



ENVS825

Sustainable Development: Introductory Principles and Practices

S1 Day 2017

Dept of Environmental Sciences

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	8
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	10
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	11
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	13
<u>Changes from Previous Offering</u>	17

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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E8A 372 moving to E7

Open: By appointment

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MEnvEd or MSc or MEngMgt or MEnvMgt or MEnvStud or MSusDev or MEnvPlan or MPlan or MDevCult or MIntRel or MEnv or MPPP or MSocEntre or GradDipEnv or GradCertEnv or GradCertSusDev or GradDipSusDev or GradDipIntRel or MPH or MDevStud

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 <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Argue the case for the importance of and reasons for 'sustainable development' and

articulate why it is contested in theory and practice

Be able to demonstrate a grasp of the Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030 and the international processes that drive sustainable development

Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific and environmental underpinnings of sustainable development, the concept of planetary boundaries and limits to growth

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

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.

Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills in regard to policy, programs and actions to achieve sustainable development

Research how sustainable development is being undertaken in practice amongst key stakeholders

Demonstrate an ability to present findings in different forms including multimedia, and cogent, structured reports, addressing defined issues

Develop an ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team

General Assessment Information

To show that you have met the outcomes for the unit, each assessment task needs to be passed to pass the unit.

Participation in class is also assessed: this is by preparing readings where required for discussion in class, plus contributions to class exercises and discussions. Expect that the marked assessment tasks that are prepared out side of class hours will take at least 100 hours - i.e at least 3 weeks of full time application.

Each assessment task needs to show that the student has read from journals. As the SD agenda is driven by the UN, government, NGO and business, reading materials from these sources on official web sites is indicated as well.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Assignment 1	10%	Yes	12th March 9.00am

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Assignment 2	20%	Yes	28th April
Assignment 3	30%	Yes	Saturday 20th May
Assignment 4	35%	Yes	12th June
Participation	5%	Yes	June 12th

Assignment 1

Due: **12th March 9.00am**

Weighting: **10%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030.

This assignment requires you to:

1. Prepare a presentation on one of the SD goals.
2. Submit your presentation which needs to include a) high quality slides with graphics and key points only b) notes pages completed for each slide which provides background and key points relating to that slide. You have to attribute points made to references in the notes. **Your presentation will be uploaded for other students to review and assess**

The presentation and notes provided with each slide will cover the following:

1. The Sustainable Development Goal
2. A slide showing a diagram with the main areas of action proposed to achieve the goal (i.e main targets/ indicators) and notes areas of emphasis and why
3. Why this goal is important for SD - how it supports a more sustainable planet and society (slide and more analytical notes)
4. A diagram showing how your goal is connected to 3-5 other SD goals - and the notes discuss in the inter connections/ risks / trade-offs / possible conflicts
5. A specific example of how this goal (or element of the goal) is being acted on - you may take an international, national or local level perspective here. The notes should expand and document your case
6. What strategies/ or changes are required to upscale the achievements for that goal? In the notes describe what changes to governance (institutions), policy, financial, technical, scientific, or economic factors may need to change

Please see assessment guide for more briefing on this task.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- 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
- 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.
- Demonstrate an ability to present findings in different forms including multimedia, and cogent, structured reports, addressing defined issues

Assignment 2

Due: **28th April**

Weighting: **20%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

Analysis of sustainable development discourse and principles

This assignment allows you to demonstrate your grasp of the discourse and practice for sustainable development, and critically assess the politics and power in achieving sustainable development. Your analysis might consider the following influences and trends on the discourse, policy and action for sustainable development:

1. the Sustainable Development Goals;
2. the concept of limits to growth and planetary boundaries;
3. current trends in global politics.

Further details and readings are provided on the ilearn site

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific and environmental underpinnings of

- sustainable development, the concept of planetary boundaries and limits to growth
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Assignment 3

Due: **Saturday 20th May**

Weighting: **30%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

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 the same major group - like farmers, women, scientists, unions, business, youth, local government etc. or from a particular sector

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 building). 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.

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- 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
- Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills in regard to policy, programs and actions to achieve sustainable development

- Research how sustainable development is being undertaken in practice amongst key stakeholders
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- Develop an ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team

Assignment 4

Due: **12th June**

Weighting: **35%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

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 in the format of policy advice to a government, business or other organisation on a sustainable development issue. The policy brief is to make a recommendation for a SD policy; the brief will make the arguments for and against, as arguments to assist in decision making.

The advice is for an actual organisation (this means you need to look at current policy and suggest future policy directions). The report will be succinct and use numbered footnotes for any references or additional points. The policy brief might include:

1. the issue and its relevance to sustainable development;
2. background to the organisation's current policy;
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 policy recommendations based on the analysis.

Part 4 B - This assignment is to be prepared in the format of an academic paper as a review/essay. The paper is to critically analyse the practical considerations of implementing a sustainable development program or policy.

Further details are on the ilearn site

On successful completion you will be able to:

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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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Participation

Due: **June 12th**

Weighting: **5%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

This assessment is based on

1. doing the required reading and being able to discuss issues in class activities
2. working on group activities in class and contributing to research and presentations

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an ability to present findings in different forms including multimedia, and cogent, structured reports, addressing defined issues
- Develop an ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team

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
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:

United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012 *The Future We Want*, UN <http://www.un.org/en/sustainablefuture/> This document is the consensus of aspirations from Rio + 20 intergovernmental meeting on sustainable development UNCSD

The Sustainable Development Goals 2015 <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

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

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%

<https://www.oxfam.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/an-economy-for-the-1-percent.pdf>

Blog WEF: Why Equity matters more than you might think

<http://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/02/why-equality-matters-more-than-you-might-think>

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

World Economic Forum 2016 Global Risks Report <http://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-risks-report-2016>

World Economic Forum 2016 Risk and Resilience <http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-agenda-council-on-risk-resilience-resilience-insights>

World Economic Forum 2016 Intelligent Assets Unlocking the Circular Economy <http://www.weforum.org/reports/intelligent-assets-unlocking-the-circular-economy-potential>

Dennis H 2013 *The world we want to see: perspectives on post-2015* A Christian Aid report September

<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/Post-2015-Christian-Aid-report-September-2013.pdf>

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*

<https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/pdf/2014/02/future-state-2030-v3.pdf>

<https://home.kpmg.com/xx/en/home/insights/2015/03/future-state-2030.html>

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

Steffen, W. Persson, A. Deutsch, L. Zalasiewicz, M. Richardson, K, Crumley, C. Crutzen, P. Folke, C. Gordon, L, Molona, M. Ramanathan,, V. Rockstrom, J Scheffer, M. Schellnhuber, H.J. and Svedin, U. 2011 The Anthropocene: From Global Change to Planetary Stewardship *AMBIO*(2011) 40:739-761

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

Rockstrom J. et al 2009 Feature: A safe operating space for humanity *Nature* 461:24: 472-475 September

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

Date	Time	Session theme	Room
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Saturday March 4 th	9.00-5.00	Session 1 – Scoping the SD field Introduction to Course themes Assessment expectations What is sustainable development Why sustainable development History of SD - International policy processes Science, governance and politics in SD	(EMC) G240
Sunday March 12 th	9.00-5.00	Session 2 – Pathways to SD SD Goals Exploration of core issues in SD	(EMC) G240
Saturday April 1 st	9.00-5.00	Session 3 – Pathways to SD - Scenarios for the future - Governance and stakeholder engagement – Leading action & change processes	(EMC) G240
Friday April 7 th	9.00-5.00	Session 4 - Sustainable Development in practice – case studies of SD actions by organisations	(EMC) G240
Saturday April 8 th	9.00-5.00	Session 5 - Pathways to SD – Driving change through Strategies Measuring progress in SD - Indicators	(EMC) G240
Friday May 12 th	9.00-5.00	Field Trip	Off campus
Saturday May 20 th	9.00-5.00	Session 6 – Presentations of Assessment task Conclusions to unit	(EMC) G240

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

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

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/

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/>

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 Services and 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.

Student Enquiries

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

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 - 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

- 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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- 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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- Demonstrate an ability to present findings in different forms including multimedia, and cogent, structured reports, addressing defined issues
- Develop an ability to work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team

Assessment tasks

- Assignment 2
- Assignment 3
- Assignment 4

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

- Argue the case for the importance of and reasons for 'sustainable development' and articulate why it is contested in theory and practice
- Be able to demonstrate a grasp of the Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030 and the international processes that drive sustainable development
- Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific and environmental underpinnings of sustainable development, the concept of planetary boundaries and limits to growth
- 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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- Demonstrate an ability to present findings in different forms including multimedia, and 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
- 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

- Argue the case for the importance of and reasons for 'sustainable development' and articulate why it is contested in theory and practice
- Demonstrate an understanding of the scientific and environmental underpinnings of

sustainable development, the concept of planetary boundaries and limits to growth

- 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
- Demonstrate critical thinking and analytical skills in regard to policy, programs and actions to achieve sustainable development
- Research how sustainable development is being undertaken in practice amongst key stakeholders

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
- Demonstrate an ability to present findings in different forms including multimedia, and 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
- 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
- Participation

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.