

Syllabus

Course description

Course title	Rural and Agricultural Development
Course code	47304
Scientific sector	AGR/01
Degree	Smart Sustainable Agriculture Systems in Mountain Areas (SAM)
Semester	1st
Year	1st
Academic year	2025/26
Credits	9 (6+3)
Modular	Yes

Total lecturing hours	54 (36 + 18)
Total lab hours	--
Total exercise hours	36 (24 + 12)
Attendance	Recommended
Prerequisites	None
Course page	

Specific educational objectives	<p>The course introduces into the topic of sustainable development of mountain areas. Theoretical concepts as well as practical approaches to regional development are presented and discussed. One focus is tourism and the production and marketing of regional and local products both food and non-food. By reviewing applied economic development and related literature, the student gains an in-depth understanding of the underlying theories. By acquiring professional skills and knowledge about project management students become familiar with practical implementation tools too. The discussion of practical examples from the European alpine area and excursions to projects and organisations dealing with tourism and regional product development complements the course work. Thus, students should gain an overview of the use of rural development instruments and of mastering planning methods.</p> <p>The course follows a classical lecture format, supplemented by student project work, guest interventions and excursions. Students will have to work on a specific topic, either by themselves or in groups, and present their results to the entire course.</p> <p>The course aim is the transfer of general research-based knowledge and methods.</p>
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Module 1	Agricultural development, sustainable tourism and regional products
Lecturer	Christian Fischer, K210, phone: 0417-017170, christian.fischer@unibz.it
Scientific sector of the lecturer	AGR/01
Teaching language	English
Office hours	On appointment
Teaching assistant (if any)	
Office hours	On appointment
List of topics covered	<p>The course will cover the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction 2. Definitions and concepts of economic development 3. Agricultural transformation and integrated rural development – globally and locally 4. EU and international rural and mountain development policies, programmes and initiatives 5. Tourism fundamentals: definitions, facts and figures 6. Sustainable tourism: definitions, concepts and examples 7. Regional products and geographic indications 8. Local products, the circular economy and global value chains 9. Mountain products and island farming 10. Presentation of study projects 11. Summary and conclusions
Teaching format	Frontal lectures, discussions and project work

Module 2	Project development and management
Lecturer	Contract
Scientific sector of the lecturer	AGR/01
Teaching language	English
Office hours	See timetable
Teaching assistant (if any)	
Office hours	-
List of topics covered	<p>The course is a practical introduction to project development and management. It shows the applicability of project management in regional development as well as in tourism and food industry by focusing on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility checks and systematic creation of project ideas • Project phases, types and context (stakeholder analysis) • Project plans (scope planning, work breakdown structure, scheduling, resource planning, cost estimating) • Project realization (motivation, controlling, getting projects back on track) • Project termination and evaluation

Teaching format	Theory input is followed up by interactive exercises, discussions, practical teamwork and case study training. Systematic feedback from the teacher rounds each teaching unit off.
Learning outcomes	<p>Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display basic knowledge of underlying theories and concepts of sustainable tourism development and the production and marketing of regional/local products (Knowing and Understanding) 2. Understand economic disparities and their implications for rural development (Knowing and Understanding). 3. Identify market opportunities in sustainable tourism and regional/local product development 4. Check feasibility of projects; formulate project objectives, deliverables, exclusions, and limits (Applying). 5. Plan and implement project activities professionally (Applying). 6. Detect and evaluate social, ecological and economic opportunities and threats of rural development (Judging). 7. Assess critically project management documents and processes (Judging). 8. Assess the impact of development initiatives (Judging). 9. Plan implementation initiatives (Applying). 10. Build rural innovation partnerships to assure the success of such projects (Applying). 11. Apply methods and tools for creating rural development strategies (Applying).
Assessment	<p>The final grade of the course will be calculated as the weighted average (according to the credit points: module 1: 67%; module 2: 33%) of the final grades obtained in the two modules.</p> <p>The performance evaluation of the student consists of a written final exam (70% to 100% of the overall course mark) and potentially the results from the project work (0-30% of the overall mark).</p> <p>The written exam will last up to 180 minutes and is made up of 3-8 examination questions separately for each module. Module 2 will be an open-book exam.</p> <p>The potential group project will be assessed by a final presentation of the project results.</p>
Assessment language	English

Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks	<p>The written exam will be evaluated on the basis of the correctness, clarity of answers, the ability to summarize, evaluate and establish connections between topics and the ability to apply methods and theories.</p> <p>The study project work of all three modules will be evaluated on the basis of the content and the format of the presentation and/or the quality of the oral speech.</p>
Required readings Supplementary readings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture slides and materials • Todaro, M. and Smith, S. (2015). <i>Economic Development</i>. 12th edition. Pearson, Addison-Wesley. Boston, USA. • Fischer, C. & Gil-Alana, L. (2009): The nature of the relationship between international tourism and international trade – the case of German imports of Spanish wine. <i>Applied Economics</i>. Vol 41, No 11, 1345–1359. • Fischer, C. (2004): The influence of immigration and international tourism on the demand for imported food products. <i>Food Economics</i>. Vol 1, No 1, 21–33. • Lu, H., Batt, P. & Fischer, C. (2010): Best Practice in Relationship Management: Recommendations for Farmers, Processors and Retailers. In: Fischer, C. & Hartmann, M. (eds), <i>Agri-food Chain Relationships</i>. CAB International. Oxford. Pages 237–249. • Fischer, C. (2007): The influence of immigration and international tourism on the import demand for consumer goods – a theoretical model. In: Matias, Á., Neto, P. & Nijkamp, P. (eds), <i>Advances in Modern Tourism Research – Economic Perspectives</i>. Physica-Verlag. Heidelberg, Germany. Pages 37–49. • Rural Poverty Report 2011: International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Rome. Italy. • Moseley, M. (2003): <i>Rural Development – Principles and Practice</i>. Sage Publishing, London, UK. • Green, G. P. (2013): <i>Handbook of Rural Development</i>. Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK. • Heijman W and Schipper R. (2010) <i>Space and economics – An introduction to regional economics</i>. Wageningen Academic Publishers • PMBOK Guide (2000) <i>A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge</i>. Project Management Institute Newtown. • Richman, L. (2002) <i>Project Management Step-By-Step</i> Amacom, New York. • Wytrzens H. (2017) <i>Projektmanagement – Der erfolgreiche Einstieg</i>. 5., erweiterte Auflage. Facultas, Wien.