

# GD105-15 Environmental Principles of Global Sustainable Development

21/22

**Department**

Global Sustainable Development

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 1

**Module leader**

Alastair Smith

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

60% coursework, 40% exam

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

This module allows students to investigate a range of perspectives on Sustainable Development from the perspective of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary Environmental Studies.

[Module web page](#)

### Module aims

It aims to equip students with the capacity to engage in academically grounded and critical discussion of the world's most pressing environmental issues, as well as associated policy responses at a range of geographical scales. Furthermore, it aims to establish skills for the creation and the persuasive presentation of environmental policy to key decision makers.

### Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

1. Introduction: The (Continued) Failure of 'Western' Sustainable Development (Goals): The

## Realities of Planetary Boundaries

2. Constructing Knowledge of the Environment: Philosophy of Appropriate Belief and Evidence
3. Introduction to Ecological Principles and Processes
4. Ecology and Biodiversity for Sustainable Development
5. Stratospheric Ozone Depletion: International Best Practice for Global Change?
6. Elementary Sustainability: Biogeochemical Flows and Intergenerational Justice
7. The Sustainability Trump Card? Climate Change and Ocean Acidification
8. "Water, water everywhere... [concentrated and reserved for the global elite]"
9. Land-System Change: Loss of the natural world and its implications
10. Novelties of Sustainable Development? Chemical pollution & atmospheric aerosol loading

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Explain the main reasons for concern about the health of our planet today, along with the causes, extent, relation to human activities, and impacts of anthropogenic activities over time
- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of scientific knowledge in the consideration of environmental sustainability in the way they research, analyse and present knowledge
- Critically appraise discourses of environmental decline and sustainability from an interdisciplinary perspective
- Demonstrate an understanding of key scientific/ academic concepts, frameworks and theories used in relation to environmental sustainability
- Critically evaluate governance opportunities for greater global environmental sustainability
- Undertake academically rigorous research into environmental problems to produce policy and practice relevant proposals
- Persuade environmental decision makers about the merits of evidence based policy and practice proposals in written and oral mediums

## Indicative reading list

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

## Research element

Healey & Jenkins (2009) propose that Research-led-teaching design should consider four discrete opportunities. This module has been designed to include all four of these opportunities:

1. Research-led learning, where the module syllabus is developed from current research in relevant fields, being based on contemporary and/or seminal, peer reviewed and other high quality research literature. As such, all knowledge for student engagement will be consciously and specifically chosen for its merits in reference to broader academic understanding.
2. Research-tutored learning, where students engage actively in discussing high quality, contemporary and seminal research literature.
3. Research-orientated learning, where students are actively taught methodological

understanding and skills for the independent creation of new knowledge. The focuses on scientific methods, providing foundational introductions to ontological and epistemological reflections on inter- and transdisciplinary research, including natural science methodologies. Practical skills of rigorous research, the nature and value of peer review and the rigorous application of scholarly transparency are emphasised.

4. Research-based learning, where students use developing methodological skills to create original knowledge of their own. Students produce innovative, evidence-based, governance recommendations, based on current published knowledge.

## **Interdisciplinary**

This module allows students to investigate a range of perspectives on Sustainable Development from the perspective of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary Environmental Studies.

## **Subject specific skills**

Ability to:

critically assess and analyse real-world, pressing environmental sustainability issues;  
apply established frameworks and methodologies for analysing the impact(s) of a behaviour or process;  
work together to create new knowledge; employ leadership for sustainable development by challenging assumptions and negotiating alternatives to unsustainable current practices;  
develop rigorously researched alternative environmental governance;  
advocate for new governance approaches in the written and oral medium

## **Transferable skills**

Planning and organising  
Independent and rigorous research and analysis  
Responding to real world issues  
Issue identification and proposing responses  
Producing persuasive mixed media documents, specifically Policy Briefings  
Persuasive oral communication skills, through group discussion and policy pitch presentation

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## **Study**

### **Study time**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Required</b>
Lectures	10 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Seminars	10 sessions of 1 hour 30 minutes (10%)
Practical classes	1 session of 2 hours (1%)
Total	150 hours

<b>Type</b>	<b>Required</b>
Private study	60 hours (40%)
Assessment	63 hours (42%)
Total	150 hours

### **Private study description**

Reading and preparation for workshops and assessments

### **Costs**

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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### **Assessment**

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

### **Assessment group D2**

	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Study time</b>
Policy Briefing Policy Briefing (2000 words)	40%	31 hours
Policy Pitch Presentation Oral pitch of the Policy Briefing	20%	2 hours
Online Examination 1.5 hr examination	40%	30 hours
~Platforms - AEP		

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- Online examination: No Answerbook required

### **Feedback on assessment**

Feedback on formative and summative assessment will be provided via tabula; individual face-to-face feedback is available during office hours.

[Past exam papers for GD105](#)

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# Availability

## Post-requisite modules

If you pass this module, you can take:

- GD216-15 Good Governance and Sustainable Development
- GD315-15 Multilingualism and Sustainable Development

## Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UIPA-L1L8 Undergraduate Economic Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-XL38 Undergraduate Education Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-L8A1 Undergraduate Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-L8N1 Undergraduate Global Sustainable Development and Business
- Year 1 of UIPA-R4L8 Undergraduate Hispanic Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-V1L8 Undergraduate History and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-C1L8 Undergraduate Life Sciences and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-V5L8 Undergraduate Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-L2L8 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-C8L8 Undergraduate Psychology and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-L3L8 Undergraduate Sociology and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UIPA-W4L8 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies and Global Sustainable Development