

Overview:

This virtual activity enables participants to become more self-aware of their cultural assumptions and problem-solving approaches, as well as understand different worldview frameworks for addressing climate change in future cities.

Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Discover their own biases and preferences that are shared with their cultural group (self-awareness).
2. Demonstrate their understanding of different priorities and the complexity of another culture in relation to its history and practices (worldview frameworks).
3. Compare the cultural attitudes of global warming and infrastructure challenges and obtain understanding of other cultural perspectives.

Time:

1 hour and 30 minutes

Group Size:

Small group

Materials:

A computer with access to the internet, Zoom or other similar video chat platform, the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\) Report 2020 by the United Nations \(UN\)](#), an international guest speaker with expertise or experience working with projects related to climate change.

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Cultural Self-Awareness:

- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks:

- To demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs & practices.

Preparation:

Students will have read the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\) Report 2020 by the United Nations \(UN\)](#) and developed awareness of the challenges of climate change in cities. An international researcher/educator with expertise or experience working with climate change projects should then be invited to deliver a guest lecture on their country's historical and cultural context related to climate change and their initiatives related to the SDG. The creator of this activity invited a researcher/educator from Japan, Dr. Yoshiki Yamagata (see guest lecturer bio in [Downloads](#)).

Activity Instructions:

1. After participants have read through the SDG Report, ask them to identify the top three goals from the report that are most important to them. The instructor might consider collecting that information using a survey platform such as Google Forms or Qualtrics, as they will be using participants' choices to form groups for this activity.
2. When participants are all together in Zoom or another similar platform, the instructor should review and summarize the UN's 17 goals related to climate change (in the report). They should also share the following question with participants to guide their thoughts as they listen to the guest lecture:

- What kinds of specific activities/technology/models proposed in [guest speaker's country] can be applied or cannot be applied in US cities?

3. Then, the guest speaker will commence with their lecture.
4. Place participants in breakout rooms with other students who share the same goal. The instructor should aim for three to six participants per group.

Note: The instructor can choose to do this part of the activity directly following the guest lecture, if time, or during the next class meeting.

5. In the breakout rooms, participants should do the following:
 - Brainstorm possible smart and sustainable solutions to their team's specific sustainability challenge that can be applied in cities in the US and beyond.
 - Considering the humans, infrastructure, and technology discussed in class and the guest lecture, discuss the acceptance of technology/models from the guest lecturer's country in the US:
 - Can they find any perspectives of addressing climate change from the guest lecturer they agree or disagree with?
 - What specific technology/model can be used for their smart and sustainable solution?
 - What specific people or interest groups would be impacted by the technology/model?
 - What changes of specific infrastructure systems would be acceptable in the US?
6. With the entire group, discuss the following:
 - What are the different cultural perspectives of responding to climate change in cities that you discussed in your groups?

Related Tools:

- [Analyzing Cultural Attitudes](#)
- [Danger of a Single Story](#)
- [Building Global Competency in the Intercultural Classroom](#)
- [Follow-the-Sun Global Technology Team](#)