Quality improvements in curricula for Global Studies

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Abstract

Purpose – Based on an in-depth comparison of 20 multicultural university curricula, this article aims to provide practical and implementable suggestions about how to improve such curricula in order to ensure highest and globally compatible academic quality. The recently founded developmental Master’s curriculum “Global Studies” (GS) at the University of Graz, Austria serves as a case study.

Design/methodology/approach – Through an academic web-based process of authoring and reviewing, over a dozen students and practitioners in Global Studies have compiled this analysis. Such an approach shows that education technologies significantly enhance peer-oriented scientific culture. Further networking among universities from every continent, and their students, is also facilitated.

Findings – Analyses conducted by over 50 contributors during 2010-2013 show first that the Graz-based curriculum has achieved international quality standards by spanning multiple faculties, disciplines, professional roles, and perspectives regarding globalisation. Secondly, suggestions for improvements pertaining to nine aggregated issues are provided: partner universities, semester abroad, interdisciplinarity, didactics & lectures, practicals, languages, electives, admission of students, and exams.

Practical implications – The present specific recommendations serve as valuable evidence-based and authentic input for quality assessment procedures at Graz University, and similarly for other academic curricula elsewhere.

Social implications – Peer-oriented higher education profits greatly from student input that has undergone an academic peer review procedure. Such quality assurance is favourably implemented via collaborative education technologies such as web platforms with discussion fora.

Originality/value – Students as the core target group in higher education institutions express their own opinion and are valued as experts and stakeholders in a genuinely democratic procedure.

Keywords Global Studies, Curriculum, Quality assessment, Improvements, Students’ viewpoint, Developmental education, Web platform, Curriculum development, Curricula, Students

Paper type General review

Introduction

“Climate change and shortage of resources, hunger and mass poverty, terror and violence represent manifold unresolved global problems and challenges” (Global Studies Graz, 2010, 2011). As a sound answer to these challenges on an educational and cultural level, many universities have increased their efforts by studying such problems as globalisation and structural peace.
Due to its geographical location between two former power blocks, neutral Austria has repeatedly assumed a role of active, peace-oriented foreign policy and its capital Vienna is one of the four headquarters of the United Nations (UNIS, 2013). In Austria’s second-largest city, Graz, since 2004 various NGOs and representatives from all faculties of the university have embarked on establishing two Global Studies (GS) curricula: the “Bundle of electives GS”, and since 2010 the “Master programme GS”. After years-long institutionalisation efforts by the steering committee GS and the curricula commission GS, both curricula have formed a stable contribution to Austria’s academic landscape (Kumpfmüller, 2007, 2009; Bader and Zotter, 2012, p. 121; Ahamer et al., 2011, pp. 19-26; and see Section 1.1). Such internationally oriented, high-quality curricula comply with documents on the common European Higher Education Area (EHEA, 2010), with the national university strategy including quality audits (Uniko, 2011, p. 22; Bernhard, 2011, 2012a, b), with literature analyses on quality assessment for interdisciplinary curricula (Ahamer, 2014; Ahamer and Kumpfmüller, 2014), and received backing from the rectorate and from all elected student representatives (GS, 2011).

Due to the increasing number of GS students in both curricula, several types of self-organised institution building have emerged among students. In addition to actively participating in the GS curricula commission, student representatives have developed a forum for informal discussion of GS issues (Global Studies Forum, 2013), co-founded an alumni club for GS graduates and organise weekly lunch tables.

The appeal of this paper consists in the authentic authorship of students who have experienced the curriculum and at the same time have analysed it via peer-review processes (Pany, 2013; Bader and Zotter, 2012, pp. 127-132; Ahamer, 2012a) utilising the communicative functionalities of an elaborate web platform (WebCT). A high percentage of co-authors has acquired solid professional developmental experience at their own workplaces, which adds credibility to the argumentation and recommendations of the present article.

1. Case of a multicultural and developmental curriculum

1.1 History of the Master’s curriculum GS at Graz University, Austria

As this paper is written by students of GS, a short overview of the origin of this very young Master’s programme is covered. The aim of this paragraph is to offer an insight into the broad engagements of the founders of GS in Graz (mainly its initiator Kumpfmüller (2012a, b), lecturer of development economics since 1977 after studies at The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of The Johns Hopkins University) for getting an idea from where the current motivation of the almost 100 new students per year with GS as major (Bader and Zotter, 2012) could originate: In 2004, an informal working group was founded, which later developed into the GS Steering Committee. This working group consists of university professors as well as representatives of different developmental NGOs (e.g. Centre for Peace and Development in Graz, the developmental initiative of the diocese of Graz named “Welthaus”, the Afro-Asian Institute (AAI, 2010), etc.), which in 2004 founded the “Bundle of electives GS” to the value of 40 ECTS and in which students from all faculties are enrolled (Ahamer et al., 2011, pp. 29-33; Ahamer, 2013). This bundle includes global problems and opportunities in the areas of hunger, poverty, climate change, culture, politics, etc. and can be seen as a complement to the Master’s programme in GS for a well-defined target group of students who wish to stick to their original specialties.
After seven years of preparation (Kumpfmüller, 2007, 2009), including many discussions (Pajank, 2008), modifications, administrative developments, support from the national umbrella organisation (MK, 2013), and extremely severe financial bottlenecks, the Master’s programme in GS has finally been on offer since the winter semester of 2010/2011 (Ahamer et al., 2011, pp. 21-26).

1.2 Web-based process for collaborative writing and reviewing

Regarding the procedure of authoring the present paper, a technology-enhanced process was used during the past three years (at left in Figure 1). On a learning platform (WebCT) the authors as student colleagues posted the contributions and performed a peer review (typical example at right in Figure 1). Such peer review processes enhance the academic quality of the texts in a stepwise manner and allow seeing the work products of earlier colleagues (Ahamer, 2011, p. 14). If measured quantitatively by metrics of weekly semester hours, one single contribution of one co-authoring student to the present paper amounts to as little as 0.02 semester hours; in other words less than 1/2 per cent of the “Basic Lecture GS” totalling 15 ECTS, hence \( \sim 0.1 \) ECTS per co-author. The theme of the present paper is only one out of 50 themes dealt with in

![Figure 1](image.png)

> Quality improvements in curricula

At left: the platform for the web-based collaboration shows the optional case studies that were filled in during 2010-2013 by over 50 students who received one peer review each and who partly updated and improved their short seminar papers; at right: screenshot of a typical review process among students on the comparison of developmental theories, analogous to the process leading to the present paper.
facultative assignments; and a comparison of the 20 curricula worldwide and other
work products by GS students will be published later.

The analysis of curricula performed by the authors, however incomplete, facilitates
the overview of various approaches to GS, namely at Graz University, Austria; Vienna
University, Austria; Salzburg University, Austria; Albert-Ludwigs University, Freiburg,
Germany; Philipps University, Marburg, Germany; Leipzig University, Germany;
Roskilde University, Denmark; Lund University, Sweden; Gothenburg University,
Sweden; Birmingham University, UK; Northeastern University, Boston, USA; University
of Ottawa, Canada; University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada; University of California,
Santa Barbara (UCSB), USA; Australian National University ANU Canberra, Wilfrid
Laurier University, Canada; University of Los Angeles, USA; Vancouver Island
University, Canada and others (ordered along geographical distance from the first
mentioned and pictured by GS logos in Figure 1 of the editorial to this special issue).

On this basis and on the basis of original contributions during own studies, in Section 2
the authors suggest the following improvements for any Master’s curriculum GS.

2. Suggestions for improvement of Master’s programmes on globalisation
and development

This Section 2 first includes positive features of developmental curricula using the case
of Graz (Section 2.1) and continues with concrete suggestions for improvement from
the authentic point of view of the authoring students (Sections 2.2-2.10) while using
their Graz curriculum as a case. Figure 2 shows an overview of how often which theme
of suggestions was named by:

- the authors of the present paper (full bars); and
- by all 50 students dealing with this issue during that last three years in the web
  platform (full + empty bars).

2.1 Positive features of developmental curricula using the case of the Global Studies Graz
curriculum

According to year-long own practical experience of the authors, the Master’s programme
GS at Graz University generally stands out with its interdisciplinary approach and the

![Figure 2. Statistics of the themes to which the suggested quality improvements pertained](image)

**Notes:** The numbering (1-10) equals the Sections 2.1-2.10 on the following pages; it is visible
that practically all students have provided argumentation why the curriculum “GS” at Graz
University is very suitable for their needs (item 1); most suggestions for improvement pertain
to foreign languages, either as offered courses or usage of English in GS courses.
large variety of opportunities for specialisation in different scientific disciplines from all faculties of the university. These features of the Master’s programme enable students to approach the broad topic of globalisation with an at least equally broad spectrum of approaches and scientific perspectives, as well as gaining the essentially needed comprehensive view of the topic of globalisation. The previously described “Basic Module GS” (Ahamer, 2012a, p. 203; Ahamer, 2013) especially offers a wide overview of the different disciplines and may also raise interest in research areas that were not originally considered as some students’ field of interest. The opportunity to focus on two or more main areas allows the students within this Master’s programme to meet their individual interests. This possibility may prove advantageous in the students’ further professional life, as their individuality will allow them to stand out. Another special feature is the compulsory internship that offers a good extension to the theoretical basics of the first semesters. The practical application of the knowledge gained in an internship can be used on the one hand for networking and on the other hand may also generate potential future employers.

2.2 Quality improvements regarding partner universities
To put it simply, cooperation with international partner universities is seen as essential, as all the analysed Master’s programmes adorn themselves with the terms “global” and “international”. Therefore, not only should student exchanges be easily available but also mutual support in the field of teaching and research should be encouraged.

The University of Freiburg (Global Studies Freiburg, 2012) can be seen as a very positive example, as it promotes inter-continental relations by providing students the opportunity to capture the international character of the GS degree not only in theory but also to experience life on two different continents. This enables a more interdisciplinary approach in teaching as well as learning from different perspectives. Although many universities recommend studying abroad using the university mobility programmes, they do not offer any exclusive exchanges. The aims of strengthening intercultural communication skills and promoting a cosmopolitan attitude could be better achieved with the cooperation of one or more partner universities. Short-term student exchanges and guest lectures by professors from different universities would enrich all participants.

Another positive example is the “GS consortium” coordinated at the UCSB (2013). This consortium brings together numerous GS programmes worldwide: Aarhus (DK), Berlin (GER, GSP, 2013), Leipzig (GER), Vienna (AUT), Tokyo (JAP), Shanghai (PRC), the M.A. Globalisation ANU Canberra (AUS), and many others. The goal of this consortium is to promote the exchange of ideas about curricula and teaching programmes, the exchange of teaching materials to develop surveys of the career paths of students and ultimately the promotion of exchanges between the respective universities (Global Studies Consortium, 2013). This is one way of enabling offers for student exchange programmes and making it easier for students to complete internships as well as studying abroad worldwide. Nevertheless, students in higher education areas are able to act in a self-responsible manner and thus should involve themselves actively in this process.

2.3 Quality improvements regarding semester abroad
Due to the international focus of these studies a semester abroad can certainly be seen as an academic, cultural as well as personal enhancement for students. Besides the
multitude of advantages, the high costs of staying abroad are often a big barrier, therefore financial aid is an area in which improvements are requested and needed. However, not only the financial components are essential for enabling the largely smooth processing of preparation procedures, but also support in getting information and raising awareness of student opportunities during their years of studies. One possible implementation could be the introduction of joint Master’s programmes, which would also allow the courses to become internationally competitive. Under these conditions, many students would declare themselves in favour not only of a recommended, but also of a compulsory, semester abroad.

2.4 Quality improvements regarding interdisciplinarity
An interfaculty cooperation as it is strongly implemented, for example, at the University of Graz would be a first step for increased interdisciplinarity. The Master’s programme at Graz is not organised by just one institution or faculty, but different faculties are participating in the programme. In this way, the theoretical foundation for the students is greatly extended. The University of Lund (Global Studies Lund, 2012) attaches great importance to an interdisciplinary approach and can be cited as a positive example as well. In a broader sense, interdisciplinarity can also include language skills and intercultural communication and therefore the offer of a wide range of language courses would be an improvement within these programmes.

Suitable improvements are that lecturers do actually implement interdisciplinarity an integrative view based on professional experience in their contributions to the curriculum. Administratively and scientifically, the interfaculty character of Global Studies Graz should be reinforced and the material basis for this curriculum has to be secured in the long run.

2.5 Quality improvements regarding didactics and lectures
Basically, long-term learning, practical application of the acquired knowledge as well as a critical approach should be enabled in an adequate framework of any study programme. These features can be promoted through fostering active participation by students, even if learning types differ.

Acquiring knowledge independently or in groups, writing academic papers (Pany, 2013; Ahamer, 2011, 2012a) and preparing presentations as part of different types of courses are some examples of how students can actively participate. In some universities, such as the University of Toronto (Munk School of Global Affairs, 2013) and Lund University (Global Studies Lund, 2012) this is particularly encouraged. The course system of the Anglo-Saxon model has some advantages that could be taken as a role model because of, e.g. more comprehensive courses, with more ECTS, which enables deeper understanding due to more time being available for instruction. Furthermore, discussions in the scope of courses between students and lecturers as well as so-called “panel discussions” (which help to prepare for discussions and involve representatives from the government, the world of business, etc.) serve as a preparation for future situations in the workplace and should be increasingly conducted in courses.

So-called “interdisciplinary practicals” (IP) as they are offered at the University of Graz in the curriculum Environmental Systems Science (USW, 2013) and similarly for the Salzburg GS curriculum, are a special interactive form of teaching that other curricula and other universities could also offer in their course programmes. A very positive aspect
of these kinds of courses is the continuous participation of students (Altmann et al., 2013; Ahamer, 2012b), which could avoid the pressure of excessively comprehensive exams at the end of the semester (for further explanation see Section 2.10).

Especially for the GS type of Master’s programme, with a focus on interdisciplinarity, it is important that students from various preliminary studies gain some basic knowledge (terminology, basic models, etc.) from other disciplines. This could be enabled, for example, in the form of preparatory tutorials designed to help students attain an approximately equal level of knowledge prior to commencing a Master’s programme (Section 2.4 on interdisciplinarity).

Furthermore, courses in research methodology would be gladly accepted, as at for example the University of Vienna (Master’s programme international development, Section 1.2). Students thus could get to know which methods are applied in the various disciplines and how to combine them.

Besides, excursions, summer/winter schools, and different projects that could be a fixed part of the curricula would provide diverse and effective knowledge transfer and offer a valuable addition to the theoretical parts of academic life. National as well as international projects are important opportunities for students to obtain different views beyond the university realm. These suggestions are often an effort for students and teachers and also involve additional financial expenditures that nevertheless should be made because of the success and improved quality of sustainable learning.

To support the area of teaching, new media can also be incorporated. Web-based collaboration and digital transfer of learning materials facilitate the exchange of information enormously, as was evidenced for the “Basic Lecture GS” through independent empirical surveys (Bader and Zotter, 2012, p. 132; Bader and Köttsdorfer, 2013; Ahamer et al., 2011, pp. 26-30) and backed by anonymous surveys among participating students. The selected approach for the section “social and human geography” in the 2010 “Basic Lecture GS” in created a communication density amounting to tenfold or 20-fold as compared to mere face-to-face lectures (Ahamer, 2011, p. 15).

Generally, a flexible arrangement in curricula is advocated in order to allow individualisation and possibly employment while studying. Some universities already make it possible to complete a PhD programme, such as in California (UCSB). Such PhD extension could be beneficial especially when implemented in cooperation with other international universities.

2.6 Quality improvements regarding internships, practicals, etc
Internships are a good addition to theory based courses designed to gain practical experience which is required in the labour market. Nevertheless, internships may pose some difficulties. First of all, it is important that universities establish contacts with (domestic and foreign) partner organisations and companies for facilitating students to complete various internships in different areas, e.g. in environment area (Mueller et al., 2013), human rights organisations or in political fields, etc. At this point the University of Gothenburg (Global Studies Gothenburg, 2013) could be mentioned as a positive example that was able to facilitate placements in embassies and foreign ministries. Excursions, such as to international organisations/institutions, are one possible activity, that could facilitate contacts for future internships. University-based research or the possibility to complete (compulsory) internships at different organisations allow for implementing practical experience more easily and make the study programme more diverse.
Another important aspect in the field of internships is the financial facet. Internships are often unpaid and students often have to cover their own expenses (e.g. travel costs, etc.). The possibility of completing (compulsory) internships abroad should be optional, as this on the one hand is associated with higher financial expenses and on the other hand, some students may be bound by an ongoing employment contract in their home country. Furthermore, a non-bureaucratic recognition of internships would considerably simplify matters.

Finally, internships should provide an orientation and in the best case create potential contacts for future employment. Trade fairs and exhibitions presenting internship opportunities such as the one which was successfully organised by Global Studies Graz students could provide another platform for students to exchange their experiences.

Another example, which is already embedded in the curricula of Global Studies Graz, is a separate course which supports students during or after completion of their internship in reflecting and analysing their practical experiences. At the end of the course, a report detailing the experience should connect the internship programme with the content of the Master’s programme. As an example, during SS 2012 during this compulsory course “Analysis of Practice” the process of report writing was managed in web-based manner: all students wrote and subsequently reviewed a professional report about their internship experience in group work and additionally authored a paper (Duraković et al., 2012). When collected across years, such reports could be used to offer future students insight and assistance with their internships.

Overall, many students seem to advocate compulsory internship programmes, if difficulties such as financial aspects are likely to be overcome with support, e.g. from universities or the government.

2.7 Quality improvements regarding languages
Both the course content and the subsequent professional activities of the students of these study programmes are designed with a decisive international focus. Accordingly, solid language skills (at least in English) are not only important, but to some extent are also a prerequisite for a successful career and for later professional life, as they are often desired and expected by future employers. Specifically, lecturing in other languages than one’s mother tongue, as well as an expanded range of language courses, would lead to improved and expanded language skills. Implementation in the form of elective bundles or even compulsory language courses designed to teach professional vocabulary and basic language skills, such as communication skills, could be envisaged.

Another possible course of action would be to introduce specific language skill requirements. At the University of Leipzig, for example, students have to demonstrate a minimum level in English and two other languages (at least B2 level, Europass, 2013; Goethe Institut, 2013). Furthermore, language tests such as TOEFL could serve as prerequisites. These suggestions would be advantageous inasmuch as no substantive cuts to the subject matter would be necessary within the limited time of four semesters and 120 ECTS. If this procedure were to be introduced, there would be a need for fair regulations determining when these skills would have to be completed to ensure similar opportunities for all applicants. Additional courses could be held in other languages without difficulties in comprehension, which may also increase the number of foreign students, and thus promote interculturalism.
2.8 Quality improvements regarding electives
Achieving the interdisciplinary approach of these types of Master’s programmes is possible by means of electives. An interfaculty cooperation, as it is strongly implemented for example at the University of Graz, would be a first step toward increased true interdisciplinarity. The Master’s programme in Graz is not organised by just one institution or faculty, but different faculties are participating in the programme. In this way a sufficient range of courses from different disciplines can be offered to enable a comprehensive approach, which greatly extends the theoretical foundation of the students. The University of Lund attaches great importance to an interdisciplinary approach and can be cited as a positive example as well.

Regarding the electives, however, an even distribution of courses from different areas of knowledge is required. At the University of Graz, for example, it would be desirable to offer a greater choice of elective subjects of specialisation, especially in the fields of history and environment, climate, and technology. In addition, a uniform distribution of the courses offered in the spring and fall semester are preferable. In a broader sense, interdisciplinarity can also include language skills and therefore a wide range of language course offerings would be beneficial in the course of these electives/programmes.

Several expressions of student opinions underline that clear, solid quality, and a high professional level during courses and electives are helpful to guarantee substantial quality of the entire curriculum and its international clear acceptance. Such attitude is supported by lecturers.

2.9 Quality improvements regarding admission of students
Often problems occur in the admission process of Master’s programmes. On the one hand, they are based on the limited admission ability of the universities and on the other hand, on the professional requirements. In Master’s programmes with admission requirements, the introduction of an application process, which would determine in advance whether students are suitable for this programme, would be a possible procedure. The advantages of such a proposal are a reduction in the number of student dropouts and a continuous increase in the quality of the Master’s programmes. A problem resulting from this method is the question of who would be allowed to judge the suitability of the applicants and what criteria would be used for this selection.

2.10 Quality improvements regarding exams
The extent of exams and conflicting scheduling are problems which students are most often confronted with. The latter presents a simple logistical problem. Due to the huge extent of exams and time constraints, students are often only able to get a superficial overview of topics, which would require more research (also for only individual interests). This superficial approach hampers the gain of deepened knowledge as well as additional research into topics of individual interest. Several small exams or continuous knowledge tests during the semester (at least in some courses) might be a solution. The possibility of demonstrating (optional) performance in advance would be a big concession for the students. For particularly difficult tests or rather tests that require knowledge from other disciplines, preparatory tutorials would be of great help.

It should be noted that knowing where to find specific information is often more important than rote memorisation, which is often only retained by short term memory. In this context, technical innovations (e.g. internet access to e-journals or online...
collaboration) should be mentioned, which enable easy and quick access to current information. Even though internet-based systems also have weaknesses, these can be offset by other advantages.

The possibility of writing exams in other languages, or at least in English, would be an advantage as foreign students could benefit from this possibility, and the linguistic competence of students whose mother tongue is other than English would be supported.

Recommendations
Complex themes that affect the whole world require an interdisciplinary approach based on the principle of responsibility (Schweitzer, 1996). To enable junior scientific staff to deal with global problems by means of widespread knowledge, to find concurrent causes and risks and finally to add solutions requires new innovative concepts of education.

Concrete suggestions were worked out in Section 2 of this article and are summarised in the conclusions.

The consequences and prognoses for the future concerning global development are being redefined every day, and consequently the educational establishment also has to extend and revise their orientation accordingly by expanding their educational offerings.

The comparison of different programmes concerning global development showed that intercultural mobility is often seen as an obvious desire and therefore it should be used for education, research and teaching. The demand for internationality can be seen in the form of recommended semesters abroad or excursions, and also in the demand for foreign language skills. There is a strong wish for cooperation and networking with partner universities to encourage student exchange programmes.

For students it is important to implement their knowledge in practice which is a necessary component of an integral education. In the area of teaching there are many possibilities and resources which are utilised by universities and which can be useful for many other education programmes.

There was also the wish for more variety of teaching methods mentioned by students such as panel discussions, the writing of scientific papers and guest lecturers. Lately, some of the endless possibilities of the internet and web-based forms of teaching and learning have also been mentioned, like platforms for student communication and networking.

Conclusion
This paper presented steps towards quality assurance in nine key areas from the point of view of students in Sections 2.2-2.10. The team of authors cooperatively suggests steps to quality assurance from the point of view of current and former students. Thereby positive insights as well as ideas for improvements arose, which have been developed by comparing national and international Master’s programmes. In summary, several arguments should be mentioned:

- To foster intense cooperation between partner universities, not merely an exchange of students but also guest lectures could be established.
- Entering the GS consortium can be seen as a recommendable option to increase an interexchange of knowledge.
- Without a doubt, completing stays abroad is particularly important for internationally aligned study programmes.
• Joint Master’s programmes can be suggested as a possibility for promoting internships and stays abroad. These programmes should offer financial support and information for participating students.

• Multidisciplinarity and a multi-paradigmatic approach, which is especially vital in GS, can be achieved by increasing cooperation between faculties of the university.

• Further emphases like language skills could be implicated.

• In terms of didactics and lectures, the prevalent arguments addressed active participation and self-responsible working such as in “IP”. An extension of a broad range of courses like multidisciplinary practices would enrich tuition as a whole.

• Furthermore, increased own performance during the semester should be required to foster continuous participation and at the same time unburden students in the examination periods.

• Placements are part of many GS Master’s programmes, but most students receive no payment for their work and consequently cannot spend time abroad. Ideally, it should be optional for the students to either go abroad or stay in their home country to assist their placement.

• Many students consider the integration of language courses as very important. More lectures should be held in different languages. Additionally, language skills could be constituted as an admission requirement.

• The admission procedure can also result in problems. Due to the multidisciplinary aspect of GS Studies, students from various fields of study apply for admission. An application procedure could help to evaluate borderline cases more precisely.

• A substantial need is safeguarding a sound financial basis for GS as such which is dreadfully absent as of now. Until now, Global Studies Graz has been founded and run at almost no additional cost.

May the above suggestions from a students’ point of view serve to further improve academic quality of multicultural and developmental curricula worldwide.

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**Further reading**


**About the authors**

Almost all co-authors study Global Studies at Graz University or graduated from this curriculum. Additionally, Lena Bader (holding a Master degree in economics and in GS) and Gerhard Witz have been elected student representatives since GS started in 2010. Silvia Fürderer acts as study assistant for the GS curriculum since 2012 at the Institute for Social and Economic History of Graz University. Elisabeth Deutsch works in the headquarters of the St Vincent Community, accommodating and feeding daily over 500 people in their homeless shelters throughout Austria. Marlene Köttstorfer holds a Master degree in Ethnology and works at the Department for Children, Youth and Family in the township Knittelfeld, Styria. Tabea Bereuther, Julia Edlinger, Emanuel Kaspar, Claudia Mautner, Christine Rossegger, Alina Samonig, Stefan Samonig, Christoph Schuster and Victoria Zotter presently study GS or have already graduated from GS.

Dr Gilbert Ahamer is elected board member at the Austrian umbrella organisation for developmental curricula such as Global Studies, namely the Vienna-based Mattersburg Circle for Development Policy at Austrian Universities. Gilbert Ahamer is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: gilbert.ahamer@uni-graz.at

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