



Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam - 2024-2025

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](#).

Governance of Global Sustainability

Course Code	AB_1229
Credits	6
Period	P2
Course Level	300
Language Of Tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Science
Course Coordinator	dr. J. Dell'Angelo
Examiner	dr. J. Dell'Angelo
Teaching Staff	dr. J. Dell'Angelo
Teaching method(s)	Lecture, Seminar

Course Objective

The main objective of this course is for you to develop an understanding of the different modes and multidimensional challenges of sustainability governance and the critical ways in which it is possible to think about decisions that have impact on the environment. Collectively as a class, and individually, you will develop knowledge in the politics of the environment by engaging with core scientific literature and discussing and tackling real world socio-environmental problems. By the end of the course, you will have gained an understanding of the complexity of the political dimension of the environment and the decisions that society deals with that impact sustainability. You will develop theoretical knowledge that will give you the ability to think critically and question mainstream societal decisions, politics and policies about the environment.

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Understand and describe different critical principles and theories about multilevel governance of sustainability and the politics and policies of Sustainable Development
- Apply different theories to think critically about and different sustainability problems, by analyzing them from diverse and diverging perspectives
- Characterize different modes of sustainability governance and identify their strengths and limitations in relation to different types of socio-environmental problems
- Formulate your own analysis and suggestions regarding societal decisions that impact local and global sustainable development

Course Content

Humanity deals with complex socio-environmental problems that impact the wellbeing of current and future generations. Nature and ecosystems globally are threatened and under suffering increasing deterioration. It is important to develop critical knowledge, understanding and perspectives about socio-environmental problems and potential solutions.

Governance plays a key role in dealing with global sustainability issues. In this course we will study alternative theories about the sustainability challenges that will allow you to think of socio-environmental problems critically and we will learn about the different modes of governance that play a role in addressing issues of sustainability and sustainable development. We will deal with the political dimension of the environment and learn about how different theoretical perspective challenge the dominant paradigms. We will discuss and debate key sustainable development and socio-environmental problems such as the FEW nexus, climate change, water challenges, environmental conflicts etc.

Additional Information Teaching Methods

We will mix: frontal lectures, seminars, discussions and group activities. The structure of the course consists of a mix of lectures and group discussions, activities and assignments. The group activities in class will include simulations and team assignments. Readings will be assigned for each session and it will be essential to be well prepared in order to successfully participate and address key questions that we will tackle. Participation: Due to the complexity of the issues addressed and the concentrated length of the course I highly recommend attending every session. Of course, if you will have serious family or health reasons you can count on my help for making up for your absence and catching up. The amount of the material that we will go through and the very short time to prepare between the end of classes and the final exam will not allow you to be successful in this course if you

procrastinate reading and if you don't participate. I will lead group discussions on key questions related to the readings. To make the most of our time together, I will call on students directly to address specific question during the group discussion. I will apply the "Socratic method" and challenge you to defend your opinions. (This is a method that might seem a little intimidating but is particularly useful to develop the capacity to debate publicly and defend your opinions – in line with the learning goals of the course.) Preparation advice: I can't stress enough the importance to hit the ground and start running from day one, actively participate and not fall behind. A critical aspect is that you make an effort to study the assigned readings before class. If you don't you will see pages adding up quickly and you not be as able to engage productively in discussions and have less information and tools to understand the lectures. I look forward to work with you, so please also take advantage of office hours.

Method of Assessment

Assessment is based on exam, presentations and written group assignments

Literature

For each week, a selection of articles will be made to be studied in advance.

Additional Information

We strongly recommend that students interested in this course take all courses of the Minor Sustainability: Global Challenges Interdisciplinary Solutions

Recommended background knowledge

Interest in sustainability issues and social and environmental justice and politics