

**SABANCI UNIVERSITY**  
**SPS 101A / Humanity and Society I**  
**SPRING 2023**  
**Top Hat: 405670**

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This syllabus is created in accordance with the YÖK regulations implemented countrywide after the February earthquakes in Turkey. This course will be delivered **online** until further notice. We may have to revise the course plan according to the reassessment to be made country-wide, regarding higher education, at the beginning of April. The content to be delivered is certain but the method of course delivery, the number and dates of exams, and some other details are subject to change.

UPDATE: The first midterm will take place online. The second midterm will take place on campus.

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**Lectures:** Delivered synchronous online on Mondays, 9:40-11:30, recording location: FMAN 1099. Students are encouraged to come to the lecture on location.

**Discussion Sections:** Online: A1-A5: Tuesdays 14:40-16:30  
A6-A9: Tuesdays 16:40-18:30

**Instructors:** Emre Erol [emre.erol@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:emre.erol@sabanciuniv.edu), Ateş Altınordu [ates.altinordu@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:ates.altinordu@sabanciuniv.edu), Marloes Cornelissen Aydemir [marloes.cornelissen@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:marloes.cornelissen@sabanciuniv.edu), Melike Ayşe Şenol Kocacık [melike.kocacik@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:melike.kocacik@sabanciuniv.edu), Fatma Öncel [fatma.oncel@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:fatma.oncel@sabanciuniv.edu).

**(Online) office hours** with instructors by email appointment

**Coordinator:** Berna Kamay [berna.kamay@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:berna.kamay@sabanciuniv.edu)

**Online office hours:** by email appointment

**Technical Assistant:** Ezgi Çolakoğlu [ezgi.colakoglu@sabanciuniv.edu](mailto:ezgi.colakoglu@sabanciuniv.edu)

**Course Description:** This course provides an introduction to the study of the human experience in the pre-modern world. It brings together various disciplinary approaches and major topics of the pre-modern world in a roughly chronological order. There are three central aims of this course. The first aim is to present our students the challenges and potential in the scientific study of human experience through the introduction of various analytical tools from disciplines such as history, sociology, anthropology, and economics. The idea is to show to our students that the human experience is as much the realm of scientific inquiry and critical thinking as it is the case with the natural world. The second aim is to introduce the basic dynamics of the pre-modern world before the 19<sup>th</sup> century so that students would be adequately equipped to follow our consecutive course SPS 102 about the modern era and the concept of modernity. Finally, this course also aims to emphasize the structured use of language, in this case English, for the purposes of knowledge production and critical analysis. It accepts the role of language in humanities and social sciences as important as calculus is for physics. To that end, it pays special attention to critical reading and writing as evident from the course structure.

**Grading:** The components of the final course grade are as follows:

Midterm examinations:	50%	(1 <sup>st</sup> midterm <b>20%</b> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> midterm <b>30%</b> )
Writing Assignments:	30%	(Summary Paper: 10% + Response Paper: 20%)
Discussion sessions:	20%	(Ten discussion weeks, of which seven are graded, five best will count x 4% each)
In-lecture Bonus Top Hat questions:	4%	(Four random <i>Top Hat</i> questions x 1% each)

Bonus video assignment: 6% (Read, listen and record assignment)

**Course Requirements:** Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before each lecture and actively participate in discussion sections, take two midterm exams, and submit a summary paper and response paper. No mandatory attendance is taken for the lectures, but students who miss more than five discussion sections (or more than 10 discussion hours) will automatically get a zero from all their discussion section grades. In addition, those who miss five or more discussion sections and both midterm examinations without a valid excuse will fail the course and be considered NA. Attend your discussions on time, late attendance (10 minutes rule) will not be tolerated.

### Course Components:

Midterm examinations: Planned to take face-to-face on campus; more information will follow by April. There will be two midterm examinations in this course, which constitute 25% of the course grade each. In terms of the examination format, each midterm will consist of short questions and long essay questions. Students will be graded based on their comprehension of the content and their ability to formulate analytical arguments based on that content from the readings, lectures, and discussion sections.

Writing Assignments: Students are expected to complete two writing assignments based on the readings of this course. The first step of this component is the submission of a summary paper (tentatively in week 6), and the second step is the online submission of a response paper (week 12). Both writing assignments are considered as exams. Each step is graded separately. These assignments will prepare you for the more advanced academic writing assignments of our follow-up course SPS 102. Please make sure to read 'SPS 101 Writing Assignments guidelines' on SUCourse for more details.

Discussion sessions: Online discussion sessions are student-centered learning hours conducted by SPS facilitators. There will be a total of ten discussion sessions. Every discussion session will consist of two hours and of these ten sections, seven random sections will have graded exercises, which will be submitted to SUCourse during the discussion hour. The five best of these seven will be counted towards your grade. The other three sections will be discussion and skills-learning based meetings. The graded weeks will be worth 4% each. Students are expected to watch the recorded tutorial videos before the discussion sections. Students may also be asked to finish one or more of the assigned readings before the discussion sections. Attendance will be taken regularly during each hour of the discussion sessions. Students who miss more than five discussion sections (or more than 10 discussion hours in total) will automatically get a zero from all their discussion section grades. Students will not be allowed into the discussion sections after ten minutes following the start of the section meeting. No exceptions will be made to this rule.

Lectures: Lectures constitute the backbone of this course. They are central to the design of the course and the content delivered in the lectures will be tested in the midterm examinations. Lecture attendance is not mandatory, but four random in-lecture bonus questions will be asked at random lecture hours throughout the course through the Top Hat system. These are small quizzes that aim to test your comprehension of the lecture and they are not conducted for attendance. Cheating will not be tolerated.

Reading assignments: Students are expected to do all the readings. Readings are designed to be complementary to the lectures and discussion sessions. A better understanding of any topic is only possible by completing the readings and they are a great source for the writing assignments. In addition, midterms will have questions based on the reading material.

Audio-Visual Media Sources: There are videos listed for each week in the syllabus. These audio-visual media materials are assigned to enhance both your understanding of each week's topics as well as your audio-visual media literacy skills. Parts of these media can be used in the discussion sections as well.

**Bonus video assignment:** Technical issues will not be accepted as excuses for not submitting any writing assignments or examinations on time. Additional time (with penalty) for such issues is already provided for some components of this course. To make up for any lost points a read, listen and record assignment will be provided for a total of 6 points. A video will be provided by the course lecturers commenting on one of the course readings accompanied by a set of questions. Students will be expected to record a 5-minute long response to the question provided in the lecturer's video. This assignment will be available on SUCourse by week 5. Please see the SPS 101 Bonus Assignment Guidelines on SUCourse for more details.

**Make-Up Policy:** Make-ups are only allowed for midterms and assignments to students with an official report from or approved by the University Health Center for the date of the exam / assignment in question and those with an official permission notice from the university for participation in a university event on the date of the exam / assignment in question. Students are not allowed to take any form of examination or submit assignments on the days that they have documented excuses. No exceptions will be made to these rules. The makeup exam will be cumulative, meaning that students will be responsible for the content of the entire course in the makeup exam. The format of the makeup exam may be different from the midterms too. There will be no makeup for the makeup exam. The makeup assignment for the paper assignments is cumulative. Late submissions for the Response Paper are allowed only for 3 hours after the initial deadline, but there is a penalty. For the discussion worksheets, students with an official report from or approved by the University Health Center or an official permission notice from the university for participation in a university event for the date of a discussion section will receive the average points they have received in their other section worksheets throughout the semester only if less than 5 graded worksheets are present for the entire semester. Those who already have 5 worksheet grades will not have make-up adjustments in their grades.

**Objection Policy:** Students are only allowed to object to their midterm and writing assignment grades. Grade bargaining is absolutely not tolerated. All objections must have a solid basis. Objections must be submitted by email to the relevant facilitator and must be followed by an (online) meeting. The facilitators who graded the assignment in question initially assess the objections. The SPS course coordinator makes a second assessment if need be. All objections must be made within the announced periods of time.

**Assigned Readings:** The SPS 101 reader includes all the required readings listed below and these readings will be accessible from the SUCourse page of the course. Readings should be done before the lecture for which they are assigned. See the schedule of readings and lectures below.

**Grading Scale:** Final grades will be calculated using the following point distribution:

90-100	A
86-89	A-
82-85	B+
78-81	B
74-77	B-
70-73	C+
66-69	C
62-65	C-
58-61	D+
54-57	D
0-53	F

**Academic Integrity:** Cases of plagiarism and cheating will automatically be penalized with a 0 (zero) from the assignment/ examination and also the entire grade component related to that assignment/examination. In addition to that, these cases will be directly referred to the Dean's Office for disciplinary action. Students might be called for a random oral interview for any of the assignments of this course if deemed necessary by the instructors. It should be noted that using (a

part of) an assignment or exam submitted before to this or another course is not allowed and is considered as self-plagiarism. Please also be informed that overreliance on external editing and proofreading will be penalized accordingly. This SPS course does not tolerate any breach of academic integrity. For the university's Academic Integrity Statement, see:

<http://www.sabanciuniv.edu/en/academic-integrity-statement>

**Important Disclaimer:** Amendments could be made to this syllabus. Please follow email and SUCourse announcements throughout the semester.

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## Course Outline and Readings

### Week 1 – (27 February):

Lecture 1: What is SPS, why SPS and how does it work?

Lecture 2: The big picture: The transition from pre-modern to modern societies

\* Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*, (E-book: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), pp. 20-48.

\* Clive Ponting: *A New Green History of the World* (London: Penguin Books, 2007): Chapter 3: “Ninety-Nine percent of human history”, pp. 17-35

\* Video: ‘What Happened Before History? Human Origins’ *Kurzgesagt – In a Nutshell*, last modified 2016 ([Click me](#))

### Week 2 – (6 March):

Lecture 1: The longest period of human history: Hunter and gatherers

Lecture 2: The great transition: Agricultural revolution and beyond

\* Michael Cook, *A Brief History of the Human Race* (New York - London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003), pp. 3-37.

\* Video: ‘Origins of agriculture,’ *World History / Khan Academy*, 2017 ([Click me](#))

\* Video: ‘Catalhoyuk: The Story of the Oldest Civilization on Earth?’ *26 Dimensions*, 2020 ([Click me](#))

### Week 3 – (13 March):

Lecture 1: A man-made habitat: Emergence of cities and civilization

Lecture 2: Historicizing state: Theories on the origin of states

\* J. Donald Hughes, *An Environmental History of the World: Humankind's Changing Role in the Community of Life* (London & New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 30-51.

\* Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*, (E-book: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), pp. 225-250.

### Week 4 – (20 March):

Lecture 1: Early Afro-Eurasian empires

Lecture 2: On cultural and material exchange in pre-modern societies: markets, trade and interactions

\* Peter Stearns et al. *World Civilizations, The Global Experience* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc. 2011) Chapter 4: “Unification and the Consolidation of Civilization in China” pp. 80-100; Chapter 7: “Rome and its Empire”, pp. 146-162.

\* William J. Bernstein, *A Splendid Exchange: How Trade Shaped the World* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2008), pp. 20-42.

\* [Video](#), 'The Silk Road and Ancient Trade,' *Crash Course World History Episode 9*, 2012 ([Click me](#))

**Week 5** – (27 March):

Lecture 1: What is culture? How meanings shape human behavior.

Lecture 2: Religion as culture and practice. Early belief systems and world religions.

\* Yuval N. Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, (London: Vintage Books, 2014), pp. 22-44.

\* Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: The Free Press, 1995), pp. 33-44, 207-216.

\* Raymond Williams, "Culture is Ordinary" (1958), in Ben Highmore ed., *The Everyday Life Reader* (Psychology Press, 2002), pp. 91-100.

**Week 6** – (3 April):

Lecture 1: Afro-Eurasian macro systems

Lecture 2: A general outlook: Pre-modern economies

\* Clive Ponting, *World History: A New Perspective*, (London: Chatto & Windus, 2000), pp. 250-257, 355-376.

\* Peter Stearns et al., *World Civilizations, The Global Experience* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc. 2011), pp. 328-349.

\* [Video](#): 'Int'l Commerce, Snorkeling Camels, and The Indian Ocean Trade,' *Crash Course World History # 18*, 2012 ([Click me](#))

<b>Summary Paper is scheduled during discussion sections</b>
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**Week 7**– (10 April):

Lecture 1: Expanding frontiers and the Columbian Exchange I

Lecture 2: Expanding frontiers and the Columbian Exchange II

\* Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492*, (London: Praeger, 2003), pp. 3-34.

\* [Video](#): 'The Columbian Exchange,' *Crash Course World History #23*, 2012 ([Click me](#))

<b>First Midterm: 15 April</b>
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**Week 8** – (17 April):

Lecture 1: The Renaissance

Lecture 2: The Reformation

\* Richard W. Bulliet et al., *The Earth and Its Peoples: A Global History* (2011), pp. 449-455.

\* Gerard Delanty, Chapter 6: "The Renaissance and the Rise of European Consciousness," *Formations of European Modernity* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), pp. 109-131.

\* [Video](#): 'Political Theory - Niccolò Machiavelli,' *The School of Life*, 2015 ([Click me](#))

**Week 9** – (24 April):

Lecture 1: On early modern transformations: Maritime empires and resilient empires

Lecture 2: Atlantic Trade: Proto-globalization and the new economy

\* Richard W. Bulliet et al., *The Earth and Its Peoples: A Global History (Fifth Edition)* (Boston MA: Wadsworth-Cengage Learning, 2011), pp. 446-468.

\* Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind*, (London: Vintage Books, 2014), pp. 341-373.

\* [Video](#): 'The triangle trade and the colonial table, sugar, tea, and slavery,' *Smart History*, 2018 ([Click me](#))

\* [Video](#): 'Impact of the Slave Trade: Through a Ghanaian Lens,' *World History Project*, 2019 ([Click me](#))

**Week 10** – (1 May): **This recorded lecture will be made available online, due to the holiday**

Lecture 1: Scientific Revolution I

Lecture 2: Scientific Revolution II

\* Roger B. Beck et al., *World History: Patterns of Interaction* (Evanstone, IL: McDougal Littell, 2009), pp. 623-628.

\* [Video](#): 'The Scientific Revolution,' *Crash Course History of Science Episode # 12*, 2018 ([Click me](#)).

**Week 11** – (8 May):

Lecture 1: Enlightenment I

Lecture 2: Enlightenment II

\* Kieron O'Hara, *The Enlightenment: A Beginner's Guide* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2010), pp. 1-22.

\* Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* (New York: McClelland & Stewart, 2014), 'The Ideal of Progress' and 'And They Lived Happily Ever After'.

\* [Video](#): 'The Scientific Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment,' *World History | Khan Academy*, 2017 ([Click me](#)).

**Week 12** – (15 May):

Lecture 1: The Age of Revolutions: Concepts and Frameworks

Lecture 2: The Age of Revolutions: The American and the French cases

\* Jack Goldstone, "The Comparative and Historical Study of Revolutions", *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 8, 1982, pp. 187-207.

\* Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution* (Vintage, 1996), pp. 117-131.

\* [Video](#): '1750-1900: Enlightenment and Revolution,' *Khan Academy*, 2019 ([Click me](#))

<b>Response Paper (set: Thursday 18 May 8 pm; due Sunday 21 May 11:55 pm)</b>
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**Week 13** – (22 May):

Lecture 1: The Age of Nationalisms

Lecture 2: The Nation State

\* Christopher Pierson, *The Modern State*, 3rd ed. (Routledge, 2011), pp. 4-49.

\* Anthony D. Smith, "State-making and nation-building," *States in History* 15 (1986): pp. 228-263.

**Week 14** – (29 May):

Lecture 1: The Energy Revolution

Lecture 2: Humans and Collective Learning

\* Alfred W. Crosby, *The Children of the Sun: A History of Humanity's Unappeasable Appetite for Energy* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006), pp. 59-84.

\* David Christian, *Origin Story: A Big History of Everything* (Penguin Books: London, 2019), pp. 169-187.

\* [Video](#): 'Threshold 6: Humans and Collective Learning,' *The Big History Project*, 2013 ([Click me](#))



<b>Second Midterm (in the final exam period, date will be announced on SU Course)</b>
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**Suggested optional readings**

- \* **Week 2:** Brian M. Fagan and Nadia Durrani, *World Prehistory: A Brief Introduction* (London & New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 175-204.
- \* **Week 3:** Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Jovanovich, 1961), pp. 119-125.
- \* **Week 6:** Lynda Shaffer, 'Southernization,' *Journal of World History* Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 1994) pp. 1-21.
- \* **Week 7:** Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*, (E-book: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999), pp. 306-325.
- \* **Week 9:** Ben Teensma and John Anderson, *Navigator: The Log of John Anderson, VOC Pilot-Major, 1640-1643* (Leiden: BRILL, 2010), pp. 3-9.
- \* **Week 11:** Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment," *Berlinische Monatschrift*, 1784.
- \* **Week 12:** John Coatsworth et al., *Global Connections: Volume 2, Since 1500: Politics, Exchange, and Social Life in World History* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 202-211.
- \* **Week 14:** David Christian, *Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History* (University of California Press: London, 2004), pp. 182-190.

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**Discussion Session Outline and Important Dates**

**Week 1 – (28 February):** Introduction & The big picture

- Two-hour discussion session.

**Week 2 – (7 March):** Hunters & gatherers and The Agricultural Revolution

- Two-hour discussion session.

**Week 3 – (14 March):** Cities, civilizations & states

- Two-hour discussion session.

**Week 4 – (21 March):** Early Afro-Eurasian empires & exchange

- Two-hour discussion session.

**Week 5 – (28 March):** culture & religion

- Two-hour discussion session.

**Week 6 – (4 April):** Afro Eurasian Macro-systems and pre-modern economies

<b>Summary Paper is scheduled during discussion sections</b>
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**Week 7 – (11 April):** Columbian Exchange

- Two-hour discussion session.

<b>First midterm: 15 April</b>
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**Week 8 – (18 April): No DS**

**Week 9 – (25 April): Maritime Empires & Atlantic Trade**

- Two-hour discussion session.

**Feedback sessions on Summary Paper** through (online) feedback sessions this week

**Week 10 – (2 May): Scientific Revolution**

- Two-hour discussion session.

**Week 11 – (9 May): Enlightenment**

- Two-hour discussion session.

**Week 12 – (16 May): No DS**

**Response Paper (set: Thursday 18 May 8 pm; due Sunday 21 May 11:55 pm)**

**Week 13 – (23 May): Nationalisms & the nation state**

- Two-hour discussion session.

**Bonus assignment deadline 26 May, 11:55 pm; late submission with no penalty until 28 May, 11:55 pm**

**Week 14: No DS**

**Feedback sessions on the Response Paper** with SL facilitators during finals period

**Second midterm (In the finals week, date will be announced on SUCourse)**

#### **Golden rules for Discussion Sessions**

##### **- Don't be late**

No students are allowed into the online session after the first 10 minutes. Be punctual and respect the digital classroom etiquette.

##### **- Keep your camera on during the online sessions**

Attendance will be taken each hour and you are expected to actively participate. Therefore, please keep your camera on, but only turn on your microphone when asked or planning to speak.

##### **- Communicate in English**

Language is best learned with practice. Discussion sessions are safe environments to make mistakes and ask questions. Use this opportunity and communicate in English.

##### **- Be patient and follow the instructions**

You will be writing, listening, reading and talking a lot in an academic environment. It will initially feel intimidating and hard. Be patient, follow the instructions and work hard. Your language skills



will improve throughout the semester, and you will find things easier as you get used to the assignments, the terminology, and the overall logic of the course.

### **How to follow your grade performance**

Freshman year can be overwhelming and demanding. It is always wise to keep a close track of your own performance throughout the course. Below is a simplified formula that will help you predict or calculate your grade. This formula is just a helping tool. It is not definitive and subject to change. Please make sure to consult the actual grading rubric and/or the course coordinator for more accurate information. The formula is as follows:

MT: Midterm examination

(Sum of best 5 discussion worksheet grades) + [(MT1 x 0.20) + (MT2 x 0.30)] + (Sum of writing assignment components) + (sum of Top Hat bonus) + (bonus video assignment)

## SABANCI UNIVERSITY

SPS 101 / Humanity and Society I  
SPS 102 / Humanity and Society II

### SYLLABUS APPENDIX 1

SPRING 2023  
(Earthquake related measures)

#### EXTENDED ONLINE TEACHING GUIDELINE FOR STUDENTS

In accordance with YÖK's earthquake-related measures, necessary changes have been made to the original structure of SPS 101 and 102 courses. During the Spring term, our courses are taught online. We have shared our course procedures in the **SPS 101 / 102 Spring 2023 Syllabus** uploaded on SUCourse. Students can find necessary information on course components, grading, and general procedures in those syllabi.

In order to get maximum efficiency from online teaching, all students are expected to familiarize themselves with the **online discussion section format** and to comply with the **online discussion section etiquette** described below:

#### Online Discussion Section Etiquette

- **Discussion Sections: As indicated in the course syllabus, there will be synchronous online discussion sections both in SPS 101 and SPS 102.** It is of utmost importance that students watch relevant online lectures/SL-related videos uploaded on SUCourse, study the written teaching materials, and do the readings before they join the online discussion sections. That is a number 1 rule for students who wish to make the best out of online discussion sections.
- For online discussion sections, facilitators will use the online platform Zoom. All students are expected to familiarize themselves with such online meeting technologies if they have not done so far and pre-check their internet connections. Students should collect all necessary information before a scheduled online meeting. All students will attend online meetings by registering through their Sabanci University e-mail accounts and with their real names only. They should keep their webcam on for the duration of the session. Students who do not comply with this rule will not be admitted to any online discussion section by facilitators.
- For those discussion sections that will have graded tasks, the graded assignment will be released on SUCourse and should be submitted during the discussion section.
- No excuses (for instance technical or connection problems) will be accepted for not submitting graded assignments. In case of such problems, missed points can be compensated with the bonus assignment as described in the course syllabus.
- All students should follow important online discussion section announcements sent out by their facilitators regularly.

- Each discussion section will not exceed the scheduled discussion section hours as announced in our syllabi, so that students can join their other courses on time. Discussion sections will be recorded by the facilitators.
- Punctuality is of utmost importance for students in online discussion sections. Please be online on time. You are not allowed to participate 10 minutes after the discussion section has started. The same rule applies for the second hour of the discussion after the 10-minute break.
- Students should always follow proper behavior during online discussion sections. In case of inappropriate or improper behavior (such as displaying nicknames instead of their real names, trying to record online tutorials, not paying attention or properly answering their facilitators, unnecessarily using the chat box, and sharing any inappropriate material and content) during an online meeting, the person in question can and will be banned from online sessions and will be reported and forwarded to a committee for disciplinary action where necessary.

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice. All University Courses contain certain themes that overlap with these goals.

This chart shows how SPS 101 course content relates to these goals.



Week	Course Content	Sustainable Development Goals							
		13	16	3	4	5	12	13	15
1	What is SPS?	13	16						
2	Agricultural Revolution	3	4	5	12	13	15		
3	Cities & States	1	2	6	11	12	15		
4	Empires, Money & Trade	1	10						
5	Culture & Religion	10							
6	Afro-Eurasian Macro Systems & Pre-Modern Economy	8	14	15					
7	Columbian Exchange	12	13						
8	Renaissance & Reformation	4							
9	Atlantic Trade & Maritime Empires	2	8	12					
10	Scientific Revolution	4							
11	Enlightenment	5							
12	Age of Revolutions	16							
13	Nationalisms & Nation State	10	16						
14	Energy Revolution & Collective Learning	4	7	11	12	15			