

GD105-15 Environmental Principles of Global Sustainable Development

23/24

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

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

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	10 sessions of 1 hour (11%)
Seminars	10 sessions of 1 hour 30 minutes (17%)
Practical classes	1 session of 2 hours (2%)
Total	87 hours

Type	Required
Private study	60 hours (69%)
Total	87 hours

Private study description

Reading and preparation for workshops and assessments

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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 D3

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

- 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](#)

Availability

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
- UIPA-V5L8 Undergraduate Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
 - Year 1 of V5L8 Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
 - Year 1 of V5L8 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