). Both courses were open to undergraduate students from various academic fields. Module 2.1 was taught to 10 students, module 2.2 to 6 students. Due to other mandatory courses only one student participated in both modules. Both courses were delivered by Dr. Carsten Storm.

Students generally welcomed the interdisciplinary concept of the module, especially the combination of economic and cultural aspects and the exemplification of theories in case studies. The impact of case studies was therefore emphasized in module 2.2 with a focus on China and Bangladesh.

A new form of international student linking was implemented in module 2. Online chats between students from different locations were held between students from Dresden and Beijing (2.1) and Dresden and Dhaka (2.2). In both cases the lecturers agreed on an article and a range of questions as a basis for the chats. The chats were held in small groups of two to three students. Time, selection of questions, and choice of chat programme were arranged individually by the students by email contact. The results of the chat were part of the final marking of the students, together with reports and in-class participation. Students were quite enthusiastic about the possibility to exchange their opinions on the article with their fellow students. This also improved their general understanding of the modules topic.

Most students were already familiar with the use of class pages and the online presentation of their reports. Generally, students' outputs are of a better quality if presented to the public.

(Dr. Carsten Storm)

University of Limerick

Module 2 was successfully implemented at the University of Limerick as part of the undergraduate and postgraduate courses on international economics offered by the Department of Economics. Module 2.1, which was started in September 2005, covered international economics at undergraduate level (Course Code: EC4325). Module 2.1, which was run with a postgraduate class in the following semester (starting February 2006), explored the global relationships between politics and economics in greater depth.

Module 2.1 was delivered to 85 students. In addition to recognising the impact of culture on economic development, it also examined the interaction between political decisions and their economic consequences. The literature included, but was not limited to the project reading list, and students were assessed based on course-work and end-of-semester examination.

The module put specific emphasis on looking at why the Chinese economy has grown so rapidly. This provided an opportunity to meet a key objectives of the project, namely to enhance intercultural experiences amongst students and staff. Module 2.2 was delivered to a much smaller class of seven students as part of their taught postgraduate programme in International Studies. It explored the complexity of modern international economic affairs. The ICCD project objectives were met by comparing and contrasting the experiences of economic reforms in China and Bangladesh in class, and inviting students to engage in further discussion and work on the topic outside the classroom

(John Lannon)

Beijing Institute of Technology

Module 2 was implemented in the Beijing Institute of Technology (BIT). It was integrated as part of the pre-existing courses in international business (D087107) in the first term and intercultural management (D086516) in the second term. The participating students, who could either choose to take one or both of the modules, were mostly economics and management majors. Both courses were delivered by A. Professor Dr. Meng Fanchen.

The students were generally glad to have the opportunity to get in contact with their fellow students at the other three locations. The students' attitudes towards the concept and structure of the class pages were positive. A group of students took initiative in the message board discussion in module 2.1. Students were to discuss a provided reference paper and topic with the students in other locations. Especially the linking with the students in Dresden was very successful. The students of both sides discussed not only through class-pages, but also via MSN or Yahoo Messenger. However, they often participated in the discussion with students from other universities. The motivation to participate in the discussion was higher in module 2.2; the students received more guidance from the instructor.

As during the teaching in the module 1, the use of the class pages was a meaningful tool for most students. Especially after students learned the theoretical knowledge and were given insights in processes of intercultural communication. The students could discuss the related topics in connection to the discourses of culture and economic development, so that they could gain intercultural competences.

We have learned a number of lessons from this experience. In particular the following:

1. It is better to choose particular case studies related to the current issues for message board topics. Texts which are too theoretical are less attractive for the students, because they are not easy to understand for students who do not have English as mother tongue.

2. To discuss the problems of economic development in term of the relationship between EU Countries and Asia, it is very important to define particular topics, so the students from both sides can better focus on the topic.

(A. Professor Dr. Fanchen Meng)

University of Dhaka

The module 2 was implemented in the Department of Sociology, University of Dhaka as a year-long course at the level of fourth year BSS (Hons).The Course started from 27th February, 2006. The course was offered by Professor S. Aminul Islam and Professor A.I. Mahbub Udd1n Ahmed. The number of students enrolled was 38 (thirty-eight). The students took it as part of their general courses in sociology. This course was particularly useful in offering students a good perspective for analyzing the relationship between culture and economic development with special focus on Europe and Asia.

The students liked the way the module was arranged - the combination of development theories and problems. They enjoyed Weber's deliberations on the birth of capitalism in Europe and its absence in India and China, and current flow of FDI to China. Some students made considerable use of the message board and interacted with fellow students through e-mail. The students read in particular a paper called "The Rise in China's FDI: Myths and Realities" by Alex Erskine and interacted with students of Germany and Ireland through the message board and e-mail. The class page was again useful to students. The students' response was, however, not uniform. Some students were very enthusiastic about the course. A few students showed lack of interest because the course was too difficult and intensive for them.

(Professors S. Aminul Islam and A.I. Mahbub Uddin Ahmed)

Results of Module 2.1

Selected Data and Analysis

Following are selected data from the analysis. All participating students were asked to file the questionnaire during one of the last lessons of part 1.

The numbers refer to the listing in the questionnaire. Please find its complete blank version in the Annex.

A) Please state your opinion concerning the module

1 = totally agree to 5 = totally disagree; [AM = Arithmetic Mean]

		UD	TUD	BIT	UL	Total
		n =27	n=9	n =18	n =60	
	Question	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
4.	The suggested reading is useful for understanding the module.	2,30	1,44	2,28	1,76	1,95
5.	The case studies were well chosen.	2,26	2,22	2,17	2,03	2,12
8.	The module content was relevant:					
	for modern societies	1,52	1,89	1,72	1,68	1,67
	within the academic discourse	2,38	1,89	2,39	1,70	2,00
	for me personally	1,92	1,22	2,39	1,77	1,87
	for internationalisation	1,54	1,78	1,82	1,91	1,79
11.	Concepts of economic development must take the following categories into account:					
	population dynamics	1,70	1,13	2,00	1,92	1,82
	resources	1,92	1,63	1,89	2,19	2,02
	environment	2,04	1,25	2,06	1,94	1,93
12.	Globalized culture of economics is a pow- erful tool to deal with the problems of in- equality, poverty and gender relationships.	1,37	2,50	1,94	2,11	1,91
13.	Political culture and governance are decisive aspects within the discourse of economic development.	1,76	1,60	2,00	1,92	1,87
14.	The following aspects of globalization: trade, technology, transnational corpora- tions, and foreign aid are relevant analyti- cal tools to describe contemporary every- day life circumstances down to local areas.	1,74	1,75	1,89	1,93	1,93

Please note that graphs of the results of key questions contained in the questionnaire are available in the chapter "Graphs of Evaluation Results Module 2.1"

Main findings:

- The average opinion concerning the module is good. There might be different national / cultural attitudes to evaluation, i.e. Students from Dresden generally gave better marks in comparison to the other students.
- Students generally regarded the module as important for modern societies, while its importance within the academic discourse is seen critically. This is to be explained by the fact that for most students the contents though not generally unknown had hitherto not been dealt with in academic classes.
- There a national / cultural differences in identifying the importance of categories of economic development. The category of population dynamics is regarded as most important in Dhaka, Dresden, and Limerick, while students in Beijing are favouring the category of resources. The category of environment Students is seen most critically by in Dhaka and Beijing.
- Students in Dhaka are most keen for the implications of globalisation.

Problems:

Questions 13 and 14 were answered by several students although they were not content of Module 2.1. (Economic Development and Culture I). The evaluation forms stated that these questions were to be answered only by students participating in Module 2.2.

B) Please state your opinion concerning the class pages

1 = totally agree to 5 = totally disagree; [AM = Arithmetic Mean]

		UD	TUD	BIT	UL	Total
		n = 27	n= 9	n = 18	n =60	
	Question	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
8.	The short personal self presentations of the student participants was helpful to start communication.	1,71	2,88	2,06	2,58	2,28
9.	I used the message board to discuss topics of the module content.	3,04	2,50	2,44	3,12	2,91
10.	Class pages and message boards are useful tools for internationally organized courses.	1,52	1,33	2,44	2,41	2,08

Please note that graphs of the results of key questions contained in the questionnaire are available in the chapter "Graphs of Evaluation Results Module 2.1"

- Message boards were used less within this course since direct chats on selected topics were held among small groups of students from different locations.
- Students from Dresden found class pages and message boards more useful to elucidate the content of the module than students from Beijing

C) Individual point of view

		UD	TUD	BIT	UL	Total
		n = 27	n= 9	n = 18	n = 60	
	Question	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
2.	The module content was completely new to me.	1,74	3,44	1,83	2,66	2,33
5.	It was interesting to work together with students from different countries.	1,15	1,33	1,67	1,95	1,63

1 = totally agree to 5 = totally disagree; [AM = Arithmetic Mean]

Please note that graphs of the results of key questions contained in the questionnaire are available in the chapter "Graphs of Evaluation Results Module 2.1"

Questions:

- 8. The module inspired me to continue working in this direction.
- 9. The course was especially meaningful because it is part of ICCD project.
- 10. I would like to intensify the exchange between students from different countries within the courses.

	UD		TUD		BIT		UL		Total	
	n = 27		n= 9		n =18		n = 60			
Q	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
8.	96,3%	3,7%	100%	0%	77,8%	22,2%	79,5	20,5	85,6%	14,4%
9.	92,6%	7,4%	22,2%	77,8%	77,8%	22,2%	56,4%	43,6%	67,7%	32,3%
10.	92,6%	7,4%	77,8%	22,2%	100%	0%	73,8%	26,2%	84,4%	15,6%

Please note that graphs of the results of key questions contained in the questionnaire are available in the chapter "Graphs of Evaluation Results Module 2.1"

- The module is more congruent with the European than the Asian general curriculum. It therefore attracts more Asian students who value it as a new chance for intercultural communication.
- Linkage of students in Dhaka and Dresden was more successfully operated than among students from Beijing and Limerick. Successful linkage obviously increases the acceptance of international co-operation.
- The module was generally inspiring for students to continue working in this direction.
- The large majority of students from all countries wishes to intensify the exchange between students from different countries within the course. The rate is generally higher though in Asia reflecting that international co-operation in teaching even less established in there.

Results of Module 2.2

Selected Data and Analysis

A) Please state your opinion concerning the module

1 = totally agree to 5 = totally disagree; [AM = Arithmetic Mean]

		UD	TUD	BIT	UL	Total
		n =24	n=5	n =43	n =5	
	Question	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
4.	The suggested reading is useful for understanding the module.	2,00	1,40	2,02	2,60	2,01
5.	The case studies were well chosen.	1,87	1,80	1,63	2,80	1,79
8.	The module content was relevant:					
	for modern societies	1,58	1,20	1,56	2,20	1,58
	within the academic discourse	1,75	1,60	1,88	3,00	1,88
	for me personally	1,92	1,40	2,55	2,40	2,26
	for internationalisation	1,83	1,40	1,79	2,50	1,82
11.	Concepts of economic development must take the following categories into account:					
	population dynamics		1,50	1,70		1,69
	resources		1,50	1,56		1,56
	environment		1,00	1,55		1,52
12.	Globalized culture of economics is a pow- erful tool to deal with the problems of in- equality, poverty and gender relationships.		1,00	2,12		1,91
13.	Political culture and governance are decisive aspects within the discourse of economic development.	1,75	1,40	2,07	2,50	1,95
14.	The following aspects of globalization: trade, technology, transnational corpora- tions, and foreign aid are relevant analyti- cal tools to describe contemporary every- day life circumstances down to local areas.	1,46	1,20	1,84	2,00	1,68

Please note that graphs of the results of key questions contained in the questionnaire are available in the chapter "Graphs of Evaluation Results Module 2.1"

Main findings:

- The average opinion concerning the module is good. There might be different national / cultural attitudes to evaluation, i.e. Students from Dresden generally gave better marks in comparison to the other students.

- Students generally regarded the module as important for modern societies. The awareness of its importance within the academic discourse, which had been seem most critically for Module 2.1, has generally risen. This exemplifies the fact that curriculum development and increased knowledge are resulting in an increased awareness
- There a national / cultural differences in identifying the importance of categories of political culture and governance as well as aspects of globalisation. The largest difference is between the students from Dresden and from Limerick, that is among the European students. Quite possibly the reason is the different status of participating students. Students from Dresden were attending a course for all faculties. This means their knowledge on related matters was rather unequal and for most of them the contents were new. Students in Limerick on the other hand were in an MA course, meaning that they were in a better position to question the contents critically.

Problems:

Question 11 and 12 were answered by several students although they were not content of Module 2.2. (Economic Development and Culture II).

B) Please state your opinion concerning the class pages

1 = totally agree to $5 = $ totally	disagree; [AM = Arithmetic Mean]
-------------------------------------	----------------------------------

		UD	TUD	BIT	UL	Total
		n = 24	n= 5	n = 43	n =5	
	Question	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
8.	The short personal self presentations of the student participants was helpful to start communication.	1,54	2,67	2,10	1,67	1,92
9.	I used the message board to discuss topics of the module content.	2,46	3,50	2,60	4,25	2,69
10.	Class pages and message boards are useful tools for internationally organized courses.	1,46	1,50	1,90	2,33	1,75

Please note that graphs of the results of key questions contained in the questionnaire are available in the chapter "Graphs of Evaluation Results Module 2.1"

- Message boards were used less within this course since direct chats on selected topics were held among small groups of students from different locations.
- The bad results for Limerick reflect problems in connecting the students due to differences in time schedules of the terms. Nonetheless, students had been eager to participate in international co-operation, which proves that linkage of students is a motivating factor.

C) Individual point of view

		UD	TUD	BIT	UL	Total
		n = 24	n= 5	n = 43	n = 5	
	Question	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
2.	The module content was completely new to me.	2,17	2,40	1,95	3,40	2,14
5.	It was interesting to work together with students from different countries.	1,13	1,50	1,57	2,25	1,46

1 = totally agree to 5 = totally disagree; [AM = Arithmetic Mean]

Please note that graphs of the results of key questions contained in the questionnaire are available in the chapter "Graphs of Evaluation Results Module 2.1"

Questions:

- 8. The module inspired me to continue working in this direction.
- 9. The course was especially meaningful because it is part of ICCD project.
- 10. I would like to intensify the exchange between students from different countries within the courses.

	UD		TUD		BIT		UL		Total	
	n = 24		n= 5		n =43		n = 5			
Q	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
8.	95,8%	14,7%	75%	25%	83,3%	16,7%	60%	40%	85,3%	14,7%
9.	100%	0%	50%	50%	81%	19%	0%	100%	82,2%	17,8%
10.	100%	0%	80%	20%	95,2%	4,8%	100%	0%	95,9%	4,1%

Please note that graphs of the results of key questions contained in the questionnaire are available in the chapter "Graphs of Evaluation Results Module 2.1"

- The module is more congruent with the European than the Asian general curriculum. It therefore attracts more Asian students who value it as a new chance for intercultural communication.
- The module was generally inspiring for students to continue working in this direction.
- The large majority of students from all countries wishes to intensify the exchange between students from different countries within the course. This is especially true for those students facing problems in connecting to their counterparts

Measures and Reactions

The following lessons were drawn from the experiences of module 2:

General

- 1 The module structure allows adopting it to local requirements. Linking, however, requires a high degree of conformity in terms of common topics, reading material etc.
- 2 Different terms schedules in the four locations proved to be an obstacle for linking since students' knowledge is different when being connected. Online activities should therefore be related to specific topic to be prepared in class, but should take this only as a starting point for online discussions, so that students' can contribute their different knowledge and experiences.

Student linking

Students were internationally linked via message boards and chats, providing possibilities for asynchronous and synchronous communication. Message board discussions were started by the lecturers by provocative statements and questions drown from in class discussions and extra reading material.

Chats were organised in small groups of max 4 students and email addresses were exchanged via the lecturers. All students were given a basic text and four questions, of which one was mandatory and a second one had to be chosen for discussion by the students. Tasks included (1) to agree on a date for the chat within a time frame of two weeks (2) to agree on a technical application allowing to save the chat as a document (NetMeeting, MSN messenger etc.), (3) to agree on the questions for discussion, (4) the chat itself with a duration of at least 1 hour, and (5) handing in the save chat document to the lecturers for marking.

Findings:

- 1 Asynchronous communication increases the quality of students' contributions, while synchronous communication fosters the students' enthusiasm.
- 2 Chats had to be restricted to written forms due to limitations of internet connectivity. Additionally written chats can easily be saved as documents in integrated into the marking procedure.
- 3 Participation in linking needs to be mandatory and relevant for marks in order to increase participation in terms of frequency and quality.
- 4 All forms of student linking need to be carefully prepared by lecturers. Topics should be related to class room performance, but should not just repeat it. They should widen the scope and refer to the different academic backgrounds at the four partner locations.
- 5 Questions and discussions should be prepared in class to deepen the students' apprehension. This is especially true for the basic text for chats. Chat time should not be used for explanations of terms etc.
- 6 To include case studies concerning current problems as basis for message board topics enhances the students' motivation. Highly theoretical texts are less attractive.

Annex

Questionnaire (blanc)

Questionnaire for Evaluating the Modules within the ICCD – Project

Module 2:	Economic Development and Culture								
Please mark you	r answers as follows	•		corrections with	Х				
University:	TUD o	UL	0	BIT	0		DU	0	
l am:	Female o	Male	0						

1. Please state your opinion concerning the module

		totally agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	totally disagree
1.	The objective of the module is clear.	0	0	0	0	0
2.	The module is reasonably structured.	0	0	0	0	0
3.	Complex contents are explained understandingly.	0	0	0	0	0
4.	The suggested reading is useful for understanding the module.	0	0	0	0	0
5.	The case studies were well chosen.	0	0	0	0	0
6.	The case studies do elucidate the theoretical framework.	0	0	0	0	0
7.	The module content was interesting.	0	0	0	0	0
8.	The module content is relevant:					
	for modern societies	0	0	0	0	0
	within the academic discourse	0	0	0	0	0
	for me personally	0	0	0	0	0
	for internationalisation	0	0	0	0	0
9.	The module helped me to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the interdependence between development and culture.	0	0	0	0	0
10.	The theoretical/methodological part of the module was sufficient to meet the course requirements.	0	0	0	0	0
11.	Concepts of economic development must take the following categories into account: [only module 2.1]					
	Population dynamics	0	0	0	0	0
	Resources	0	0	0	0	0
12.	Environment	0	0	0	0	0
12.	Globalized culture of economics is a powerful tool to deal with the problems of inequality, poverty and gender relationships. [only module 2.1]	0	0	0	0	0
13.	Political culture and governance are decisive aspects within the discourse of economic development. [only module 2.1]	0	0	0	0	0
14.	The following aspects of globalization: trade, technology, transnational corporations, and foreign aid are relevant analytical tools to describe contemporary everyday life circumstances down to local areas. [only module 2.2]	0	0	0	0	0

2. Please state your opinion concerning the class pages

		totally agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	totally disagree
1.	The class pages are well structured.	0	0	0	0	0
2.	The class pages are easy to access.	0	0	0	0	0
3.	The class pages are useful to elucidate the content of the module.	0	0	0	0	0
4.	I used class pages for the first time.	0	0	0	0	0
5.	I liked to use the class pages.	0	0	0	0	0
6.	The class pages didn't help to understand the course.	0	0	0	0	0
7.	I didn't have any problems in using English class pages.	0	0	0	0	0
8.	The short personal self presentations of the student participants was helpful to start communication.	0	0	0	0	0
9.	I used the message board to discuss topics of the module content.	0	0	0	0	0
10.	Class pages and message boards are useful tools for internationally organized courses.	0	0	0	0	0

3. Individual point of view

		totally agree	partially agree	neither agree nor disagree	partially disagree	totally disagree
1.	I did learn a lot.	0	0	0	0	0
2.	The module content was completely new to me.	0	0	0	0	0
3.	I didn't have any problems in reading the course material.	0	0	0	0	0
4.	It was the first time for me to work together with students from different countries.	0	0	0	0	0
5.	It was interesting to work together with students from different countries.	0	0	0	0	0
6.	To work with students from different countries is difficult.	0	0	0	0	0
7.	It was difficult to switch between the mother tongue and English.	0	0	0	0	0
8.	The module inspired me to continue working in this direction.					
		yes	no			
9.	The course was especially meaningful because it is part of the ICCD project					
10	I would like to intensify the exchange between students from different countries within the courses.					
11.	Did you miss anything?					
	If yes, please specify					

Thank you for your cooperation!