



Food security & rural development

Rural local development

M1 - at University College Cork - Ireland

I. GENERAL ORGANISATION

The M1 of the training track in UCC builds up on the programme of the Postgraduate Diploma in Co-operative Organisation, Food Marketing and Rural Development at the University College Cork. Subjects in the Programme include:

- Co-operative principles and structural characteristics
- Economic and financial aspects of co-operatives
- Decision-making and management in co-operatives
- Food marketing skills and techniques
- Theories and techniques of rural development.

More info can be found at <http://www.ucc.ie/en/foodbus/postgrad/pdip/>

To be admitted to the Part1 University Examinations in the MSc Food Business a student must have satisfactorily attended modules amounting to 60 credits.

Students take core modules to the value of 55 credits plus an elective to the value of 5 credits as follows:

Core Modules

- FE 5100 Co-operative Organisation (15 credits)
- FE 5101 Food Marketing I (15 credits) (For students who have not previously studied marketing) or FE 5102 Food Marketing II (15 credits) (For students who have previously studied marketing to a sufficient level)
- FE 5103 Rural Development (15 credits)
- FE 5104 Practical Training Placement (10 credits)

Elective

- FE 4008 Food Security and the Developing World (5 credits)
- Or any other 5 credit module which may be made available by any Department in the Faculty of Food Science and Technology, depending on the prior qualifications and interests of each student and subject to the approval of the course leader.

The 50 course credits will be examined in summer and a report on the Practical Training Placement will be submitted in September. Course leadership will be provided by the Department of Food Business and Development and the Centre for Co-operative Studies.

II. DETAILED COURSE UNIT OUTLINE

1. Core Modules

1.1 FE 6102 Co-operative Organisation

Overview of co-operative activity in Ireland and abroad, of different cooperative sectors: Agricultural, worker, community, food, service, energy, water and sports co-operatives and credit unions.

Topics covered include:

- Overview of co-operative principles and structural characteristics; co-operative history.
- Sociology of organisations, co-operative and conventional: different theoretical and practical approaches to organising (scientific management, bureaucratic approach, human relations/human resources, Japanese model, contingency theory, 'new age' organisations, representative cooperative, collective co-operative).
- Economic and financial aspects: business planning, business objectives in a co-operative, application of surplus, co-operative accounting;
- Co-operative law and administration: fundamentals of co-operative law, shareholding structures, value of shares in a co-operative and recent developments in agricultural co-operatives, roles and functions of members, Board of Directors, managers, co-operative strategy, business success and member identity.
- Co-operative training and education: steps in starting up a cooperative (group aims, meetings, feasibility studies, business plan), decision-making and meeting processes, team work, social goals.
- Sociology of communications. Two-way communication and presentation skills.

After completing this module the student should be able to:

- Review co-operative activity in Ireland and abroad across the different co-operative sectors;
- Analyse co-operative principles and characteristics;
- Examine different theoretical and practical approaches to organising across the organisational spectrum, from conventional to co-operative;
- Explore the co-operative management and decision-making process;

- Apply co-operative theory to practice;
- Evaluate co-operative performance in social and economic terms and as effective vehicles for development in Ireland and overseas;
- Assess the relationship between the co-operative and its members, especially in food processing and marketing cooperatives;
- Evaluate the relevance of co-operatives, especially to the agrifood business chain; and evaluate the potential competitive advantages of co-operatives.

1.2 FE 6105 Food Marketing I

Topics covered include:

- Introduction to marketing skills and techniques.
- Structure and organisation of Irish food industry – Farm production, processing, trade, distribution.
- Consumer demand, industry performance.
- Market segmentation, product choice, pricing, promotion and distribution in relation to food.
- Environmental and ethical considerations in marketing.
- Should co-operative marketing be different from conventional marketing?
- Examination of Fair Trade mark and analysis of alternative trade movements.
- Detailed study of Community Regulations which influence product choice and trade strategies of Irish firms.
- Analysis of single-tier and multi-tier cooperative marketing systems -strengths, weaknesses, success and failure factors.
- Particular attention will be given to the nature of the relationships (financing, payment pooling, contracts etc.) between the co-operatives and their members especially in food processing and marketing co-operatives.

After completing this module the student should be able to:

- Evaluate the relationships between the different components of the food and agricultural supply chain.
- Interpret government policy as applied to food and agricultural markets.
- Interpret the role of market orientation in new product success.
- Evaluate the role of market-oriented techniques in designing new products.
- Challenge the role of ethics in the food supply chain and food marketing strategies.
- Develop detailed marketing strategies for both large and small food companies and co-operatives.

1.3 FE 6106 Food Marketing II

Topics covered include:

- Detailed development of food marketing strategies by firms and by sectoral groups with particular emphasis on
- International food marketing. The application of quantitative techniques to the main issues arising at various stages of the Food Business chain
- Such as demand analysis, operational efficiency, pricing efficiency, raw material supply, income distribution, market entry, product development. Intermediate marketing skills and techniques.

After completing this module the student should be able to:

- Analyse the determinants of human behaviour and food choice.

- Assess the importance of social & cultural environment to marketing efforts and business relationships.
- Summarise the causes and effects of consumer behaviour on the health and wellbeing of a society.
- Analyse the different marketing strategies that firms utilise in competitive food markets.
- Design marketing strategies for novel food products that achieve sustainable competitive advantage.
- Question the role of market orientation in new product success and be able to design a new product development strategy for a firm.

1.4 FE 6103 Rural Development

Topics covered include:

- Theories of rural development. Definition and measurement of development.
- Trends in the rural economy - changing rural labour market, cross sectoral links; the context of rural development policy.
- Diversification of the rural economy: traditional farm activities vs. new/'organic' farm activities vs. farm-related activities (agri-tourism, forestry, etc.); small farmer viability, part-time farming, pluri-active rural households; non-farm enterprises, the role of local organisations including co-operatives in development; links between co-operative sectors in promoting rural development.
- Community based strategies for small business development.
- Rural development policy at EU, national and local level - LEADER, county enterprise boards and area partnership companies, etc.
- Application of new technology to promote equitable rural development. Rural environmental issues and sustainable development. Rural public management appraisal techniques for rural development projects.
- Rural development in developing countries and lessons for Ireland.
- Food security and poverty reduction including impact of HIV/AIDS.

After completing this module the student should be able to:

- Explain the different approaches to rural development.
- Discuss the links between regional and rural development.
- Identify and explain the changing policy context for rural development in the EU and Ireland.
- Appreciate theory and practice in regional and rural development in Ireland.
- Define and explain development, poverty and food security.
- Explain sustainable development and the linkages between poverty and the environment.

Capstone Seminar Course

This course will build on the material offered in the other sections by focusing in depth on the concept of co-operative organisation and its application and feasibility in food marketing and rural development in differing socio-economic and political systems. As such it will serve to integrate the other course units. Conventional and co-operative assumptions and beliefs will be challenged and debated in both theoretical and practical terms by drawing on in depth analytical studies from around the world. The course will be taught in a seminar format involving considerable student input and interaction between lecturer and students. Students will be required to prepare and present one or more papers for the seminar course.

Group Research Project

Students will be given an opportunity to test and apply in a practical integrated manner the various theoretical concepts introduced during the course by working in small co-operative teams to conduct a group research project on an approved topic. This exercise will also provide students with experience of co-operative decision-making and in general help them to acquire team work and leadership skills.

Preparation for this project will involve tuition on research methods and presentation skills.

Computer Skills

Students in both the Postgraduate Diploma and MSc years attend tutorials on the practical use of computers in research analysis. They enjoy unrestricted access to the Department of Food Business and Development's computer laboratory.

1.5 FE 6104 Practical Training Placement

A training project is to be undertaken on an approved aspect of Cooperative Organisation, Food Marketing or Rural Development and is to be submitted by September. A placement coordinator will advise and facilitate students on this programme. Students are encouraged to be actively involved in identifying suitable placements.

After completing this module the student should be able to:

- Work in an organisational and/or development setting, arising from practical work placement.
- Conduct and report on organisational research.
- Reflect analytically on organisational operations in cooperatives, social enterprises, food businesses and development agencies.

Training project placements are normally in co-operatives, food firms and development agencies in Ireland, Europe and elsewhere. So far, students have obtained overseas summer placements in English workers' co-operatives; Welsh and Scottish food co-operatives and community enterprises; Danish, US, Italian, German, Russian and Swedish agricultural co-operatives and agencies; Spanish, Polish, Greek and Cypriot rural development projects; marketing Irish tourism in Italy and working in French food firms. Students have also obtained placements in the head offices of Irish Third World agencies and the International Co-operative Alliance, Geneva.

2. Elective

2.1 FE 4008 Food Security and the Developing World

This module will explore the impact of changing patterns of world food trade, structural adjustment and other intervention programmes on rural livelihoods and survival strategies in the developing world.

Topics covered include: the economic and environmental sustainability of livelihood portfolios and the impact on food security of structural adjustment programmes, trade liberalisation, bilateral and multilateral donors and changing governmental policies and roles.

After completing this module the student should be able to:

- Assess the impact of institutional policy on developing countries e.g. SAP, PRSP etc.
- Summarise the contributions of financial institutions to food security.
- Measure various changes in governmental policies in trade liberalisation, privatisation and donor agencies.
- Evaluate the sustainable livelihood framework using livelihood portfolios.
- Debate the roles of bilateral and multi-lateral agencies in developing countries.
- Predict the forces and nature of sustainable livelihoods in a complex world.
- Describe the differences between the North - South on issues of sustainable development.

2.2 FE4002 Global Food Policy.

This module will assess the impact of food policy and of regulatory framework on price, production, trade flows, incomes, rural communities, the environment, agriculture, food processing and retailing.

On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Discuss the different approaches to policy analysis.
- Employ different theoretical approaches to the study of food policy.
- Describe contemporary food and agricultural policies in selected developed market economies.
- Assess the impact of contemporary food and agricultural policies in selected developed market economies.
- Assess the implications of current policy developments for the Irish agricultural and food sectors.

2.3 Or Students may also take another approved 5 credit module

III. LANGUAGE OPTION

French

Spanish

Read more : <http://www.ucc.ie/en/foodbus/postgrad/mscfb/>