Academic Summer School
SOAS University of London

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals
Course Handbook

Mode of Attendance: Full-time
Duration: 3 weeks
Course hours: 150 hours, of which 50 will be contact hours.
SOAS Accredited: This course is worth 15 UK credits

Programme Description

Since the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, many countries in the world have undertaken parallel efforts to tackle global challenges – from poverty to inequality, from climate change to health, from sustainable cities and communities to peace and justice. The SDGs set ambitious albeit necessary objectives to be reached by 2030, which should be of interest to anyone concerned with the sustainability of production and consumption systems, equitable and inclusive development, and growth and prosperity of future generations. Yet, SDGs should play a more influential role in the policy process than they have actually obtained so far.

This course aims to provide participants with theoretical knowledge and practical tools to understand the challenges that the SDGs aim to tackle, the role that SDGs play in the policy process, and the strategies that governments can pursue to achieve them. The course will cover topics such as the design and management of stakeholder engagement, the process of strategic planning, the conduct of policy analysis, and the making of policy decisions. It will also include topics such as the role of public financial management systems and of monitoring and evaluation in the pursuit of SDGs. By the end of the course, participants would gain a better understanding of strategies for pursuing SDGs in domestic policies.

The course will draw examples and case studies from various countries and different thematic areas including poverty, inequalities, education, healthcare, environmental protection, sustainability, and peace and justice institutions.

The course is of interest to anyone who wants to better understand the concept of SDGs, why they are important and how to achieve them; to undergraduate students interested in policy-making, sustainability and development; policy-makers and policy practitioners; and private (business and non-profit) sector actors who want to contribute pursuing the SDG agenda.

Programme Schedule

Week 1: Defining the roadmap towards the SDGs

• What are the SDGs
• SDGs and the policy process
• Engagement of stakeholders
• Strategic planning

Week 2: Organising, resourcing and controlling the achievement of SDGs

• Developing administrative capacity
• Strengthening public financial management systems
• Using performance management systems
• Monitoring and evaluating policies and programmes

Week 3: Good governance and the achievement of SDGs

• The role of the private sector
• The role of innovation, science and technology
• Partnerships for sustainable development
• A global policy agenda beyond 2030

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, a student should be able to demonstrate the ability to:

• Understand what SDGs are and how they matter for public policy and management
• Explain how the pursue of SDGs affects the policy-making process
• Explain how organisational and financial resources should be aligned to the pursue of SDGs
• Explain how the attainment of SDGs can be measured, appraised and reported

Assessment

Assessment will be in the form of a 2,500 word essay (70%) and a group presentation (30%).

If you have opted to study for credit, you will be required to complete all course assessments. Should you complete the assessments with success, you will receive a transcript confirming your marks and credits. If you have not chosen to study for credit, you will be exempt from any course assignments and not receive a mark.

Course Convenor: Dr Alberto Asquer

Indicative Reading Materials


