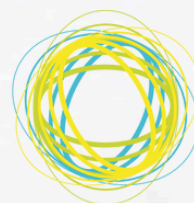


UniPID Virtual Studies Student Guide

UNIPID
FINNISH UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Foreword



Welcome to UniPID Virtual Studies!

This guide offers essential guidelines and instructions for students enrolled in, or considering, courses within the UniPID Virtual Studies Programme. The Coordination Unit has thoughtfully compiled a comprehensive set of guidelines, instructions, and suggestions to assist you before, during, and after your virtual course experience.

We hope you find this information helpful and pertinent. Remember, you can always reach out to the Coordination Unit for further information at any time.

Wishing you a rewarding and successful learning experience ahead!

All the best,

UniPID Coordination Unit

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UniPID Virtual Studies Programme



UniPID Virtual Studies consist of online courses provided by UniPID Member Universities, which give the students access to specialised training and expertise from other Finnish universities. The Virtual Studies programme promotes teaching related to global development and sustainability, especially bringing forward perspectives from the Global South, and increases the amount of knowledge on these issues.

Students from the UniPID Member Universities, including exchange students, are offered the opportunity to take courses offered by the different Member Universities in their respective fields of specialization.

All courses are held in English and are worth 5 ECTS. Courses are free of charge for students enrolled in UniPID member universities. From 2020 onwards, some of the courses are organized in collaboration with partner universities from the Global South, in which case the courses are available and free also for their students. Some courses can also admit other students, at the discretion of the course teacher.

The UniPID Virtual Studies courses are designed to support the students' degree studies at their home universities, and it is also possible to compile them into a study module, Sustainability in Development, of at least 25 ECTS credits.

Background

Responding to the permanent growing demand for courses on sustainable development and global development research, the Finnish University Partnership for International Development - UniPID has designed a Virtual Studies Programme. This strategy answers the demand especially by bringing forward perspectives from the Global South.

Flexible distance learning

Online courses are a flexible way of participating in university studies. You can study regardless of your location, if you have access to a high-quality internet connection and the required software (browser, word processing, presentation, and spreadsheet programmes). If the completion of a course requires other tools, they are mentioned in the course description.

Study methods vary from one UniPID course to the next. However, courses always include a significant amount of self-study of course material chosen by the teacher. The material can consist e.g. of video or audio lectures and supporting PowerPoint presentations, scientific and popular articles, videos or other visual material. Learning assignments can take many forms, such as mandatory weekly discussions, small writing assignments, essays and videos made by students, blogs entries and audio recordings. Courses can also include self and peer evaluation assignments, which improve the students' reflections skills and capability of evaluating own and others' performance.

The pace of the course can be quite free or relatively strictly scheduled. Thus, you should always check the schedule of the course and deadlines of required assignments from the course description when you are registering for a course, in order to allow the necessary amount of time and energy for the needs of the course.

On online courses students are responsible not only for their own scheduling, but also their own learning and supporting others' learning through interaction that many courses include as a part of mandatory course assignments. Studying online makes interaction and studying over institutional, national and cultural borders possible.

The number of courses you can study simultaneously is not restricted, although it is recommended that you do not take more than a couple of UniPID courses at a time so that there is enough time for the needs of each one. Online courses can be challenging, and students are expected to arrange the necessary amount of time and energy for the needs of each course. Students are also expected to keep to the course schedule, and to return assignments on time.

Online courses are offered in both spring and fall semesters, occasionally also during the summer. About half of the courses are organized during the fall and about half during the spring. Each course is offered at least three times through UniPID. The number of courses on offer and their content varies from one year to the next. On the course page you can see how many times the course has been offered.

New courses are added to the selection annually, so it is worth keeping an eye on the UniPID Virtual Studies course catalogue at <http://www.unipid.fi/students/virtual-studies/>.

UniPID Member Universities

UniPID represents ten internationally acclaimed Finnish universities. The representatives of each university in the UniPID Board are listed here.



Aalto University

Aalto University is a Finnish institute of higher education with campuses in Helsinki and Espoo.



Hanken School of Economics

Hanken School of Economics is a stand alone business school offering degree programmes in Swedish and English.



Tampere University

Tampere University is a multidisciplinary research university located in Tampere.



University of Eastern Finland

University of Eastern Finland comprises of two main campuses, located in Joensuu and Kuopio.



University of Helsinki

University of Helsinki the oldest and largest university in Finland. It is located in Helsinki.



University of Jyväskylä

University of Jyväskylä was established as the first Finnish language teacher education seminar in 1863.



University of Lapland

University of Lapland is a Finnish university located in Rovaniemi. It has four faculties.



University of Oulu

University of Oulu is a university located in Oulu, founded in 1958.



University of Turku

University of Turku is the first university that was founded as a Finnish-speaking institution, in 1920.



Åbo Akademi University

Åbo Akademi is the only multi-faculty Swedish-speaking university in Finland, based in Turku.

Online learning platforms

When a course begins, registered students receive instructions from the teacher on how to log in to the online learning environment. Most UniPID courses use the Moodle online learning environment, while the MOOC “Essentials in Development Studies” is available on the DigiCampus platform.

Moodle can be accessed at <http://moodle.org/>, and DigiCampus can be accessed at <https://digicampus.fi/>. Students can access the learning environment using their username and password. In addition, admitted students receive a course key from the responsible teacher, with which they can access the course platform and further get to know course material and the contents of the course.



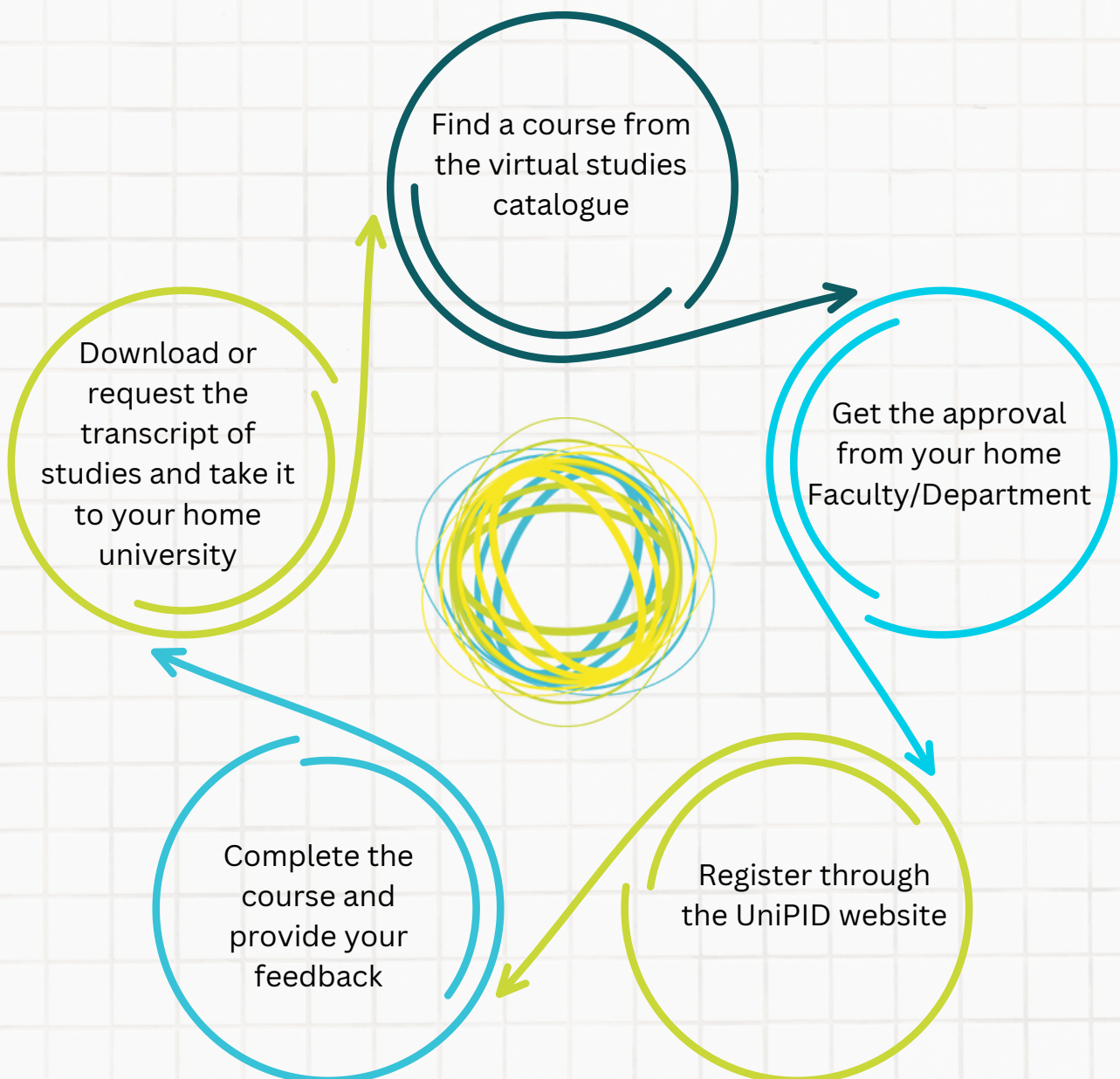
As a student, you should familiarize yourself with the course platform before the class starts. This way, you will feel more confident navigating it, and it'll be easier for you to engage with the material. Keep in mind that the teacher might not always have the time to assist each student individually with using the learning environment.



Online courses step by step

Each UniPID Virtual Studies course is worth 5 ECTS. When you are planning to take a UniPID course, remember to include it in your personal study plan (HOPS). The inclusion of UniPID Virtual Studies in your degree must be approved in advance at your institution. UniPID Virtual Studies Contacts at your institution can help you with this procedure, you will find their contact information at <https://www.unipid.fi/students/virtual-studies-contacts/>.

UniPID Virtual Studies cycle for students



Before the course begins

1 Choose a course that interests you from the UniPID Virtual Studies catalogue at <http://www.unipid.fi/students/virtual-studies/>.

Be sure to read the course description carefully, as some courses require previous studies or prior knowledge, which will be specified in the description. Before registering, ensure that you meet any prerequisites and that the course fits within your degree requirements. Additionally, make sure the course timetable suits your other courses and commitments. To confirm its suitability for your curriculum, it is advisable to consult with a faculty member at your home university.



2 Confirm your registration on the UniPID website.

On the page of your selected course, you will find the registration dates. Be sure to register within the deadline by filling out the form available on each course's webpage. Ensure that you complete all fields in the registration form, as incomplete registrations may not be accepted. You can find more information about the registration process in page 14.



Note: If a course requires separate registration (e.g., through the Open University), instructions will be included in the course description.

3 The online registration form is sent to the responsible teacher for approval.

The teacher will contact you after the registration period ends to inform you whether you have been admitted to the course. If you do not hear from the teacher within seven days after the registration period ends, contact the course teacher directly. If necessary, you can also reach out to the UniPID Virtual Studies coordinator. Contact details are available at: <https://www.unipid.fi/unipid/contacts/>



4

Get to know the online learning environment.

Once you have been admitted, you will receive instructions from the teacher describing how to access the online learning environment. The teacher sends you all the information you need to access the course material. Make sure that you have all the material (e.g. course books) you need, enough time, and that you have explored the learning environment before the course begins.



Please note that, as a general rule, late registrations are not accepted because they cause an additional administrative burden. However, in some cases, exceptions may be granted, and this can be discussed together with the student, teacher and UniPID Coordination unit. If you missed the registration period, you are advised to contact both the teacher and UniPID Coordination unit as soon as possible.

During the course

5

Complete the course by following the proposed methodology and course content.

Please note that while UniPID courses offer flexibility and allow you to study from home, they require a significant amount of independent study, and there are deadlines that must be met. Do not hesitate to engage with your classmates and teachers through the various available channels, such as forums, live sessions, and more.



When a course ends

6

You are asked to fill in an electronic feedback form.

Student feedback is essential for the development and success of the UniPID Virtual Studies. Your feedback helps the teacher recognize which components of the course work as planned, and which aspects have room for improvement. You can find the student feedback form here: <https://www.unipid.fi/vs-forms/student-feedback-form/>.



7

Assessment and feedback.

During the course you may receive feedback for your assignments both from the teacher and from other students. Your performance is often assessed on a scale of 0-5 (0=fail, 5=excellent); however, some courses may use a different assessment scale.



8

Credit registration

After you have passed a course, your course credits and your grade are registered in the study information system of the institution organizing the course. For this purpose, a so-called visiting student status is registered for you. The successful registration of visiting student status requires that you have filled in all the information on the registration form and notified course staff if any of that information has changed since.



9

Credit transfer to home university

When a course has concluded and the course credits have been registered, **you are in charge of transferring the credits to the study information system of your home university.**



Credit transfer to home university

You can do this by downloading a transcript of records from the university that provided the course and delivering this document to your home department's study administration. The course teacher and administration staff will assist you in this process, if necessary.



The course teacher can guide you in the process of downloading or requesting your transcript of studies.

Additionally, you can consult the virtual studies contact people at the producing university for further assistance.



Certificates of participation for students outside the UniPID network.

In some cases (e.g. if the student comes from outside the UniPID network), the UniPID Coordination Unit can provide separate course diplomas for students who have passed a course. **Please note that in these cases, the course diplomas provided by UniPID are not official.**



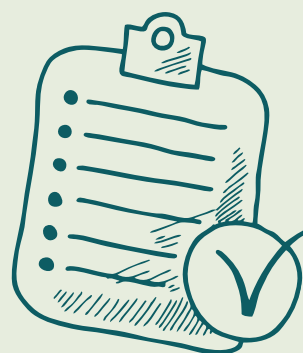
Student registration process

Students must register to UniPID Virtual Studies courses through the UniPID course catalogue page: <https://www.unipid.fi/students/virtual-studies/> .

By filling out the registration form, you give your consent for UniPID to forward the information you have given on the form to the institution organizing the course. Information given on the form is used both in administrative processes and to select students to be admitted. Please note that students enrolled in the UniPID study module (read more on page 16) may be given priority over other students if the number of registered students exceeds the number of students that can be admitted. Kindly note that **submitting the registration form does not guarantee admittance to a course**. Course teacher may require students to deliver e.g., a preliminary assignment or a motivation letter before the course begins to help choose which students to admit, if the number of registered students is higher than the amount of available seats.

The registration form contains the following information:

- Permission to forward personal details within the UniPID Member Universities for course purposes
- Full name
- Gender
- Address
- Email address
- Telephone number
- Personal identity number (for exchange students and other foreign students, date of birth)
- Place of residence
- Nationality
- Native language
- Preferred language for contact: Finnish/English/Swedish
- If the student is previously registered to the Producing University's system
- If yes, what was the student number at the producing university?
- Finnish home university
- Other home university, if any
- Enrolled as present at the home university: yes/no
- Finnish student number
- Major/degree programme
- Faculty/Department
- Degree to which the course is intended to be included
- Start date of studies
- Estimated end date of studies
- Who at the student's home university (administration) has approved the course for their degree
- The date of approval
- Is the student completing the UniPID study module
- Has the student completed UniPID courses before
- The number of previously completed UniPID courses
- Interest/Motivation to take the course
- Additional information





UniPID MOOC "Essentials in Development Studies"

The Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) in Essentials in Development Studies aims to provide students with fundamentals to the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary discipline of development studies and motivate students to further their knowledge in the field.

The MOOC is part of the UniPID Virtual Studies Programme, as well as the University of Helsinki's course syllabus. It is held in English and worth 5 ECTS. The course can also be included in the UniPID study module, Sustainability in Development.

Essentials in Development Studies is an online course offered on the DigiCampus platform. The principal target group is master-level students in UniPID member universities. However, the course can be taken by bachelor students and PhD researchers. Additionally, the MOOC course is open to all interested participants, such as people working in the field of development policy and/or development cooperation.

The course consists of 5 modules:

- What is Development?
- Major theories of Development
- Actors, institutions and policies of Development
- Current topics in Development studies
- Reflections on Development and alternatives

The MOOC content is available to anyone interested in Development Studies, regardless of affiliation. However, to receive the credits, students must register through the Open University upon course completion. The transcript of records is free of charge for degree students from UniPID member universities, while external students must pay a course fee. More information about the MOOC is available in the UniPID Virtual Studies Course Catalogue or here:

<https://www.unipid.fi/virtual-studies/mooc-course-essentials-in-development-studies/>.

UniPID Module in Development Studies: Sustainability in Development

The UniPID module, Sustainability in Development, in development studies programme consists of at least five courses worth 5 ECTS credits each for a total of 25 ECTS. Students can choose courses to be included in the module freely among the courses offered by UniPID.

The completion of the study module requires registration at

<https://www.unipid.fi/students/study-module/>.

Before registering for the module, you should make sure that the module can be included in your degree. For this purpose, you are suggested to discuss this possibility at you home faculty and include the optional study module in your personal study plan for approval.



Students registered for the module may be given priority in admission to courses, especially when the number of registrations exceeds the available seats.

Even if you have already completed one or more UniPID Virtual Studies courses, you can still register for the module. In this case, too, you need to discuss with study administration staff at your home institution about the inclusion of the module in your degree.

Students who have successfully completed the Sustainability in Development module may request a certificate from the UniPID Coordination Unit. After you have completed the required number of courses, you should deliver your transcripts to the UniPID Virtual Studies coordinator and request the certificate.

Virtual Studies General Guidelines

Since students from various disciplines and institutions take part in UniPID Virtual Studies, it is worth going through some general guidelines. These guidelines can be used on all courses, but there is variance between universities, courses, and disciplines. Thus, you should primarily follow the instructions given by the teacher, and second the instructions given in this document.



Plagiarism is a serious offense. Please remember to acknowledge all ideas, phrases, quotations, and other content that are not your own. Many courses use anti-plagiarism software to ensure academic integrity. As a student, you are responsible for using direct citations and references according to good academic practices.



Plagiarism

If you have any questions about plagiarism, use your learning environment's Questions and Answers board. This way, your question reaches both the teacher and other students, ensuring a wider discussion and information exchange. More information about plagiarism can be found at www.plagiarism.org.

In case of plagiarism, the plagiarism policy at the producing university will be followed.

On most courses, students can choose the citation style if it's used consistently. Please note that sometimes the teacher can ask the students to use a single citation style.

Different citation styles are outlined here:

✈️ http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_citation_styles.html

✈️ https://libguides.aalto.fi/citation_guide

Student performance in online courses is often assessed with written assignments. It is important for students to express themselves clearly and effectively in these assignments.

Thus, you should pay close attention to writing style, grammar, structure, and other elements of good academic writing. Often **your own faculty's website** can provide good guidelines and rules on academic writing.

As students come from many different disciplinary and institutional backgrounds, a list of links is compiled below which gives general guidelines about academic writing.



Academic Writing



Guide to grammar:

<http://sana.aalto.fi/awe/grammar/index.html>



Guide to correct punctuation:

<http://sana.aalto.fi/awe/punctuation/index.html>



Essay writing guide:

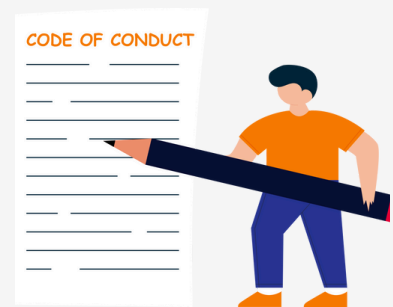
<https://davidgauntlett.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/essaywriting.pdf>

Code of conduct

In order to foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment, we, -at UniPID- are committed to ensuring that everyone's participation in the course is free from harassment. We strictly prohibit any form of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

We expect from UniPID's students to promote the following behaviors:

- Using welcoming and inclusive language.
- Being respectful of differing viewpoints and experiences, strengths, and personal boundaries.
- Avoiding making assumptions about others.
- Listening attentively to others and offering apologies if unintentionally causing harm.
- Being open to forgiveness if accidentally hurt by someone else.
- Accepting constructive criticism.
- Demonstrating empathy towards fellow course participants.



UniPID's Coordination Unit and the course's responsible teacher commit to promptly address and rectify any instances of unacceptable behavior. We reserve the right and responsibility to remove, edit, or reject comments or contributions that do not align with this Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct applies to all courses as part of the UniPID Virtual Studies Programme, ensuring a respectful and inclusive learning environment.

The code of Conduct is adapted from the [Contributor Covenant](https://www.contributor-covenant.org/version/2/1/code_of_conduct.html), version 2.1., available at https://www.contributor-covenant.org/version/2/1/code_of_conduct.html.

In instances of abusive, harassing, or other unacceptable behavior during the course, we ask you to contact the course's responsible teacher (s), unipid-info@hesinki.fi or the [UniPID Virtual Studies Coordinator](#).

Contact information



The Virtual Studies contact persons can help students with administrative issues relating to online courses. Contact persons can help in registering for a course, transferring credits, and answering questions that you might have about UniPID Virtual Studies in general.

You will find the contact details on the UniPID website at:

<http://www.unipid.fi/students/virtual-studies-contacts/>



If you need help and your university does not have a nominated contact person, please contact the UniPID Coordination Unit. Course-specific questions should, however, be addressed to the course teacher.

Feel free to contact the Coordination Unit/Virtual Studies coordinator with any questions. You will find the Coordination Unit's contact details at:

<https://www.unipid.fi/unipid/contacts>



You can read more about UniPID activities from our website:

<https://www.unipid.fi/>



Get in touch with UniPID



We warmly invite you to follow UniPID through our different channels, so that you can obtain first-hand information about calls, grants and fundings, job opportunities, virtual studies offer, events, and more. Follow us by clicking on the icons below:



You are also welcome to subscribe to our [mailing list](#) and monthly [newsletter](#).

Read the “[Ethical Guidelines for Responsible Academic Partnerships with the Global South](#)”, a document developed by UniPID and [TENK](#). It serves as a self-reflective journey to counterbalance inherent global inequalities that may permeate and be reproduced within academic collaborations.

Listen to “[Detangling Development](#)”, a 7-part podcast that aim to give you a better understanding and broader picture of development pathways. Our hope is that we could inspire you -as we did- to get involved in promoting sustainable development.

We hope that you enjoy studying UniPID Virtual Studies
and learning more about global development!

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