

Sustainable Futures 2a. Environment, Culture, Society, Economy

The aims of the course:

- The objective of this course is to give the students a sense and overview of the most important themes for creating sustainable futures in the environment, cultural, societal and economic dimensions.
- The course will start with a background on the concept and debates on sustainable development and sustainability, and then raise a number of questions on what a sustainable future in each of four dimensions could mean in society and for the corporate sector.
- For the environment dimension this includes: the role of ecosystem services and resilience vs. change, how much and for how long is acceptable change, and identify desirable directions.
- For the social dimension the questions circle around: cohesion, equity, poverty, human rights and democracy and how the social dimension is linked to the other sustainability dimensions.
- For the cultural dimension important questions include: protection of culture, protecting heritage 'stable' vs. dynamic process, and global vs. local (company) culture.
- Last but not least for the economic dimension sustainability questions concern for example: investments in technology, discount rates and time, and sustainable growth beyond monetary terms.
- The students should learn to critically analyse such themes across the different sustainability dimensions, become familiar with some of the sustainability strategies in the corporate sector and learn how to argue in a clear and systematic way for the importance of considering long-term sustainable development in different organizations.

Project assignment 2010:

The final examination will be in the form of **individual work** where students will have to prepare a **report** answering to the questions below. Their reports will be presented for the whole class.

Please answer to these questions in your project assignment:

Week no.	Theme of the course	Question
2	Sustainable development background	1. What is sustainable development? 2. Where has the term sustainable originated?
2	Environment dimension of sustainability	3. What is important and relevant regarding the environmental dimensions of sustainability?
3	The social dimension of sustainability	4. What is important and relevant regarding the social dimensions of sustainability?
3	The cultural dimension of sustainability	5. What is cultural sustainability? 6a. Identify one cultural heritage site from your home town or from some other environment familiar for you 6b. Identify some interactive and (at least slightly) creative process from everyday culture of your home town or from some other environment familiar for you 6c. Reflect how these both are culturally sustainable, and how the sustainability could be supported
4	The economic dimension of sustainability	7. How to impose limits on growth? 8. How to decouple economic growth from environmental stress?
4	SD in companies	9. How can companies contribute to sustainable development?
6	Alternative visions for a future world	10. What kind of alternative visions are there / could there be for a future world?

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Technical aspects of the report:

- It is to be done individually
- Appr. 10 pages long (minimum 5 pages) + list of reference
- Some of your answers may be longer than the others but you need to answer to all of the questions
- Your main source are the lectures and materials + articles given to you on the course.
- Please make a list of references and refer to the articles in the text.

Presentations on 15.2.2009:

- On the last lecture you will present the results of your project report.
- You have to bring the paper version of your report then
- And you also need to prepare a PowerPoint presentation and be prepared to present your work and results to the whole group.
- Additionally there will be group discussions on that lecture.

Grades:

The grading system applied at the Turku School of Economics is as follows:

TSE	Definition
5	EXCELLENT: outstanding performance with only minor errors
4	VERY GOOD: above average standard but with some errors
3	GOOD: generally sound work with a number of notable errors
2	SATISFACTORY: fair but with significant shortcomings
1	SUFFICIENT: performance meets the minimum criteria
	FAIL: considerable further work is required

(To fail is grade 0)

Piia Nurmi will grade the project assignments. The grade consist of the grading of the written report and the presentation and the activity of the discussions.
Also: There is a possibility to get a little better grade if you are active during the whole course.

Further information: Piia Nurmi piia.nurmi@tse.fi