

**ML 2500 OL4: Introduction to Cross-Cultural Studies
Approaches to the Global Humanities and the UN SDGs**

ML 2500 introduces students to literature, film, and photography from around the globe and teaches comparative literary and cultural studies analysis through a focus on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs).

Instructor: Kelly Comfort (kcomfort@gatech.edu)

Late Summer: June 29 – August 4, 2026

Required Reading:

- *A Global Humanities Approach to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals: Understanding Planet, People, and Prosperity*, edited by Kelly Comfort (pdf files in Canvas Modules)
- Agustina Bazterrica's *Tender is the Flesh* (online access: [https://pubhtml5.com/qvcmx/bacf/Tender Is The Flesh/1](https://pubhtml5.com/qvcmx/bacf/Tender_Is_The_Flesh/1))
- Hao Jingfang's "Folding Beijing" (online access: <https://www.uncannymagazine.com/article/folding-beijing-2/>)

ML 2500 HP/OL1 is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Humanities area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I interpret the human experience through creative, linguistic, and philosophical works?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze and interpret the meaning, cultural significance, and ethical implications of literary/philosophical texts or of works in the visual/performing arts.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Ethical Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Intercultural Competence

Course Schedule

June 29:

- Watch your instructor's ML 2500 introduction video recording for:
 - Syllabus review
 - Canvas orientation
 - Introduction to the UN SDGs, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), and the Global Humanities
- Read pages 1-22 of course textbook (pdf file)
- **Complete Canvas Discussion 1 Assignment by 11:59 pm, Monday, June 29**

Unit 1: Planet and UN SDGs 6, 12, 13, 14, and 15

June 30 – July 1:

- Watch the documentary film: Aya Hanabusa's *Holy Island*
- Read pages 25-28 of course textbook (pdf file)
- Review the notes on "Nuclear Power and Political Resistance in Iwaishima, Japan"
- **Complete Canvas Discussion 2 Assignment by 11:59 pm, Wednesday, July 1**

July 6-7:

- Read pages 25-28 of course textbook (pdf file)
- View Barbara Dombrowski's *Tropic Ice: Five Continents*
- Review the notes on "Dombrowski's Photographic Installations: The Places and Faces of Climate Change"
- **Complete Canvas Discussion 3 Assignment by 11:59 pm, Tuesday, July 7**

July 8 - 9:

- Read pages 59-64 of course textbook (pdf file)
- View Fabrice Monteiro's *The Prophecy*
- Review the notes on "Monteiro's Trash Art Photography Protests Trashing the Planet"
- **Complete Canvas Discussion 4 Assignment by 11:59 pm, Thursday, July 9**

July 10:

- **Submit End-of-Unit 1 Video Reflection Assignment by 11:59 pm, Friday, July 10**

Unit 2: People and UN SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5

July 13-15:

- Read pages 127-128 of course textbook (pdf file)
- Read Agustina Bazterrica's *Tender is the Flesh*
- Review the notes on "Bazterrica: Devouring Each Other in Consumerist Society"
- **Complete Canvas Discussion 5 Assignment by 11:59 pm, Wednesday, July 15**

July 16-17:

- Read pages 137-139 of course textbook (pdf file)
- Watch Pedro Kos and Kief Davidson's *Bending the Arc*:

- Review the notes on “Public Health Pioneers Fight for Universal Health Equity”
- ***Complete Canvas Discussion 6 Assignment by 11:59 pm, Friday, July 17***

July 20:

- ***Submit End-of-Unit 2 Video Reflection Assignment by 11:59 pm, Monday, July 20***

Unit 3: Prosperity and UN SDGs 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11

July 21-22:

- Read pages 201-202 of course textbook (pdf file)
- Watch Wang Jiuliang’s *Plastic China*
- Review notes on “Wang Jiuliang: Unveiling the Façade of Prosperity”
- ***Complete Canvas Discussion 7 Assignment by 11:59 pm, Wednesday, July 22***

July 23-24:

- Read pages 190-191 of course textbook (pdf file)
- Read Hao Jingfang’s “Folding Beijing”
- Review notes on “Hao Jingfang: Unequal Time and Space in a Dystopian City”
- ***Complete Canvas Discussion 8 Assignment by 11:59 pm, Friday, July 24***

July 27:

- ***Submit End-of-Unit 3 Video Reflection Assignment by 11:59 pm, Monday, July 27***

July 28 - August 4:

- ***Submit Final Project by 11:59 pm, Tuesday, August 4***

Grade Breakdown:

Canvas Discussions (8 total)	40%
End-of-Unit Video Reflection Assignments (3 total)	30%
Final Project	30%