GSE 825
Sustainable Development: Introductory Principles and Practices
S1 Day 2015
Dept of Environmental Sciences

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## General Information

### Unit convenor and teaching staff

**Unit Convenor**  
Wendy Goldstein  
[wendy.goldstein@mq.edu.au](mailto:wendy.goldstein@mq.edu.au)  
Contact via wendy.goldstein@mq.edu.au  
E8A 372  
Open: By appointment

### Credit points

4

### Prerequisites

Admission to MEnvEd or PGDipEnvEd or PGCertEnvEd or MEngMgt or MEnvMgt or PGCertEnvMgt or MEnvStud or PGDipEnvStud or MSusDev or PGDipSusDev or PGCertSusDev or MEnvPlan or MDevCult or PGDipDevCult or MIntRel or MEnv or PGDipEnv or PGCertEnv or MPP or PGDipPP or MSc in (Environmental Health or Remote Sensing and GIS) or PGDipSc in (Environmental Health or Remote Sensing and GIS) or PGCertSc in (Environmental Health or Remote Sensing and GIS) or MScEntre or PGCertSocEntre or GradDipEnv or GradCertEnv or GradCertSusDev or GradDipSusDev or GradDipIntRel

### Corequisites

### Co-badged status

### Unit description

This unit examines the origins, issues, policies, principles and processes of sustainable development (SD) and the international fora that drive the sustainable development agenda. The unit requires students to explore the global and national debates surrounding SD, analyse these and formulate and substantiate their own views. Students are engaged in a process of identifying how sustainable development principles are interpreted in practice in different sectors including in national frameworks, local government and business. Students undertake research with community groups on their concept of and views of progress on sustainable development. The unit involves the students in analysis of the ideological and value bases of SD and a critical appraisal of the policy and practical approaches that are emerging.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at [http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/](http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/)
Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate an understanding of key scientific concepts and inter-relationships underpinning sustainable development
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of SD, the values and principles underpinning SD and its contested nature in theory and application
3. Apply a system and future thinking approach to understand the interactions of environmental changes on aspects such as biodiversity, security, economic and social conditions
4. Be able to demonstrate a grasp of the international processes and literature relating to sustainable development
5. Begin to understand the processes of bringing about change towards sustainable development
6. Research how sustainable development is being undertaken in practice amongst key stakeholders
7. Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills for policy, programs and actions for key issues of sustainable development
8. Demonstrate an ability to present in different forms, cogent, structured reports, addressing defined issues
9. Develop an ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team

Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>28th April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Sunday 24th May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22nd June</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Assignment 1

Due: **28th April**
Weighting: **25%**

**Analysis of sustainable development concept/ principles**

This assignment allows you to demonstrate your grasp of the concept of sustainable development and an aspect of its application in practice.

**Select one** of the following aspects to critically assess.
1. the concept of planetary boundaries and its value as a scientific basis for policy and action for sustainable development

2. the business case for sustainability

3. resilience for sustainable development in the Anthropocene

4. inter and intra generational equity in the Anthropocene

Further details and readings are provided on the ilearn site

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate an understanding of key scientific concepts and inter-relationships underpinning sustainable development
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Assignment 2

Due: Sunday 24th May
Weighting: 35%

Documentary Report based on research of perceptions of a major group on sustainable development

This is a group project to produce a documentary report on the perception of a Major Group on progress towards sustainable development and particularly in relation to the proposed sustainable development goals. The project is based on a field research project, in which each member of the group interviews 4 members of the community from a major group - like farmers, women,
scientists, business etc. The resulting findings from each members interviews are analysed and synthesised by the group to present a documentary.

Note 10% of the marks are provided for individual contribution and reflection. Further details are on the ilearn site.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

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Assignment 3
Due: 22nd June
Weighting: 40%

Critical analysis report on an aspect of sustainable development

This assignment assesses your ability to comprehensively analyse the practical considerations of implementing a sustainable development program or policy.

Further details are on the ilearn site

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• Demonstrate an understanding of key scientific concepts and inter-relationships underpinning sustainable development
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Delivery and Resources
Delivery of the Unit
The unit is delivered by face to face block mode sessions. The teaching process includes:

1. Background reading by the students
2. Short presentations to introduce basic concepts.
3. Practical workshop sessions to provide opportunities for experiential learning from discussion with other class members (preparation is essential).
4. Student presentations of tasks undertaken in class in a time pressed environment (like work practice).
5. Talks from guest lecturers that convey the practice of sustainability and the ways change is facilitated.
6. A field trip to appreciate the practical and technical aspects of sustainability
7. Assignments that require students to practice key skills, including critical and integrative thinking, taking a systems perspective, listening to stakeholders, and communicating through diverse forms including writing and presenting in a logical and clearly argued manner.
8. Assignments provide opportunities for practicing negotiation skills and appreciating differences in different cultural and national contexts.

Students are expected to:
participate in workshop activities in small groups;
read set readings in advance for classes; and
follow current developments with regard to sustainable development in the media/ internationally.

Resources to start you off

At the outset students can review the following:


This document is the consensus of aspirations from Rio + 20 intergovernmental meeting on sustainable development UNCSD.

NOTE: the UN has a website on sustainable development - a rich source of information. http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/


This document presents the vision for sustainable development from an NGO and has a strong values/ethical/ justice (Christian) viewpoint and highlights where action is needed


This document provides an easy read that encompasses the major global forces taking shape now that will significantly impact business for government and private sectors

Or you can look at the Australian research on megatrends

CSIRO *Our Future World: Global megatrends that will change the way we live* http://www.csiro.au/Portals/Partner/Futures/Our-Future-World.aspx

Raskin, P.D Electrix, C. Rosea, R.A. 2010 *The century ahead searching for sustainability* *Sustainability* 2:2626-2651

This journal article presents 4 scenarios for the future and looks at various indicators associated with those scenarios. Gives an insight into how sustainable development might be measured - more technically based article


This journal article lays out the human-nature relationship, the pace of change, the scientific basis and calls for action

http://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/45369/unit_guide/print

This article develops a concept of boundaries in the global system for certain impacts, and propose that these set limits for human development

**Unit Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Session</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>6:30pm -</td>
<td>E8A</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to Course Themes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>9:30pm</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>Conceptualising sustainable development</td>
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<td>Assignment briefing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:00am -</td>
<td>EMC-G240</td>
<td><strong>Workshop Session 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>5:00pm</td>
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<td>Pathways to Sustainable Development and Themes</td>
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<td>History of the international SD policy process</td>
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<td>Sustainability science</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduction to law, governance and politics of sustainable development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>10:00am -</td>
<td>EMC-G240</td>
<td><strong>Workshop Session 2:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8 March</td>
<td>5:00pm</td>
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<td>Key trends, programs and action for sustainable development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:00am -</td>
<td>EMC-G240</td>
<td><strong>Workshop Session 3:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>5:00pm</td>
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<td>Policy Frameworks for Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>Measuring Progress Towards Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>SD Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>9.00-5.00</td>
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<td>Field trip</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 20th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>10:00am -</td>
<td>EMC-G240</td>
<td><strong>Workshop Session 4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>May 8th</td>
<td>5:00pm</td>
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<td>Sustainable development in practice</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Industry</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Local government</td>
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http://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/45369/unit_guide/print
Saturday 9th May
10:00am - 5:00pm
EMC-G240
**Workshop Session 5:**
International case studies
Leading change for sustainable development

Sunday 24th May
10:00am - 5:00pm
EMC-G240
**Workshop Session 6**
Presentations of assignment 2
Conclusions

**Policies and Procedures**

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:


In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/) of Policy Central.

**Student Code of Conduct**

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

**Results**

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

**Student Support**

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/)
Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser

Student Enquiry Service

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

Equity Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/.

When using the University’s IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

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• Demonstrate an ability to present in different forms, cogent, structured reports, addressing defined issues

Assessment tasks
• Assignment 1
• Assignment 2
• Assignment 3

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking
Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes
• Apply a system and future thinking approach to understand the interactions of environmental changes on aspects such as biodiversity, security, economic and social conditions
• Begin to understand the processes of bringing about change towards sustainable development
• Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills for policy, programs and actions for key issues of sustainable development

Assessment tasks
• Assignment 1
• Assignment 2
• Assignment 3

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability
Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or
practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Apply a system and future thinking approach to understand the interactions of environmental changes on aspects such as biodiversity, security, economic and social conditions
- Begin to understand the processes of bringing about change towards sustainable development
- Research how sustainable development is being undertaken in practice amongst key stakeholders

**Assessment tasks**

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3

**PG - Effective Communication**

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of SD, the values and principles underpinning SD and its contested nature in theory and application
- Demonstrate an ability to present in different forms, cogent, structured reports, addressing defined issues
- Develop an ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team

**Assessment tasks**

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3
PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of SD, the values and principles underpinning SD and its contested nature in theory and application
- Begin to understand the processes of bringing about change towards sustainable development
- Research how sustainable development is being undertaken in practice amongst key stakeholders
- Develop an ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of SD, the values and principles underpinning SD and its contested nature in theory and application
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Assessment tasks
• Assignment 1
• Assignment 2
• Assignment 3

Changes from Previous Offering
A full day field trip is planned in 2015 to gain practical insights about implementing sustainable development