

FP036-30 Understanding Society

22/23

Department

Warwick Foundation Studies

Level

Foundation

Module leader

Sam Grierson

Credit value

30

Module duration

25 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

FP036-30 Understanding Society

Module aims

The module aims to introduce students to the family of disciplines that constitute the social sciences. By providing students in the first instance with a social science 'toolkit' to use to understand society and the world around us, the module should equip students to evaluate a variety of contemporary social issues and events in an interdisciplinary way. In applying the tools learned to a range of topics for example food, gender, health, ethnicity and migration, students will learn the key concepts and techniques required to be a successful undergraduate student of any social science discipline. We aim to assess students in innovative and creative ways that are becoming more popular as forms of assessment at undergraduate level and introduce greater variety of assessment methods into the social science course.

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.

The module will be divided into four 'units' of varying lengths. The specific subject of units 2-4 are

to be determined by the module leader according to teachers' expertise, student interest and current affairs. An example of the current subjects being taught can be found below.

1. The Social Science 'Toolkit': Social science approaches – law, economics, sociology, politics, human geography and psychology
2. Contemporary Social Issue 1: Social science approaches to Food
3. Contemporary Social Issue 2: Social science approaches to Gender
4. Contemporary Social Issue 3: Social science approaches to Migration

Learning outcomes

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

- Identify and apply the different yet complementary approaches of social science to addressing a variety of contemporary social issues.
- Compare and contrast explanations of social phenomena deriving from different social science disciplines.
- Critically apply social insights and justify informed solutions to social science issues to a varied audience using a selection of media formats.
- Demonstrate a range of cognitive and practical skills including teamwork, communication and presentation skills, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, and research skills (including information retrieval, analysis and interpretation), within the discipline of social science.

Indicative reading list

Unit 1:

Boyle, M (2015) Human Geography: A concise introduction, Chichester: John Wiley and Sons
Gillespie, A (2019) Foundations of Economics (5th Edn) Oxford: OUP
Gross, R (2015) Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behaviour (7th Edn) London: Hodder
Haralambos, M and Holborn, M (2013) Sociology: Themes and Perspectives (8th Edn) London: Collins
Vaughan, G 2011, Social Psychology, Pearson Education UK, Old Tappan. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central.

Unit 2:

Klein, J and Watson, J. L (Eds) (2016) The Handbook of Food and Anthropology, London: Bloomsbury Academic
Wilk, R (Ed) (2006) Fast Food/Slow Food: The cultural economy of the global food system, Lanham MD: AltaMira Press
Food, Culture and Society: An international journal of multidisciplinary research, Taylor and Francis

Unit 3:

Barker, M-J and Scheele, J (2016) Queer: A Graphic History, London: Icon Books
Hill Collins, P, (2005) Black sexual politics: African Americans, gender, and the new racism, Oxon: Routledge
Kimmel, M (2016) The Gendered Society (6th Edn) Oxford: OUP

Ryle, R (2020) Questioning Gender: A sociological exploration (4th Edn) London: Sage
Wood, W and Ridgeway, C. L (2010) 'Gender: An interdisciplinary perspective' in Social Psychology Quarterly 73(4) pp.334-339
Gender & Society, SAGE Journals

Unit 4:

Evans Braziel, J (2007) Diaspora: An Introduction, Oxford: Blackwell

Platt, L 2019, Understanding Inequalities : Stratification and Difference, Polity Press, Newark.
Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central.

The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford (<https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/>)

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Interdisciplinary

Students are encouraged to use a range of social science disciplines to analyse and evaluate the world around them. Students are encouraged to see how disciplines connect, their commonalities and where they diverge. They are then challenged to present innovative solutions through the lens of multiple perspectives and apply these to real world issues.

International

Students are encouraged to take a global perspective on the issues covered and to bring in their own experiences and perspectives.

Subject specific skills

To develop students' use of analysis to interpret and critique existing social science disciplines and their various perspectives through a wide range of communication methods, including debates, blogs/forums, film making and posters.

Transferable skills

Critical thinking, presentation, report writing, problem solving, research skills and the use of contemporary communication media.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	25 sessions of 1 hour (12%)
Seminars	75 sessions of 1 hour (38%)
Private study	100 hours (50%)
Total	200 hours

Private study description

Weekly reading and topic associated tasks including formative assessments.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time
1000 word individual blog post Using Moodle blogs to critically consider a contemporary social science topic and engage with other students' work.	20%	10 hours
5 minute film project with design and planning Film project that explores a complex contemporary social science interdisciplinary issue. The students will design, plan and execute the film in a style of their choice. Marks will be assessed through both the film and complementary planning and overview document submitted.	40%	25 hours
Social science toolkit infographic A critical comparative review of two social science disciplines.	10%	5 hours
Case Study 2000 word Based on already taught material. Students respond to a question set against a scenario, to address a contemporary social science issue in an interdisciplinary manner. They will critically consider the question and present evidence from a range of social science disciplines to form their answer.	30%	20 hours

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback provided on all formative and summative written assignments, followed up with verbal one to one feedback (at least one verbal feedback session compulsory). Written feedback provided via Tabula.

Opportunities for peer assessment and feedback provided regularly on formative work.

Verbal feedback provided as routine throughout teaching sessions and via email/Teams.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of FIOE Warwick International Foundation Programme