

SUST 201 Exploring Sustainability

Tuesday, Thursday 11:00 – 12:20

Web-based Synchronous

Dr. Noel Keough nkeough@ucalgary.ca 403 805-5677 (office hours by appointment)

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 debates. **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

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Explain, debate, critique and defend foundational concepts and theories of sustainability.
2. Formulate and articulate values consistent with sustainability (e.g. our place in the natural world, inter and intra-generational ethics, diversity, equity and social justice)
3. Analyze real world problems, issues and debates and design solutions consistent with sustainability theories, concepts and values.
3. Demonstrate 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, discussions, and active participation in group work and learning activities. We will be bringing real world issues into the classroom 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, Professionals and communities of practice, all with a common interest in understanding, educating about and practicing sustainability.

Means of Evaluation

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: State of Our City Report	(October 1)	20%
Assignment 2: Ecological Footprint Product Analysis	(November 2)	30%
Multiple Choice Exams (3 @ 10%)	(Sept 23, Oct. 28, Dec. 9)	30%
Assignment 3: Journal: Reflecting on my Learning Experience	(December 13)	20%

Note: (all assignments subject to up to 5% grade reduction for every day late)

Course Texts

1. Keough and Ghitter, Sustainability Matters: Prospects for a Just Transition in Calgary, Canada's Petro-City
2. Sustainable Calgary, State of Our City 2020: An Urgent Call for a Just Transition

Supplementary Reading

George Monbiot: <https://www.monbiot.com>

Orion Magazine: <https://orionmagazine.org>

Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

2021 IPCC Report: Press Release <https://www.ipcc.ch/2021/08/09/ar6-wg1-20210809-pr/>

2021 IPCC Report: Summary for Policy Makers:

https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM.pdf

Weekly Schedule

Tuesday	September 7	Instructor and Course Introductions
Thursday	September 9	Historical Roots of Sustainability
Readings:		Sustainability Matters: Introduction and Chapters 1 – 3
Tuesday	September 14	Historical Roots of Sustainability 7 PM Web event. Sustainability Conversations. Issues in Affordable Housing
Thursday	September 16	Sustainability Frameworks, Reporting and Measurement
Readings:		2020 State of Our City Report
Tuesday	September 21	Sustainability Frameworks, Reporting and Measurement
Readings:		Sustainable Development Goals: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs Sustainability Matters: Chapter 2
Thursday	September 23	Multiple Choice Exam 1
Tuesday	September 28	Colonialism, Sustainability and Reconciliation
Thursday	September 30	NO CLASS (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation)
Tuesday	October 1	Our Ecological Footprint and the Climate Emergency
Thursday	October 3	Product Footprint Analysis –Project Discussion
Readings:		TBA

Tuesday	October 5	The Energy Question
Readings:	Sustainability Matters: Chapter 6, 7 and 10	
Thursday	October 7	Active Transportation (Guest Speaker)
Tuesday	October 12	Multiple Choice Quiz 1
Thursday	October 14	Urban Agriculture/Food Security (Guest speaker)
Readings:	Michael Pollan, "Farmer in Chief," New York Times, October 9, 2008, https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/12/magazine/12policy-t.html	
Tuesday	October 19	Design for Sustainability (Guest Speaker)
Thursday	October 21	Ecological Foundations: Sustainability and the Growth Problem
Readings:	Sustainability Matters: Chapters 4 and 5 How Much is Enough: p. 230-232 Sustainability Matters	
Tuesday	October 26	Biodiversity and the 'Rest of Nature'
Thursday	October 28	Multiple Choice Exam 2
Readings:	TBA	
Tuesday	November 2	Class Presentations: Product Analysis
Thursday	November 4	Class Presentations: Product Analysis
Term Break: November 7 to November 13		
Tuesday	November 16	The Social Economy (Guest Speaker)
Thursday	November 18	The Wheels are Off the Growth Machine
Readings:	Sustainability Matters: Chapter 9	
Tuesday	November 23	The Manchester Project: Next Generation Cities
Thursday	November 25	Governance
Readings:	Sustainability Matters: Chapter 12	
Tuesday	November 30	Justice, Fairness and Sustainability
Readings:	Sustainability Matters: Chapters 8 and 11	
Thursday	December 2	Justice, Fairness and Sustainability
Readings:	Sustainability Matters: Chapters 13 and 14	
Tuesday	December 7	Course Wrap-Up and Reflective Journal Exercise
Thursday	December 9	Multiple Choice Exam 3

Grading Scale

Grade	Grade Point	Percent	Description
A+	4.00	92.5-100	Outstanding
A	4.00	85-92.49	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	80-84.99	Very good performance
B+	3.30	76-79.99	
B	3.00	73-75.99	Good – clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete
B-	2.70	70-72.99	
C+	2.30	66-69.99	
C	2.00	63-65.99	Satisfactory – basic understanding of the subject matter
C-	1.70	60-62.99	Receipt of a grade point average of 1.70 may not be sufficient for promotion or graduation (see individual undergraduate faculty regulations)
D+	1.30	56-59.99	
D	1.00	50-55.99	Minimal pass – marginal performance
F	0.00	0-49.99	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.

Notes:

- 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 instructors. Submissions must come from an official University of Calgary (ucalgary) email account.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>)
- 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>).