



# Ages of Globalization

## Advanced Learning Program for Higher Education

**A groundbreaking educational initiative now launching for  
Higher Education Institution Learners & Educators**

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**Ages of Globalization** is an innovative global program based on Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs' seminal book that explores the story of humanity across the world and over time. This online course traces 70,000 years of human, economic, and environmental history through the seven ages of globalization, and the forces shaping our interconnected world. It empowers learners to explore humanity's history of interdependence and change, shaped by geography, technology, and institutions, to better address and solve the challenges we face today.

The Ages of Globalization (AoG) is a free course and designed for a global audience – students, educators, and lifelong learners – eager to deepen their understanding of global history and take action for sustainable development.

**This new AoG program is specifically tailored for learners and educators in higher education.**

As part of this new program participants will have access to:

- 10 live lectures with Professor Sachs (February to April 2026)
- Dynamic video lectures and lesson plans
- Monthly live sessions with world leaders
- Virtual visits to UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Action-based learning activities & maps

Join the 13,000+ learners and educators from 165 countries already making a difference with AoG!

**“Our history is one of interdependence – globalization – as well as change, driven by geography, technology, and institutions. By understanding our shared history, we can also understand how to meet the great challenges of our time.”**

Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs  
President, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network  
& Columbia University Professor





## **Ages of Globalization for Higher Education**

### **Call to Higher Education Institutions**

In February 2026 an AoG **Program for Higher Education** will debut with LIVE lectures from Jeffrey D. Sachs. To follow this **ten-week program** from **3 February to 7 April**, **Higher Education Institution learners and educators** are invited to join weekly live global classroom sessions via Zoom.

Learners and educators will have the opportunity to directly engage with Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs to explore specific issues and topics across 10 Learning Modules.

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### **Register now for the LIVE lectures from Jeffrey D. Sachs**

**Spring 2026 lectures begin: Feb 3, 2026 at 8:00–9.00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

(see your local time [here](#))

**<https://columbiauniversity.zoom.us/meeting/register/H-aLWZ2iTtSilw-GlaMouA>**

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Zoom meetings.

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**Please visit the Ages of Globalization website [Higher Ed Program](#) page, enroll as a [learner](#) or [educator](#) to access the 10 Learning Modules.**

Whether you're an individual, part of a classroom, or a life-long learner, everyone is welcome to enroll in this Higher Ed Program!



# Ages of Globalization for Higher Education

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

**Ages of Globalization for Higher Education** is a two-part college-level course inspired by Jeffrey D. Sachs' acclaimed book of the same name.

**The flexible, self-paced online module format is available year-round and a special interactive live session will be offered in Spring 2026, where students can engage directly with Professor Sachs on key topics.**

This rigorous academic program provides students with an in-depth understanding of the forces shaping our interconnected world, emphasizing their relevance to the environment, politics, technology, and other critical areas.

Through partnerships with various educational institutions, AoG seeks to cultivate a new generation of capable and committed leaders dedicated to building a sustainable and equitable world.

### PART I

**Fall 2025** (leading up to any time before live lectures begin in February 2026):

- Open period for interested students to complete the **10 self-paced AoG modules** online. The online modules will be available for students to access in 2026 as well, but familiarizing with the contents of AoG before the February live lecture launch is recommended. **Learners** sign up [here](#). **Educators** sign up [here](#).

### PART II

**Spring 2026:**

- All course participants - both learners and educators - can follow the **10-week live course** via Zoom, with one-hour sessions each week facilitated by Professor Sachs. Sign up [here](#).
- During these sessions, students will explore specific topics (listed below) on designated days.

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**Please note that Institutions of Higher Education are encouraged to adapt and localize the course content to fit their needs and their institution's academic calendar.**



# Ages of Globalization for Higher Education Curriculum

## COURSE OUTLINE

Education is the key to building more peaceful and sustainable societies. AoG offers a powerful solution by advancing Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education, focusing on **three core learning outcomes**:

- Knowledge & Solution-Oriented Thinking – understanding global history, sustainability challenges, and solutions.
- Social & Emotional Skills – cultivating empathy, intercultural understanding, and leadership for collaborative action.
- Action-Taking for Sustainable Transformations – turning ideas into action by leading change in the personal, societal and political spheres.

By understanding humanity’s shared history through this course, students will:

- Understand sustainability challenges and their complex interlinkages, explore disruptive ideas and alternative solutions.
- Build core values and attitudes for sustainability, cultivate empathy and compassion for other people and the planet, and motivate to lead the change.
- Take practical action for sustainable transformations in the personal, societal and political sphere.

## KEY QUESTIONS THAT WILL BE EXPLORED

1. What are the main drivers of global-scale change?
2. How do geography, technology, and institutions interact?
3. How do changes in one region affect other regions?
4. How has global interdependence changed throughout history?
5. What lessons can we glean from each age of globalization to help us meet our challenges today?
6. How can the world in the 21st century achieve prosperity, social inclusion and environmental sustainability in this 7th age of globalization?
7. How should our global governance be reorganized to achieve sustainable development in our multipolar world?
8. How can we secure global peace possible, and how can global ethics help to secure peace?



# **Ages of Globalization for Higher Education**

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- Students should complete the self-paced Higher Ed AoG course in the Fall. For students and educators that do not get an opportunity to access the online course, the modules will be available all throughout 2026. Taking the self-paced course prior to the February live lecture launch is recommended.
- For students participating as part of a class, a course coordinator is required for the Spring section of AoG.
- Course coordinators should localize the course's global hour of content led by Professor Sachs to suit their local or regional context.
- The ten Spring course live lectures will be delivered sequentially online, allowing students to participate at the same time from different locations in a virtual classroom.

## **COURSE READINGS COURSE CREDITS**

- Sachs, Jeffrey D. (2020), *The Ages of Globalization: Geography, technology, and institutions*, Columbia University Press
- Topic-specific readings recommended under each lecture in the syllabus

## **COURSE CREDITS**

AoG for Higher Ed while open to all, invites universities and colleges to integrate AoG as part of a year-long credit-bearing course. It is recommended that students receive academic credit for completing both parts of the course (Fall and Spring). Credits should be awarded by the students' respective academic institutions.

The Sustainable Development Solutions Network does not grant credit for any of its courses. However, upon successful completion of both course sections and upon written request from the coordinator of Ages of Globalization at the participating institution, a certificate of participation—signed by Professor Sachs—can be issued to the participating academic institutions and their students.



## SPRING LIVE COURSE STRUCTURE

**Class Schedule:** Each live session will be held every Tuesday at 8:00am EST.

**Preparatory Work:** Students should complete assigned readings prior to each class session.

**Course Format:** This course will be conducted as an online seminar at the higher education level.

**Session Structure:** Professor Sachs will deliver a 30 to 40-minute lecture on the topic of the day, followed by a Q&A session. Students will use Slido, a platform for live questions and polling.

**Technical Requirements:** Each participating class should have their camera turned on during sessions, allowing Professor Sachs and students to see each other via Zoom.

**Participation Expectations:** Due to the collaborative and participatory nature of the course, students are expected to attend every session. Students are expected to come prepared by completing the assigned readings and actively participating in class discussions.

**Post-Session Activity:** It is expected that after the global hour with Professor Sachs, participating classes will hold an additional session to localize and adapt the discussed topics to their local or regional context. During this post-session activity, AoG coordinators will design assignments that encourage their students to not only deepen their understanding of the Ages of Globalization in relation to sustainable development but also develop activities related to the topic that are relevant to their local context.

## COURSE TOPICS & 10 LIVE LECTURE DATES 2026

Course Professor: Jeffrey D. Sachs

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. <b>The Seven Ages of Globalization</b> .....                                | <b>February 3</b>  |
| 2. <b>Geography</b> .....  | <b>February 10</b> |
| 3a. <b>Technology</b> .....  | <b>February 17</b> |
| 3b. <b>Technology</b> .....  | <b>February 18</b> |
| 4. <b>Institutions</b> .....   | <b>February 24</b> |
| 5. <b>Sustainable Development &amp; the SDGs</b> .....                         | <b>March 3</b>     |
| 6. <b>The Rise of Empires in the Ancient World</b> .....                       | <b>March 10</b>    |
| 7. <b>The Rise of Western Power after 1500</b> .....                           | <b>March 17</b>    |
| 8. <b>From Western Dominance to Multipolarity</b> .....                        | <b>March 24</b>    |
| 9. <b>The Sustainability Imperative</b> .....                                  | <b>March 31</b>    |
| 10. <b>The New Multilateralism &amp; Sustainable Development to 2050</b> ..... | <b>April 7</b>     |



## Spring 2026 Syllabus Overview

### 10 MODULES for the LIVE LECTURES

#### **Module 1: THE 7 AGES OF GLOBALIZATION**

Introduces the framework of seven historical ages shaped by geography, technology, and institutions, tracing humanity's journey from hunter-gatherers to the digital age.

#### **Module 2: GEOGRAPHY**

Explores how climate, topography, rivers, trade routes, and disease patterns have influenced economies, societies, and global interconnection.

#### **Module 3: TECHNOLOGY**

Examines the role of innovation – from tools and infrastructure to industrialization and digital technologies – in driving transformation across all seven ages.

#### **Module 4: INSTITUTIONS**

Looks at the evolution of social, political, economic, and religious institutions, and their role in shaping how humans live and interact.

#### **Module 5: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & SDGs**

Connects today's urgent challenges – poverty, inequality, and division on a crowded planet – to the global vision of peace, prosperity, and sustainability.

#### **Module 6: THE RISE OF EMPIRES IN THE ANCIENT WORLD**

Traces the emergence of great empires across Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, highlighting their contributions to culture, governance, and exchange.

#### **Module 7: THE RISE OF WESTERN POWER AFTER 1500**

Explores the birth of global empires, colonial expansion, and the institutions that consolidated Western dominance.



## **Module 8: FROM WESTERN DOMINANCE TO MULTIPOLARITY (POST-1950)**

Examines the shifts since 1950 – from decolonization to the rise of new powers – toward a more multipolar world order.

## **Module 9: THE SUSTAINABILITY IMPERATIVE**

Focuses on today’s environmental crossroads, addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, circular economy, and pathways to 2050.

## **Module 10: THE NEW MULTILATERALISM**

Considers how international institutions and global ethics can guide cooperation for peace, justice, and sustainable development in the decades ahead.

**Ages**  
OF GLOBALIZATION

Find out more



Visit our [FAQs page](#)  
or contact us directly to learn more:

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