Syllabus

The Core Curriculum

Patterns and change

The core theme provides an overview of the geographic foundation for the key global issues of our times. The purpose is to provide a broad factual and conceptual introduction to each topic and to the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular those concerning poverty reduction, gender equality, improvements in health and education and environmental sustainability. An evaluation of the progress made towards meeting these goals is also provided.

The core theme also develops knowledge of the likely causes and impacts of global climate change, a major contemporary issue of immense international significance. An understanding of this issue is the fundamental basis for the section on patterns in environmental quality and sustainability.

The emphasis in teaching the core theme should be on the concepts underlying much of the content and the consequent regional and global patterns. Attention should be given to the positive aspects of change (not only the negative ones), to the need to accept responsibility for seeking solutions to the demographic, economic and environmental issues covered, and, where appropriate, to the management strategies adopted to successfully meet the challenges posed.

It is recommended that as much of the content as possible is taught through appropriate examples and case studies, preferably chosen from a limited number of countries (between three and five) of contrasting levels of development. Although many of the ideas are reflected in differences at the local or sub-national scale, the emphasis in the core theme is on national, regional and global trends and patterns.

It is not intended for the topics to be taught sequentially because some issues cover several of the topics. The approach to teaching is not prescribed and the content can be taught with flexibility according to the interests of the teacher and needs of the students.

**Definitions**

The definitions of the terms used in studying the core theme vary from one source to another. To avoid confusion, the following definitions are given and expected of students.

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| **Term** | **Definition** |
| **Core and periphery** | The concept of a developed core surrounded by an undeveloped periphery. The concept can be applied at various scales. |
| **Ecological footprint** | The theoretical measurement of the amount of land and water a population requires to produce the resources it consumes and to absorb its waste under prevailing technology. |
| **Global climate change** | The changes in global patterns of rainfall and temperature, sea level, habitats and the incidences of droughts, floods and storms, resulting from changes in the Earth’s atmosphere, believed to be mainly caused by the enhanced greenhouse effect. |
| **GNI** | Gross national income (now used in preference to gross national product—GNP). The total value of goods and services produced within a country together with the balance of income and payments from or to other countries. |
| **Migration** | The movement of people, involving a change of residence. It can be internal or external (international) and voluntary or forced. It does not include temporary circulations such as commuting or tourism. |
| **Remittances** | Transfers of money/goods by foreign workers to their home countries. |
| **Soil degradation** | A severe reduction in the quality of soils. The term includes soil erosion, salinization and soil exhaustion (loss of fertility). |
| **Water scarcity** | Can be defined as:  . physical water scarcity, where water resource development is approaching or has exceeded unsustainable levels; it relates water availability to water demand and implies that arid areas are not necessarily water scarce  . economic water scarcity, where water is available locally but not accessible for human, institutional or financial capital reasons. |

**Details**

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| **Sub-topic** | **Development** | **Teaching hours** |
| **1. Populations in transition** | | |
| . Population change  . Responses to high and low fertility  . Movement responses—migration  . Gender and change | Explain population trends and patterns in births (Crude Birth Rate), natural increase and mortality (Crude Death Rate, infant and child mortality rates), fertility and life expectancy in contrasting regions of the world. Analyse population pyramids. Explain population momentum and its impact on population projections.  Explain dependency and ageing ratios. Examine the impacts of youthful and ageing populations. Evaluate examples of a pro-natalist policy and an anti-natalist policy.  Discuss the causes of migrations, both forced and voluntary. Evaluate internal (national) and international migrations in terms of their geographic (socio-economic, political and environmental) impacts at their origins and destinations.  Examine gender inequalities in culture, status, education, birth ratios, health, employment, empowerment, life expectancy, family size, migration, legal rights and land tenure. | 5 hours  4 hours  6 hours  4 hours |
| **2. Disparities in wealth and development** | | |
| . Measurements of regional and global disparities  . 0rigin of disparities  . Disparities and change  . Reducing disparities | Define indices of infant mortality, education, nutrition, income, marginalization and Human Development  Index (HDI). Explain the value of the indices in measuring disparities across the globe.  Explain disparities and inequities that occur within countries resulting from ethnicity, residence, parental education, income, employment (formal and informal) and land ownership.  Identify and explain the changing patterns and trends of regional and global disparities of life expectancy, education and income.  Examine the progress made in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in poverty reduction, education and health.  Discuss the different ways in which disparities can be reduced with an emphasis on trade and market access, debt relief, aid and remittances.  Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies designed to reduce disparities. | 3 hours  3 hours  5 hours  5 hours |

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| **3. Patterns in environmental quality and sustainability** | | |
| . Atmosphere and change  . Soil and change  . Water and change | Describe the functioning of the atmospheric system in terms of the energy balance between solar and longwave radiation. Explain the changes in this balance due to external forcings (changes in solar radiation, changes  in the albedo of the atmosphere and changes in the longwave radiation returned to space). Discuss the causes and environmental consequences of global climate change.  Explain the causes of soil degradation. Discuss the environmental and socio-economic consequences of this process, together with management strategies.  Identify the ways in which water is utilized at the regional scale. Examine the environmental and human factors affecting patterns and trends in physical water scarcity and economic water scarcity. Examine the factors affecting access to safe drinking water. | 4 hours  4 hours  5 hours |
| . Biodiversity and change  . Sustainability and the environment | Explain the concept and importance of biodiversity in tropical rainforests. Examine the causes and consequences of reduced biodiversity in this biome.  Define the concept of environmental sustainability. Evaluate a management strategy at a local or national scale designed to achieve environmental sustainability. | 3 hours  3 hours |
| **4. Patterns in resource consumption** | | |
| . Patterns of resource consumption  . Changing patterns of energy consumption  . Conservation strategies | Evaluate the ecological footprint as a measure of the relationship between population size and resource consumption. Identify international variations in its size. Discuss the two opposing views (neo-Malthusian and anti-Malthusian) of the relationship between population size and resource consumption.  Examine the global patterns and trends in the production and consumption of oil.  Examine the geopolitical and environmental impacts of these changes in patterns and trends. Examine the changing importance of other energy sources.  Discuss the reduction of resource consumption by conservation, waste reduction, recycling and substitution. Evaluate a strategy at a local or national scale aimed at reducing the consumption of one resource. | 4 hours  2 hours  6 hours  4 hours |

0ption E: Leisure, sport and tourism

**Leisure** is defined for the purposes of this optional theme as any freely chosen activity or experience that takes place in non-work time.

The leisure industry is a significant and rapidly expanding global economic sector. This option is designed to illustrate the pattern and diversity of leisure activities, their increasing popularity and their impact on environments, culture and economy on a range of scales from global to local. Issues and conflicts arise for planners and managers in meeting leisure demand, conserving natural resources and avoiding social conflict.

The theme focuses specifically on **tourism**, **sport** and **recreation**. Although the three terms are defined separately, they overlap and participation in them may be simultaneous. For example, a sporting activity may occur during a vacation.

**Definitions**

The definitions of the terms used in studying this theme, “Leisure, sport and tourism”, vary from one source to another. To avoid confusion, the following definitions are given and expected of students.

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| **Term** | **Definition** |
| **Carrying capacity** | The maximum number of visitors/participants that a site/event can satisfy at one time. It is customar y to distinguish between **environmental carrying capacity** (the maximum number before the local environment becomes damaged) and **perceptual carrying capacity** (the maximum number before a specific group of visitors considers the level of impact, such as noise, to be excessive). For example, young mountain bikers may be more crowd-tolerant than elderly walkers. |
| **Leisure** | Any freely chosen activity or experience that takes place in non-work time. |
| **Primary tourist/**  **recreational resources** | The pre-existing attractions for tourism or recreation (that is, those not built specifically for the purpose), including climate, scenery, wildlife, indigenous people, cultural and heritage sites. These are distinguished f rom **se condar y tourist /re creat ional resources**, which include accommodation, catering, entertainment and shopping. |
| **Recreation** | A leisure-time activity undertaken voluntarily and for enjoyment. It includes individual pursuits, organized outings and events, and non-paid (non-professional) sports. |
| **Resort** | A settlement where the primary function is tourism. This includes a hotel complex. |
| **Sport** | A physical activity involving a set of rules or customs. The activity may be competitive. |
| **Tourism** | Travel away from home for at least one night for the purpose of leisure. Note that this definition excludes day-trippers. There are many possible subdivisions of tourism. Sub-groups include:  . ecotourism—tourism focusing on the natural environment and local communities  . heritage tourism—tourism based on a historic legacy (landscape feature, historic building or event) as its major attraction  . sustainable tourism—tourism that conserves primary tourist resources and supports the livelihoods and culture of local people. |

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| **Sub-topic** | **Development** | **Teaching hours** |
| **1. Leisure** | | |
| . Definitions | Discuss the difficulties in attempting to define leisure, recreation, tourism and sport.  Discuss the influence of accessibility, changes in technology and affluence upon the growth of these activities. | 2 hours |
| **2. Leisure at the international scale: tourism** | | |
| . Changes in demand  . Changes in supply | Explain the long- and short-term trends and patterns in international tourism.  Examine the changes in location and development of different tourist activities. Explain the growth of more remote tourist destinations. | 4 hours |
| **3. Leisure at the international scale: sport** | | |
| . International participation and success  . Case study of a contemporary international sports event | Examine the social, cultural, economic and political factors affecting participation and success in two major international sports.  Analyse the geographic factors that influenced the choice of venue(s).  Examine the factors affecting the sphere of influence for participants and supporters.  Evaluate the short- and long-term geographic costs and benefits of hosting such an event at both the local and national level. | 4 hours |
| **4. Leisure at the national/regional scale: tourism** | | |
| . Case study of a national tourist industry  . Case study of ecotourism  . Tourism as a development strategy | Examine the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism.  Evaluate the strategies designed to manage and sustain the tourist industry.  Examine the importance of tourism as a development strategy for low-income countries. | 6 hours |
| **5. Leisure at the national/regional scale: sport** | | |
| . Case study of a national sports league | Explain the hierarchy of a league and the location of its teams. Examine the relationship between team location and the residence of its supporters. | 3 hours |

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| **6. Leisure at the local scale: tourism** | | |
| . Tourism management in urban areas  . Tourism management in rural areas | For **one** named city or large town:  . describe the distribution and location of primary and secondary tourist resources  . discuss the strategies designed to manage tourist demands, maximize capacity and minimize conflicts between local residents and visitors, and avoid environmental damage.  Examine the concept of carrying capacities in a rural tourist area.  Discuss strategies designed to maximize capacity and minimize conflicts between local residents and visitors, and avoid environmental damage. | 4 hours |
| **7. Leisure at the local scale: sport and recreation** | | |
| . The leisure hierarchy  . Intra-urban spatial patterns  . Urban regeneration | Explain the relationship between urban settlements and recreational and sports facilities in terms of frequency, size, range and catchment area.  Examine the distribution and location of recreational and sports facilities in urban areas and relate the patterns to accessibility, land value and the physical and  socio-economic characteristics of each urban zone (from the central business district to the rural–urban fringe).  Discuss the role of sport and recreation in regeneration strategies of urban areas. | 4 hours |
| **8. Sustainable tourism** | | |
| . Sustainable tourism | Define sustainable tourism.  Examine the extent to which it might be successfully implemented in different environments. | 3 hours |

0ption G: Urban environments

This optional theme considers cities as places of intense social interaction and as focal points of production, wealth generation and consumption. They exhibit diversity in patterns of wealth and deprivation, which can result in conflict. Transport improvements have led to rapid growth and shifts in population and economic activities, producing stresses and challenges for planners.

The theme also considers issues of sustainability where the city is regarded as a system with inputs and outputs that need to be managed to minimize environmental impacts.

This theme recognizes that cities and towns may share common characteristics and processes irrespective of the national level of economic development.

For all sections of this optional theme (unless stated otherwise), **two** case studies of cities/large urban areas must be studied in **two** countries at contrasting levels of development.

**Definitions**

The definitions of the terms used in studying this theme, “Urban environments”, vary from one source to another. To avoid confusion, the following definitions are given and expected of students.

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| **Term** | **Definition** |
| **Brownfield site** | Abandoned, derelict or under-used industrial buildings and land that may be contaminated but have potential for redevelopment. |
| **Counter-urbanization** | The movement of population away from inner urban areas to a new town, a new estate, a commuter town or a village on the edge or just beyond the city limits/rural–urban fringe. |
| **Ecological footprint** | The theoretical measurement of the amount of land and water a population requires to produce the resources it consumes and to absorb its waste under prevailing technology. |
| **Re-urbanization** | The development of ac tivities to increase residential population densities within the existing built-up area of a city. This may include the redevelopment of vacant land, the refurbishment of housing and the development of new business enterprises. |
| **Suburb** | A residential area within or just outside the boundaries of a city. |
| **Suburbanization** | The outward growth of towns and cities to engulf surrounding villages and rural areas. This may result from the out-migration of population from the inner urban area to the suburbs or from inward rural–urban movement. |
| **Sustainable urban management strategy** | An approach to urban management that seeks to maintain and improve the quality of life for current and future urban dwellers. Aspects of management may be social (housing quality, crime), economic (jobs, income) or environmental (air, water, land, resources). |
| **Urbanization** | An increasing percentage of a country’s population comes to live in towns and cities. It may involve both rural–urban migration and natural increase. |
| **Urban sprawl** | The unplanned and uncontrolled physical expansion of an urban area into the surrounding countryside. It is closely linked to the process of suburbanization. |

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| **Sub-topic** | **Development** | **Teaching hours** |
| **1. Urban populations** | | |
| . Urbanization  . Inward movement  . 0utward movement  . Natural change  . The global megacity | Define urbanization and explain the variation in global growth rates and patterns.  Explain the processes of centripetal movements (rural– urban migration, gentrification, re-urbanization/urban renewal).  Explain the processes of centrifugal movements  (suburbanization, counter-urbanization, urban sprawl).  Explain the contribution of natural change to patterns of population density within urban areas.  Explain the global increase in the number and location of megacities (population over l0 million). | 2 hours |
| **2. Urban land use** | | |
| . Residential areas  . Areas of economic activity | Explain the location of residential areas in relation to wealth, ethnicity and family status (stage in life cycle).  Examine patterns of urban poverty and deprivation (such as slums, squatter settlements, areas of low-cost housing and inner-city areas).  Examine the causes and effects of the movement of socio-economic groups since the l980s.  Explain the spatial pattern of economic activity, the zoning of urban and suburban functions and the internal structure of the central business district (CBD).  Describe the informal sector; its characteristics and location in urban areas.  Examine the causes and effects of the movement of retailing, service and manufacturing activities to new locations, including brownfield sites. | 4 hours  4 hours |
| **3. Urban stress** | | |
| . Urban microclimate  . 0ther types of environmental and social stress | Examine the effects of structures and human activity  on urban microclimates, including the urban heat island effect and air pollution.  Examine the other symptoms of urban stress including congestion, overcrowding and noise, depletion of green space, waste overburden, poor quality housing, social deprivation, crime and inequality. | 4 hours  4 hours |
| **4. The sustainable city** | | |
| . The city as a system  . Case studies  . Sustainable strategies | Describe the city as a system in terms of:  . inputs—energy, water, people, materials, products, food (urban agriculture)  . outputs—solid, atmospheric and liquid waste, noise, people.  Distinguish between a sustainable circular system where inputs are reduced and outputs are recycled and an unsustainable (open/linear) city system with uncontrolled inputs and outputs.  Referring to at least **two** city case studies, discuss the concepts of:  . sustainable city management  . the urban ecological footprint.  Evaluate **one** case study of **each** of the following.  . 0ne socially sustainable housing management strategy.  . 0ne environmentally sustainable pollution management strategy.  . 0ne strategy to control rapid city growth resulting from in-migration. | 2 hours  4 hours  6 hours |