

FP036-30 Understanding Society

24/25

Department

Warwick Foundation Studies

Level

Foundation

Module leader

Lucy Ryland

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:

- Describe how different social science disciplines contribute in different ways to an understanding of contemporary society.
- Explain the methods used by different social science disciplines to gain an understanding of contemporary society and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches.
- Apply complementary and contrasting social science perspectives to a range of contemporary social issues.
- Analyse and evaluate social science perspectives, theories, and evidence in order to build arguments, draw conclusions, and present solutions to contemporary social problems.

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

Unit 2:

Klein, J and Watson, J. L (Eds) (2016) *The Handbook of Food and Anthropology*, London: Bloomsbury Academic

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

Kimmel, M (2016) *The Gendered Society* (6th Edn) Oxford: OUP

Marchbank, J and Leatherby, G (2007) *Introduction to Gender: Social Science Perspectives*, Harlow: Pearson

Ryle, R (2020) *Questioning Gender: A sociological exploration* (4th Edn) London: Sage
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.
The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford (<https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/>)

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 (8%)
Seminars	75 sessions of 1 hour (25%)
Private study	140 hours (47%)
Assessment	60 hours (20%)
Total	300 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 A4

	Weighting	Study time
Individual blog post	20%	12 hours
Students will write an informative and interesting blog post on a food-related social science topic, in which they are expected to outline and apply the perspectives of at least two social science disciplines on the topic.		
Film project with design and planning	40%	24 hours
Students will plan and create a five minute film project that explores a complex contemporary social science issue related to gender, requiring the application and evaluation of multiple social science perspectives. Students can design and execute the film in a style of their choice, and must also produce a complementary planning and overview document.		
Case Study	40%	24 hours
Students will respond to a question related to a specified contemporary case of international migration. Students must critically consider the question and present evidence and perspectives from a range of social science disciplines to inform their answer. Students will have 24 hours over four university working days to complete their case study.		

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