<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Module descriptor</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Module code:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Module title:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>FHEQ level:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Module Leader:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other contributors:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Number of credits:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Number of ECTS credits:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Module availability:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Overall student workload:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Date of production/revision of the descriptor:</strong></td>
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### Assessment pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units of assessment</th>
<th>Weighting towards module mark (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written assignment</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-reading assignment</td>
<td>25%</td>
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**Alternative assessment:** for failed submissions, repeat of assignment using different subject selected from supplied list

**Qualifying condition(s):**
A weighted aggregated mark of 50% is required to pass the module.

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**Pre-requisite/co-requisites**

None

**Module overview**

This module provides an introduction to the core concepts, policy challenges and ethical issues in Sustainable Development. It is aimed at a wide range of students and provides a grounding in sustainability ideas and issues that is self-contained but also prepares students for getting the best from the complementary module on Sustainable Development Applications.
Module aims

This course introduces the foundational concepts of Sustainable Development. The module will build on the introductory sessions already successfully offered in the current SD week. The aim is to provide a rich understanding of the history, politics, ethics and scientific foundations of SD that will inspire interest in deeper study. We also aim to equip students to discuss and research complex conceptual and practical challenges in the integration of SD ideas in organisations, policies and projects.

Learning outcomes

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

- Understand the basic principles of sustainable development (K, C)
- Make sense of current arguments and debates on sustainable development (K, C)
- Understand the fundamental ethical and political issues raised by sustainable development challenges and concepts (K, C, P)
- Understand and discuss major criticisms levelled at the idea of SD (K, C, P)
- Engage in debates about the definition, analysis and prospects for realisation of sustainable development (C, K, T, P)

Key: C-Cognitive/Analytical; K-Subject Knowledge; T-Transferable Skills; P- Professional/Practical skills

Module content

Indicative content includes:

- the nature of development
- history of sustainable development ideas
- the Brundtland Report
- the Sustainability Equation
- the Planetary Boundaries framework for SD
- values and the ethical dimensions of sustainable development
- social dimensions of SD and environmentalism
- sustainable consumption challenges
- SD and biodiversity
- contested issues in defining and decision-making for SD
- case studies in ethical and political controversies raised by SD
- political economy of SD
- critiques of SD
- analysis of key texts and discussion of films offering case studies
Methods of teaching/learning

The learning and teaching strategy is designed to:

The module is designed to provide an introduction to sustainable development, including an awareness of fundamental issues arising in the evolution of the concept, such as its scientific and ethical dimensions, plus the political economy of SD, critiques of sustainability and international and national policies. The module is geared towards theory, history of SD and fundamental challenges that need to be understood and faced in applications of SD in practice. Guest speakers from the public, private and 'Third' sectors have been engaged to talk about some of the basic ethical, political and conceptual issues that they have dealt with in making sustainability a reality in their own organisations and projects.

The learning and teaching methods include:
- SurreyLearn-based pre-readings
- Lectures from module team and various guest lecturers from the public, private and civil society sectors.
- Films and follow-up discussions
- Discussion groups based on particular challenges and dilemmas
- Post course study linked to main assessment

35 hours contact time in the module week (Monday to Friday)
Pre-module work = 30 hours
Post-module assignment = 85 hours

Assessment strategy

The assessment strategy is designed to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate analytical, critical thinking and writing skills and subject knowledge and interest. The assignments offer opportunities to write in different formats and lengths.

The pre- and post-module assignments are designed to build upon the topics covered in the module and give the students a chance to explore them in a context that they are especially interested in.

Thus, the summative assessment for this module consists of:
- Pre-module individual critical review in blog format (maximum 1000 words) on an topic arising from pre-module readings (25%)
- Post-module individual written assignment (maximum 3000 words) from a supplied list of essay topics (75%)

Formative assessment

Feedback from the pre-module assignment will help students with their post-module assignment. Sessions at the start and end of the module will cover – in part – the module assignment. Students will submit their work via Surrey Learn.

Feedback
Detailed feedback is given in the marking process, including suggestions on improvements in grammar, style and structure.
Reading list

Essential reading


Recommended reading


Helen Kopnina and Eleanor Shoreman-Ouimet (eds), *Sustainability: key issues*, Earthscan/Routledge, Abingdon, 2015


Background reading
None