

# GD912-20 Popular Movements and Sustainable Change

**24/25**

**Department**

Global Sustainable Development

**Level**

Taught Postgraduate Level

**Module leader**

Edward Loveman

**Credit value**

20

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

---

## Description

### Introductory description

Despite some limited success, we are not on track to meet the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Across the world, there is an increased emphasis on citizen participation in doing 'something' about challenges that the goals aim at. From climate change to food sovereignty and anti-racism, popular movements advocating social change have arisen. Concomitantly, a new generation of popular movements and activists are emerging. From the School Strike for Climate to #MeToo and Black Lives Matter, the message is clear that previous efforts have not led to sustained and sustainable change. On this module you will consider the questions this has provoked about the nature of social action today: what leads to action, disenfranchisement, hope or anger; how this intersects with social structures, ideologies, identities, models of citizenship, or structures of power; and how socio-political energy can be catalysed, co-opted or diluted.

### Module aims

On this module we will explore different social challenges and the forms of action that we can use in movements to address them. In doing so we will learn about the lineage of different social movements, mobilisations and sociological paradigms, as well as the ways in which these have been studied more broadly. We will consider what can be learnt from earlier movements, why

people seek change, what would a more sustainable world look like, and is it even possible? The aim is to harness your own capabilities and interests to, in your own ways, help movements succeed in dealing with the magnitude and complexity of today's global challenges.

## **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.

Through a series of weekly seminars and workshops the module will begin with an introduction and overview of theories of social change and popular movements. Drawing on case studies, you will be asked to consider key questions such as why and when do popular movements emerge, why do people participate? Theories and examples of key popular movements will be situated in their historical context and critically evaluated. In the following weeks you will critically interrogate non-state actors such as civil society, the third sector, nongovernmental organisations and transnational civil society before moving on to look at the variety of organisational forms, coalitions and transnational organisations. Theories of leadership, movement professionals and organic intellectuals will then be evaluated in relation to conflicting views of social change 'from above' and 'from below'. The later part of the module will draw together the key themes of the contestation of and within movements and how movements frame and understand grievances and persuade others to participate, before critically reflecting on fundamental divisions over strategies and tactics. Finally, you will assess a much under researched area of how to sustain collective and individual participation in popular movements.

## **Learning outcomes**

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

- Distinguish major concepts applied to the understanding of popular movements and explain their relevance and limitations with concrete examples
- Critically analyse the theories of leadership in relation to the strategy, tactics and ideas of popular movements
- An ability to formulate and articulate strategies and ideas for social change, orally, in seminars and in written form in assessed work
- Develop interpersonal skills and the ability to engage in cooperative group learning through seminar discussions

## **Indicative reading list**

Arbatli, E. and Rosenberg, D. (2017) *Non-Western social movements and participatory democracy*. Cham: Springer.

Baaz, M., Lilja, M. and S. Vinthagen (2018) *Researching resistance and social change. A critical approach to theory and practice*. London: Rowman and Littlefield International.

Barker, C. et al (2013) *Marxism and social movements*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Barker, C. et al eds. (2001) *Leadership in Social Movements*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Bayat, A. (2017) *Revolution without revolutionaries: making sense of the Arab Spring*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Bosi, L et al (2016) *The consequences of social movements*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Castells, M. (2015) *Networks of Outrage and Hope. Social Movements in the Internet Age*. London: Polity Press.

Choudry, A. (2015) *Learning Activism: The Intellectual Life of Contemporary Social Movements*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Dangl, B. *The five hundred year rebellion, Indigenous movements and the decolonization of history in Bolivia*. Chico: AK Press.

Davis, A (2016) *Freedom is a constant struggle*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Della Porta (2015) *Social Movements in time of austerity: bringing capitalism back into protest analysis*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Eschle, C. and Maignascha, E. (2011) *Making feminist sense of the global justice social movement*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Goodwin, J. and Jasper J. (2014) *The social movements reader*. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.

Hall, S. (2005) *Peace and freedom: the civil rights and antiwar movements of the 1960s*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Hamed Hosseini, S.A. (2020) *The Routledge Handbook of Transformative Global Studies*. London: Rotledge.

Interface: A journal for and about social movements

Kapoor, D. and A. Choudry (2010) *Learning from the Ground Up. Global Perspectives on Social Movements and Knowledge Production*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Motta, S. and A.G. Nielsen (eds) (2011) *Social Movements in the Global South*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mueller, L. (2018) *Political protest in contemporary Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Munck, R. (2020), *Social movements in Latin America: mapping the mosaic*. Newcastle: Agenda Publishing.

Ngwane, T et al, (2017) *Urban revolt; state power and the rise of people's movements in the global south*. Chicago: Haymarket Books.

Oyelere, M. (2014) *The impact of political action on labour movement strength: Trade union revitalisation in Africa*. Abingdon: Palgrave MacMillan.

Shiva, V. (ed.) (2018) *Food sovereignty, food security. Women in the vanguard of the fights against GMOs and corporate agriculture*. Berkeley: North Atlantic Books.

Taylor, K. 2016) *From # BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*. Chicago. Haymarket Books.

Shah, G. (2004) *Social Movements in India*. New Delhi: Sage.

Zelege, C. E. (2019) *Ethiopia in Theory, Revolution and Knowledge Production, 1964-2016*, Chicago. Haymarket Books.

## 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 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. This will include the most contemporary literature regarding global COVID-19 pandemic, as well as leading work from other contexts.

2. Research-tutored learning, where students engage actively in discussing high quality, contemporary and seminal research literature. Contact time will use seminal and contemporary research papers for a basis of discussion and other learning activities.
3. Research-Orientated, where student develop research and inquiry skills. In line with the recommendations of scholarship, research skills - for Critical Discourse analysis research and analysis - are embedded into the subject content teaching of the module.

## **Interdisciplinary**

Positive global transformations are widely recognised to require transdisciplinary approaches and this approach is adopted in the design and delivery of learning opportunities. Leadership is broadly conceived and the module draws on knowledge from Philosophy, Development Studies, Sociology, Political-Ecology etc. Authentic assessment will require students to demonstrate transdisciplinary aptitude, through the production of a Personal Methodology of change that draws on a range of disciplinary knowledge sets. Transdisciplinary aptitude will be explicitly embedded in the marking rubric, as adapted from the standard university scale and descriptors.

## **International**

This is a module on the Master's in Global Sustainable Development which offers learning experiences that draw on a range of different national and international and subjects. Literature will be chosen according to the principles of decolonising the curriculum, with space consciously created for the expression of usually more marginal discourses. For example, the module will include literature authored by stakeholders in the Global South, as well as covering these geographies and local narratives about them, as a point of subject.

## **Subject specific skills**

The students will develop a transdisciplinary aptitude for reflecting on the nature of appropriate, positive intellectual leadership for transformation in social movements, including an ability to engage effectively with varied vocabularies and the knowledge sets they represent, as well as how to combine these authentically and innovatively.

Students will also have the opportunity to develop skills for personal research, note taking, synthesis of information, the communication and discussion of information, necessary for change agency.

## **Transferable skills**

Enhancing and deepening written and oral communication skills. The development of which will be linked to understanding and critically interrogating complex ideas and to apply these to practical situations. This will be aided through extending research and analytical skills, including the ability to interpret and challenge numerical data and and complex argument and the ability to use

evidence and logic to construct strong arguments.  
All of which will require the ability to plan, organise and undertake sophisticated research.

---

## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	10 sessions of 1 hour (5%)
Practical classes	10 sessions of 1 hour (5%)
Private study	80 hours (40%)
Assessment	100 hours (50%)
Total	200 hours

### Private study description

Students are expected to prepare for classes and seminars. They will also be expected to work cooperatively to prepare seminar presentations on key themes from the course such as the ideas, strategies and tactics of specific campaigns and events linked to social movements, and gender and leadership in social movements.

## 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
Critical Review	50%	50 hours
A critical review of the tactics of a popular movement through reflection on learning from the module workshops.		
Presentation	30%	30 hours
A presentation for a non-academic audience exploring movements as catalysts of change in relation to one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Identify and problematise the key challenges and persuade an audience to act.		
Portfolio	20%	20 hours

## **Weighting**

## **Study time**

Students will compile a written portfolio of responses to key questions regarding their experience of local sustainability campaigns

## **Feedback on assessment**

Each assessment will both receive written feedback on Tabula in line with departmental policy.

---

## **Availability**

### **Courses**

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 1 of TIPA-LA9Z Postgraduate Taught Community, Engagement and Belonging (MASc)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 1 of TGDA-L801 Postgraduate Taught Global Sustainable Development