Courses in English
Course Description

Department	13 General and Interdisciplinary Studies
Course title	**Understanding complexity. The study of systems, no matter what they are made of**
Course number	
Hours per week (SWS)	2
Number of ECTS credits	2
Course objective	Seminar with face-to-face master classes, discussions and online assignments on glossaLAB elucidation platform. The lectures are intended to provide a critical perspective of the historical modes of facing problems and the ways complexity has been eluded from the scientific endeavours, as well as the approaches to face it properly. Through colloquial discussions, students' ability to understand others' perspectives and construct critically their viewpoints will be promoted.
Prerequisites	None
Recommended reading	Beer, S. (1993). Designing Freedom. House of Anansi Press. Flood, C. (1993). Dealing with complexity. Springer. glossaLAB Consortium (2025). GlossaLAB: Interdisciplinary platform for the integration of Knowledge. www.glossalab.org.
Teaching methods	Seminar in English, in which the lecturer will provide a general orientation on the subject, presenting the most important perspectives on the understanding of complexity.
Assessment methods	The student shall select a topic among the ones proposed by the lecturer to be thereafter developed and discussed within the seminar. Evaluation: through a short and open discussion of the topic and a written paper in English.
Language of instruction	English
Name of lecturer	José Maria Diaz Nafria
Email	diaz-naf@hm.edu
Link	
Course content	Throughout the 20th century, the need to break down the walls that separate the specialities in which knowledge is forged has become progressively clearer. Specialization as a privileged mode of knowledge production was the architect of great achievements of modernity; however, it has accumulated problems that are imperceptible to the specialised gaze. In the 21st century, we know that global challenges such as climate and ecological balance, peace, poverty… – even when we are just addressing local issues – require considering the many factors that participate in the solution. For this, it is necessary to study reality and to confront it in a multi-perspectivistic and synthetic manner, beyond the analytical view that has fostered the development of "linear and reductionist models", woven in the looms of specialised disciplines since the beginning of modernity. This necessity has motivated that educational and scientific policies have focused for decades on building interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary scientific-technical strategies, particularly promoted by international institutions.
Remarks	It is recommended to make a glossaLAB user account at https://www.glossalab.org, with a user name equal to the student's full name (i.e., name and family name) and including in the short biography requested at least the studies in which the student is involved.