Risk Assessment and Governance (STEP0021)

Description

This module examines the rise of risk-based policy-making and risk regulation for scientific, technological and environmental developments. Throughout the module, students will explore definitions of risk and the terminology for risk governance, (changing) perceptions and attitudes to risk in public and private organisations, as well as established and new approaches to managing and regulating risk.

These issues will be explored through a number of deep dive case studies and sessions from several fields: healthcare and pharmaceutical, the environment and climate change, digital technologies and cyber-physical systems, food safety. Particular attention is paid to addressing uncertainty and ambiguity, and what 'good' governance of uncertain risks entails via models such as 'planned adaptive risk regulation'.

The module is structured in two parts. In the first part of the term, before reading week, you will learn about notions of risk, the difference between familiar and emerging risks, the subsequent challenges that high uncertainty, increasing complexity and system (inter-)dependencies bring to how we measure and assess risk. In this part, we will also explore familiar and new approaches to governing risk, from the established precautionary principle in risk regulation to more adaptive risk management and governance models. In the second part of the term, after reading week, we will explore in more depth different risk governance approaches, from the use of risk management standards, to changes in organisational practices towards more adaptability and flexibility in risk management (i.e. the ‘high reliability organisation’), to horizontal mechanisms that look at the distributed and combined capabilities of different stakeholders in a risk governance regime. We conclude this module with an assessment of whether our contemporary ‘risk society’ needs to fundamentally change the way in which it assesses and manages risk given the complex socio-techno-environmental systems that impact our lives (e.g. climate change, personalised health).

Key information

Year: 2020/21
Credit value: 15 (150 study hours)
Delivery: UG L6, Campus-based
Reading List: View on UCL website
Tutor: Dr Irina Brass
Term: Term 2
Timetable: View on UCL website

Assessment

Coursework: 45.0%
Coursework: 30.0%
Oral Presentation: 25.0%

Find out more

For more information about the department, programmes, relevant open days and to browse other modules, visit ucl.ac.uk

Disclaimer: All information correct as of March 2020. Please note that aspects of the module may be subject to change. UCL will make best efforts to inform applicants of major changes.
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Tutor Dr Irina Brass
Term Term 2
Timetable View on UCL website

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