

This document provides detailed information on the module named below. It will be updated as necessary when modifications to the module are approved. Modules are allocated to a Subject Network not a programme, and may be accessed by students studying on different programmes.

1 SUMMARY MODULE INFORMATION

a Module title

Environmental and Social Issues in Mountain Areas.

b SITS module code

UF711925

c UHI Subject Network

Science, Environment and Rural Resource Management

d Exam board

MSc Managing Sustainable Mountain/Rural Development.

e SCQF level

11

f SCOTCAT credit points

15

g Module leader and contact details (email, phone)

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h Brief description of module

An introductory module which covers key issues relating to mountain areas. The first six sessions address ways in which mountain areas are defined, the physical landscape, biological systems, mountain economies and mountain populations. The second six sessions address initiatives and policies affecting mountain areas, patterns of land ownership and use, the definition of priorities for sustainable development, and climate change and its implications.

i Pre-requisites or co-requisites

N/A.

j Primary mode(s) of delivery and support

Online, including CD for lectures

Support for students is provided via e-mail and, when necessary, telephone.

k Assessment

Two assignments (40% and 45% each) + 15% for contributing to the discussion board.

To pass the module overall, you must get at least 50% in each of the assignments and the discussion board, as well as an overall weighted mark of at least 50%.

l Suitable for access via Learning Centres?

N/A.

2 MODULE DESCRIPTOR

a Aims

This module is a foundation for all aspects of the MSc, designed to ensure broad understanding of the various elements of the environmental and societal systems of mountain areas, especially in Europe. The integrated understanding of these elements and their interactions is an essential basis for all aspects of sustainable mountain development, which relates to not only mountain areas, but also regions downstream.

This module enables students to develop their knowledge and understanding of European mountain environmental and societal systems, and therefore may also be applicable as a stand-alone module in the UHI Postgraduate prospectus.

b Intended learning outcomes

On completion of the module, the student should be able to:

1. understand the fundamental elements and processes of the environmental and societal systems of European mountain areas;
2. identify and evaluate key interactions between these processes, and drivers of change as a basis for fostering sustainable development in these areas;
3. analyse and discuss relevant case studies which illustrate these processes and drivers of change in the context of sustainable mountain development.

c Indicative content

- defining mountain areas: topographic, ecological/land cover, cultural, and integrated approaches;
- biogeophysical processes and their interactions: geology, climate, soils, ecosystems;
- Mountain economies, their components, and changes over time: agriculture, forests, mining, water, biodiversity and landscape conservation, hunting, tourism;
- patterns of land ownership and use;
- changes in demography: driving forces and trends;
- the interactions of policies at different scales as driving forces of change in mountain areas;
- potential impacts of climate change.

d Mode(s) of delivery and support for teaching and learning

Face-to-face	0 hours or	... %
Video-conference	0 hours or	... %
Supported online learning	40 hours or	... %
Self-directed learning	110 hours	... %
Total activity	150	100%

There are two main modes of delivery. For 9 of the 12 weeks, students view 20-30 minute lectures prepared using Microsoft Producer (basically, PowerPoint + a video of the lecturer). They then use resources on Blackboard, with various embedded web links and digitized documents to start them on their weekly reading and thinking. Throughout the module, students are encouraged to use on-line literature; a special session on this is included in the induction.

e Assessment

Summative assessment: weekly tasks, usually to find a relevant paper or website and comment on it; and also to comment on others' postings (15% of total mark: 5% for participation, 5% for content, 5% for interaction with other students). A weekly critique of all posting is provided by the module tutor.

Formative assessment:

- assignment 1, 2000 words: 40% of the total mark
- assignment 2, 2000 words: 45% of the total mark.
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Each assignment is designed to evaluate all three learning outcomes. Feedback is provided after marking. The standard marking grid is used.

f Key learning resources

Reading List

Essential:

European Environment Agency, 2010, Europe's ecological backbone: recognising the true value of our mountains ISBN: 978-92-9213-108-1 (Available to download or order for free at <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/europes-ecological-backbone>)

Nordregio, 2004, Mountain Areas in Europe: Analysis of mountain areas in EU Member States, acceding and other European countries. Nordregio, Stockholm. ISBN 91-89332-35-0. (provided to students in digital form).

Parish, R., 2002, *Mountain Environments*. Prentice Hall, Harlow. ISBN 0-582-41911-5.

Recommended:

Gerrard, A.J., 1990, *Mountain Environments*. Belhaven, London. ISBN 1-85293-049-7.

Messerli, B. and Ives, J.D., (Eds.) 1997, *Mountains of the World: A Global Priority*. Parthenon: London. ISBN 1-85070-781-2.

Background:

Beniston, M., 2000, *Environmental Change in Mountains and Uplands*. Arnold, London. ISBN 0-340-70636-8.

Mountain Research and Development (quarterly journal). ISSN 0276-4741 (available through UHI subscription).

Background Web Resources:

Mountain Forum website www.mtnforum.org

Mountain Partnership www.mountainpartnership.org

g Additional background information

N/A.

h Specialist resource requirements

Internet access: Learning materials and discussion boards are available on the UHI Virtual Learning Environment. Internet access is essential throughout the module.