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# Cultural Expertise Module: Guidelines for a Feasibility Study

Livia Holden, Joshua Isaac Bishay

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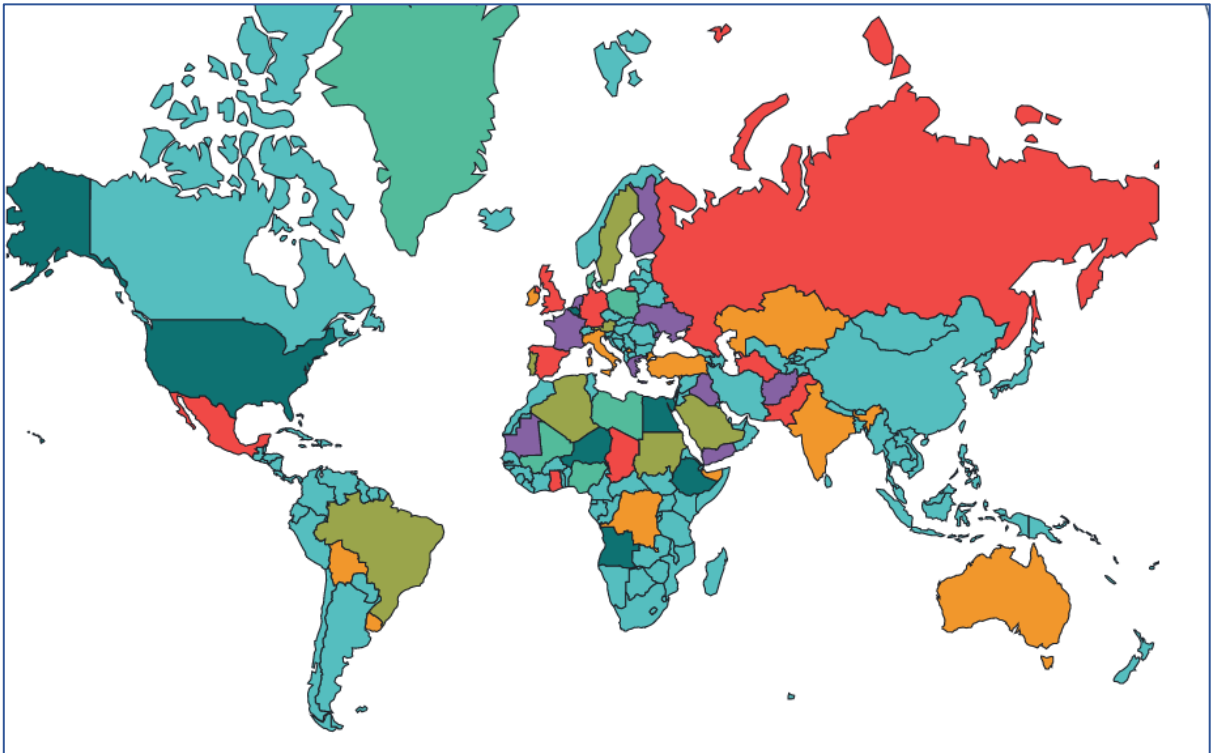
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# Cultural Expertise Module: Guidelines for a Feasibility Study

**Livia Holden (PI of EURO-EXPERT) with the assistance of Joshua Bishay (Research Assistant at EURO-EXPERT)**



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## **Executive Summary**

These guidelines suggest a feasibility study before the adoption of a module on cultural expertise to ensure:

- 1) an enabling environment.
- 2) balance between innovation and institutionalization.
- 3) conformity to international standards, and
- 4) adequacy to the local context and institutional environment.

These guidelines indicate a period of 5 years from the start of the module as ideal length of planning; the identification of the justification and rationale of a cultural expertise module; the awareness of the flow chart of required institutional approvals; a concrete plan for the hire and capacity building of the instructors; the integration of the module into a system that ensures its quality and systematic review; the identification of the students' population and the capacity to cater for their professional goals; the awareness of budget-savvy solutions; and the connection of the module at the international level.

### ***Aim and scope of these guidelines***

These guidelines are to be considered as generative and non-mandatory: Since all recommendations were formulated based on the inputs provided by EURO-EXPERT's stakeholders, this document is contingent to the circumstances of this collaborative endeavor, which may change as the program develops, and therefore will be reviewed periodically. These guidelines will help the initiators of a module on cultural expertise to assess its feasibility and propose a plan for its sustainability on the shorter and longer term for what concern location, human resources, curricula, career destinations, capacity building, quality enhancement and

monitoring, and progressive self-sustaining strategy. More specifically, these guidelines support the investigation of the feasibility of a financially independent module; explore the implications of financial independence on the process of funds allocation and sustainability of human resources on the longer term and will ask crucial questions to the stakeholders: Where to get funds for high quality module? How to motivate donors? How to avoid unrealistic expectations regarding staff hiring, institutionalization, and revenues. This proposal will furthermore propose the vision of the cultural expertise module; how it will be implemented regarding the student pool, area study, need for a clinic component, capacity to address local demands and connect them with global debates, capacity to develop critical affirmation and quality service, motivation and ambition, module v. academic teaching, teaching for professional integration, clinic as part of the curricula. In doing so, attention will also be given to address the benefits of integrating the study of culture as to particularly address the context and adapt the module that is significant locally while at the same time adopting international best practices.

### **Key Action**

The key action includes the assessment of the feasibility and sustainability of the module over five years based on the review of the needs for the module on cultural expertise with a specific emphasis on capacity building and professional destinations.

#### ***Assessment***

The assessment should be carried out to test the overall effectiveness and success of the initiators of the module at the following levels:

- 1) at a national level, in order to assess whether it responds to the needs of the targeted pool of students, especially for what concerns the marketability of the module and its desired social impact;
- 2) at an international level, to assess whether the proposed program will equip the students for the contribution to relevant problem solving and the interaction with the international professional market.

#### ***Review***

Review should be conducted with the aim to assist the initiators of the module in the procedure for approval and institutionalization of the module. The leading criterium should be to foster Higher Education's high standards, which are aware of international trends and best

academic practices worldwide, but also adequately responds to the needs and the context of the adoption of the module as a new and much needed professional field with promising professional destinations.

### **Why a module on cultural expertise?**

The feasibility study should identify the comprehensive needs which the module on cultural expertise will address. An agenda which would include capacity building, professional development, and policymaking should be developed together with a detailed definition of the justification and rationale for a cultural expertise module as a comprehensive program which pinpoints its contribution to professionalization and lists major career destinations. Hereafter the justification and rationale for the module on cultural expertise which EURO-EXPERT uses for its curriculum. Departments and organizations that would like to adopt a module on cultural expertise are encouraged to engage in an inquiry with a pool of prospective students and faculty to see whether a reformulation would better respond to local needs.

#### ***Justification***

Cultural expertise has been acknowledged as a powerful theoretical framework for supporting better access to justice and inclusive decision-making. Notwithstanding, available data show also that the systematic appointment of experts for matters in which judges lack the required cultural knowledge was hindered by factors ranging from ideological views about social diversity to concerns for the costs of cultural expertise and including the difficulty to identify appropriate experts. Therefore, cultural expertise is often entrenched by an endemic uncertainty which translates into the hesitation of experts to engage with problem solving and the difficulty to identify experts when the members of the legal professions would like to appoint one. To date there is a gap between the demand for cultural expertise and the availability of a suitable pool of adequately prepared cultural experts. The comprehensive program of this module about cultural expertise will fill this gap by equipping the students with advanced tools for capacity building as cultural experts, documentation and literature, and ethical principles that will strengthen the professional profiles of the experts. This module will furthermore provide a crucial platform for fostering a global scholarship able to grasp the diverse realities of cultural expertise to institutionalize a realistic framework that supports the appraisal of cultures for better access to justice and a more inclusive justice. In so doing, the cultural expertise module will provide an unprecedented know-how for the adoption of cultural expertise in court and out-of-court.

## ***Rationale***

This comprehensive module on cultural expertise is unique for starting with the identification hitherto of under-used infra-structures and neglected human resources already existing in many academic environments, whose use and empowerment will contribute to the increasing awareness on cultural expertise and the need to disseminate a knowledge that will foster a more inclusive justice. During the long process for the development of this module, all the involved stakeholders have learnt that there is a need to be creative and empower as much as possible under-estimated human resources. Although this has been frustrating to many extents, it has also provided an opportunity to test sustainable solutions. And it is by keeping in mind sustainability that this module that will rely initially on the existing resources of the variety of cultural experts across the Humanities and Social Sciences faculties as main component but will have a modular structure to consolidate interdisciplinarity and propose new components as soon as the host institution will be able to afford an expansion.

The cultural expertise module is designed to foster a better access to justice and a more inclusive decision-making process by transferring advanced tools for the scientific appraisal, documentation, and problem-solving approach to cultural diversity. The cultural expertise module will encourage interdisciplinary approaches that develop connections among sociology, anthropology, communication sciences, history, international relations, linguistics, literature, and psychology. The cultural expertise module will transfer advanced skills for understanding the theoretical and applied components of the major debates and controversies related with the engagement of social scientists with law and concerning the ethical delivery of services, access and enjoyment of rights, and the development of diverse societies. Both students and professionals will find the cultural expertise module as the ideal platform to learn and develop new tools, which are particularly appropriate to context in which they live and work but also contribute to the global debates on inclusion in diverse societies.

## **Institutional Approvals: Step-by-Step Procedure**

The approval of the certificate through the statutory bodies should be a priority. Without statutory approval all the activity risks to be endangered because not only will lack institutional acknowledgment (i.e. certification will not have any marketable value) but the very aim of financial sustainability will be jeopardized for the structural impossibility to allocate funds to a module that is not institutionally recognised. Furthermore, the statutory existence of the



module will enhance the marketability of the certification and, as a consequence, the credibility with regard to donors and prospective students.

### ***Flowchart of Approvals***

The steps that need to be followed systematically for institutionalizing a module should be outlined clearly; what are the expected risks and challenges, opportunities and what are the mitigation strategies? How long will it take to finalise the whole process and have the first cohort of students?

### ***Timeline***

New modules must undergo a series of submissions and approvals to the various bodies of the university. The innovation is usually designed within a department or with the collaboration of more than one department or faculty. The first step of approval is usually the Department Council. The Head of Department or, in the case of more than one department or faculty, the Heads and/or the Deans present the innovation to the Faculty/ies Council/s. The proposed module must be defended and a presentation is usually held to scrutinize its requirements, rationale and sustainability. The Council/s can ask for revision. When the program is considered to satisfy all the requisites, it is approved by the Faculty Council/s. The Dean/s then presents the module to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs at the Curricula Committee. The module is again scrutinized and amendments may be requested. The Vice Chancellor presents the module to the University Senate. Once the module is approved by the Senate, the module might be sent (if applicable) to the Ministry of Higher Education or to professional bodies for accreditation. Depending on the context, the accreditation of the module might not be a necessary step, but with the accreditation the module has more chances of long-term credibility.

### ***Risks and Challenges***

Keeping in mind that a cultural expertise module, might not receive funds for its implementation, the initiators of the module should evaluate its financial sustainability. Indicators of prospective success are the consistent demand for the module; the networking of the initiators with universities and professional organizations; attempts at developing curricula; the availability of infrastructures including also the know-how for online module, and, overall, the high level of commitment of all the partners, including a keen eagerness to start at the university level.

## **Human Resources**

The availability and capacity of human resources for the module on cultural expertise should be the object of lengthy consultations between the university administration and the initiators of the module. Ideally full data concerning the capacity of existing faculty should be available to the initiators of the module on cultural expertise. It might be assumed that cultural experts who provide occasional training to the members of the legal professions and to social scientists may be qualified for the task. However, careful thought should be directed to the qualifications and financial capacity of the host institution and the standard of quality of the teaching: 1) whether there is a sufficient number of permanent faculty with high level cultural expertise, 2) whether the host institution will be able to sustain the module after a potential first phase of sponsorship, 3) whether capacity building for faculty members/ instructors may be provided, and 4) whether the module will be supported by the administration of the host institution for its management.

## **Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee may be established including the head of the module, two faculty members, and as soon as the program is implemented, two students' representatives may also be included. The Steering Committee should meet at least three times in the academic year (and perhaps only two times later on) in order to first of all review this document and decide which committees and professionals should be hired and/or nominated for the implementation of the feasibility study and later for the adoption of the module. The tasks of the Steering Committee might be as follows:

- 1) Setting the tone for team-work. Often stakeholders do not freely cooperate. In some cases, different committees and sub-committees might feel to compete for the same funding resources. It is the purpose of the Steering Committee to make sure that all the members freely cooperate in completing the shared vision and goals.
- 2) Ensuring the legitimacy of the module. In multi stakeholders' projects direct lines of authority might not be applicable between cooperating stakeholders and the university. It is the role of the Steering Committee to ensure that the means and mechanisms are in place to ensure the legitimacy of the implementation according to the rules and regulation of the university.
- 3) Representing the stakeholders that do not directly sit on the steering committee. A steering committee can only have a limited number of members. It is the responsibility

of the Steering Committee to represent those who do not have a direct representative in the governance structure and eventually envision ways to make a place for underrepresented instances.

- 4) Ensuring equality in decision-making. The steering committee must make sure the project meets the needs of as many participants as possible. This means it must fairly weigh all requests and act impartially to do the best with available resources.
- 5) Acting as the ultimate decision-maker in handling political, legal, organizational, technical, cost, management, cultural and personnel issues. For the most difficult decisions a specific sub-committee might be nominated based on seniority and representation.
- 6) Establishing a flowchart of roles and responsibilities after the consideration of the present document.

### **Budget Committee**

The Budget Committee might be either a sub-committee of the Steering Committee or a Committee formed under the guidance and the care of the Steering Committee. It is an advisory committee consisting of representation from faculty, students, and administrators. This committee is advisory to the Steering Committee and all members shall be appointed by the Convenor/ Head of the Steering Committee based on expertise and representation. The BC might work with the Convenor/ Head of the Steering Committee to establish priority funding recommendations based on the program's strategic plan. The Budget committee will review new budget proposals. In time of budget reversions, the committee will review budget reduction as well as budget increase plans. In addition, the committee will participate in the development of the module's funding initiatives which may be submitted on a semester basis initially and then yearly to the Steering Committee. The Budget Committee will meet twice a year.

### **Quality Assurance Cell**

The Quality Assurance Cell might be headed either by a senior professor or by a professional whose services will be hired against the relevant criteria for quality assurance of higher education. The status of the Head of the QAC head might be equivalent to a Dean and the reporting authority for this position might be the Vice Chancellor of Academics. He/she will be the correspondent with the outside stakeholders and sponsors and responsible for internal Academic Audit as well. QAC will have the following tasks and responsibilities:

- 1) QAC will be responsible for promoting public confidence that the quality and standards of the module, management and overall quality of knowledge being imparted by the program is safeguarded and enhanced as the program consolidates.
- 2) QAC will be responsible for the review of quality standards by auditing academic standards and the quality of teaching, learning and management of the program.
- 3) QAC will be responsible for the review of academic affiliations/collaborations with other programs/institutions in terms of effective management of standards and quality of programs.
- 4) QAC will be responsible for defining clear and explicit standards as points of reference to the reviews to be carried out.
- 5) QAC will be responsible to develop qualifications framework by setting out the attributes and abilities that can be expected from cultural experts.
- 6) QAC will be responsible to develop program specifications along the phases of implementation, consolidation, and expansion of the program. These are standard set of information clarifying what knowledge, understanding, skills and other attributes a student will have developed on successfully completing the module.
- 7) QAC will be responsible to develop quality assurance processes and methods of evaluation to affirm that the quality of provision and the standard of awards are being maintained and to foster curriculum, subject and staff development, together with research and other scholarly activities.
- 8) QAC will be responsible to ensure that the quality assurance procedures are designed to fit in with the arrangements in place nationally for maintaining and improving the quality of Higher Education and Continuous Professional Development.
- 9) QAC staff will get the capacity building training on the subject of quality in higher learning and will be responsible to implement and disseminate that acquired knowledge into learning environment of the program.

### **Advisory board**

The Advisory Board should represent the primary constituent group which have a stake in the adoption and the success of the cultural expertise module. Primary constituents may be students, faculty, alumni (after the program will be delivered once), library committee, sponsors, potential employers, and international faculty specialized in cultural expertise and/or with administrative experience in the development and implementation of new academic and

professional development programs. The Advisory Board may meet once in a semester. The tasks of the Advisory Board may be as follows:

- 1) Provide advice to the Steering Committee regarding all areas relating to its mission and strategic direction with a primary focus on areas related to curriculum, research and service, and serve as a liaison between the Steering Committee and the constituent groups which its members represent.
- 2) Provide advice to the Steering Committee regarding those administrative areas that bear directly on the ability of the capacity to pursue its mission, most notably, funding and technology.
- 3) Advocate for the module on cultural expertise at national and international fora, exploring for opportunity of exposure and sponsorship, and informally assist in marketing the program.

#### **External assessor/s**

Consideration might also be put into appointing an external assessor or a committee of external assessors, they should consider an individual/individuals with broad experience and repute in the field of cultural expertise. The external assessor may be selected from a pool of academics specialised with the same or cognate subject area who are currently, or have recently been, employed in a recognised higher education institution (ii) professionals with recent experience of the relevant profession/industry/public service who are able to focus on the relevance of a proposal to the specific professional field of cultural expertise and on employability issues.

The role of the external assessor is to assist the Steering Committee by:

- 1) Providing an independent academic and/or professional perspective of the proposal(s) under consideration.
- 2) Making appropriate comparisons between the proposed module on cultural expertise and similar programs, either at their own institution or at other institutions, *i.e.*, where they may be serving as an external examiner.
- 3) Providing subject expertise and knowledge of best academic practice, academic debate about the curriculum, its contemporary nature and its relevance to the future role of the students.

## **Situational Analysis on Cultural Expertise**

This section outlines the steps for the situation analyses on cultural expertise and the current offer at the university level which might lead to a professional certification: the initiators of the module should investigate how can a module on cultural expertise might be adopted and implemented through best practices for cost effectiveness, functionality, and coordination.

### ***Current Situation***

The idea of a module on cultural expertise generates from the increasing awareness that a systematic understanding of the cultural contexts of facts and peoples is crucial to the successful understanding and resolution of litigation and conflicts. Efforts have been deployed within the EURO-EXPERT project funded by the ERC, and several activities have been carried out that have helped to scope, the feasibility, the priorities, and the format of a curriculum on cultural expertise. Notwithstanding, before adopting a module on cultural expertise the current situation should be assessed to overview:

- 1) the local scholarship on cultural expertise to integrate it in the module program;
- 2) the local network of experts for inclusion in the module program;
- 3) the specific demand at the local level on the types of cases and the types of cultural expertise required.

The new program in cultural expertise will address the identified gaps by focusing on an inter-disciplinary and integrated vision on cultural expertise related with the local demand, articulate from the acknowledgement of the local cultural expertise, and connecting with global ethical principles that will equip the students with all the modern skills for cultural expertise. By focusing on context-appropriate teaching and transferable skills the module will be in measure to produce highly skilled individuals able to provide cultural expertise abiding by the best deontological and ethical principles.

### ***Lesson-learnt***

The adoption of the module on cultural expertise should foresee a phase of incubation which would allow useful exercise of trial and error and develop as series of lesson learnt paradigms. Current paradigms include the combination of four global best practices: 1) cultural expertise as theoretical framework cross-cutting all the social sciences; 2) independence of the role of the experts; 3) budget-savvy solutions; 4) response to market needs.

## **Cultural expertise as theoretical framework cross cutting all the social sciences**

Anthropology has identified culture as central to the life of social groups but also as potential instigator of discrimination and stereotypes. Culture as a concept, refers to ideas, social practices, and ways of life, including customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time. Anthropologists have defined culture as symbolic structures,<sup>1</sup> as a web of meanings and references,<sup>2</sup> that help to explain the practices of everyday life but have also pointed to the danger that culture may eventually substitute the concept of race,<sup>3</sup> and may be identified as the culture of the majority and eventually become a source of discrimination.<sup>4</sup> UNESCO defines culture as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs.<sup>5</sup>

The relationship between law and culture has attracted the attention of social scientists since the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> It centres on the question of the boundaries of law and what is and can be included under the notions of state law and non-state law. Social scientists – although having been involved with law, lawmaking, policymaking and their implementation – have not always recognised the value of culture per se.<sup>7</sup>

Cultural expertise is the special knowledge deployed by the experts of laws and cultures for assisting decision-making authorities in the assessment of evidence with information on the socio-legal backgrounds of facts and persons involved. Cultural experts must be independent and afford a position of critical affirmation which translates into the possibility to counter the position of the institutions and to affirm the priority of the voice of the beneficiaries of cultural expertise.<sup>8</sup>

Cultural expertise is proposed as an umbrella concept for all the procedurally sound, ethically aware and knowledge-based instruments that support the settlement of conflict and

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<sup>1</sup> Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (Basic Books 1963).

<sup>2</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (Basic Books 1973).

<sup>3</sup> Unni Wikan, 'Culture: A New Concept of Race' (1999) 7 *Social Anthropology* 57.

<sup>4</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction* (Routledge & Kegan Paul 1984).

<sup>5</sup> UNESCO Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001).

<sup>6</sup> Livia Holden, 'Cultural Expertise and Law: An Historical Overview' (2020) 38 *Law and History Review* 29, 30.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, 45

<sup>8</sup> Livia Holden, *Cultural Expertise and Litigation* (Routledge 2011).

the claim of rights in court and out-of-court. Cultural expertise as a concept, stresses on a strengthened ethics commitment of cultural experts who must be neutral, meaning that experts must not advocate explicitly or implicitly for a specific legal outcome, yet secure a position of critical affirmation that recognise the primacy of the voice of the beneficiaries of cultural expertise.

### **Budget-savvy solutions**

The review of the budget for a sustainable module on cultural expertise should include a survey of the existing budgeted and established facilities based on the rules and regulation as well as established practices of the university and a projection of expenditures on five years. Several visits to prospective facilities may be needed to generate a plan of sustainability based on past experience, which should be integrated with the comparison of the establishment of similar programs in neighboring institutions and countries. The scrutiny of the budget should take into account the nature of the cultural expertise module as a composite and modular program: therefore, cost effective practices for faculty hiring and workload allocation both for sustainability on the shorter and longer term. At the same time attention should be directed to ensure the standard quality and fair working conditions with a plan for faculty professional development at the start of the program which should be monitored and potentially improved over the first five years.

### **Response to market needs**

The cultural expertise module should specifically detect the field of its marketability in the very broad area of conflict resolution, professional development, and policy making, but also in various private sectors among the civil society organisations. The module on cultural expertise could be envisioned as a part-time program that prioritises self-sustainability and with the passage of time, after full consolidation, it might target a larger cohort of students and might be delivered on a full-time basis. It might be expected that the first cohort of students might be partially drawn from the experts that are already practicing and may be interested in an academic title that attests to their professionalism. Consultation with these potential students has shown their expectation that the module on cultural expertise will help with their advancement in career both as consolidation of their professional role as experts and as a set of new knowledge and skills that are particularly competitive both in the public and private sectors.



## **Career Destinations**

A module on cultural expertise will open new career opportunities both in the public and the private sectors including also organizations working with religious, linguistics, and ethnic minorities and larger institutional setups and for-profit enterprises in need of cultural expertise for conflict resolution. Certified cultural experts will be primarily appointed as experts for in-court litigation and out-of-court conflict resolution, but will also find placements in NGOs, international welfare organisations, education centers, housing societies, public and private health services, development, policy making, diversity and inclusion related legislation, policy making implementation, and diversity and inclusion monitoring. The certification module may also equip some existing expert with the necessary skills to continue with their higher education and serve as permanent position holders for the delivery of the cultural expertise module to prospective experts.

## **Vision, Mission, and Objectives of the Module on Cultural Expertise**

This section outlines the basic components of the module on cultural expertise that we identified as likely requirements for institutional approval as described in the step-by-step approval procedure. However, depending on the feasibility study, these components may be further elaborated to respond to local demands.

### ***Vision***

Preparing responsible individuals who will professionally integrate positions of experts in court and out-of-court litigation and will make the best use of knowledge for social inclusion and social justice.

### ***Mission***

The cultural expertise module includes advanced theoretical and applied components that will allow certified experts to be appointed in the public and private sectors linked with justice, governance, administration, responsible management, civic engagement and advocacy organizations, youth intervention programs as well as pursuing in the field of education. The module on cultural expertise could also be envisioned as a gateway to teaching and capacity building for experts at universities and organisations that will adopt this module on cultural expertise.

The cultural expertise module is an interdisciplinary program that brings together experts and scholarship on cultural expertise from across the social sciences. The module on

cultural expertise is committed towards a socially responsible academia that fosters inclusion through widespread access to knowledge and its production, and social service for a diverse and inclusive society. Thanks to an integrated approach to the understanding of the social and cultural constructions of ethnicity, race, identity, and cultural belonging the very structure of the module on cultural expertise reflects its mission for a higher education informed by both ethical and intellectual values of social justice and social inclusion in diverse societies. With a faculty contribution from the most conventional disciplines as well as the inclusion of experienced experts who may be interested in teaching, the program encourages collegiality and innovation while providing a solid foundation in cultural expertise. In addition, thanks to its strong institutional linkages the cultural expertise module provides opportunities for civic engagement through internships, national and international scholarly exchanges, and a diverse array of co-curricular activities at the university.

### ***Objectives***

A student who successfully completes the module in cultural expertise will demonstrate competence and skills as follows:

- 1) scrutiny on how culture informs the social and biological experience of life in all societies;
- 2) understanding of structural inequalities and ways to support cultural diversity in conflict resolution;
- 3) social empathy, self-questioning, understanding of diverse social environments;
- 4) ethical and deontological positioning as cultural expert;
- 5) appraisal of the variety of fields and subfields in which cultural expertise is relevant;
- 6) familiarity with the array of instruments that fall under the umbrella concept of cultural expertise;
- 7) responsible service as cultural expert;
- 8) advanced written and oral communication for problem solving;
- 9) familiarity with a representative cases studies including cultural expertise.

### **Goals and Skills**

**Goal # 1:** Instill in the students an awareness of the overall theoretical framework of cultural expertise and the ethical positioning of cultural experts. Provide students with a solid grounding

in the core concepts, theoretical perspectives, and bodies of knowledge used and produced by the module on cultural expertise.

**Skills # 1:** Students will demonstrate the ability to summarize, analyze, critique, and compare the key concepts, bodies of knowledge, and perspectives used by the module on cultural expertise.

**Skills # 2:** Students will demonstrate their ability to apply the key concepts, methodologies, and perspectives to real world issues, both historical and contemporary.

**Goal # 2:** Familiarize students with the ethics of cultural expertise and the instruments used by social scientists acting as experts in conflict resolution.

**Objective # 1:** Students will be exposed to a variety of cultural expertise and procedural references through case studies covering a broad geographical and temporal span.

**Objective # 2:** Students will demonstrate their grasp of the basic ethics of cultural expertise and procedural references by participating in clinics where they will play the role of experts individually and in groups.

**Goal # 3:** Train students to apply the theoretical framework of cultural expertise with an emphasis on select sub-fields of specialization.

**Skills # 3:** Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the application of cultural expertise to specific aspects of social life and specific fields or sub-fields of law.

**Skills # 4:** Students will design and undertake theme-based research projects, whereby they learn to choose the expertise tools based on the latter's relevance to the relevant social field or theme.

**Goal # 4:** Equip students with the ability to engage with and reflect on cultural expertise in a critical manner, develop their own arguments systematically, and experiment with expert report.

**Skills # 5:** Students will demonstrate the ability to identify a variety of styles of expertise while critically engaging with the facts of the cases.

**Skills # 6:** Students will be trained-through interaction with the trainers and their peers-to develop their expertise writing skills, with an emphasis on argumentation, self-reflection, ethics, and accuracy.

## **Strengthen Relationships between the module on Cultural Expertise and other University Institutions and Professional Bodies**

In order to strengthen the status and role of the cultural expertise module the initiators of the programme may consider to adopt a composite strategy including: 1) institutional consolidation; 2) awareness on the interdisciplinary nature of cultural expertise; 3) facilitation of partner associations; 4) national and international exchanges.

### ***Institutional Consolidation***

The statutory approval of the module on cultural expertise will provide the faculty with a defensible role within the university or the organization, and the students with a marketable knowledge. The cultural expertise module has been already designed keeping in mind the needs of the market, but care should be taken into facilitating the professional integration of the students through professional networking.

Being the program self-sustaining and potentially constituting a source of extra income for the faculty, it will provide a model of sustainable innovation that other universities may want to replicate.

### ***Facilitation of Partner-Associations***

Partner associations that have contributed to the establishment of the cultural expertise module may be facilitated with merit-based quotas for students' admission and for conducting activities revolving around cultural expertise. In this way a mutual network of support and cooperation will foster productivity and sustainability.

A non-exhaustive list of partner association may be developed and disseminated among the network.

## **International Connections between the module on cultural expertise and other similar Programmes at an International Level**

Although budgetary constraints may not leave much room for funded international exchanges, the stakeholders are aware of the importance to explore funds for such exchanges. These guidelines indicate the importance of establishing and sustaining a broad platform of exchange for nurturing a scholarship that is in measure to produce much needed knowledge on cultural expertise. The concomitant target is to produce a replicable but also original teaching module, i.e. one that will not merely reproduce our curriculum but will be able to grasp cultural

expertise contextually and providing context-appropriate solutions. Whilst dialogue, comparison, and experimentation should be nurtured with national and international exchanges these should also foster the development of a local scholarship able to understand the local and talk globally.

The core cultural expertise faculty may be sponsored for visits to similar centers in neighboring institutions and countries and to combine it with a visiting scheme of international faculty within a mentorship framework. Moreover, the exploration of similar centers in neighboring countries could reveal stimulating for sharing information and knowledge on similar issues and solutions.

### **Further reading**

Holden, Livia (ed.) [\*Cultural Expertise: An Emergent Concept and Evolving Practices\*](#). Printed Edition of the Special Issue Published in *Laws*, 2020.

- The special issue offers descriptions of judicial practices involving cultural experts and surveys of the most frequent fields of expert witness that are related to culture. It asks who the experts are, and outlines their links with local communities and with the courts and with state power and politics; how cultural expert evidence has been received by judges; how cultural expertise has developed across the sister disciplines of history and psychiatry. Finally, it asks whether academic truth and legal truth are commensurable across time and space, in order to argue for closer cross-disciplinary cooperation between socio-legal experts and the legal profession and greater transparency in the practice of cultural expertise.

Holden, Livia (ed.) [\*Cultural Expertise and the Legal Professions\*](#). Special issue in *NAVEIN REET: Nordic Journal of Law and Social Research*, No. 11, 2021.

- The special issue offers a selected sample of first-hand experiences about the use and usefulness of cultural expertise by a pool of legal professionals and expert witnesses in various jurisdictions ranging from immigration and asylum to Indigenous rights and including family law, international human rights and criminal law.

Holden, Livia. [\*'L'expertise culturelle'\*](#). *Les Cahiers de la justice*, 2021.

- Intercultural skills have emerged as crucial for the resolution of disputes in increasingly diverse societies, to protect disadvantaged social groups and guarantee substantial access to justice. This French-language article examines the conceptualisation of cultural expertise in socio-legal sciences, looks at the use of cultural expertise in the thirteen European countries where we have carried out research, and offers a preliminary glimpse at the results on cultural expertise in Europe, with a section relating specifically to France.

Holden, Livia (ed.) *Cultural Expertise, Law, and Rights: A Comprehensive Guide*. Routledge, 2022.

- This edited textbook is intended for social sciences students, members of the legal profession and social workers who engage or plan to engage with cultural expertise in dispute resolution and the development of cultural arguments for the protection of human rights. It proposes an overview of theoretical and practical skills useful in acknowledging, implementing, and advancing cultural expert knowledge.

List of EURO-EXPERT publications: <https://culturalexpertise.net/#publications> and <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/CULTURALEXPERTISE>

### **Other resources**

[EURO-EXPERT 6 milestones of cultural expertise](#)

[EURO-EXPERT in-court and out-of-court maps](#)

[CULTEXP](#): the first cross-jurisdictional and multilingual database on cultural expertise

[K-EXP](#): online register of experts and assessment of impact of expert report

EURO-EXPERT podcasts:



EURO-EXPERT in social media:



EURO-EXPERT mailing list:

