GD205-30 Security, Sovereignty and Sustainability in the Global Food System

23/24

Department
> Global Sustainable Development

Level
> Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader
> Alastair Smith

Credit value
> 30

Module duration
> 20 weeks

Assessment
> 100% coursework

Study location
> University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

The module draws on Warwick's world leading research – especially those involved in the university's Global Research Priority on Food – to deliver subject and analytical knowledge, as well as research and communication skills, to equip students with a multi-disciplinary toolkit for positive participation in the creation of more sustainable food systems.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

The module aims to examine the relationship between Food and Sustainability using theories and methods from the sciences, social sciences and humanities.

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 is structured into two distinct sections, which map onto the two main teaching terms. Part 1 (Autumn Term) explores key issues connected to global food systems and sustainability. Part 2 (Spring Term) is focused more on issues relating to food sovereignty and food justice.

Part 1: Food Systems & Sustainability (Autumn Term - Indicative)
Week(s)

1. Introduction: The Food Systems Approach and Foundational Issues
2. Food Regimes and Global Commodities
3. Food Production as Modified Ecosystems
4. Food Production: Industrial and Small Farmer Sustainability
5. Food Supply and Governance: Sustainability in Corporate and Alternative Approaches
6. Environmental Impacts of Food Supply
7. Crop Production and Threats
8. University of Warwick in the Food System
9. Financialisation: Food Prices and Crisis
10. Visual Campaign Presentations

Part 2: Food Security & Sovereignty (Spring Term - Indicative)

Week(s)

1. Introduction: Security and Sovereignty
2. A genealogy of food security
3. The Right to Food
4. Food poverty at the household level
5. Group Presentations
6. Food growing and performing the land
7. The cultural significance of food
8. Sociology of food
9. The customs, rituals and cultural meanings of eating
10. Conclusion

Learning outcomes

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

- Apply a 'Food Systems' approach to the identification, research and analysis of broadly conceived sustainability issues, emerging in food production, processing and consumption.
- Evaluate the contrasting technical and governance responses proposed for issues generate by global food needs
- Apply a critical understanding of key concepts, particularly food security, sovereignty and sustainability in analysis of food systems
- Where relevant, reflect on and evaluate personal and collective food consumption choices in relation to sustainable development concerns

Indicative reading list

Albritton, R. (2009) Let Them Eat Junk: How capitalism Creates Hunger and Obesity. London: Pluto Press.

Alkon, A.H. & Agyeman, J. (eds) (2011) Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class and Sustainability. Cambridge Mass: MIT Press.

Atkins, P & Bowler, I. (2001) Food in Society: economy, culture and geography. London: Arnold.

Carolan, M. (2013) Reclaiming Food Security. Abingdon: Earthscan from Routledge.

Dowler, E & Jones Finer, C. (eds) (2003) The Welfare of Food: rights and responsibilities in a changing world. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. also issued as special issue of Social Policy and Administration, (2002) 36, 6

Germov, J. & Williams, L. (eds) (2008) 3rd edition A Sociology of Food and Nutrition: The Social Appetite. Victoria, Australia: Oxford University Press.

Lang, T., Barling, D. & Caraher, M. (2009) Food Policy: integrating health, environment and society. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Maurer, D. & Sobal, J. (eds.) (1995) Eating Agendas: Food and Nutrition as Social Problems. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Patel, R. (2007) Stuffed and Starved: Markets, Power and the Hidden Battle for the World Food System. London: Portobello Books.

Tansey, G. & Worsley, T. (1995) The Food System: A Guide. London: Earthscan.

[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 three 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, as well as working progress academic work.

3. Research-based learning, where students use developing methodological skills to create original knowledge of their own. Students produce innovative, evidence-based, suggestions for a Visual Campaign and develop the skills necessary for the creation of a Research Paper.

4. Research-orientated, in which students have the opportunity to create their own original knowledge through the production of a research paper.

Interdisciplinary

This is an optonal core module on the Global Sustainable Development course which adopts an interdisciplinary approach spanning the arts, humanities, social and natural sciences fields in order to engage with the major global challenges facing contemporary society, explore these 'big problems,' from a variety of perspectives and consider a range of possible solutions. Specifically,

this module examines the relationship between Food and different interpretations of Sustainability, using theories and methods from the sciences, social sciences and humanities.

International

This is an optional core module on the Global Sustainable Development course which offers a unique trans-disciplinary and international learning experience that allows students to achieve breadth and depth of knowledge. Specifically, this module enables students to evaluate contrasting responses proposed by societies around the globe to problems created by a need to feed the planet.

Subject specific skills

Following successful completion of this module, students will be able to:

Employ visual mapping of food systems for analytical purposes in creating a mixed media campaign

Critically review existing literature to scope current knowledge, identify and evaluate subject specific concepts and conceptual frameworks for future research and analysis, and identify knowledge gaps to generate rigorous research questions for further investigation (as required by Year 3 Dissertation Module)

Research and present a transdisciplinary research paper, making active choices about content and presentation efficacy (as required by Year 3 Dissertation Module).

Critically assess and analyse sustainability issues that need to be addressed, including real-life examples
use and apply established frameworks and methodologies for analysing the impact(s) of a behaviour or process
generate and evaluate different models of sustainable development to assess their likely impact
actively implement or contribute to changes that promote sustainable development within the scope of own learning experience

Engage with real-life problems relevant to sustainable development
use historical knowledge and an understanding of the consequences of past actions to envision how futures may be shaped

Identify the importance of empowering individuals and organisations to work together to create new knowledge
employ leadership for sustainable development by challenging assumptions and negotiating alternatives to unsustainable current practices

Identify the opportunities to support and develop a progressive and resilient culture that encourages citizens, professions and institutions to put learning into practice

Transferable skills

As per the University of Warwick framework for Core Skills, students taking this module will develop in the following areas:

Sustainability: understand and explain consequences of the Climate Emergency, specifically food systems at a variety of scales

Professionalism: Planning and organising of self study, and through group assessment in the Visual Campaign and personal work on the Research Paper.

Information Literacy: Independent and rigorous research and analysis, as part of weekly learning and assessment tasks.

Problem Solving: Issue identification and proposing responses to evidenced food related concerns.
Communication: Designing mixed media Visual Campaign for change and advocacy, as well as creating a Research Paper.

Ethical Values: Reflect on personal behaviours viz sustainability, specifically regarding their own food consumption.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	19 sessions of 1 hour (11%)
Seminars	20 sessions of 2 hours (22%)
Private study	121 hours (67%)
Total	180 hours

Private study description

Students will prepare for workshops and use this time to create assessment submissions.

Students will be expected to undertake no more than a maximum of 11 hours notional working time within a 1 week study period. This will ensure that they can manage this module alongside any others taking the same approach to module design.

Students will be provided with a specific account of the weekly workload expectation to support their own time management. This model will be revised on an ongoing basis, according to student and staff experience and feedback.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

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

Assessment group A2

	Weighting	Study time
Visual campaign group project	25%	30 hours

Visual Campaign Group Project. Students work in groups to identify a sustainability concern using a food systems approach, and develop a Visual Campaign as an intervention to address the specific nature of the issue as they diagnose it.

	Weighting	Study time
Group presentation	25%	25 hours
Research Paper	50%	65 hours

Students undertake a literature review to define a research question and respond through original research.

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided via tabula; individual feedback sessions will be offered to each student; moodle will be used where appropriate.

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 2 of UIPA-R4L8 Undergraduate Hispanic Studies and Global Sustainable Development

This module is Core optional for:

- Year 2 of UIPA-L1L8 Undergraduate Economic Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 2 of UIPA-XL38 Undergraduate Education Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 2 of UIPA-L8A1 Undergraduate Global Sustainable Development
- Year 2 of UIPA-L8N1 Undergraduate Global Sustainable Development and Business
- Year 2 of UIPA-R4L8 Undergraduate Hispanic Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 2 of UIPA-V1L8 Undergraduate History and Global Sustainable Development
- UIPA-C1L8 Undergraduate Life Sciences and Global Sustainable Development
    - Year 2 of C1L8 Life Sciences and Global Sustainable Development
    - Year 2 of C1LA Life Sciences and Global Sustainable Development: Biological Sciences
    - Year 2 of C1LB Life Sciences and Global Sustainable Development: Ecology
- UIPA-V5L8 Undergraduate Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development

- Year 2 of V5L8 Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
  - Year 2 of V5L8 Philosophy and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 2 of UIPA-L2L8 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 2 of UIPA-C8L8 Undergraduate Psychology and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 2 of UIPA-L3L8 Undergraduate Sociology and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 2 of UIPA-W4L8 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies and Global Sustainable Development