FACULTY
OF SOCIAL
SCIENCES

COURSE SYLLABUS

Reg. No.
U 2023/624

Date 2023-06-14

SGR020F Environment and Sustainable Development in the MENA Region, 7.5 credits, third cycle

General information

The course is offered as a freestanding, third-cycle course at the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The language of instruction is English.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course, the student shall:

Knowledge and understanding

- have a basic understanding of sustainability-related issues concerning water and land resource management, politics, and socioeconomics of the MENA region
- be able to use concepts, e.g., water and land management, within the sustainability research field

Competence and skills

- be able to identify, analyze, and reflect upon basic water and land resource problems that affect the environment.
- be able to understand the nexus between water, land, food, and energy in the region.
- be able to identify and understand the general and specific use of water and land resources at present and in the long term in

view of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including economic, social, political, and environmental dimensions.

Judgment and approach

- analyze and understand how political and economic situations in the region affect environmental sustainability.
- analyze relevant region's development in connection to water and land resource management using key concepts and theories acquired during the course.
- formulate research questions regarding achieving SDGs as affected by water and land resource utilization and relationships to poverty and conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Course content

The course covers the environmental impact of natural resource management and its political, social, and economic dimensions. The main objective is to understand land and water management and their environmental impacts in the MENA through a holistic and interdisciplinary perspective. The SDGs in the context of water, land, food, and energy nexus in the MENA region are discussed.

Four important areas for MENA sustainable development are touched upon in the course. The first involves the management of water and land in light of the increasing population and a changing climate. For this, the actors that influence water and land management are analyzed. The second introduces the student to techniques for spatial planning and management of transboundary waters and agricultural lands. In this part, different traditional and improved water management systems are also introduced. In the third part, conflict or cooperation is looked at from the SDGs and management perspective and their influence on the environment and societies within the major river basins, forests, and agricultural lands. The last part covers the political aspects and threats to natural resource use in the MENA region.

Through group/individualized coursework, the student should be able to critically examine the environment and sustainable development connected to problems related to natural resources and socio-political and economic situations. The student will acquire knowledge to evaluate water and land resource management alternatives in view of SDGs and environmental effects. The course work will also prepare the students for applying this knowledge in a variety of different professional contexts, such as academia, policymakers, trainers, or practitioners, in government agencies, private firms, or NGOs.

Course design

The teaching consists of lectures, seminars, and individual/group supervision. The course is organized around a series of lectures covering key issues in environmental sustainability concerning water, land use, management, politics, economy, and related issues. Lectures are followed by seminars or group work where the different environmental sustainability problems are treated in depth. The student is encouraged to individually or collectively search for, analyze, and present syntheses of literature. The course concludes with seminars in which the student's individual and group work is discussed.

Assessment

The course examination is based on two group essays (20%+20%) and a final individual paper (60%).

Grades

Marking scale: Pass or Fail

The grade for a non-passing result is Fail. To pass, the student's performance is assessed with reference to the learning outcomes of the course. The student must also have participated in all compulsory components.

At the start of the course, students are informed about the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus.

Entry requirements and selection

Applicants must be admitted to a doctoral programme in any discipline. If the number of applicants doesn’t exceed the number of available places for the course, M.Sc. students from the Faculty of Social Sciences, Lund University, will be given priority.