



**University of
Zurich** ^{UZH}

Department of Geography

GEO361 – Advanced Human Geography

Research Seminar A: Sustainable Mountain Development

Core elective module

A collaboration between the Tbilisi State University (TSU) and the University of Zürich (UZH)

Syllabus

Autumn semester 2022

Draft version, 01. 07. 2022

Time

Tuesday 10:15-13:45 (CEST/CET)

Rooms

25-H-86/92 and Zoom (*tba*)

Course management

UZH

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TSU

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Language

English

1 General description

The course's main inspiration is to introduce students to sustainable mountain development through the lens of the Alpine and Caucasus mountainous areas. Using Switzerland and Georgia as examples, the study module aims to impart broad conceptual and research-based knowledge. Regarding the thematic focus of the course, students will become acquainted with the contexts of both countries.

The core elective module provides tutorial-style teaching and discussion environments in smaller groups based on lecture themes. Lessons, seminars, and group projects are used to explore important topics in sustainable development in mountainous countries. The study module will give a general understanding of shifting discourses of mountain places and confronting current challenges, such as climate change and migration. The course will explore and discuss responses to such challenges. One focus will be laid on tourism: We will analyze its development prospects, economic linkages, and, based on recent studies, induced changes in the host society's socioeconomic structure. There will also be a discussion on the best practical examples of mountain tourism development from the European alpine areas. A second core area of the course offers insights into landscape and conservation research in mountainous areas, their foothills (such as the Prealps), and adjacent regions. It will discuss opportunities and challenges linked to protected area establishment and management and will introduce the students to contemporary approaches to nature conservation and landscape research, both in practice and theory.

Students will strengthen their thematic and theoretical knowledge by connecting them with different methods and put them into practice during a group project assignment. Additionally, they will be expected to undertake self-directed learning to deepen their understanding of the reading materials introduced during class.

2 Learning outcomes

Students who complete the course will be able to obtain scientific and practical knowledge:

- Students develop and strengthen their ability to work independently, in groups, as well as in a cross-cultural environment.
- Students develop their critical thinking and acquire in-depth knowledge of underlying concepts of theories related to sustainable (mountain) development, landscape perception, nature conservation, and tourism.
- Students are able to connect conceptual approaches with case studies in the Alpine and Caucasus regions. They gain knowledge on stakeholder partnerships in mountain development and sustainable mountain development policies, strategies, legislation, and accessible statistical resources;
- Students will be able to understand development trends and impacts of migration and tourism in mountains, as well as social, ecological, and economic opportunities and threats of sustainable development in mountainous countries;
- Students explore and acquire the knowledge of different qualitative research methods, are able to formulate adequate research questions related to the course topics, and conduct a small research project.

3 Prerequisites

This course is intended for advanced bachelor's students interested in topics of sustainable rural development, with an emphasis on the Alpine and Caucasus areas. It is desirable but not essential that students have a basic understanding of the sustainability principles and of qualitative research methods as well as of working scientifically (for more information please consult olwa.ch). The course is taught and examined entirely in English. To make the most of the studies, the students must be able to communicate fluently and accurately in spoken and written English.

4 Criteria of assessment and workload

Task	Format	Mode	Grades	Weight (%)
1 Data collection on app	Written	Individual	Passed/failed	
2a Text discussion	Written	Individual	1-6	20
2b Blog post	Written	Team	Passed/failed	
3a Research concept	Written	Team	1-6	20
3b Give peer feedback	Written/oral	Team	Passed/failed	
3c Presentation	Oral	Team	1-6	20
3d Final report	Written	Team	1-6	40
TOTAL				100

The criteria for the evaluation can be found in the attachments. The module can be repeated once.

Activity	Work load (%)
Presence in lecture/seminar	20
Literature research, reading of texts, writing text discussion	15
Collaboration with tandem team (incl. blog post)	10
Developing research design	10
Data collection and analysis	20
Preparation of presentation	5
Writing report	20
TOTAL	
	100 (5 ECTS)

Presence during the lectures (offline and online) and exercises is mandatory.

5 Guidelines

The tasks described in chapter 6 are part of the module. Most tasks will be graded. The formal criteria of scientific writing as well as the rules for inclusive writing are to be met in all assignments:

- Online Guideline for Academic Research and Writing: <http://www.olwa.ch>
- Universitätsleitung der Universität Zürich 2018: 'Geschlechtergerecht in Text und Bild', Zurich: Universität Zürich. <https://www.gleichstellung.uzh.ch/de/angebote/sprachleitfaden.html>
- University of Zurich Communications 2017: University of Zurich English Writing Guide, Zurich: University of Zurich. https://www.gleichstellung.uzh.ch/en/agl_beratung/sprachleitfaden.html
- See also checklist for papers at the Department of Geography (on OLAT).

By submitting documents on OLAT, the authorship automatically confirms that the work is the result of their own independent efforts and that all sources used have been cited correctly. Plagiarism will

lead to an automatic failure of the module, without any ECTS credited. The lecturers reserve the right to take legal or disciplinary action according to the guidelines of the university teaching commission.

- UZH Disziplinarkommission:
<https://www.disziplinarkommission.uzh.ch/de/disziplinarfehler.html>
- UZH Teaching and Educational Development, Plagiatskontrolle:
<https://www.teaching.uzh.ch/de/infrastruktur/plagiate.html>

6 Tasks

To complete the course, participants will complete three main tasks: 1) Interact with other participants and participate in data gathering on the app, 2) Text discussions and writing for different audiences, and 3) a research project (which will be the largest task).

6.1 Task 1: Data gathering with MTA - MountainApp

During the semester, participants will interact with each other using the smartphone app "MTA - MountainApp". Three times during the semester, students have to upload at least two data points, including a picture to the app (tasks 1a, 1b, 1c). All the questions linked to a new data point have to be answered. Students are expected to interact (like, comment) other students' entries, especially from the other university.

The app was specifically developed for this course and is based on a citizen science approach. MTA is used to facilitate cross-border student collaboration and learning and to introduce students to sustainable mountain development through the lens of the Alpine and Caucasus mountains. We are interested in learning more about places and landscapes people visit and experience in their everyday lives. By collecting this data, we want to better understand people's relationships to different kinds of landscapes and landscape elements. With a focus on these relationships, the project aims to analyze values and meanings attached to landscapes. We want to draw attention to contemporary challenges of mountainous regions and bring people living in these areas closer together. Fun fact: "Mta" is the Georgian term for "mountain"!

MTA - MountainApp runs on iOS and Android and you can download it from the App Store or GooglePlay.

6.2 Task 2: Reading and writing

During the semester, students will complete mandatory reading and actively participate in text discussions. In addition, there are two writing tasks. Task 2a focuses on scientific reading and writing, task 2b engages with writing for a broader audience.

Task 2a: Text discussion

Mandatory texts will be made available via OLAT. All texts must be read by everyone. In addition, each participant will write a 600-800 words summary of one of the texts listed below. In the summary, following questions should be answered:

- What are the main points in the text?
- Which scientific debates are addressed in the text?
- What positions do the authors take in these debates?

Finally, 3 questions must be formulated that can be discussed in plenary.

The summaries have to be submitted via OLAT no later than Monday morning at 10:00 (the day before the text discussion).

Please find the list of texts below. The mandatory texts are marked in bold. The other texts in this list are voluntary and may be used for the final report.

General

- Keller, R. & Backhaus, N. (2020) Integrating landscape services into policy and practice – a case study from Switzerland. *Landscape Research*, 45(1), 111-122.

- Price, M.F. & Kohler, T. (2013) Sustainable mountain development. In Price, M.F. et al. (eds.) *Mountain geography: Physical and human dimensions*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 333-366.
- Elizbarashvili, N., Meessen, H., Khoetsyan, A., Meladze, G. & Kohler, T. (2018) *Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions*. Publishing house Dani, Tbilisi. (*available in both languages*)

1) Climate change / migration

- McDowell, G., Stephenson, E. & Ford, J. (2014) Adaptation to climate change in glaciated mountain regions. *Climatic Change*, 126, 77-91.
- Carey, M. (2007) The History of Ice: How Glaciers Became an Endangered Species. *Environmental History* 12, 497-527.
- Kohler, T., Elizbarashvili, N., Meladze, G., Svanadze, D. & Meessen, H. (2017) The Demogeographic Crisis in Racha, Georgia: Depopulation in the Central Caucasus Mountains. *Mountain Research and Development*, 37(4), 415-424.
- Moulton, H. Carey, M. Huggel, C. & Motschmann, A. (2021) Narratives of ice loss: New approaches to shrinking glaciers and climate change adaptation. *Geoforum*, 125, 47-56.
- Pütz, M., Gallati, D., Kytzia, S. Elsasser, H. & Lardelli, C. (2011) Winter Tourism, Climate Change, and Snowmaking in the Swiss Alps: Tourists' Attitudes and Regional Economic Impacts. *Mountain Research and Development*, 31(4), 357-362.

2) Conservation / parks

- Mace, G.M. (2014) Whose conservation? Changes in the perception and goals of nature conservation require a solid scientific basis. *Science*, 345, 1558-1560.
- Kupper, P. (2009) Science and the National Parks: A Transatlantic Perspective on the Interwar Years. *Environmental History*, 14, 58-81.
- Michel, A.H. (2019) How conceptions of equity and justice shape national park negotiations: The case of Parc Adula, Switzerland. *eco.mont (Journal on Protected Mountain Areas Research)*, 11, 25-31
- Michel, A.H., Backhaus, N. (2019) Unravelling Reasons for the Non-Establishment of Protected Areas: Justification Regimes and Principles of Worth in a Swiss National Park Project. *Environmental Values*, 28, 171-190.
- Michel, A.H.; Pleger, L.E.; von Atzigen, A.; Bosello, O.; Sager, F.; Hunziker, M.; Graefe, O.; Siegrist, D.; Backhaus, N. (2022) The Role of Trust in the Participatory Establishment of Protected Areas – Lessons Learnt from a Failed National Park Project in Switzerland. *Society & Natural Resources*, 35(5), 487-505.
- Michel, A.H. & Wallner, A. (2020) How can local populations be won over to protected areas? *Swiss Academies Factsheets* 15(5).
- Salukvadze, G., Gugushvi, T., Dolbaia, T., Salukvadze, J. & Durglishvili, N. (2021). Park-people interaction in mountainous Georgia. *Dela - Oddelek za geografijo Filozofske fakultete v Ljubljani*, številka 55, str. 69-86.

3) Methods

- Bergeron, J., Paquette, S., & Poullaouec-Gonidec, P. (2014). Uncovering landscape values and micro geographies of meanings with the go-along method. In: *Landscape and Urban Planning*, Vol. 122, 108-121.
- Newing, H. (2011) *Conducting research in conservation*. Routledge, London. Selected chapters.
- Banks, M. (2018) *Using Visual Data in Qualitative Research*. In: *The SAGE Qualitative Research Kit* (2nd ed.). London, SAGE Publications Ltd
- Angrosino, M. (2007) *Doing Ethnographic and Observational Research*. In: *The SAGE Qualitative Research Kit*. London, SAGE Publications Ltd.

4) Tourism

- Salukvadze, G., Khokhobaia, M., Gugushvili, T. & Khartishvili L. (2021). Tourism in Georgia: From Past Lessons to Future Perspectives. *Caucasus Analytical Digest (CAD)*. VOL 122. <https://doi.org/10.3929/ethz-b-000506344>

- Gugushvili, T., Salukvadze, G., Leonhäuser I-U, Durglishvili, N., Pavliashvili, N., Khelashvili, J., Salukvadze, J. & Khartishvili, L. (2020). Participatory Policy Review: “Supportive Tourism” Concept for Hand-in-hand Mountain Economic Development. *Annals of Agrarian Science*, 18 (3), 269-281.
- Salukvadze, G. & Backhaus, N., (2020). Is Tourism the Beginning or the End? Livelihoods of Georgian Mountain People at Stake. *Mountain Research and Development (MRD)*, 40 (1), R28-R36.
- Gugushvili, T., Salukvadze, G. & Salukvadze, J. (2017). Fragmented Development: Tourism-driven Economic Changes in Kazbegi, Georgia. *Annals of Agrarian Science*, 1-6.
- Hüller, S., Heiny, J. & Leonhauser, I.-U. (2017) Linking agricultural food production and rural tourism in the Kazbegi district e A qualitative study. *Annals of Agrarian Science* 15, 40-48
- Debarbieux, B., Oiry Varacca, M., Rudaz, G., Maselli, D., Kohler, T. & Jurek, M. (eds.) (2014) *Tourism in Mountain Regions: Hopes, Fears and Realities*. Sustainable Mountain Development Series. Geneva, UNIGE, CDE, SDC.

5) Sustainable livelihoods / Landscapes and emotions

- Egoz, S. (2019). Landscape and identity in the century of the migrant. In: Howard, P., Thompson, I., Waterton, E., & Atha, M.: *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (2nd edition). London: Routledge, chapter 6, 329-340.
- Geiser, U. et al. (2011) Towards an Analytical Livelihoods Perspective in Critical Development Research. In *Research for Sustainable Development: Foundations, Experiences, and Perspectives*, (Eds, Wiesmann, U. & Hurni, H.) University of Bern: Perspectives of the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) North-South, Bern, 257-271.
- Nightingale, A. J. (2011) The Embodiment of Nature: fishing, emotion and the politics of environmental values. In Brady, E., Phemister, P. (eds) *Human-Environment Relations*. Springer, Dordrecht, 135-147.
- Waterton, E. (2019). More-than-representational landscapes. In: Howard, P., Thompson, I., Waterton, E., & Atha, M. (eds.): *The Routledge companion to landscape studies* (2nd edition). London, Routledge, 91-101.

6) Governance / conflict

- tba

7) Scientific writing and publishing

- Hartley, J., & Hartley, J. (2008). *Academic Writing and Publishing: A Practical Handbook* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Task 2b: Blog post

A blog post will be co-authored in groups: 2 students from UZH and 2 students from TSU. Selected blog posts will be published on the MTA website. The students can choose their overarching topic (see Google Doc), but will have to define the focus of their blog post themselves. Blog posts will be based on topics discussed in the lectures, as well as in the readings.

Submission date: Monday, 21.11.2022, 10:00am on OLAT.

Scope:

- Approx. 500 words (1 A4 page)
- At least 4 sources, 1 of which should be a scientific source (i.e., journal article).
- Submit your .docx file to OLAT, once per group. Please name the file as follows: Blog_Name1_Name2_Name3_Name3 (last names only)

6.3 Task 3: Research project

During the semester, student teams will work independently on their research projects. The tasks related to the research project include finding a case study and formulating research questions, writing and discussing the research concept, literature research, collecting data in the field, data analysis, and, in the end, presenting the results in a final report and a short presentation.

For UZH students, we expect each team to conduct at least 2 go-along interviews with relevant stakeholders, as well as an extensive literature research on the case topic. The go-along interviews can be conducted in pairs.

Task 3a: Research Concept

Each team will submit a research concept, which will be discussed with other students, as well as the lecturers. The research concept describes the chosen topic, the case study and the methods that will be employed in the research. The research concept is 2-3 pages long and discusses the following points:

- Short description of the case study and contextualization of the case in broader scientific debates.
- Problem statement and research questions. These shall be developed based on the relevant literature – either specifically related to the case or the issue/topic more broadly.
- Methods. Describe the methods chosen and elaborate on the access to the field, sampling.
- Time schedule and the responsibilities within your team. Including: Contacting respondents, field work, data analysis, writing the report, preparing the presentation, and meetings within the team.
- Open questions
- Bibliography

Please name the file as follows: Concept_Team_“Number”. Upload the file as a word document to OLAT. After a first peer-feedback, teams can revise their concepts and submit the revised version to the lecturers (file name: Concept_Team_“Number”_final). The teams will then receive individual feedback from the lecturers.

Task 3b: Peer Feedback

Each team provides feedback on the research concept of another team. Following questions should be answered:

- Is the chosen case study appropriate for the planned research?
- Are the research questions clearly defined and suitable to be answered?
- Are the methods well-described?
- Does the time schedule seem feasible?
- Is the concept presented in a scientifically accurate way, including all relevant literature?

Task 3c: Presentation of final results

Each team presents their case study, state of the art, and results in a presentation. (*Details tbd*)

Task 3d: Final report

Each project team submits a final report. The report length is 2000-3000 words (*tbd*): Not including title page, contents, bibliography, annex; but including tables, figure captions, and references within the text. The final report includes the following parts:

- Title
- Introduction: Problem statement, research questions
- State of the art: Discussion of relevant literature
- Methods
- Results: Including a map of each go-along interview, showcasing relevant quotes and researcher-generated photos. Quotes may also be used in the text.
- Discussion and conclusion
- Bibliography
- Annex: Transcribed interview text (most relevant parts of each interview, min. 10 minutes per interview. Please include timestamps). All pictures taken during the interviews. Other relevant data.

7 Program and dates autumn semester 2022

The course is structured into joint TSU-UZH lectures and individual seminars. The time difference between Tbilisi and Zürich is 2 hours until 30.10.22 (GET/CEST) and 3 hours from 01.11.22 onward (GET/CET). Therefore, the slot for the lectures will shift during the semester for UZH students. Lecture slots are highlighted in green (pre-recorded screencasts in blue), submission dates of tasks in gray.

Part I (time difference between Zürich and Tbilisi = 2 hours)

W	Date	UZH 10:15-11:00	UZH 11:15-12:00 TSU 13:15-14:00 (15 min. break)	UZH 12:15-13:00 TSU 14:15-15:00 (15 min. break)	TSU 15:15-16:00
0	13.09.22	Semester start TSU			
1	20.09.22	Course starts 11:15 (only this day)	Introduction I Introduction of team, course aims, introduction of MTA app (all)	Introduction II Why do mountains matter? (GS/AM)	Team building Download app
2	27.09.22	Text discussion 1 Define research topics of teams	Challenges I Climate change (AM/NB 30') Input by TSU (GS/TG 10')	Challenges II Migration (TG/GS 30') Input by UZH (NB 10')	Text discussion 1 Define research topics of teams
	03.10.22	Task 1a: Upload 2 pictures ("spots") of everyday landscapes in your vicinity to MTA, complete questionnaire. Check out other students' entries and interact with other posts. (Until 10:00 am)			
3	04.10.22	Text discussion 2	Responses I Nature conservation (NB 30') Input by TSU (10')	Responses I Parks (AM 30') Input by TSU (10')	Text discussion 2
	04.10.22	Task 3a: Upload draft concepts to OLAT. <i>To-Dos: Watch screencasts for week 4. Read the draft concept of the tandem team and fill in the feedback sheet.</i>			
4	11.10.22	Text discussion 3	Methods I+II (screencasts, NB/AM) Peer feedback on draft concepts	Questions by students (separately for UZH and TSU)	Text discussion 3
5	18.10.22	Text discussion 4	Responses II Tourism (GS/TG 45')	Responses II Tourism (GS/TG 30') Input by UZH (NB 10')	Text discussion 4
	18.10.22	Task 3a: Upload final concepts to OLAT			
6	25.10.22	Text discussion 5	Conceptual approaches I Sustainable Livelihoods (NB 30') Input by TSU (TG 10')	Conceptual approaches II Landscapes and emotions (AM 30') Input by TSU (GS 10')	Text discussion 5

Part II (time difference between Zürich and Tbilisi = 3 hours)

W	Date	UZH 10:15-11:00 TSU 13:15-14:00	UZH 11:15-12:00 TSU 14:15-15:00	UZH 12:15-13:00 TSU 15:15-16:00
7	01.11.22	Individual meetings with teams	Individual meetings with teams	Individual meetings with team
	07.11.22	Task 1b: Upload 2 pictures ("spots") of everyday landscapes in your vicinity to MTA, complete questionnaire. Check out other students' entries and interact with other posts. (Until 10:00 am)		
8	08.11.22	Conceptual approaches III Governance (JS 30') Input by UZH (AM 10')	Conceptual approaches IV Conflict (TG? 30') Input by UZH (AM 10')	Text discussion 6
9	15.11.22	Data collection (no class)		
	21.11.22	Task 2b: Submission of blog post (OLAT), until 10:00 am		
10	22.11.22	Methods III (screencast) Scientific writing and publishing (NB/ AM 30')	Discussion of specific questions with teams	Discussion of specific questions with teams
11	29.11.22	Data collection (no class)		
	05.12.22	Task 1c: Upload 2 pictures ("spots") of everyday landscapes in your vicinity to MTA, complete questionnaire. Check out other students' entries and interact with other posts. (Until 10:00 am)		
12	06.12.22	Presentations I	Presentations II	Presentations III
13	13.12.22	Presentations IV	Presentations V	Presentations VI
	13.12.22	Task 3d: Submission of final report to OLAT, until 23:59.		
14	20.12.22	Course evaluation and feedback	Individual feedback to teams	Individual feedback to teams
15		Exams at TSU		

Note: Official holidays in Georgia: 14.10.2022 and 23.11.2022