

“Understanding Global Sustainability Challenges”

Instructor:	Ursel Biester
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Duration:	9 weeks
Language of Instruction:	English

Description

Sustainability is no longer a fringe topic as it is intricately linked to the overall well-being of people and the planet. A foundational understanding of sustainability, its dimensions (social, economic, environmental), interpretations and manifestation is a crucial 21st-century competence – which is important on an individual level, but also to create a future that is more just for the whole of humanity. This course will introduce its participants to the concept of sustainability and expose them to the societal challenges and possible solutions using the framework of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Examples from business, academia, NGOs and communities will be used to showcase good practices in order to inspire thoughts and actions of the participants. A key emphasis will be on introducing the participants to multi-stakeholder approaches to solve sustainability challenges. Lastly, we will elaborate on the role of communicating sustainability.

Learning Objectives

This seminar will equip the participants with knowledge and key competencies on sustainability that will enable them to reflect and act on areas of change in the individual sphere. Further, they will enhance their macro understanding through a comprehensive overview of complex sustainability challenges, their effects and consequences on people and the planet. Knowledge of the UN SDGs and the role of the government, business and other institutions will support the participants in charting out the sustainability agenda of their own organizations. The participants will also be empowered to analyze complex systems, to think about how these systems are embedded within different domains and different scales, and to reflect on their own role in their local community and in global society.

Throughout the program, the participants will be introduced to examples of good practices from different regions of the world to bring an intercultural flavor to the learning process. A framework on successful multi-stakeholder approaches for sustainability will enhance the ability of participants to build and/or participate in such processes. Through an approach strongly focusing on practice and debate, participants will deepen their knowledge on sustainable decision-making and on acting sustainably in daily life as well as their profession.

Target Group

Young professionals, graduates, postgraduates, early-career CSR (corporate social responsibility) professionals and/or aspirants, professionals from all fields, advanced students.

General Requirements

Participants need to possess English language abilities in speaking and writing on the Upper Intermediate Level (at least B2). Attendance of the live sessions is essential for your successful and meaningful completion of the course. To receive a certificate for this course, you will need to attend at least two of the three live sessions. These live sessions will be combined with additional material and intensive work through the online course platform, both individually and in groups. Please see course requirements for the various assignments.

To ensure a comfortable learning environment for all, please adhere to our [Code of Online Conduct](#).

Technical Requirements

Stable internet connection.

Fully functional device, such as computer, laptop or tablet (use of smart phones is not recommended) with camera and microphone, headset recommended.

Recommended operating systems: Windows 10 or higher or MacOS 10.13 or higher. Avoid using a VPN.

Software: Webex Meetings. Please log in to Webex at least a day before course start in order to avoid any technical delays on the first live session.

Course Requirements

Assignments & Readings

Readings, listening and watching material will be available online on particular topics; smaller assignments (such as creating Mindmaps, group tasks) will be provided weekly to discuss multi-stakeholder perspectives and strengthen participative approaches towards sustainability.

Literature

Provided online.

Modules

Module	Topics, Guiding Questions, Reading, Assignments
1	<p>LIVE SESSION // Introduction: The 21st Century – Setting Ground for a Sustainable Future?</p> <p>With the opening online session of the course, we will open the scope with the 21st century’s challenges for the planet and introduce the concept of sustainability. We will expose the (societal) challenges and possible solutions using the framework of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and discuss its relevance and impact to our daily life.</p>
2	<p>Asynchronous session // Topic: Overview on implementation of the AGENDA 2030 in respective countries of the participants</p> <p>Get familiar with the implementation of the Agenda 2030, the SDGs, in your country.</p>
3	<p>Asynchronous session // Topic: Critical perspectives on SDGs: what about Inclusion & Diversity in the global agenda?</p>
4	<p>Asynchronous session // Topic: Relating the SDGs to your own institution/profession</p>

5	<p>LIVE SESSION // Topic: Regenerative Entrepreneurship</p> <p>In the second live online session, we will focus on regenerative entrepreneurship. The participants will explore the fundamental questions pertaining to the ‘purpose of business’ and the role of business in sustainability transformation. The relationship between business and society and the role of multi-stakeholder partnerships in advancing positive change will be a key focus area.</p>
6	<p>Asynchronous session // Topic: Completing a case study on Regenerative Entrepreneurship</p>
7	<p>Asynchronous session // Topic: Mapping (blind) spots for action in your own institution/profession</p>
8	<p>Asynchronous session // Topic: Formulate an overarching goal towards sustainability (professional/personal)</p> <p>Define short-term goals, taking into account the various dimensions of sustainability, and determine first steps of action.</p>
9	<p>LIVE SESSION // Topic: Sustainability Communication</p> <p>In our last meeting, we focus on Sustainability Communication and discuss implementation approaches in order to achieve concrete transformation steps – in participants’ both personal and professional lives.</p>