

Lessons from Los Angeles: Self-Study on Teaching University Global Citizenship Education to Challenge Authoritarian Education, Neoliberal Globalization and Nationalist Populism

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ABSTRACT: Humanity and our planet face a growing number of interconnected challenges and opportunities exacerbated by globalization(s), which demand new paradigms of teaching and learning. Despite criticism, global citizenship education (GCE) has been proffered as an attempt to assist policy makers and practitioners to address complex global challenges through education. Guided by questions of what the roles and responsibilities of universities are in addressing global problems and how teacher education programs should incorporate pedagogies of GCE, the author offers preliminary findings from a qualitative self-study on teaching GCE to undergraduates in Los Angeles, thereby filling a void in empirical research of teaching university GCE in the United States.

Before exploring critical approaches to GCE, the author examines challenges of authoritarian education, neoliberal globalization and nationalist populism that GCE confronts. Moreover, the author illuminates pedagogical themes of critical GCE emerging from the research and considers models of critical GCE, highlighting why they deserve more attention throughout US universities, specifically within teacher education programs and schools/departments of education.

Introduction

Climate change, increasing global poverty and income inequality, transnational migration and refugee crises, as well as the persistence of racism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, war and violence, pressures on flora and fauna, and access to and availability of clean food and water are but a few of the plethora of environmental and social injustices the world currently faces. In an era of global interdependence, these immense challenges—accompanied by rapid advances in technology—demand new paradigms of teaching and learning. These new pedagogies must be grounded in multifaceted global understanding, responsibility and engagement determined to create and harness prospects for local and

global solutions. Global citizenship education (GCE) has been an attempt by various educators and international institutions such as UNESCO to assist policy makers and practitioners in addressing the complex challenges of globalization(s) that impact education and society. However, critics decry models of GCE as being overwhelmingly “Western-centric” (Koyama, 2015) and connect them to 21st century tools of imperialism and neoliberalism (Arneil, 2007). Although much theoretical and empirical research on GCE has been conducted worldwide (Abdi & Shultz, 2008; Andreotti, 2006; Davies, 2008; Gaudelli, 2009; Pashby, 2011; Peters, Britton, & Blee, 2008; Pike, 2001; Stromquist, 2009; Tawil, 2013; Torres, 2017; UNESCO, 2014; Veugelers, 2011) and despite the call by scholars to bring global aspects of teaching and learning to teacher education programs (Abdi & Shultz, 2010; Apple, 2011; Banks, 2004; Bottery, 2006; Torres, 2017), there is a dearth of empirical research on teaching university GCE particularly within the United States. Most research on university GCE in the US focuses on program development (Sperandio et al, 2010), measurement of programs (Anthony et al, 2014), or student perceptions (Morais & Ogden, 2011; Szelényi & Rhoads, 2007).

Today’s global challenges therefore raise a number of often unasked questions for schools and universities worldwide: in an increasingly interconnected world, what should be the purpose of education? Do conventional educational experiences provide the knowledge, skills and values necessary to fundamentally understand what is happening in the world and how global problems impact our lives, the lives of others, communities, nations and the planet itself? What can critical forms of education do to address global problems for the planet, others and ourselves? Specifically, this study is guided by the following questions: What should be the roles and responsibilities of universities in addressing global problems? How should teacher education programs incorporate pedagogies of global citizenship education? By trying to answer these questions, the present study fills a void in the empirical research on teaching university GCE and offers preliminary findings from a qualitative self-study on teaching GCE to undergraduates at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). In the article, I consider models of critical global citizenship education and why they deserve more attention throughout US universities, specifically within teacher education programs and schools/departments of education. The article begins by exploring various justifications for GCE and significant challenges confronted by GCE. Then, through the lens of critical pedagogy, I illuminate pedagogical themes of critical global citizenship education that emerged from the research involving critical frameworks; focus on local and global power; critical reflexivity; the importance of interconnectedness, interdisciplinary, and intersectionality; empowerment through praxis; and the university as a critical public sphere.

An Education to Address Contemporary Problems

Educators worldwide appear to be consumed with questions about global citizenship education and what it comprises. Before I address what GCE is and how it is defined, an important starting point is to explain the urgent justifications for the attention given to

theories and practices of GCE. According to UNESCO (2013), teaching and learning of GCE is seen as addressing:

[T]he emergence of a new class of global challenges which require some form of collective response to find effective solutions. These include increasingly integrated and knowledge-driven economies; greater migration between countries and from rural to urban areas; growing inequalities; more awareness of the importance of sustainable development and including concerns about climate change and environmental degradation; a large and growing youth demographic; the acceleration of globalization; and rapid developments in technology. Education systems need to respond to these emerging global challenges, which require a collective response with a strategic vision that is global in character, rather than limited to the individual country level. (p.1)

What this passage demonstrates is not only the pressing demand for models of GCE, but also the multidimensional nature of today's global challenges and thus the complexity of awareness, understanding and solutions needed for new paradigms of teaching and learning. The need for global citizenship education is a growing global norm, but there remain many obstacles to its teaching, learning and implementation.

Challenges to Global Citizenship Education

Although pressing global problems may present a persuasive justification for the adoption of GCE models, those interested in GCE must first recognize that it confronts many practical and ideological challenges. However, I argue that these challenges not only hinder the development of more critical models of global citizenship education, they may also act as an inspiration to bring about new policies and pedagogies that address and challenge such destructive educational practices. Thus, GCE can be endorsed as a tool to counter practices and ideologies that are deeply intertwined with the problems facing humanity and our planet. At all levels, GCE encounters practical constraints including human resource constraints, limited material resources, timetable constraints, logistical and demographic constraints and sensitivities of subject matter (Education Above All, 2012, p.47). However, there are more profound epistemologies that will either serve to narrowly define the mission of GCE, or operate to manipulate the role of GCE into a tool used for domination and oppression. Three such challenges posed by authoritarian education, neoliberalism and nationalist populism are explored below.

Authoritarian Education

An important challenge to global citizenship education is the conventional pedagogy of schooling that suffocates the potential of educational systems worldwide. It is ironic that while many societies strive for democracy within their broader political systems, they often overlook dictatorships within the classroom. Authoritarian education is the normative

system of schooling that is teacher-centered, often disconnects learning from the lives and experiences of learners, upholds instrumental-rationality of knowledge and bifurcated fields of study, over-emphasizes test-taking and memorization, values standardization of curriculum and instruction, and is devoid of any real commitment to citizen building, transformative civic engagement or democratic student participation. In his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire (2007) uses the banking model of education metaphor to describe systems of education that situate the teacher at the center of power and the student on the periphery. The teacher deposits pre-set information to the passive, empty objects of the student-depositories. The student as a hollow vessel is perceived as void of creativity, reflection, action and personal experience. The student patiently and passively receives, memorizes and repeats the prescribed information for the sole and meaningless purpose of regurgitating the information. In restricting the ability of the student to critically analyze their own situation necessary to consciously act to transform their world, this form of learning justifies, maintains and perpetuates structures of domination, exploitation and oppression. Describing banking education, Freire writes, "it attempts to control thinking and action, leads women and men to adjust to the world, and inhibits their creative power" (2007, p. 77). Therefore, banking education and other authoritarian models lead to the condition of learning for obedient citizenship and towards a citizenship for unquestioning compliance and passivity. By undermining the ability of students to share and reflect upon their experiences, critically think about society or practice democracy, models of authoritarian education usher in and provide the structure and legitimacy for destructive educational policies and ideologies grounded in neoliberalism and nationalist populism, which are detrimental and counter-intuitive to the purpose and realization of a critical global citizenship education.

The Agenda of the Neoliberal University and Neoliberal Citizenship

Over the last three decades, the neoliberal common sense of market supremacy, deregulation, commodification and the retreat of the state from social services have permeated university policy worldwide. It has been well established that the neoliberal agenda for universities has diluted and, in some cases, obliterated any mission¹ of the university as an institution for public good; a public sphere for democratic deliberation and action, where education is grounded in social responsibility, social justice, and active citizenship (Giroux, 2002; Giroux, 2015; Rhoads & Torres, 2006; Torres, 2011). The neoliberal agenda for universities prioritizes profit-driven academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) and often focuses reforms and policies towards accreditation and universalization, efficiency and accountability, decentralization, international competitiveness, privatization and the expansion of vocational education. In a *Truthout*

¹ Some may argue that the original mission of the university was to exclude and give preference to particular groups, epistemologies and forms of research, and therefore exclusionary legacies of higher education are difficult to dismantle. For example, Wilder (2013) argues human slavery and the genocide of indigenous groups was "the precondition for the rise of higher education in America" (p. 114). Moreover, these institutions provided the "intellectual cover for the social and political subjugation of non-white peoples" (p.3).

article, Henry Giroux (2015) explains that the neoliberal university is obsessed with “a market-driven paradigm that seeks to eliminate tenure, turn the humanities into a job preparation service, and transform most faculty into an army of temporary subaltern labor” (p.3). University skills are narrowly bound by access and competencies necessary for the global economy. Research and funding is therefore directed to topics and fields that yield the most profit rather than those that benefit the most people. Overall, this corporatization of universities has been significantly driven by the needs of the global market over public and social good.

The neoliberal agenda of the universities has created the condition for neoliberal citizenship. In sharp contrast to the upsurge of critical student activism and movements of the 1960s and 1970s, with few notable exceptions², students of the subsequent decades were subjected to models of citizenship that generally promoted passivity, disengagement and possessive individualism—where individuals are seen as the sole proprietors of their own skills and success and owe nothing to society. This citizenship privileges economic citizenship and rights. Moreover, individual responsibility, rather than social responsibility, is seen as the cornerstone of economic wellbeing, and law-abiding citizens making individual and rational choices for success—reducing their claims on the state—are upheld and rewarded. Thus, being a good consumer has become an indicator of what it means to be a good citizen, taking precedent over altruistic and transformative models and acts of citizenship. Furthermore, universities are complicit in creating a climate in which knowledge, scientific research, movements and policies that challenge or disrupt these citizenship norms and premises are commonly seen as falsehoods, while “alternative facts” and conspiracy theories have been constructed to encourage anti-intellectualism and anti-science, ushering in the so-called era of post-truth³. Weakened by its neoliberal policies and visions and neutered by its commitment to academic capitalism, the university, for all its talents and resources, has been ill-equipped to resolve the inequities and injustices produced by decades of neoliberal economic policies and has failed to create sustainable bottom-up alternatives to neoliberal globalization, social injustices, perpetual war, planetary destruction and the current crises of democracy. Consequently, constrained by what Santos (2006) calls a crisis of legitimacy, rather than settling 21st century global issues, the current neoliberal models of education have generated values and mindsets that actually perpetuate the very injustices that the world is witnessing today.

Nationalist Populism: Exacerbating Inequality and Xenophobia

Many people around the globe have been shocked by the recent political developments of the 2016 UK referendum on EU membership, the 2016 US presidential elections, the popularity of Marine Le Pen, and the National Front party receiving nearly 34 percent of

² This is not to delegitimize the recent crucial work that has been done on campuses to create awareness, alliances and action for Black Lives Matter, BDS movement (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement to end international support for Israel’s oppression of Palestinians), as well as NoDAPL (The movement to prevent the Dakota Access Pipeline). Although significant, these movements are exceptions rather than the norm.

³ Some may ask, if this is the era of post-truth, when was the era of truth?

the vote in the 2017 French presidential elections, all events that reflect the rise of far-right movements and the global authoritarian turn. The discontent and the so-called “losers of globalization” have been galvanized through popular discourse that harkens back to a mythological past. Political leaders unable to devise creative, holistic and new solutions to the problems of globalization(s) have focused more on “the politics of the past,” re-igniting nationalist populist rhetoric by tapping into society’s unresolved racists and xenophobic undertones that are blended with real concerns of economic inequalities indicative of the “jobless society.” Some characteristics of contemporary nationalist populism include fermenting a culture of fear through the mythical impending threat of the other while promoting the so-called traditional values of one ethnic group; rejecting economic globalization by denouncing the export of labour and the influx of “foreigners or terrorists;” attacking political correctness under the guise of free speech; and favouring policies grounded in xenophobia, isolationism and economic nationalism. These developments have ushered in a contentious social and political atmosphere that sews divisive and exclusionary citizenship, emboldening white supremacists and other hate groups to commit violent attacks and hold public rallies of aggression and hate. Meanwhile, liberals and globalist are scrambling to find the answers to the question: what went wrong?

These political developments can be seen as a narrow-sighted response to unresolved social frictions that have been exacerbated by failed global economic policies and the increase in global inequalities and transnational migration, thus highlighting the ideological divide between global and national, and global and local citizenship. In his recent article entitled *How Neoliberalism Prepared the way for Donald Trump*, Polish scholar Zygmunt Bauman (2016) argues that the Enlightenment and liberalism have been based upon the interconnected triad of *Liberté, Egalité* and *Fraternité*. However, the more recent hegemonic philosophy of neoliberalism tore at the fabric of the liberal triad by “exiling the precept of *Egalité*.” After decades of being unchallenged, the glove-less hands of neoliberal capitalism created a void in the triad and, as Bauman explains, the resurgence of nationalist populism and illiberal democracy “has become all but predetermined.” Consequently, within the metropolises of neoliberal globalization, unfettered capitalism led to unfettered inequities, which greatly shocked the foundation of liberal democracy resulting in a backlash against the national and global status quo. Additionally, schools and universities, consumed with preparing learners for the global economy and whose central mission of citizenship education is to teach tolerance of others—failed, to a certain extent, to either critically address and respond to the destructive forces of globalization(s) or uphold any critical mission of deep understanding about the other. Recent research on public primary and secondary schools in the US asked about culpabilities of education in general and citizenship education that would allow for the current political atmosphere (Kahlenber & Janey, 2016). Researchers found that rather than preparing young people to be reflective citizens engaging in cherished American democratic ideals such tolerance for others, freedoms of religion, press, and independent judiciary, and challenging authoritarianism, over the past three decades, neoliberal globalization have persuaded

educators and policy makers to emphasize the importance of serving the global market needs, which has greatly hindered commitment to citizenship education. Additionally, reports during the 2016 US presidential campaign have found that in US schools, immigrant and Muslim students express fear about what might happen to them and their families. The reports also revealed an increase in uncivil political discourse, an increase in anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiments, and teachers being hesitant about teaching contemporary politics and other controversial issues (Costello, 2016). On university campuses, emboldened by the hateful rhetoric of American politicians, there has been a rise of hate crimes and hate incidents as well as increases in mobilizations by white supremacists groups (Dreid & Najmabadi, 2016; SPLC, 2016). For example at UCLA, my peers and I found flyers posted on campus by a hate group called American Vanguard. This is the same group that James Alex Field Jr. is allegedly associated with. Fields took part in the recent neo-Nazi white supremacists rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017 and drove his car into a crowd, killing a counter-demonstrator Heather D. Heyer. The group's website explains that "a government based in the natural law must not cater to the false notion of equality" and further states:

White America is under attack. Through subversion, the forces of Marxism have brought our nation to its knees by rotting it from within. The traditional values that have kept Western civilization alive for millennia are being torn apart, leaving a generation of American youth without direction or purpose. While millions of our countrymen languish in poverty, our infrastructure crumbles, our jobs are shipped overseas and billions are sent to Israel. The greatest threat to our country did not fall in 1945, nor in 1991. The true enemy is within our walls, destroying our nation and opening our gates to the millions of outsiders who want to take all that our forefathers have created.

The website is loaded with other racist, xenophobic, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic rhetoric. This group exemplifies the resurgence and normalization of nationalist populism and racist nativism on university campuses. Thus, it could be argued that contemporary nationalist populism sprang out of the failures of neoliberal globalization and the inability of universities to critically respond to current global inequities and unresolved past issues of diversity. Consequently, when searching for a response to globalization while lacking a deep understanding and appreciation of critical multiculturalism, people have looked inwards for answers. They have latched onto leaders that promote an imagined past, leaders that tap into historical legacies of fear, dehumanization and violence against the other, and leaders that narrowly define culture and citizenship, encouraging an anti-cosmopolitanism.

It should be acknowledged that other ideologies and structures such colonialism and imperialism, racism, sexism, homophobia, paternalism and anthropocentrism, to name a few, also pose significant obstacles as well as objectives-to-dismantle for models of GCE.

As social systems of exclusion and violence, I view these ideologies as being deeply intertwined with, endorsed by and perpetuated through the triple forces of authoritarian education, neoliberalism and neo-nationalism. The more the world is unknown, the easier it is to pervert, dismiss and isolate the world. Without critical, global and comprehensive forms of citizenship education, the chances for the continuation of shortsighted and violent knowledge and learning will only increase. Therefore, GCE should be regarded as a means to understand, confront and disrupt destructive and violent ways of knowing the world and being in the world, and the structures that support these ideologies. Moreover, GCE must lead to the creation of action that counters the forces causing injustice to humanity and the planet, even if those forces are within ourselves. Thus, the answer to the rise in neo-nationalism is not neoliberal globalization and vice-versa. Moreover, the status quo in pedagogy and educational policy—a system that shares complicity in creating the world’s problems—should definitely not be seen as a sustainable or effective means of addressing today’s global troubles. Authoritarian education, neoliberalism and nationalist populism present significant hurdles and can adversely influence any model of GCE. However, the triple forces can provide a benchmark for what GCE is not, and what GCE should fight against. Critical global citizenship education has the possibility to offer a formative answer to global problems, in that it promotes de-colonialism and unlearning of violent paradigms of society and the world, as well as encourages a broadening of identity, an indignation for injustices, a radical international solidarity that engages in new processes of teaching, learning, institution building, and finally, promotes healing and solution-making that counters the caustic hegemonic forces of globalization.

Conceptualizing Global Citizenship Education

Global citizenship education is an oft contested and contentious concept. Carlos Alberto Torres (2017) describes GCE as an “intervention in search of a theory” (p.17). This phrase underscores the unsettled nature of the term as well as the complications that abound when conceptualizing GCE, which can be viewed as a framing paradigm, a field of study, as well as a model of education. The space provided in this article cannot do justice to the contours of conceptualizing GCE. However, I view GCE as more than simply creating global awareness and understanding of the world’s most pressing issues. GCE should also be concerned with fostering a new set of ethics necessary for expanding the responsibilities, identities and actions of learners.

Expanding Responsibilities, Identities and Actions

It is first essential to tease out the differences between GCE and earlier related models of education, namely global education and civic education. Whereas global education often focuses on international awareness frequently gained through study abroad programs that are commonly connected to developing a more “cultured” or well-rounded individual, GCE incorporates citizenship that, in my view, should emphasize action for social justice. Moreover, GCE moves beyond civic education that has been conventionally restricted to

national politics, identities and belonging. Thus, GCE should strive to help students epistemologically and theoretically expand their understanding of citizenship beyond legal notions and de-territorialize citizenship beyond national borders, ultimately striving for an expansion of rights and justice, responsibilities and identities across borders that can thus be seen as adding value to national citizenship because it includes struggling for a global consciousness while addressing issues that locally manifest. To the point Rhoads and Szelényi (2011) argue:

It is not simply the geographic scope of one's actions as a citizen that constitutes global citizenship, but rather it is the nature of one's understandings and the commitment to broader concerns that constitute global citizenship. We see global citizenship as being marked by an understanding of global ties and connections and a commitment to the collective good... Even actions on the part of citizens aimed at addressing local concerns may still constitute forms of GC when those actions are informed by global understandings and reflective of concerns beyond those of the individual. (p. 27)

As the quote highlights, GCE should work towards understanding and building new global relations and struggle for the common good beyond individual concerns, regardless of where the action takes place. Moreover, GCE challenges the instrumental rationality of civic education commonly delivered in banking pedagogies, which has often been to develop a submissive and obedient national citizenry in order to maintain and reproduce particular economic, social and political structures of society (Giroux, 1980). GCE is a moral and political citizenship towards rights and justice, planetary belonging, with goals motivated by transforming destructive complex global systems for a more egalitarian world. However, this is not the abandonment of loyalties to culture or reasonable patriotism, but an inclusion—a planetary layer in the age of global interconnectedness—of wider loyalty to justice and equity for humanity and our finite planet.

Two decades ago, in their report entitled “Curriculum for Global Citizenship,” *UK Oxfam* defined a “global citizen” as someone who:

Is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen; respects and values diversity; has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally; is outraged by social injustice; is willing to act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place; participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from the local to the global” (1997, p. 1).

This encompassing definition of global citizen connotes a very active citizenship with foundations in global knowledge about issues of diversity, equity and justice and peace and sustainability. Significantly, there is a willingness to be engaged in actions that constitute

what Shultz (2007) defines as *transformationalist global citizens*, as people who understand the dialectical relationship of globalization(s) and are committed to social justice, building relationships through diversity and finding shared purposes across national borders. Positioning global citizenship education as means to expand responsibilities, identities and actions in learners, demands an exploration of the approaches to GCE that have the potential to facilitate such educational endeavours.

Towards Critical Approaches of GCE

There should be an acknowledgement of the varied models of GCE, from softer approaches to more critical approaches (Andreotti, 2006). Teachers, students and policy makers must decide which approaches are more valuable for their educational environment. Although the application of any education must be relevant to the lives of the learners and educational context, I tend to advocate for more critical and transformative approaches to GCE. I argue that is imperative for critical models of GCE to adopt forms of problem-posing education vital to what Freire (2007) terms in Portuguese as *conscientizacao*, which refers to “learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (p. 35). Thus, there is an importance placed on particular issues and ways to address those issues through forms of learning. Problem posing education must begin first by blurring the dichotomous relationship of the teacher-student contradiction. The blurring of roles occurs when students and teachers use dialogue, thereby becoming critical co-investigators unmasking their world. This dialogue must include love, humility, faith, mutual trust, hope and critical thinking. Taken alone, these conditions are important to citizenship in any society, but together they can have a profound and revolutionary impact toward a more liberated society. It is through dialogue that teacher and student(s) create knowledge. Knowledge, rather than mechanistic, static information, should be the means for critical reflection by both student and teacher. As they constantly unveil reality and struggle to regain their humanity, students co-author (in solidarity with each other and the teacher) and find ownership in a problem-posing education that is relevant to the oppressive issues in their reality. Thus, through a pedagogy that can provide the possibility of praxis, “the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it” (Freire, 2007, p. 79), education is transformed into an invaluable comrade for the learner in their human vocation of liberation. Henry Giroux (2004) expands upon Freirean pedagogy and develops general themes of critical pedagogy that can be useful in understanding more critical models of GCE. Through a process of critical questioning and critical imagination of what it might mean and look like to transform existing relations in the world, critical pedagogy can provide educators and students with the tools to develop more engaging and relevant GCE. However, it must be understood that critical pedagogy is not “a fixed set of principles and practices” that can standardize and indiscriminately transferred from one context to the next; critical models of GCE must begin from the experiences of those within that particular context (Giroux, 2004, p. 37). Therefore, the model of critical GCE

presented in this article should be seen more as an inspiration, or a provocateur for critical GCE models in other localities.

Critical pedagogy is an educational process that empowers learners to question existing social structures and ideologies while symbiotically constructing new localities necessary to transform people into more than their present consciousness. The educational endeavour of critical pedagogy is centered more on issues of politics and power and less on the language of technique and methodology. Critical pedagogy emphasizes a critical reflexivity that connects learning to everyday life and understanding the connections between power and knowledge. Critical pedagogy links learning to social change in a wide variety of social sites; thus it is a political intervention in the world, making visible alternative models of radical democratic relations. Associated with a political intervention is the task of rekindling social and political agency to subvert dominant structures of power. As mentioned above, pedagogy must always be contextually defined as indispensable when responding to the problems that arise with a specific educational site. Moreover, there should be a rejection of the notions of neutrality and apolitical-ness, while fostering a language of critique and transformation. I would argue the overall goal of any critical model of GCE is to illuminate the critical consciousness in learners through global knowledge, transformative engagement and collaborative solution making. Therefore, with regards to GCE, critical pedagogy can “reinvigorate the relationship between democracy, ethics, and political agency by expanding both the meaning of the pedagogical as a political practices while at the same time making the political more pedagogical” (Giroux, 2004, p. 33).

The critical pedagogy of GCE that is presented in this article builds upon previous theories and foundations highlighted above from Freire and Giroux, combined with additional inspiration by such foundational critical scholars as Apple, Fanon, hooks, and Said, and is substantiated in the following understanding of GCE: I regard and teach GCE as a new global ethos of teaching and learning citizenship education (not confined to formal education) that fosters understanding of and actions concerning issues of power, equity, justice, marginalization and oppression that manifest locally and globally for people and our planet. It offers a source of learning that is critical of the failures and unevenness of globalization and unpacks the current hegemonic models of globalization that are tied to and embolden local and national structures of power and hierarchies. It is a moral and political form of cosmopolitanism, one that is not obsessed with neoliberal access to the global economy, but uses privilege and knowledge to minimize and transform local and global suffering. It can be characterized as a form of de-colonial pedagogy that offers pathway for un-learning, healing and subversion. Moreover, this pedagogy must attempt to counter racism, sexism, homophobia, paternalism, imperialism, anthropocentrism, ablism, xenophobia, neo-nationalism and other forms of bigotry, systems and structures grounded in hatred and violence towards people and our planet. This is done through forms of education that promote a deeper understanding of and mutual respect for the histories, experiences and struggles of groups, specifically

indigenous and traditionally marginalized communities who are culturally different than oneself. Therefore, it is concerned with viewing the world through an amalgamation of social and environmental inequities and injustices and the actions necessary to create models of new possibility. Overall, I see GCE as a critical global pedagogy that attempts to foster youth engagement, consciousness of global interdependence, emboldened by global knowledge and thinking that is vital to creating new local and global modes of knowing as *solutionaries* (Weil, 2016) to the most pressing local and global problems.

Self-Study as A Method to Examine Teaching GCE

To empirically explore teaching university global citizenship education, this research was guided by self-study methodology (Loughran et al, 2004; Samaras & Freese, 2006; Tidwell et al, 2009). Self-study is a methodology that relies heavily on qualitative data collection techniques and is used in teacher education and education research as a means to better understand the complex nature of teaching and learning as well as a process for advancing teacher efficacy and educational change. Researchers conducting self-studies often focus on their own learning and teaching perspectives, practices, contexts and relationships. I view self-study as being motivated by the following important questions: As a teacher, how can I improve my craft and enhance learning with students? How will my own experiences enrich the broader teaching community? How can this understanding of teaching and learning better inform society? As Berry and Hamilton (2013) state, in a self-study, “both personal and public purposes are concerned with the reform of teaching and teacher education that works from a social change and social justice perspective” (p.1). Therefore, self-study is grounded in the purpose of enriching learning experiences and environments through an intentional, systematic and truly emic perspective that reveals the ways learners and teachers co-construct knowledge (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1992).

There are many approaches, purposes and methods associated with self-study. As Loughran (2004) argues, “there is not ‘one way’ to do self-study” (p. 24). Since this was the first time I taught the course, the goals of this particular self-study were to improve my teaching practices of GCE and provide deeper insight into the relationship between teaching and GCE for the field of education and the broader society. Moreover, given that there is limited empirical research on teaching university GCE in the US it is necessary to expand the body of literature in the field. I utilized three forms of qualitative data collection techniques including reflective journaling, classroom dialogues and student-created texts comprising of course papers, presentations, lesson plans and course evaluations. Qualitative analysis of the data included a coding process that unearthed pertinent information and passages, and organizing connected data into themes or categories (Merriam, 2009). The findings below are presented within pedagogical themes that were coded from the data. To support and explain each theme, I used direct quotes from students and other forms of data that are then blended with my interpretation and relevant literature.

Pedagogical Themes for Critical Global Citizenship Education

The context for this study was an undergraduate course that focused on curriculum and instruction of global citizenship education; it was part of a newly implemented set of three undergraduate courses on GCE offered by the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. This was a four-hour course that met once a week for the ten-week quarter. The course fulfilled upper division requirements for students in the Education minor program (UCLA does not currently offer Education as a major). There were twenty-one junior and senior undergraduate students enrolled in the course in addition to a visiting professor from China who audited the course. Although there were only three male students, the class was quite diverse, representing various racial/ethnic backgrounds, various religious beliefs, varied immigration status, sexual and political orientations, as well as wide array of majors including African American Studies, Biology, Business Economics, Chicana/o studies, Communications, English, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and Spanish and Portuguese. About half of the students were interested in pursuing careers in teaching. The remaining half were either uncertain about their career goals, pursuing graduate school or interested in careers in other fields. When asked why the students enrolled in this course, the common response was, “*The title sounds interesting but I have no idea what global citizenship education means.*”

My teaching methodology was guided by the following broad interrelated objectives: (1) Be an encouraging and accessible mentor; (2) Provide culturally relevant and culturally sensitive pedagogies that align to the student demographics of the course; (3) Position issues of social and environmental justice at the core of learning; (4) Have students uncover diverse problems of globalization using various lenses including personal experiences; (5) Attempt to foster a relationship between the student and the problem (e.g. how does it impact the student, why should they care, and how does the student impact the problem?); (6) Co-construct a space where students can creatively and holistically think, reflect and dialogue about solutions to complex global problems; (7) Convey a sense of empowerment and optimism about the ways in which teaching and learning can be a vehicle for global transformation; and (8) Inspire students to continue seeking knowledge about global problems and instill an active responsibility to social engagement that will persist after the course has ended.

Each class period was divided into three sections. The first section was devoted to lectures and student-centered discussions/activities facilitated by the instructor on global challenges providing the context of globalization(s). The second was devoted to lectures and student-centered discussions/activities facilitated by the instructor related to topics/themes of GCE viewed as an intervention to specific problems e.g. peace education, human rights education, social justice education, ecopedagogy, etc. The last section consisted of discussions facilitated by students pertaining to ways in which students could develop lessons to address specific global problems. For example, the two main

assignments underscore the students' attempt at using education as a means to address global challenges.

The first assignment was the *Global Challenges Research Paper and Mini-Lesson*. Each student selected a single global issue and wrote a research paper guided by the questions: what is the biggest challenge facing humanity or the planet and how are people actively addressing the challenge? Specific questions for the research paper included: what is the global challenge? What are some of its causes, and who/what does it impact? What are the consequences if it is not addressed? What are some of the innovative/creative ways people are addressing the global challenge? What can UCLA students do address the challenge? The students then presented a 20-minute mini-lesson pertaining to the global challenge they selected. Creative, innovative and engaging ways of teaching were expected.

The second assignment was the *Group Unit Plan on UN SDGs*. In self-selected groups of 4-5, students designed a five-day unit plan covering at least 2 of the 17 UN SDGs United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015). The Unit Plan included: Introduction: title, purpose/overall objectives, an explanation of which UN SDGs were covered, the educational context and class/school environment, and the age group and student demographic this unit was designed for; Framework and Theory: define global citizenship education and how their definition connects to the unit; Explain the core principals and concepts used in the unit; The skills, knowledge and virtues emphasized in the unit; and the literature/research supporting the framework; Teaching Practices: describe how the teaching practices and content were culturally relevant and interdisciplinary and how the teaching practices relate to pedagogy for critical global citizenship education; Table of five lessons: a visual representation of the unit containing name of lessons, learning objectives, key activities, name/number of SDGs. Last was a detailed description of five individual lessons including a description of the lesson, learning objectives, activities, assessments, key materials and literature. Note that one lesson had to include some form of community engagement project/exercise. At the end of the quarter, groups were given 45 minutes to present their unit, teaching a part of a synthesis of the unit.

With the above context in mind, the following six themes arose out of the self-study research. It must be noted that this is not an exhaustive list of pedagogical themes of critical global citizenship education. Moreover, the themes greatly overlap.

Critical Frameworks

Reflecting on the course, one student stated, “*You allowed us to critique knowledge. That was something new. You didn't just tell us to ascribe to global citizenship but said it was okay to challenge and critique literature and theories.*” The quote underscores that an important goal of the course was to create a GCE learning community that is grounded in critical theories including de-colonial, anti-imperial and anti-racists frameworks, which, in turn, fosters in students a commitment to these frameworks when developing their own

curriculum and instruction of GCE. Critical frameworks of GCE enables students to nurture the skill and ability to question the world and conventional worldviews, nurturing a language of critique. These critical epistemologies endeavour to expose, unpack and critique power structures and hierarchical relations, while simultaneously offering spaces for agency and creative and sustainable solutions.

An example of an activity that encouraged students to challenge preconceived notions about GCE topics and attempted to develop critical analytical skills was the short report group activity. Students organized themselves in 4-5 groups and each group was assigned a 1-3 page news report on a similar topic from vastly different perspectives. Upon reading the news report, each group was required to present on it. Components of the presentation included: main arguments; legitimacy of data/evidence used to support the arguments; notable quotes; reflections on ideological/theoretical underpinnings of the argument/background and positionality of author(s); group critiques of the arguments; and how the group would teach their topic. After each presentation was complete, the other students were encouraged to provide critical feedback, pose questions, and connect it to their articles and course readings. Often, a lively and deep class discussion would ensue. From this and other related activities, students also shared that the class helped them to *“think past our western-centered views and see education and society more nuanced and globally.”* Similarly, another student stated, *“The class was a new and great experience in teaching and challenging current ways of education and normative American-centric perspectives.”*

Critical frameworks for GCE involve the recognition and inclusion of multiple wisdoms, learning, philosophies, cultural practices and economic relationships that strive for communal peace and environmental preservation. It is about bringing into frame alternative world visions and knowledges, which some refer to as epistemologies of the South (Santos, 2012). Such frameworks are generally related to the re-centering and re-narrativization of knowledge and epistemologies that have been traditionally based upon Eurocentric, male, neoliberal, hetero-normative and other hegemonic norms and standards. GCE should be an attempt to decolonize the university deeply tied to Western, normative and elitist ideas dominated by universal and monolithic narratives of citizenship. Such critical frameworks also include critiquing anthropocentric norms of citizenship and education. Ecopedagogy (Misiaszek, 2015) models of GCE were discussed in class, which advocates for a reconstitution of pedagogies towards raising consciousness about the entangled human-environment relationships that demand a merging of education for/through social and ecological justice.

Other educators have also promoted creating a critical and decolonizing GCE. Abdi, Shultz and Pillay (2015) argue for nuanced thinking about and practices of citizenship and a GCE that critically understands and responds to “the problematic habitualizations of uni-directional and uni-dimensional mentalizations and practicalizations of citizenship and citizenship education” (p.3). Moreover, the authors advance a GCE that not only challenges institutionalized and historically normalized understandings and practices of

citizenship but also has the task of education for global social justice. To this point, Abdi et al. (2015) argue:

With the histories and legacies of colonialism, patriarchy, and imperialism intertwining to create international and global relations that are continuously the antithesis and counter-practices of global justice and rights, multi-directionally constructed global citizenship education has an important transformative contribution to affect crucial and timely changes in the lives of the world's still and citizenship-wise, marginalized billions. (p. 3)

The quote highlights the significant transformative properties that critical frameworks of GCE contain, not only for privileged universities in the global North, but also the importance that these critical epistemologies of GCE can have for global South and “majority world” to understand and interrupt systems of local and global power.

Local and Global Power

One student shared, “*You blew my mind. I never thought about the connection between politics and education or that education can be political.*” There are three significant points to this quote. The first obvious point is that the student came to realize the synergistic relationship between knowledge and power. Second, though the student had been formally schooled for nearly two decades, this clarity was not found until the student’s senior year. This shows the failures of primary, secondary and university education as well as lack of exposure to critical education in non-formal or informal spaces. Nevertheless, this awakening does provide hope for notions of lifelong learning and it is never too late to be exposed to critical forms of knowledge and learning. Third, the student realized the significant dialectic power of education, in that it can be used as a tool for control as well as a means for change.

Pedagogy of GCE must first and foremost be critical of the dominant mode of globalization(s). Moreover, the dialectics of local and global power are analyzed within human relationships, structures, complex systems and human interactions with the environment, as well as the role of culture and culture-making institutions such as education, media, religion and many others that are recognized as greatly informing hegemony and common-sense interpretations and actions of citizenship. Therefore, there is a focus on power and knowledge; on the one hand, offering a critique to the dominant educational policies and teaching practices that have led to the current global challenges, while on the other, providing innovative forms of individual and collective action. The topic of power and knowledge was an essential theme that ran throughout the course. After the first four weeks of building a common foundation in research and theories of citizenship education, globalization, global citizenship education, and teaching GCE, the following specific themes were the focus of each week: (1) Human rights education that is detached from the imperial mission; (2) Issues of Diversity and Multicultural Education;

(3) Poverty, Global Inequities and Social Justice Education; (4) Peace Education, Ethics of Nonviolence (including civil disobedience), and Conflict Resolution; (5) Sustainable Development and Ecopedagogy.

A class reflection at the end of the quarter found a limitation to this arrangement of themes. Because there was much overlapping, the next time I teach this course I plan to combined theme 2 and 3 to create a new blended theme entitled Global Social Justice Education: Justice and Equity for a Multicultural World. Additionally, the syllabus gave little attention to the powerful role of technology including social media, but many class discussions incorporated these topics. Therefore, the next time I teach this course, I will set aside one week to focus on the dialectics of oppressive and liberating forms of technologies including the power of social media and digital spaces of citizenship, and the importance of critical media literacy (Kellner & Share, 2009). Another consideration is to include a week on indigenous wisdoms, issues and questions of sovereignty. Overall, this course brought to light the significance of a GCE that offers a critique to forms of globalization that exacerbate both social and environmental injustices. Moreover, students realized that in order to begin to address the devastation to the planet and people, in a globalized world attention at all levels must be given to the interrelationship between both social and environmental justice, including the ability to reflect on one's own thoughts and actions in relations to systems of power.

Critical Reflexivity

The ability and time to reflect on global challenges and one's relationships with forms of globalization was crucial for this course. To this point, one student explained, *"Instructor Dorio made sure to give us time to reflect and critique our views and those presented in the topics, which really created a space for discussion."* This reflection was accomplished through personal writing and thought activities, in small groups as well as within whole class discussions. Students were made to reflect upon their roles in, connections to and impacts on the world. Conversely, they were asked to reflect upon how they have been positively and negatively impacted by various social, political, economic, cultural and environmental events and challenges occurring in other localities. The goal of critical reflexivity was to foster in students the ability to recognize individual, community and national identities in collective solutions as well as complicity in harmful local and global systems and structures. Thus, the emphasis was on a critical reflexivity that connects learning to everyday life by providing a vision and language of critique grounded in global understanding. Learners understand both their own complicity and agency within structures of global power. As a form of empowerment, a kind of thinking and acting beyond oneself, this critical reflexivity uses consciousness-raising towards altering destructive social patterns that negatively impact our planet and communities. This critical reflexivity can include critical thinking and problem solving skills that are broad, holistic, transdisciplinary and systems-orientated for the purposes of developing complex solutions and alternatives towards research for action. Reflecting upon one's thoughts and actions,

especially one's cultural ignorance and insensitivities can also help foster social communication and dialogue between groups. On another level, critical reflexivity should also be an action conducted by the teacher. The teacher can model and share personal experiences and life trajectories that have interwoven with forms of globalization. Additionally, teachers can reflect upon their own privileges and negative behaviour (racism, sexism, xenophobia, and other forms of microaggression and anthropocentric action) in class and society, and how they are working towards addressing these narrow worldviews. A critical reflexivity of GCE helps students and teachers to discover, for themselves, the complicated interconnected, interdisciplinary and intersectional nature of today's global problems.

Interconnectedness, Interdisciplinary and Intersectionality

Another important goal of this course was to nurture a sense of active global interconnectedness, especially with regards to the complex nature of global problems. As the adage goes, complex problems demand complex solutions, but they also demand the often-painful task of rethinking the structures and systems that perpetuate those problems in the first place. Various activities allowed students to use multiple lenses to critically explore the complex multidimensional systems. As stated above, a critical reflexivity helped students to realize the interconnected nature of local, national and global problems as well as assisted in recognizing ones local, national and global identities (Banks, 2004).

With students from various fields of study, there was an organic interdisciplinary nature to the course. This not only provided a richness of experiences and knowledge to class discussions, especially when discussing solutions, but it also helped students to realize the complex interdisciplinary approach needed to devise solutions. Having space in the curriculum for learning interdisciplinary skills organized around real-world issues is vital to any model of GCE. As Weil (2016) succinctly explains:

Because life in our world—both ecological and societal—is dependent upon interconnected systems, to be a solutionary it is also essential to become a systems thinker, able to identify the interlinking components that contribute to the challenges we face. (p. 28-29)

Global problems are therefore inextricably linked through various systems, and an attempt to solve a problem in isolation has the possibility of exacerbating problems in other connected systems. For example, intersectionality became another important running theme of the course. Intersectionality initially was conceived to explain the ways in which race and gender interact to shape the multiple experiences of black women in the US (Crenshaw, 1991), and often contentiously refers to the interrelationship of such structures of race, gender and class that impact experiences, especially with regards to privilege and oppression. Intersectionality in GCE therefore provides a formidable lens to help locate and name the multiple ways local and global power coalesce to shape social structures as well as human-environment relationships, and to examine the ways that power of

intersecting structures work against communities of color, the poverty stricken, the Global south and other marginalized groups. Thus, an intersectionality of GCE can provide the means to identify, examine and find solutions to issues of the global politics of identity.

With regards to the relationship between GCE and “issues of diversity,” the class came to the conclusion that tolerance for “the other” should not be the goal for education and society. GCE must move beyond being content with tolerance and understanding of diversity. Moreover, settling solely on tolerance maybe the reason for the failures of some models of multicultural education (Tarrozzi and Torres, 2017). The class discussed the need for GCE to move beyond tolerance towards models of citizenship and education that locate injustices and call for an “outrage” towards intersectional issues of injustice, striving for policies and pedagogies that are grounded in compassion, mutual respect, humanization—in the words of Freire, striving for “the creation of a world in which it will be easier to love” (2007, p.40). Our conversations echo the call by Stewart (2017) to move beyond diversity and inclusion toward justice and equity. Therefore, we realize that for GCE to be more universally applicable in the US, in addition to being anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-other forms of violence, bigotry, and xenophobia, GCE must be used to dismantle, resist and disrupt the relationship between white privilege, the white savior complex (Straubhaar, 2015) and global citizenship. This aligns to theories of intersectional global citizenship built upon feminist theories. Thus, any GCE must analyze the interaction between gender and other categories such as race/ethnicity, geographical location and be grounded in understanding and challenging globalization linked to present and historical structural inequalities (de Jong, 2013).

Empowerment through Praxis

Empowerment through praxis of GCE is concerned with the ability to believe in oneself, the consciousness of one’s current and future roles and responsibilities in the world, and the courage for self and social transformation, learned through global knowledge, reflection on that knowledge, and the agency to change. Reflecting on the course, one student explained, “*This course pushed us to realize the importance of using our privilege to better the world. We can have an impact especially within our communities, with our families and friends.*” This quote demonstrates that throughout the course, I attempted to instill in students a sense of awareness about their privilege associated with being students of this elite university (as well as other privileges), and the importance of problematizing and utilizing that privilege for the betterment of humanity rather than for selfish endeavours. Another example is from the beginning of the quarter, when I shared the syllabus with the students and asked them if they wanted to scrap all but the first three weeks of the set readings (to provide common foundational knowledge). I suggested that they design the syllabus and provide relevant readings and activities for the remaining weeks. Unfortunately, they were not ready for that power and explained that, being new to this topic, they felt uncomfortable designing the syllabus. This exercise in classroom democracy and empowerment is not only crucial to models of democratic and

participatory education, it also signaled to students that this was a space where their voice was welcomed and appreciated. This approach to empowering education has elements of culturally relevant and sensitive pedagogies that not only engage learners, but also foster agency through a real-world education that has meaning to the lives of learners.

As I have stated before, the Freirean notion of *praxis* is essential to guide objectives of empowerment and civic engagement for any GCE course and program. This is knowledge of the world in order to transform it. Thus, an important goal when teaching this course was to foster empowerment towards an agency that promotes learning for and through social action—a political intervention in the world through subversion, disruption, resistance and problem solving that makes visible the vast inequities around the globe while unearthing alternative models of radical democratic and sustainable relations. To have students use the knowledge and reflection gained in this GCE course to engage in transformative social action is the ideal outcome. As one student shared, “*The class was not only about theories, but allowed us to think and discuss about solutions to global problems. Even if those solutions seemed not feasible or far off.*” As will be discussed below, the ability and space to reflect, dialogue and imagine solutions to global problems can be considered a transformative action. The course was an attempt to nurture thinking about issues outside one’s own communities, simultaneously connecting global issues to issues in one’s communities, thus fostering the ability to be outraged by and act against issues of social and eco injustices, as well as the ability to combine critique while thinking about and designing solutions.

Nonetheless, a limitation of this course was that specific transformative social engagement components were not included. As one student lamented, “*Now that course is over, what do we do with the knowledge and awareness gained?*” However, I would argue that transformative social action was addressed in this course in three alternative ways. First, within the global challenges research papers and presentations, students proposed and examined multiple ways that UCLA students could be engaged with particular global problems, providing real-world ideas for social action. Second, students in groups developed unit lesson plans that were grounded in knowledge and awareness of sustainable development issues and included a lesson that focused on community engagement. These interdisciplinary and creative unit lesson plans could potentially be used to educate younger students for action, which may be considered a learning tool for transformative social action. Lastly, meaningful dialogue occurred on the difference between social action that is grounded in “good deeds” and has altruistic intentions but is limited in its approach to addressing multifaceted causes of problems, and transformative social action that attempts to actually address structures and systems of problems. For example we discussed the distinction between active citizenship and activist citizenship. Isin (2008) contrasts *activist citizens* with *active citizens*, writing that “while activist citizens engage in writing scripts and creating the scene, active citizens follow scripts and participate in scenes that are already created. While activist citizens are creative, active citizens are not” (p. 38). Isin’s *activist citizenship* is more aligned to what Shultz’s (2007) typifies as

transformationalist global citizens, who are “not content to just challenge the unjust structures that exist,” but are people that “[join] together to create social justice through deep compassion and accompaniment, through creating democratic spaces for building inclusive community, and through action that links the local experiences with the shared global experience” (p. 255). Moreover, to the point of engaging in systems thinking and transformation, Weil (2016) asserts:

If, for example, we ignore the root systems that are causing climate change, then we will perpetually be putting out the fires of what have become frequent less-than-natural disasters. If we don’t develop systems for people to move out of poverty, we will always be faced with the need for aid” (p.46).

Therefore, an important task of any pedagogy of GCE that is committed to transformative social action is to empower students with the global knowledge and skills necessary to converge systems of thinking with engagement for social change. Although many students were involved in various organizations and many plan to teach in various capacities, a follow-up study would be necessary to explore the extent to which students actually applied the knowledge gained from this course towards transformative social action. Some proposals for the next course discussed by the students included developing unit plans with a community organization and teaching it to the people that the organization serves; incorporating a volunteer, civic engagement project, or awareness campaign that strives to engage with problematic systems; and integrating a social media project, where students design and maintain a blog, website or social media page.

Critical Public Sphere

Creating a safe dialogical space where empowerment through praxis can be cultivated is the last important theme of our GCE course. As one student wrote:

The teaching practices used in this course encouraged engagement and conversation, even when they were opposing views. This kind of critical conversation is rare in most classes, because we are not fully challenged thus hindering our full potential for learning.

The classroom as a critical space to dialogue about global problems, allowing opposing views, was seen by this student as vital to their “full” learning potential and was viewed as a “rare” occurrence during their previous university experiences. Therefore, with such pressing issues plaguing humanity and our planet, universities in general and schools of education and teacher training programs in particular have the responsibility to create spaces for a critical public sphere. As Giroux (2002) argues, higher education “is one of the few public spaces left where students can learn the power of questioning authority, recover the ideals of engaged citizenship, re-affirm the importance of the public good, and expand their capacities to make a difference” (p. 450).

The GCE classroom as a critical public sphere has the potential to be a place wherein modes of critical dialogue about global issues can occur, and forms of social action can be broadened. It is a space for the uncomfortable conversations, especially about the most controversial issues. It is a democratic arena where the skills and importance of dialogue across differences are upheld. It can be a safe space where the inherent power dynamics between students can be unpacked, leading towards the process of healing and trust building that is necessary to forge alliances. Concurrently, students from historically marginalized and disenfranchised groups will also need access to exclusive spaces to share experiences, mobilize and heal with people from similar backgrounds and understandings. The critical public sphere is a much-needed space where students can engage with current events and society's most controversial issues, both taboo and undesirable topics for many teacher-training programs. This critical public sphere should consist of both physical and digital spaces where democratic sharing of knowledge, debate and mobilization takes place and should endeavour to foster networks of local and global solidarity with community groups, social movements, workers' organizations, universities and other public global spheres necessary for collective social action. These are the jumping points from where the knowledge and awareness of establishing more connections are created.

Critical Global Citizenship Education for Universities: Lessons from Los Angeles

To conclude, the self-study of the UCLA GCE course unearthed some important themes for university students, educators and administrators to consider and contextualize when devising their own critical global citizenship education programs and courses. The caustic nature of authoritarian education, the pervasive impact of neoliberalism on society and the impending force of nationalist populism demand a radical reframing of universities and teacher education towards global awareness and solutions for the world's most pressing problems. Critical global citizenship education can be viewed as a significant model of teaching and learning that is fundamental to today's global societies. It has the potential to be a form of global problem posing and problem resolving education. It is a model of citizenship education that fosters the knowledge, virtues and skills—in sum, global consciousness—necessary to understand and deconstruct the impacts and opportunities of globalization, and to disrupt local-global power dynamics towards developing an expansion of loyalty to humanity and our planet, and the action needed to sustain both. Grounded in interconnectedness, interdisciplinary and intersectionality, it should be a form of learning for a critical and systems understanding of the contractions of globalization necessary to cultivate a moral outrage in learners that can lead to a transformative citizenship. It can provide a space for political courage, social imagination and social responsibility—a “politics of the future” to counter the “politics of the past.” It is a critical reflectivity in self and social complicity that nurtures an ethics of sustainable change and vigilance against destructive behaviours and policies. This praxis of GCE should be directed towards empowering marginalized and disenfranchised communities, who are often the most adversely affected by globalization, a goal that can be realized by

developing models for justice and equity that are grounding in building compassion and solidarity—dare I say, love—with others within and across localities. Overall, critical global citizenship education must strive for an expansion of citizenship through teaching, learning and research for action that struggles to create models of engagement for counter-hegemonic globalization that is indispensable to challenging significant threats as well as creating sustainable and subversive alternatives to environmental, political, social and cultural injustices in the world.

As an institution purportedly grounded in notions of public good, it is crucial that the university be part of the solution to global crises, not part of the problem. I call on universities to adopt projects dedicated to models of critical global citizenship education. The present study offers pedagogical themes from a self-study of teaching university GCE specific to Los Angeles. Although this article was meant to ignite a pursuit of teaching and programming for critical GCE for students and educators concerned with the state of the world and with teaching and learning, it is not offering standardized and transferable pedagogies of GCE. Thus, any model of GCE must originate from the experiences of those within particular contexts, organized around how global society impacts specific local contexts, and vice versa. Therefore, research is needed to locate, analyze, expand upon and innovate similar models of critical GCE within given localities. Moreover, as crucial institutions necessary to create pedagogy and public awareness of and solutions to social and environmental injustices, schools and departments of education must consider more closely the role, benefits as well as challenges GCE can have for current and future teachers, specifically the possibilities of critical and transformative models and approaches to GCE. Additionally, for any critical GCE to be successful, teachers and instructors must be given ample support in their endeavours and empowered as central actors who have the responsibility to educate new generations of learners. After all, teachers are crucial in shaping learners' worldviews of the global challenges that learners will face. Critical GCE also has significant implications for the mission, values and contours of leadership in education as well as other important sectors, which can offer approaches to leadership that are more ethical, empowering, global and socio-eco justice-orientated. A commitment to pedagogies of critical GCE is a commitment to illuminating a critical consciousness in learners necessary to transform existing inequities and toxic local and global relations. It is a sophisticated and nuanced comprehension of the world. Critical global citizenship education provides a process of teaching and learning that pulls back the curtain on the world's problems, provoking an interconnectedness and social onus that makes global problems difficult to ignore while simultaneously conceiving solidarities and solutions.

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