



The University of Southern Queensland

Course specification

The current and official versions of the course specifications are available on the web at
<<http://www.usq.edu.au/coursespecification/current>>.
Please consult the web for updates that may occur during the year.

Description: Sustainability Concepts and Issues

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
CDS	2001	90816	2, 2009	EXT	1.00	Toowoomba

Academic group:	FOART
Academic org:	FOA003
Student contribution band:	1
ASCED code:	090515

STAFFING

Examiner: Ian Richards
Moderator: Nathan Beel

REQUISITES

Pre-requisite or Co-requisite: CMS1000

RATIONALE

Sustainability has become a key consideration in most human activities. Community development workers and others working in community and social contexts have an increasing need to understand sustainability concepts and the key social, economic and environmental challenges in achieving sustainable communities. This course seeks to provide a broad level of understanding of sustainability in a community context with particular emphasis on regional cities.

SYNOPSIS

The course begins by examining the many conflicting definitions of sustainability, a number of key principles and several alternative models of sustainability. These are placed in the context of the prevailing paradigms of western society and the many problems and challenges of the early twenty-first century, especially as they relate to populations and the carrying capacity of local regions and the planet as a whole. A systems approach to sustainability allows the identification of unsustainable activities and key natural resources, especially land, water and energy. Current environmental, economic and social problems can be examined in this context and solutions, both current and proposed, evaluated as to their long term contribution towards sustainability. The Hervey Bay region will be used as a case study in the context of the "sea change" phenomenon, with consideration of such issues as climate change, housing, transport, water and agriculture. Community involvement in sustainability planning is emphasised in the context of the building of social capital and sustainable community structures and organisations. Some alternative strategies for regional community and economic development will be examined including eco-villages.

OBJECTIVES

On completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast various definitions of sustainability;
2. Identify key sustainability principles and indicators;
3. Critically analyse sustainability issues in the context of a systems model of sustainability;
4. Demonstrate an awareness of current local and global sustainability problems, the actions being taken to alleviate them and the likely effectiveness of these solutions;
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the social and economic context of sustainability issues and the importance of community involvement in policy development and planning;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of alternative community responses to achieving sustainability, including local trading schemes and eco-villages.

TOPICS

Description	Weighting (%)
1. Sustainability definitions and system models;	20.00
2. Historical context: resource usage and population growth in industrialised western society;	10.00
3. Current local and global ecological and sustainability issues and responses;	30.00
4. Social and economic contexts of sustainability;	20.00
5. Alternative strategies and prospects.	20.00

TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED

ALL textbooks and materials are available for purchase from USQ BOOKSHOP (unless otherwise stated). Orders may be placed via secure internet, free fax 1800642453, phone 07 46312742 (within Australia), or mail. Overseas students should fax +61 7 46311743, or phone +61 7 46312742. For costs, further details, and internet ordering, use the 'Textbook Search' facility at <http://bookshop.usq.edu.au> click 'Semester', then enter your 'Course Code' (no spaces).

Lowe, Ian 2009, *A big fix: radical solutions for Australia's environment crisis*, Black Inc, Melbourne.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Reference materials are materials that, if accessed by students, may improve their knowledge and understanding of the material in the course and enrich their learning experience.

Extensive reference materials exist both in the library and online for this course. These are some examples. A more complete list is available in the Study materials.

Bang, Jan Martin 2005, *Ecovillages: a practical guide to sustainable communities*, New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, BC.

Edwards, Andres R 2005, *The sustainability revolution: portrait of a paradigm shift*, New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, BC.

Goldie, J, Douglas, B & Furness, B (eds) 2005, *In search of sustainability*, CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood, Vic.

Hawken, P, Lovins A & Lovins LH 1999, *Natural capitalism: the next industrial revolution*, Earthscan Publications, London.

Heinberg, R 2005, *The party's over: oil, war and the fate of industrial societies*, 2nd edn, New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, BC.

James, S, Torbjorn L 2004, *The natural step for communities: how cities and towns can change to sustainable practices*, New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, BC.

Low, N, Gleeson, B, Green, R & Rodovic, D 2005, *The green city*, UNSW Press, Sydney.

Meadows, DH, Randers J & Meadows, DL 2004, *Limits to growth: the 30 year update*, Earthscan, London.

Roseland, M 2005, *Towards sustainable communities: resources for citizens and their governments*, New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, BC.

STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Directed Study	36.00
Private Study	129.00

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks out of	Wtg (%)	Due date
CMA TEST 1	100.00	5.00	24 Aug 2009 (see note 1)
ESSAY	100.00	30.00	14 Sep 2009 (see note 2)
MEDIA JOURNAL	100.00	15.00	05 Oct 2009 (see note 3)
CASE STUDY	100.00	30.00	26 Oct 2009 (see note 4)
DISCUSSION CONTRIBUTION	100.00	15.00	30 Oct 2009 (see note 5)
CMA TEST 2	100.00	5.00	02 Nov 2009 (see note 6)

NOTES

1. This assessment is aligned with Objectives 1, 2 and 3.
2. This assessment is aligned with Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4.
3. This assessment is aligned with Objectives 1, 4, 5 and 6.
4. This assessment is aligned with Objectives 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.
5. Discussion contribution is assessed on participation in Study Desk discussions. This assessment is aligned with Objectives 3, 4, 5 and 6.
6. This assessment is aligned with Objectives 4, 5 and 6.

IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- 1 Attendance requirements:

- This course contains a discussion forum where students' participation is formally assessed and successful participation in that discussion group is required to complete the requirements to be awarded a passing grade in the course. There are no other attendance requirements for this course. However, it is the students' responsibility to study all material provided to them, or required to be accessed by them, to maximise their chances of meeting the objectives of the course and to be informed of course-related activities and administration.
- 2 Requirements for students to complete each assessment item satisfactorily:
To successfully complete an individual assessment item, a student must achieve at least 50% of the marks or a grade of at least C-. This statement must be read in conjunction with Statement 4 below.
 - 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:
If students submit assignments after the due date without extenuating circumstances and without prior approval, then a penalty of a maximum of 5% of the assigned mark may apply for each working day late, up to a maximum of 10 working days, at which time a mark of zero can be recorded for that assignment.
 - 4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:
To be assured of receiving a passing grade a student must achieve at least 50% of the total weighted marks available for the course.
 - 5 Method used to combine assessment results to attain final grade:
The final grades for students will be assigned on the basis of the aggregate of the weighted marks obtained for each of the summative assessment items in the course.
 - 6 Examination information:
There is no exam for this course.
 - 7 Examination period when Deferred/Supplementary examinations will be held:
Given the details under (6) above, there are no deferred exams for this course. However, if any deferred/makeup work is granted, it would have to be submitted by a date set by the examiner.
 - 8 University Regulations:
Students should read USQ Regulations 5.1 Definitions, 5.6 Assessment, and 5.10 Academic Misconduct for further information and to avoid actions which might contravene University Regulations. These regulations can be found at the URL
<http://www.usq.edu.au/corporateservices/calendar/part5.htm>

ASSESSMENT NOTES

- 9 (a) The due date for an assignment is the date by which a student must either submit online or despatch the assignment to the USQ. The onus is on the student to provide proof of the despatch date, if requested by the Examiner. Online submission must be made by 12 midnight on the due date. (b) Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be despatched to USQ within 24 hours if requested by the Examiner. (c) In accordance with University's Assignment Extension Policy (Regulation 5.6.1), the examiner of a course may grant an extension of the due date of an assignment in extenuating circumstances such as documented ill-health. (d) In the event that a due date for an assignment falls on a local public holiday in their area, such as a Show holiday, the due date for the assignment will be the next day. Students are to note on the assignment cover the date of the public holiday for the examiner's convenience. (e) Students who do not have regular access to postal services or who are otherwise disadvantaged by these regulations may be given special consideration. They should contact the examiner of the course to negotiate such special arrangements. (f) Students who have undertaken all of

the required assessments in the course but who have failed to meet some of the specified objectives of the course within the normally prescribed time may be awarded the temporary grade: IM (Incomplete-Makeup). An IM grade will only be awarded when, in the opinion of the examiner, a student will be able to achieve the remaining objectives of the course after a period of non-directed personal study. (g) Students who, for medical, family/personal, or employment-related reasons, are unable to complete an assignment or sit for an examination at the scheduled time, may apply to defer an assessment in the course. Such a request must be accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation. One of the following temporary grades may be awarded: IDS (Incomplete - Deferred Examination; IDM (Incomplete Deferred Make-up); IDB (Incomplete - Both Deferred Examination and Deferred Make-up).

10 Students will require access to email and have internet access to UConnect for this course.