

**Exploring Sustainability**  
**Tuesday, Thursday 12:30 – 13:50****UNIV 207**  
**PF 129**

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**Introduction**

Over the past several decades governments, corporations, not for profit and community organizations and citizens have been struggling to understand the implications of rapid industrialization, population growth, resource depletion, and information technology on our health, happiness and quality of life. The concept of sustainability has played a key role in the struggle. Sustainability offers a new way of understanding the world and our place in it. It has become a key concept in design at all scales of human intervention in the world. Sustainability, both in theory and practice is complex and challenging. This course will present a wide range of perspectives on the vitally important concept.

**Objectives**

1. Students will gain a broad understanding of the social, ecological, economic, cultural, political dimensions of sustainability, its promise and the challenges it presents.
2. Students will understand the diversity of ways in which sustainability is practiced in real world situations and be able to critically assess claims of sustainability.
3. Students will gain an understanding of how they can contribute to creating a sustainable world in their personal, academic and work lives.

**Teaching Approach**

Your course instructors and guest speakers will offer perspectives on sustainability from business, government, the not for profit sector and academia. Topics will cover a range of scales, from the smallest devices we use on a daily basis, to neighbourhoods, cities, countries and critical international issues. Classes will include lectures, videos, discussion and activities. We will be bringing real world issues into the classroom discussions on a regular basis. You will be encouraged to be engaged in the course, asking questions, challenging speakers, formulating your own ideas. The course will introduce the idea of inter-disciplinarity with a diverse group of guest speakers from The Arts, Sciences, Social Sciences, the Professions, all with a common interest in understanding, educating about and practicing sustainability.

**Weekly Class Schedule**

We will start off each week with a lecture (Tuesday). Thursday will be time for class discussion and debate on topics introduced in the lecture and to explore sustainability with hands on activities.. Detailed lecture schedule to be provided at a later date. Lecture topics will include Ecology • Complexity • Green Buildings • Energy and Resources • Community/ Planning • International Development • Alternative Economic Models • Ecological Sustainability

### Means of Evaluation

There will be no final exam. Students must obtain an overall passing grade to pass this course. Quality of writing (spelling, grammar, clarity) will be a component of the assessment of all assignments.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Assignment 1. Product/Project Analysis/Impact: The Life and Times Of ...           | 30% |
| Multi-Choice Exam: Mid-term (15%) and Final (15%)                                  | 30% |
| Assignment 2: What I learned. My process of learning – Course Diary/4 page summary | 40% |

### Course Texts

Exploring Sustainability Reader  
 The 2011 State of Our City Report: Sustainable Calgary Society  
 Sustainability Is for Everybody, Alan Atkisson  
 Other Readings will be assigned on a weekly basis

### Supplementary Reading

George Monbiot: [monbiot.com](http://monbiot.com)  
 Orion Magazine: [orionmagazine.org](http://orionmagazine.org)

IPCC - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, [www.ipcc.ch/](http://www.ipcc.ch/). In particular, its page called "Publications and Data",  
[http://www.ipcc.ch/publications\\_and\\_data/publications\\_and\\_data\\_reports.shtml](http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/publications_and_data_reports.shtml)  
 Special Issue of journal "Landscape Ecology", Volume 28, Issue 6, July 2013, "Key Concepts and Research Priorities for Landscape Sustainability".  
<http://link.springer.com/journal/10980/28/6/page/>

### Weekly Schedule (38 Classes)

|                                      |             |  |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Tuesday (Lecture)                    | January 7   | No Classes   |
| Thursday (Discussion/Video/Activity) | January 9   | Instructor Introductions                               |
| Tuesday                              | January 14  | Sustainability Reporting                               |
| Thursday                             | January 16  | Product Footprints                                     |
| Tuesday                              | January 21  | The Concept of Sustainability in Ecological Literature |
| Thursday                             | January 23  | Discussion and Activities                              |
| Tuesday                              | January 28  | Ecosystem and Public Health                            |
| Thursday                             | January 30  | Class Discussion and Activities                        |
| Tuesday                              | February 4  | Urban Agriculture/Food Security                        |
| Thursday                             | February 6  | Class Discussion and Activities                        |
| Monday                               | February 11 | The Social Economy                                     |
| Wednesday                            | February 13 | Class Discussion and Activities                        |

## READING WEEK: February 16 - 23

|          |             |  |
|----------|-------------|--|
| Tuesday  | February 25 | International Perspectives – Energy            |
| Thursday | February 27 | Class Discussion and Activities                |
| Tuesday  | March 4     | Sustainable Architecture                       |
| Thursday | March 6     | Class Discussion and Activities                |
| Tuesday  | March 11    | What is Sustainable Design                     |
| Thursday | March 13    | Class Discussion and Activities                |
| Tuesday  | March 18    | Habitat Alteration Due to Climate Change       |
| Thursday | March 20    | Class Discussion and Activities                |
| Tuesday  | March 25    | The Manchester Project: Next Generation Cities |
| Thursday | March 27    | Class Discussion                               |
| Tuesday  | April 1     | Class Presentations                            |
| Thursday | April 3     | Class Presentations                            |
| Tuesday  | April 8     | Multi-Choice Exam (2 – one at mid-term)        |
| Thursday | April 10    | Last Day of Classes - Evaluation               |

**Grading Scale**

| Grade | Grade Point | 4-Point Range | Percent  | Description   |
|-------|-------------|---------------|----------|---|
| A+    | 4.00        | 4.00          | 92.5-100 | Outstanding - evaluated by instructor   |
| A     | 4.00        | 3.85-4.00     | 85-92.49 | Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter  |
| A-    | 3.70        | 3.50-3.84     | 80-84.99 | Very good performance   |
| B+    | 3.30        | 3.15-3.49     | 76-79.99 | Good performance  |
| B     | 3.00        | 2.85-3.14     | 73-75.99 | Satisfactory performance  |
| B-    | 2.70        | 2.50-2.84     | 70-72.99 | Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies  |
| C+    | 2.30        | 2.15-2.49     | 66-69.99 | All final grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. |
| C     | 2.00        | 1.85-2.14     | 63-65.99 |   |
| C-    | 1.70        | 1.50-1.84     | 60-62.99 |   |
| D+    | 1.30        | 1.15-1.49     | 56-59.99 |   |
| D     | 1.00        | 0.50-1.14     | 50-55.99 |   |
| F     | 0.00        | 0-0.49        | 0-49.99  |   |

**Notes:**

- A student who receives a "C<sup>+</sup>" or lower in any one course will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average (GPA) unless the program recommends otherwise. If the program permits the student to retake a failed course, the second grade will replace the initial grade in the calculation of the GPA, and both grades will appear on the transcript.
- Final grades will be reported as letter grades, with the final grade calculated according to a 4-point range.
- Assignments will be evaluated by percentage grades with their letter grade equivalents as shown.

**Notes:**

1. Written work, term assignments and other course related work may only be submitted by e-mail if prior permission to do so has been obtained from the course instructor. Submissions must come from an official University of Calgary (ucalgary) email account.
2. It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/node/46>) Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.
3. Plagiarism - Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:(a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),(b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,(c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied

from another source, and/or,(d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course(although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. It is recognized that clause (d) does not prevent a graduate student incorporating work previously done by him or her in a thesis. Any suspicion of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean, and dealt with as per the regulations in the University of Calgary Graduate Calendar.

4. Information regarding the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>) and how this impacts the receipt and delivery of course material
5. Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>)
6. Safewalk information (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>)

Contact Info for: Student Union (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/page/affordability-accessibility/contact>); Graduate Student representative( <http://www.ucalgary.ca/gsa/>) and Student Ombudsman's Office (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/page/quality-education/academic-services/student-rights>).