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BUS/ENV 340: Global Sustainable Business

Course Syllabus *Spring 2020*

Instructor: TBA

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: None

Class Hours: TBA

Course Fee: TBA

Course Description

The role of sustainability in business has evolved over the past few decades from a fringe issue to one of central concern. The goal of this course is to explore both the business challenges and opportunities inherent in sustainability. The course has a global dimension as students examine complex environmental, social and economic factors that affect sustainability in business. Through case studies and direct engagement with local businesses, students learn the knowledge and skills required to launch a business that utilizes green strategies. In addition to researching business management tools and best practices, students develop business plans for launching an enterprise that prioritizes sustainability.

Learning Outcomes

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

- 1) *Explain* how the business focus on sustainability has evolved and describe current challenges and opportunities faced by businesses committed to supporting sustainability efforts both locally and globally;
- 2) *Articulate* the principles and values that support global sustainable business;
- 3) *Describe* specific strategies and practices that businesses can employ to promote sustainability;
- 4) *Utilize* business and marketing tools in developing a sustainable business plan.

Readings

The course's textbook is Helen Kopnina and John Blewitt's *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. Students will also need to access [Sustainable Business/the business plan](#) through WikiBooks. All other readings are in the course reader.

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Assessment

Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	20%
Final Project	20%
Written Homework Assignments	15%
Journal	15%
Participation	15%

Grading

Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional
A-	90% - 92%	Excellent
B+	87% - 89%	Superior
B	83% - 86%	
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C	73% - 76%	
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Course Requirements

Grades are based on the midterm and final exams, a final project, written homework assignments, a class journal, and participation.

Midterm Exam (15%)—The midterm exam will include short answer questions aimed at testing your knowledge of key terms and concepts studied during the first half of the semester.

Final Exam (20%)—The final exam will include short answer and short essay questions aimed at testing your knowledge of key terms and concepts studied during the second half of the semester. It will also assess your ability to apply topics covered throughout the semester to real-world and hypothetical scenarios.

Final Project (20%)—For their final projects, students will create a sustainable business plan incorporating the concepts we have studied throughout the semester. Part of the grade for this final project will include a presentation at the end of the semester.

Written Homework Assignments (15%)—Written homework will be assigned throughout the semester. This will include short answer questions in response to assigned readings. The goal of these assignments is to prepare students for class discussion so they must be completed on time. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Journal (15%)—Throughout the semester, students will keep a journal in which they will reflect on readings and various co-curricular activities. In some cases, specific prompts will be assigned to generate journal entries. In other cases, students will be invited to write freely about their experiences. Journals will be collected at the mid-point and end of the semester for evaluation.

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Participation (15%)—

For a spirited discussion, students' active attention and participation are required. Your class participation grade is based on four points:

1. Being on time for class and behaving in a respectful way towards the professor, your fellow classmates, and any visitors;
2. Working collaboratively in pairs/group and being supportive of your classmates;
3. Demonstrating interest in the course and the topics we study;
4. Actively sharing your perspective on assigned readings and raising questions about parts that you didn't fully understand.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance and participation in all course activities is mandatory. Because this is a one-credit course with limited class meetings, students are allowed one "free" absence, which do not need to be justified. It is the students' responsibility to save this absence in case of real necessity (sickness or any other unforeseen circumstances that may prevent students from being in class or attending a required activity). Each additional absence, unless for a very serious reason, will lower the students' grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

If students miss class or a required class activity, they are responsible for obtaining notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. It is also the policy of the Institute that any student who has eight or more absences automatically fails the class. Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in. Presence during mandatory course activities is especially important for student performance in class. Missing a required activity, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to the professor and the Academic Director in a timely manner, will lower students' final grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

Academic Integrity

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Classroom Policy

Please refrain from computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices during class time or during course activities. Active class participation is part of students' final grades. Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Week 1—Introduction: What is Sustainable International Business?

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read “Introduction: key concepts in sustainability and business,” pages 3-22.

Thursday class: Case Study

Dossa, Zachir. “Patagonia’s Sustainability Strategy: Don’t Buy Our Products.” Case study. Lausanne, Switzerland: International Institute for Management Development (Distributed by Harvard Business School Publishing), June 2015.

Week 2—Business, Sustainability, and Ethics

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read “Business Ethics,” pages 23-46.

Thursday class: Case Study

Sunil Kuman Maheshwari and MP Ganesh. “Ethics in Organizations: The Case of Tata Steel.” Working paper, March 2004.

Week 3—Key Challenges for Global Sustainable Business: Environmental Challenges

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read “Environmental Challenges,” pages 47-72.

Thursday class: Case Study

Hoffman, Andrew. “Climate Change and the Napa Valley Wine Industry.” Case study. Ann Arbor, MI: William Davis Institute (Distributed by Harvard Business School Publishing), 2017.

Week 4—Key Challenges for Global Sustainable Business: Social and Economic Challenges

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read “Social and Economic Challenges,” pages 73-95.

Thursday class: Case Study

McMaster, James, and Jan Nowak. “FIJI Water and Corporate Social Responsibility - Green Makeover or ‘Greenwashing?’” Case study. Ontario, Canada: Ivey Business School (Distributed by Harvard Business School Publishing), 2009 [2017].

Week 5—Key Challenges for Global Sustainable Business: Making Sustainability a Reality

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Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read “Key Challenges for Making Sustainability a Reality,” pages 96-114.

Thursday class: Case Study

Paine, Lynn S., Nien-hê Hsieh, and Lara Adamsons. “Governance and Sustainability at Nike (A).” Case study. Cambridge: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2016.

Week 6—Globalization and Business

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read “Globalization and Business,” pages 115-138.

Thursday class: Case Study

Darwin, Solomon, and Henry Chesbrough. “Prototyping a Scalable Smart Village to Simultaneously Create Sustainable Development and Enterprise Growth Opportunities.” Case study. Berkeley: Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley (distributed by Harvard Business School Publishing), 2017.

Week 7—Strategic Changes for Sustainability

Tuesday class: **Midterm Exam**

Thursday class: Case Study

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read “Strategic Change for Sustainability,” pages 139-156.

Lau, Ronald, Ivy Buche, and Shirley Mo-Ching Yeung. “Cathay Pacific Airways: Implementing a Sustainable Development Strategy.” Case study. Hong Kong: The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Distributed by Harvard Business School Publishing), 2014.

Week 8—Greening Business: Human Resources and the Green Economy

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read “Human Resource Management, Green Jobs, and a Green Economy,” pages 157-178.

Thursday class: Case Study

Kaplan, Robert S., and Ricardo Reisen De Pinho. “Amanco: Developing the Sustainability Scorecard.” Case study. Cambridge: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2008.

Week 9—Strategies for Creating a Sustainable Business

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read “Creating a Sustainable Business Practice,” pages 179-200.

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Beginning to plan for final project: What is a business plan?

Sustainable Business/the business plan

Thursday class: Case Study

Andrea Blengini, Gian, and Deborah J. Shields. "Green Labels and Sustainability Reporting: Overview of the building products supply chain in Italy." *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal* 21, no. 4 (June 15, 2010): 477–93.

Rangan, V. Kasturi, Michael W. Toffel, Vincent Dessain, and Jerome Lenhardt. "Sustainability at IKEA Group." Case study. Cambridge: Harvard Business School Publishing, November 2017.

Week 10—New Ways of Thinking to Create a Sustainable Business

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read "New Strategic Thinking," pages 201-221.

Thursday class: Case Study

Graham McAleer. "A Better Account of Corporate Social Responsibility." *Law & Liberty*.

<https://www.lawliberty.org/2016/03/23/a-better-account-of-corporate-social-responsibility/>

Jacqueline Tsang, "How luxury brands like Brunello Cucinelli and Tiffany are making CSR sexy," *Style*. <https://www.scmp.com/magazines/style/article/2171247/how-luxury-brands-brunello-cucinelli-and-tiffany-are-making-csr-sexy>

Brunello Cucinelli website: <http://www.brunellocucinelli.com/en/>

Week 11—The Cradle to Cradle Model (C2C)

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read "Cradle to Cradle," pages 222-239.

Thursday class: Focus on Final Project

Review assigned chapters from *Sustainable Business/the business plan*

Week 12—Building a Circular Economy

Tuesday class:

Helen Kopnina, and John Blewitt. *Sustainable Business: Key Issues*. 2nd ed. New York: Taylor and Francis, 2018. Read "Towards a Circular Economy," pages 240-259.

Thursday class: Focus on Final Project

Review draft business plans

Week 13—Presenting Global Sustainable Business Plans

Tuesday and Thursday classes:

Final projects due on Tuesday.

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Student presentations of Global Sustainable Business Plans on Tuesday and Thursday

Week 14—Final Exam and Special Activities

The Final Exam and Special Academic Events Calendar will be provided later in the semester.

Additional Relevant Works

Baxter, B. (2005) *A Theory of Ecological Justice*. New York: Routledge.

Berns, M., Townend, A., Khayat, Z., Balagopal, B., Reeves, M., Hopkins, M.S., and Kruschwitz, N. (2009) Sustainability and competitive advantage. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 51 (1): 19-26.

Berry, R.H. and Yeung, F. (2013) Are investors willing to sacrifice cash for morality? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 117: 477-492.

Blowfield, M. (2013) *Business and Sustainability*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bodley, J. (2008) *Victims of Progress*. 5th Edition. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.

Carter, N. (2007) *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Commoner, B. (1971) *The Closing Circle: Confronting the Environmental Crisis*. New York: Knopf.

Crane, A. and Matten, D. (2016) *Business Ethics: Managing Corporate Citizenship and Sustainability in an Age of Globalization*. 4th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Crist, E., Mora C., and Engelman, R. (2017) The interaction of human population, food production, and biodiversity protection. *Science* 356: 260-264.

Easterly, W. (2006) *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*. New York: The Penguin Group, Inc.

Elliot, J. (2013) *An Introduction to Sustainable Development*. New York, Routledge.

Epstein, J. and Buhovac, A.R. (2014) *Making Sustainability Work: Best Practices in Managing and Measuring Corporate Social, Environmental and Economic Impacts*. Sheffield: Greenleaf Publishing.

Giddens, A. *Global Politics and Climate Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Grant, J. (2008) *The Green Marketing Manifesto*. London: John Wiley & Sons.

Hawken, P. (1993) *The Ecology of Commerce: A Declaration of Sustainability*. New York: Harper Collins Publishing.

Jones, G. (2017) *Profits and Sustainability: A History of Green Entrepreneurship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lyle, J.T. (1996) *Regenerative Design for Sustainable Development*. New York: Wiley.

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MacEachern, M.G. and Carrigan, M. (2015) *Contemporary Issues in Green and Ethical Marketing*. London: Routledge.

McDonough, W. and Braungart, M. (2002) *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*. New York: North Point Press.

Millstone, C. (2017) *Frugal Value: Designing Business for a Crowded Planet*. London: Routledge.

Natrass, B. and Altomare, M. (2001) *The Natural Step for Business*. Gabriola Island, Canada: New Society Publishers.

Nemetz, P.N. (2013) *Business and Sustainability Challenge: An Integrated Perspective*. New York: Routledge.

Pinske, J. and Kolk, A. (2009) *International Business and Global Climate Change*. New York: Routledge.

Washington, H. (2015) *Demystifying Sustainability: Towards Real Solutions*. London: Routledge.

Werbach, A. (2009) *Strategy for Sustainability: A Business Manifesto*. Harvard, MA: Harvard Business Press.