

G L O B A L E N G A G E M E N T
NEWSLETTER

UNESCO AT UVU

Welcome to another exciting edition of the UVU Global Engagement Newsletter! Here at UVU, we're constantly striving to expand our global footprint, and today, we have some very exciting news that will take our university to new heights!

We are beyond proud to announce that UVU has officially received the prestigious UNESCO Chair designation! This designation opens up incredible opportunities for our students and faculty to engage globally on critical issues such as sustainability, clean water access, EMS training, and AI tools. It's an exciting moment for our university, and we're eager to explore how we can make a meaningful impact around the world, contributing to positive change in ways that matter most.

In celebration of this incredible honor, much of this issue will focus on the UNESCO Chair and UN-related topics, including recent events and initiatives that highlight the university's role in addressing global challenges. We'll delve into the goals of the UNESCO Chair, its significance to our campus community, and the lasting impact UVU is poised to have in the global arena.

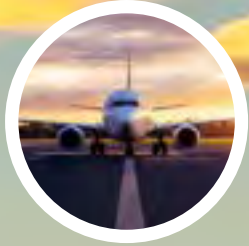
This is just the beginning, and we're thrilled to share this journey with you!

Best regards,
Kaisë McLane and the Office for Global Engagement

UPCOMING EVENTS

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MARCH 4

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL WORKSHOP
LA 210B • 1-2PM



MARCH 5

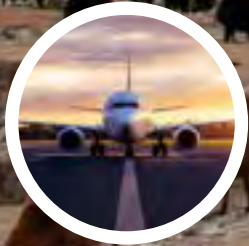
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
SB ATRIUM • 12-3PM

Celebrate with a panel discussion, and service project.



MARCH 6

GLOBAL FACULTY/ STAFF NETWORKING
LA 210B • 10-11AM



MARCH 18

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL WORKSHOP
LA 210B • 11AM-12PM



MARCH 20

GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT: FRENCH LANGUAGE DAY
LOCATION AND TIME TBC

"A Focus on French Speaking Asian Authors", with Thierno Diallo, assistant professor of French, with guest presenter associate professor, Dr. Xinyi Tan, Coastal Carolina University.



MARCH 26

GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT:
A FILIPPINO IMMIGRANT SUCCESS STORY
LOCATION AND TIME TBC

Carl Canlas, assistant professor of Information Systems hosting Gilbert Lee, co-founder Torus, Energy Storage Management.



UVU RECEIVES UNESCO CHAIR AWARD

February 19, 2025

Officials from the United Nations announced that Utah Valley University has received a UNESCO Chair designation. The chair will

focus on using artificial intelligence to improve education, environmental stewardship, and sustainability,

UNESCO Chair designations have only been given to 30 universities in the United States. It gives UVU membership to a global network of educational and governmental institutions that share research and best practices and host international events to develop solutions to pressing global issues through education, science, and technology.

“This designation is a prestigious recognition

that highlights UVU’s commitment to tackling global challenges through education, research, and international collaboration,” said Baldomero Lago, chief international officer at UVU. “It will give our students and faculty hands-on experience globally, where our research, teaching, and service will make positive differences in peoples’ lives around the world.”

UVU will initially focus its efforts on countries in what UNESCO calls the Global South starting with

countries in Africa, Central-South America and South East Asia. Selected UVU faculty and students will mentor school leaders in these areas by harnessing artificial intelligence (AI) to create tailored educational programs that address the unique needs of students.

The university plans to create several global partnerships in the next four years, offering student and faculty exchange programs in different countries.

These partnerships will not only enhance the educational experience but encourage intercultural dialogue, allowing both students and teachers to learn from one another.

“It will give our students and faculty hands-on experience globally, where our research, teaching, and service will make positive differences in peoples’ lives around the world.”

-Dr. Baldomero Lago

UVU’s UNESCO Chair leaders will also train UVU faculty on the research, curriculum, and information that comes out of the program, which will help equip them to teach updated curriculums using AI technology.



Dr. Kathren Brown, Deputy Provost, congratulates the Executive Board on the UNESCO Chair Designation

“This designation signals that Utah Valley University is at the forefront of researching some of the world’s most important challenges and is contributing to global efforts to build a more sustainable and inclusive future,” said Lago. “The project’s expected outcomes — ranging from increased academic performance to enhanced intercultural understanding and the promotion of sustainability — will not only benefit students

and educators at UVU but also have a lasting impact on global education systems.”

Nine of the 30 U.S. universities that have this designation include Harvard University, Columbia University, the University of California, Berkeley, the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of Michigan, Stanford University, New York University (NYU), and the University of Colorado Boulder.



WHAT IS A UNESCO CHAIR?

A UNESCO Chair is a team led by a higher education or research institution that partners with UNESCO on a project to advance knowledge and practice in an area of common priority. There are currently some 1000 UNESCO Chairs.



WHAT IS UNITWIN NETWORK?

UNITWIN Network is a partnership between UNESCO and a network of higher education or research institutions of at least three institutions in different countries, at least two of which must be located in the Global South, and which pool their competencies and resources around particular theme(s). There are currently some 45 UNITWIN Networks.

EXECUTIVE BOARD



Dr. Baldemero Lago
UNESCO CHAIR, DIRECTOR
CHIEF INTERNATIONAL OFFICER
GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT



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Dr. Kathleen Brown
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
DEPUTY PROVOST



Kaise McLane
UNESCO CHAIR ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT

OBJECTIVES

UNESCO CHAIR ON AI AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

- 1.** Integrate sustainability education into curricula, support student-led initiatives, and foster K-12 partnerships for environmental stewardship.



- 2.** Foster global partnerships with Global South institutions for intercultural dialogue, collaborative research, and enriching exchange programmes.

- 3.** Provide faculty with AI tools and sustainability training to enhance teaching and drive innovation in education.



- 4.** Implement AI-driven adaptive learning systems to enhance student engagement, personalise learning, and improve course completion rates.



- 5.** Cooperate closely with UNESCO, other UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks on relevant programmes and activities.





KSN (Knowledge and Scientific Network) is involved with the UNESCO Chair at UVU, helping connect young researchers with local communities to address the challenges of sustainable development. KSN's main goal is to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by sharing knowledge, fostering collaboration, and turning research into real-world solutions. The network provides a platform where young researchers can work



together, learn from each other, and connect their research to the needs of local communities. KSN's objectives include creating a global space for sharing best practices, organizing workshops for researchers to present their work, and supporting research programs that encourage collaboration across different regions. The network also works to translate academic findings into practical policies and actions, involving local governments, researchers, and communities in developing sustainable strategies. KSN promotes cross-border cooperation and helps researchers from developing countries by offering mentorship and guidance from experienced scholars. Through these efforts, KSN aims to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a way that benefits both local communities and the world at large.



“FROM *BLOOM* TO *VROOM!*”

Transforming Algae into Energy at Lake Titicaca



February 24, 2025

Kevin Shurtleff, Weihong Wang, and Edwin Gustavo Canazaca met to discuss research and methods for algae harvesting technology at Lake Titicaca and Utah Lake. Lake Titicaca experiences algae blooms caused by a large plant called Duckweed, which presents a unique challenge due to its macroscopic nature. Many of UVU’s existing

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algae harvesting technologies are designed to target microscopic algae, selectively processing small masses to avoid larger plants and debris. The group explored potential technologies that could effectively harvest large, macroscopic plants like Duckweed at Lake Titicaca.

These algae blooms serve as nature’s response to high nitrogen levels, which, when properly regulated, can benefit the lake’s ecosystem. However, once the blooms begin to decompose, they create problems for those who interact with the lake, making it necessary to harvest them. Duckweed biomass, once collected, can be converted into biofuel—a renewable energy source with the potential to power vehicles or be transformed into electricity through gasification. Developing methods to harvest and convert algae into sustainable energy would address both environmental and recreational concerns while also offering a potential energy source for the surrounding communities.

The university in Peru is committed to ecological sustainability and has already begun installing solar panels. Gasification of duckweed could directly support this initiative, serving as a trial run before proposing it as a broader energy solution for the region.

The next step in this project is to draft a research proposal outlining the study’s objectives and financial considerations for acquiring algae harvesting technologies. The UVU team plans to travel to Peru at the end of March to further this initiative.

“TURNING THE TIDE”

Public Awareness for Cleaner Lakes and Rivers

February 24, 2025

Guillermina Norberta Hinojo Jacinto
Carlos Vargas Cairo
Manuel Martinez
Juana Fernanda Rodriguez Tarazona
Roger Iziga Goicochea
Hilary Hungerford
Weihong Wang



This group of researchers is focused on raising public awareness about Lake Titicaca while collaborating with the municipalities of Santa Eulalia, Chosica, and Rimac. Hilary Hungerford and Weihong Wang shared insights from their educational outreach efforts for Utah Lake, helping communities understand the causes of algae blooms, their locations, potential risks, and the ongoing improvements in the lake’s

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health. Their goal as educators is to provide the public with accurate scientific information rather than allowing misinformation from social media and other sources to shape public perception.

Carlos Vargas Cairo highlighted public awareness initiatives already implemented in Peru, including educational activities for preschool, primary, and secondary school students. When schools visit these areas, they are provided with guides and topics to explore fundamental ecological concepts. Another critical issue discussed was the pollution of the Rimac River, which is affected by both natural and industrial waste, as well as microorganisms. To address this, Peruvian professors are involving their students in research projects on the river, encouraging them to present their findings and actively participate in environmental education.

By engaging with the public and conducting surveys, municipalities can assess public concerns and awareness regarding water pollution, particularly its impact on daily life. This information allows them to address issues that communities may lack the knowledge or resources to tackle on their own. A key approach to long-term solutions includes restoring ecosystems through tributaries and wetlands while educating the public on sustainable conservation practices. This initial meeting on public outreach strategies serves as a foundation for future proposals and collaborations, including engagement with the mayors of municipalities in Lima, Peru. The research teams from UVU will collaborate further when they visit Peru at the end of March.

CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Laura Muro and Dr. Paolo Saona delivered insightful presentations in Dr. Maritza Sotomayor's Finance class and Prof. Mari de Dios' Spanish for Business class, enriching students' understanding with their expertise. Later, Dr. Iñigo Arbiol, UN Deputy Head of Secretariat Local 2030 Coalition, presented on the



Dr. Laura Muro & Dr. Paolo Saona present in Dr. Maritza Sotomayor's Finance class




Dr. Laura Muro & Dr. Paolo Saona presents in Prof. Mari de Dios' Spanish for business class



Dr. Iñigo Arbiol presents in Prof. John MacFarlane's Political science class

organization of the United Nations before attending the UNESCO Chair Press Conference. This event highlighted current trends and frameworks on global politics. Classroom presentations like this create a valuable opportunity for students and faculty and have a profound impact on student's academic and professional growth.

A man with glasses and a beard, wearing a white shirt and a dark vest, is speaking at a wooden podium. The podium has a sign that reads "UVU UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY". He is gesturing with his hands while speaking. The background is a blurred image of a building interior.

EXPLORING THE INTERSECTION OF AI AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

FEBRUARY 20, 2025

FELIPE QUEIPO - PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS
OFFICER AT UNITED NATIONS

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming societies, and its impact on global governance has become a major focus for the United Nations (UN). In a presentation by Felipe Queipo from the UN Department of Global Communications, the intersection of AI and the UN's mission was explored, highlighting both opportunities and challenges.

AI'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING UN GOALS

The UN, with its commitment to global peace, human rights, and sustainable development, recognizes AI as a powerful tool to advance its objectives. AI-driven innovations can enhance economic development, improve education, and strengthen healthcare systems. For example, AI can predict disease outbreaks, optimize disaster response, and provide real-time climate modeling for better environmental management.

In the humanitarian sector, AI plays a crucial role in monitoring human rights violations, analyzing social media for potential abuses, and aiding crisis intervention efforts. AI-based mapping tools also assist in disaster response by assessing damage and improving the allocation of aid.

CHALLENGES AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Despite its benefits, AI poses significant ethical and legal challenges. Issues such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the potential for AI-driven surveillance demand international regulations and ethical governance frameworks. Ensuring equitable access to AI technologies is also critical to prevent widening the digital divide between nations.

THE UN'S AI INITIATIVES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

The UN is actively working on AI governance through strategic frameworks and partnerships with tech companies and research institutions. The March 2024 resolution on AI governance marked an important step toward establishing international guidelines for ethical AI development and deployment.

Moving forward, global collaboration between governments, AI experts, and policymakers will be essential to harness AI's potential while mitigating its risks. By fostering responsible AI innovation, the UN aims to ensure that AI serves as a force for good, promoting peace, security, and sustainable development worldwide.

MODEL UN

HIGH SCHOOL
COMPETITION

February 8, 2025

The UVU Model UN High School Competition took place on February 8th, 2025, hosted by the Office for Global Engagement. High schools from across the region participated, with students representing various countries and engaging in debates on pressing global issues. Around 150 high school students took part in the event, guided by 11 UVU college volunteers who led the UN Committee rooms.



The competition opened with a virtual presentation from Felipe Queipo, a UN Global Communications officer, streaming live from New York. Carter Darger, serving as the UVU MUN Secretary General, played a key role in organizing volunteer training and coordinating the event alongside Amy Barnett from the Office for Global Engagement. The competition provided an enriching experience, allowing students to develop their diplomatic and public speaking skills while gaining insight into international affairs.



BEST DELEGATION

Wasatch Independent Team



BEST NEW DELEGATION

Beehive Science and Technology



BEST SPEECH AND RESOLUTION GROUP



BEST SPEECH SC

Panama



**BEST RESOLUTION
SECURITY COUNCIL**

USA



BEST SPEECH GA

South Korea



BEST SPEECH FAO

India



OUTSTANDING DELEGATION

Timpview High School



**UVU MUN 2025 SG -
COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS**



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GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT



LIVING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM & THE QUILL PROJECT

FEBRUARY 26, 2025

Two guests from the UK, Holly Megson and Maya Reilly, recently shared their experiences working with the Quill Project, an initiative that documents the creation of constitutions, including the US Constitution. The project, in collaboration with the Center for Constitutional Studies at Utah Valley University, has contributed to the development of a platform that records important constitutional events, such as the 1787 Federal Convention, and is currently working on the 1895 Utah State Convention. The guests, based in Oxford, UK, described their inspiring work environment in an office once occupied by J.R.R. Tolkien.

They also noted cultural differences between the UK and US, including the larger food portions in the US and stricter food regulations in the UK, where some US foods would be banned due to low nutritional value. Coming from a flat region, they particularly enjoyed visiting the mountainous landscapes of Utah. Their experience with the Quill Project underscores the importance of constitutional studies in understanding the foundations of governance and the ongoing evolution of democratic principles.

GLOBAL STUDENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS



“LOVE ALL THINGS GLOBAL?”

APPLY TO THE GLOBAL STUDENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

- STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP SKILLS
- INTERACT WITH FOREIGN & UN DIGNITARIES
- RECEIVE \$1000 SCHOLARSHIP PER/SEMESTER

DEADLINE: MARCH 15, 2025



