



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2022-2023

Exchange

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam offers many English-taught courses in a variety of subjects, ranging from arts & culture and social sciences, neurosciences and computer science, to economics and business administration.

The International Office is responsible for course approval and course registration for exchange students. For details about course registration, requirements, credits, semesters and so on, please [visit the exchange programmes webpages](#).

The Human Dimension of Sustainable Development: From Ideal to Reality

Course Code	S_HDSD
Credits	6.00
Period	P5
Course Level	300
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
Course Coordinator	dr. I.C. Vrabiescu
Examiner	dr. I.C. Vrabiescu
Teaching Staff	dr. J.K. Maiyo, dr. M. Matelski, dr. I.C. Vrabiescu, M.R. Luitjens
Teaching method(s)	Study Group, Partial Exam, Lecture

Course Objective

This course centres around a number of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), set by the United Nations (UN) in 2015. The UN's ambition is that the SDGs will be achieved by 2030. Being at the halfway point, it is time to start taking stock of how these sustainable development goals have translated into development policy and practice across the globe. The SDGs include a diverse set of goals, ranging from "no poverty" (goal 1) to "reduced inequalities" (goal 10) and from "sustainable cities and communities" (goal 11) to "peace, justice and strong institutions" (goal 16). In this course, we aim to uncover the governance, organizational and grassroots dynamics of sustainable development pertaining to these four SDGs.

Course Content

This course revolves around the human dimension of sustainable development from an interdisciplinary perspective in order to highlight power configurations and different actors' responsibilities and accountability. Building on the framework of the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015), the SDGs were decided upon by the UN in 2015 to identify universal goals that address the economic, political, social, cultural and environmental challenges facing our world. We will address three levels of action: top-down (governance), meso-level (organization) and bottom-up (grassroots) that create and implement sustainable development.

The aim of this course is to help students understand the interface between the development priorities of national governments and international organizations, as well as bottom-up development initiatives of local communities, NGO's and private sector actors. Individuals, communities, governments and businesses approach sustainable development with different interests and expectations. Students will learn about these perspectives and analyse how and when they diverge and converge. Students will demonstrate their theoretical insights in a written exam and will apply several disciplinary perspectives in an interdisciplinary group assignment.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

The course follows the format of interactive lectures, mid-term exam, workgroups and a final assignment in the form of video creation and a reflection report.

The course aims to adopt a case-based learning approach for some of the SDGs, merging theory and practice, such as focusing on the decolonization of development and involvement of racialized groups or

indigenous peoples for SDG 10 (reduced inequality) as well as the emergence of strong (political, social) communities for SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities). The set of lectures will help students understand the human dimension of sustainable development from an interdisciplinary perspective, and it will encourage students to use their creativity in contributing to a sustainable future. In small group projects, students will work on addressing one of the discussed SDGs and show the interrelated disciplinary approaches.

Method of Assessment

Individual exam (mid-term exam)
Group assignment

Literature

Selection of articles and book chapters (available via VU library homepage).

Additional Information Target Audience

2nd year bachelor students Faculty of Social Sciences
Exchange students

Custom Course Registration

It is only possible to take one of the courses "AI and Society," "The Human Dimension of Sustainable Development" or "Improving Planetary Health".

In this course, you cannot enroll for one of the study groups yourself, but you will be assigned by the course coordinator. The allocation will be announced via Canvas. Please note: You do have to register for the course and the other course components on VU.nl.