ENVS825
Sustainable Development: Introductory Principles and Practices
S1 Day 2016
Dept of Environmental Sciences

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
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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 MPPP 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 MSocEntre or PGCertSocEntre or GradDipEnv or GradCertEnv or GradCertSusDev or GradDipSusDev or GradDiplIntRel

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/
Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific and environmental underpinnings of sustainable development and the concept of planetary boundaries
2. Argue the case for the importance of and reasons for 'sustainable development' and articulate why it is contested in theory and practice
3. Be able to demonstrate a grasp of the Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030 and the international processes that drive sustainable development
4. Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills in regard to policy, programs and actions to achieve sustainable development
5. Analyse and evaluate the systemic and dynamic interactions between social development, sustaining the environment and natural resources, the neo-liberal globalised economy, geopolitics and governance.
6. Identify some of the processes of bringing about change towards sustainable development, such as stakeholder engagement, leadership and governance to support change for sustainable development while considering the effects on the opportunities available to future generations
7. Research how sustainable development is being undertaken in practice amongst key stakeholders
8. Demonstrate an ability to present findings in different forms including multimedia, and 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>10%</td>
<td>19th March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>28th April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Saturday 21st May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 4</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>15th June</td>
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Assignment 1

Due: **19th March**
Weighting: **10%**

**Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030.**
This assignment requires you to:

1. Make a presentation on one of the SD goals
2. Submit your presentation with notes pages for each slide which includes background to the points from reading and references.

The presentation of 15 minutes (and notes provided with each slide) will cover the following:

1. The Sustainable Development Goal
2. A diagram showing the main areas of action proposed to achieve the goal (targets/indicators)
3. Why this goal is important for SD (in the notes you have to present what SD means to you having considered different interpretations)
4. A diagram showing how your goal relates to 3-5 other goals
5. Some of the system changes required to achieve the goal

Please see assessment guide for more briefing on this task.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

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Assignment 2

Due: 28th April
Weighting: 20%

Analysis of sustainable development discourse and principles
This assignment allows you to demonstrate your grasp of the discourse of sustainable development and critically assess the meaning of sustainable development to you in the context of the predominant neo-liberal economic agenda. In so doing consider:

1. the influence of the sustainable development goals on the discourse, policy and action for sustainable development;
2. the concept of planetary boundaries and its influence on the discourse;
3. critically evaluate the proposed priorities for achieving sustainable development.

Further details and readings are provided on the ilearn site

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

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Assignment 3

Due: Saturday 21st May
Weighting: 35%

Documentary Report based on research of a ‘major group’s’ actions for sustainable development

This is a small group project to produce a documentary report on the actions of a civil society organisation, business or government in making progress towards sustainable development.

The project is based on field research, in which each member of the group interviews 4 members of the community from a major group - like farmers, women, scientists, unions, business, youth, local government etc.

The resulting findings from each members interviews are analysed and synthesised by the group to present a documentary on what actions are being taken by that group. The documentary should also present suggestions for further action to upscale actions (e.g. policy/ technology/ financial/ capacity). The documentary should make some reflection on the contributions of these actions to relevant SD Goals.
Note 10% of the marks are provided for an individual report of the interviews and reflection on the process of undertaking interviews. Further details are on the ilearn site.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

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Assignment 4

Due: 15th June
Weighting: 35%

Report making a critical analysis on an aspect of sustainable development.

You may chose A or B

Part A Policy brief

4.A This assignment is to be prepared as advice to a government, business or other organisation on a sustainable development issue to assist in decision making.

The advice can be for an actual organisation (or you can specify for what type of organisation). The report will be succinct and use footnotes to references or added points and cover:

1. the issue and its relevance to sustainable development
2. the advantages and disadvantages of taking certain actions on the issue in relation to the dimensions of sustainable development
3. discuss some of the steps to making the changes to implement the advice
4. make recommendations based on the analysis
Part B

4B. Critically 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:

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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 prepared in advance.
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, technical and sociopolitical aspects of sustainability

http://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/61063/unit_guide/print
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 presenting in different formats, working with people of different skills and cultural perspectives.

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:


World Economic Forum 2016 has a number of reports and blogs of interest:

*The two following relate to the rising inequality in the world,*

Oxfam An economy for the 1%


*Blog WEF: Why Equity matters more than you might think*


*What are the trends which are going to influence sustainable development?*


Unit Schedule

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<th>Date</th>
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<th>Session</th>
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Dennis H 2013 *The world we want to see: perspectives on post-2015* A Christian Aid report

September


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

KPMG *Future State 2030 the global megatrends shaping government*


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


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


September

This article develops a concept of boundaries in the global system for certain impacts, and propose that these set limits for human development
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Workshop Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>9:00am</td>
<td>EMCG240</td>
<td>Workshop Session 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 5th</td>
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<td>Introduction to Course themes</td>
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<td>Sustainability science</td>
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<td>Introduction to law, governance and politics of sustainable development</td>
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<td>EMC-G240</td>
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<td>March 19th</td>
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<td>Key trends, programs and action for sustainable development</td>
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<td>C5C209</td>
<td>Workshop Session 3:</td>
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<td>April 1st</td>
<td>- 5:00pm</td>
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<td>Sustainable development in practice</td>
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<td>• Industry</td>
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<td>• Local government</td>
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<td>9:00-5:00</td>
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<td>Workshop Session 4</td>
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<td>Measuring Progress Towards Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>Leading change for sustainable development</td>
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<td>International case studies</td>
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Friday May 20
9:00am - 5:00pm
EMC-G240
Field Trip - Sustainable Development in practice?
Rhodes and Sydney Olympic Park
Themes - historical land use and decision making - remediation of degraded industrial sites - urban development and local government - corporate sustainability - biodiversity conservation - nature and well being - water & energy management - sustainability tensions (legacy of SOP in the face of neo-liberal capitalist policies)

Saturday 21st May
9:00am - 5:00pm
EMC-G240
Workshop Session 6
Presentations of assignment 3
Reflection on field trip
Conclusions

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html


Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category 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/
Student Support
Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit 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://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.
When using the University’s IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources 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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific and environmental underpinnings of sustainable development and the concept of planetary boundaries
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- Develop an ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3
- Assignment 4

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

- Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific and environmental underpinnings of sustainable development and the concept of planetary boundaries
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Assessment tasks

• Assignment 1
• Assignment 2
• Assignment 3
• Assignment 4

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

• Identify some of the processes of bringing about change towards sustainable development, such as stakeholder engagement, leadership and governance to support change for sustainable development while considering the effects on the opportunities available to future generations
• Research how sustainable development is being undertaken in practice amongst key stakeholders

Assessment tasks

• Assignment 2
• Assignment 3
• Assignment 4
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**

- Identify some of the processes of bringing about change towards sustainable development, such as stakeholder engagement, leadership and governance to support change for sustainable development while considering the effects on the opportunities available to future generations
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**Assessment tasks**

- Assignment 1
- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3
- Assignment 4

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**

- Argue the case for the importance of and reasons for 'sustainable development' and articulate why it is contested in theory and practice
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Assessment tasks
• Assignment 2
• Assignment 3
• Assignment 4

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 scientific and environmental underpinnings of sustainable development and the concept of planetary boundaries
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Assessment tasks

- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3
- Assignment 4

Changes from Previous Offering

There is increased focus on the Sustainable Development Goals 2015 and indicators for their measurement in the program, rather than the issue basis of the previous year (climate-food-water-energy-gender-biodiversity). The Goals have been made the focus of assignment 1 and class discussion.

Assignment 1 is in the second session and provides early feedback marks. In previous years when an "issue" focus occurred these class presentations were unmarked although they required time and preparation. This means there are now 4 assignments, however the workload has not increased.

The field trip introduced last year was very popular and will be offered this year again. It occurs near the end of the teaching period.

Guest speakers vary from year to year. Case studies are updated. References are updated.

The assignment 2 is revised to focus on conceptualising sustainable development and in contrast to previous years does not offer a choice of topics.

Assignment 3 - developing research skills - has been updated to focus on actions being undertaken for sustainable development

Assignment 4 is now oriented to provide practice at making a policy briefing, broadening the modes of presentation for assignments.