

ENVS3006: Surviving the Anthropocene: Sustainability in the 21st Century

Callaghan

Semester 1 - 2024



OVERVIEW

Course Description

In contrast to the past 12,000 years of the Holocene's relative stability, the Anthropocene refers to the profound and accelerating human transformations of the earth's climate and environment. However, while it is necessary to acknowledge the accelerating global impact of humanity on our world, we also must recognise that such changes are not universal. Rather the Anthropocene produces and reproduces unequal geographies of political, social, cultural and economic relations. This course takes up the challenge proposed by philosophers, social scientists and scientists who argue that nothing less than a transformation of society is needed to move us towards a sustainable future. To respond to this challenge, students will critically examine conceptual, ethical and practical tools for rethinking and determining measures of sustainability. Insights from complexity theory, contemporary social thought, and non-western knowledges that can provide ways of reimagining cities, agriculture, everyday life, consumption and waste will provide opportunities for students to examine and evaluate current and proposed pathways and processes of transformation towards sustainability.

Previous course title - Sustainability: Theory and Practice

Academic Progress Requirements

Nil

Requisites

This course replaces EMGT3070. If you have successfully completed EMGT3070 you cannot enrol in this course.

Assumed Knowledge

ENVS1004 (previously EMGT1020) and ENVS2008 (previously EMGT2020) are recommended.

Students enrolled in the B Arts program - Human Geography and the Environment Major, must have successfully completed GEOG1020 and GEOG2080, OR at least 20 units of 3000 level directed courses from this major.

Contact Hours

Callaghan Field Study

Face to Face Off Campus

11 hour(s) per term

Week/date to be advised. This includes field laboratories and computer laboratories conducted during an intensive field trip.

Lecture

Online

2 hour(s) per week(s) for 11 week(s)

Online Modules.

Tutorial

Face to Face On Campus

1 hour(s) per week(s) for 11 week(s)

Unit Weighting Workload

10

Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

COURSE OUTLINE

www.newcastle.edu.au

CRICOS Provider 00109J

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator **Callaghan**
A/Pr Michelle Duffy
Michelle.Duffy@newcastle.edu.au
(02) 4921 5097
Consultation: Please email Michelle to make a time to meet

Teaching Staff Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.

School Office **School of Environmental and Life Sciences**
Room C228 Chemistry Building
Callaghan
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9am-5pm (Mon-Fri)

SYLLABUS

Course Content Topics will be chosen from:

1. Introduction to contested notions of sustainability and sustainable development
2. Critical review of the history and theoretical basis of sustainability
3. Ethical stances for sustainability
4. Sustainability theory, including non-western knowledge systems, complexity theory and contemporary social theory
Rethinking sustainability case studies, including agriculture, cities, everyday life, consumption, waste, and food.
6. Assessment of sustainability initiatives and critical analysis of sustainability indicators
7. Pathways and possibilities for sustainable futures

Course Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain and critically evaluate contested notions of sustainable development, and develop their own concept of sustainability with reference to values, policies and futures;
2. Analyse current attempts to implement sustainability at local, regional and global levels;
3. Use and critically evaluate indicators of sustainability;
4. Analyse and comment on major issues in sustainability such as cities, agriculture, waste, and food lifestyle and consumption issues;
5. Apply key insights from complexity theory, contemporary social theory, non-western perspectives and transdisciplinary thinking to major issues in sustainability;
6. Engage constructively with diverse groups in building more sustainable futures.

Course Materials

Other Resources:

- Students are expected to attend the class fieldtrip either in week 3 or week 4. Students will be assigned one of these fieldtrip schedules at the beginning of semester.

SCHEDULE

| Week | Week Begins | Topic | Learning Activity | Assessment Due |
|----------------------------|-------------|--|--|---|
| 1 | 26 Feb | What is the Anthropocene? | Required readings | Online activity due MONDAY 4 MARCH 2024 |
| 2 | 4 Mar | Sustainability: History, Key Concepts & Contested Definitions | Required readings | Online activity due MONDAY 11 MARCH 2024 |
| 3 | 11 Mar | Field trip GROUP 1: FRIDAY 15 MARCH | Required readings Fieldtrip | Online activity due MONDAY 18 MARCH 2024 |
| 4 | 18 Mar | Fieldtrip GROUP 2: FRIDAY 22 MARCH | Required readings Fieldtrip | Online activity due MONDAY 25 MARCH 2024 |
| 5 | 25 Mar | Living in Denial | Required readings | NO online activity |
| 6 | 1 Apr | Questioning the Role of Think Tanks, Politics & the Media in Climate Change Denial | Required readings | Online activity due MONDAY 8 APRIL 2024 |
| 7 | 8 Apr | Questioning the Ethics of Sustainability & Sustainable Development | Required readings | Online activity due MONDAY 8 APRIL 2024 Fieldtrip workbook due: FRIDAY 12 APRIL 2024 |
| Mid-Semester Recess | | | | |
| Mid-Semester Recess | | | | |
| 8 | 29 Apr | Rethinking Human-Planet Relations | Required readings | Online activity due MONDAY 15 APRIL 2024 |
| 9 | 6 May | Sustaining our Worlds | Required readings | Online activity due MONDAY 6 MAY 2024 |
| 10 | 13 May | Rethinking Consumption | Required readings | Online activity due MONDAY 6 MAY 2024 |
| 11 | 20 May | Rethinking Waste | Required readings On campus fieldwork | Online activity due MONDAY 13 MAY 2024 Group presentation due: FRIDAY 24 MAY 2024 |
| 12 | 27 May | Transforming for the Future: Now What? | Required readings | NO online activity |
| 13 | 3 Jun | | | Final report due FRIDAY 7 JUNE 2024 |
| Examination Period | | | | |
| Examination Period | | | | |

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 4 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

| | Assessment Name | Due Date | Involvement | Weighting | Learning Outcomes |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Group Presentation | 24 May 2024 i.e., within scheduled time of the on-campus field trip | Group | 20% | 2, 4, 6 |
| 2 | Field Trip Report | FRIDAY 12 APRIL 2024 | Individual | 30% | 2, 3, 6 |
| 3 | Sustainability Report | FRIDAY 7 JUNE 2024 | Individual | 40% | 2, 3, 5 |
| 4 | Online Quizzes | Students have one week to complete each quiz. For example, week 1 quiz is to be completed by 5pm Monday 4 March 2024. Full schedule of due dates is provided in this document's schedule as well as on the Canvas site. | Individual | 10% | 1, 2, 3, 4 |

Late Submissions

The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Group Presentation

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Assessment Type | Presentation |
| Purpose | Opportunity to reflect on course learning |
| Description | Refer to assessment guidelines in Assessment folder on Canvas |
| Weighting | 20% |
| Length | 5 minutes |
| Due Date | 24 May 2024 i.e., within scheduled time of the on-campus field trip |
| Submission Method | In Class |
| Assessment Criteria | Refer to marking rubric |
| Return Method | Online |
| Feedback Provided | In Class |
| Opportunity to Reattempt | Students WILL NOT be given the opportunity to reattempt this assessment. |

Assessment 2 - Field Trip Report

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Assessment Type | Log / Workbook |
| Purpose | The field trip focuses on the challenges of climate change faced by communities, environments and industry in the Hunter region, NSW, and how these challenges are being addressed. Students are expected to collect a range of data and material that will be the basis for a separate assessment, the Sustainability Report. |
| Description | Refer to assessment guidelines in Assessment folder on Canvas |
| Weighting | 30% |
| Length | 3000 words |
| Due Date | FRIDAY 12 APRIL 2024 |
| Submission Method | Online |
| Assessment Criteria | Refer to marking rubric |
| Return Method | Online |
| Feedback Provided | Online - 3 weeks after submission. |
| Opportunity to Reattempt | Students WILL NOT be given the opportunity to reattempt this assessment. |

Assessment 3 - Sustainability Report

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Assessment Type | Report |
| Purpose | In this field trip report your task is to expand on one (1) specific challenge and response to climate change that you identified while on the field trip. |
| Description | Refer to assessment guidelines in Assessment folder on Canvas |
| Weighting | 40% |
| Length | 2000 words |
| Due Date | FRIDAY 7 JUNE 2024 |
| Submission Method | Online |
| Assessment Criteria | Refer to marking rubric |
| Return Method | Online |
| Feedback Provided | Online - 3 weeks after submission. |
| Opportunity to Reattempt | Students WILL NOT be given the opportunity to reattempt this assessment. |

Assessment 4 - Online Quizzes

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Assessment Type | Quiz |
| Purpose | To assist with comprehension of required readings |
| Description | |
| Weighting | 10% |
| Length | short answers |
| Due Date | Students have one week to complete each quiz. For example, week 1 quiz is to be completed by 5pm Monday 4 March 2024. Full schedule of due dates is provided in this document's schedule as well as on the Canvas site. |
| Submission Method | Online |
| Assessment Criteria | |
| Return Method | Online |
| Feedback Provided | Online - PLEASE NOTE: students may reattempt this assessment within the week the quiz is open. |
| Opportunity to Reattempt | Students WILL be given the opportunity to reattempt this assessment. |

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

| Range of Marks | Grade | Description |
|----------------|-----------------------|--|
| 85-100 | High Distinction (HD) | Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives. |
| 75-84 | Distinction (D) | Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives. |
| 65-74 | Credit (C) | Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes. |
| 50-64 | Pass (P) | Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes. |
| 0-49 | Fail (FF) | Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action. |

Attendance

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).
Attendance/participation will be recorded in the following components:

- Field Study (Method of recording: A roll will be taken)

PLEASE NOTE there is a cost for bus hire of approximately \$25-30

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.
- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.
- Face to Face: Communication will be provided via face to face meetings or supervision

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

As a result of student feedback, the following changes have been made to this offering of the course:

- Tutorials will assist students with the skills needed to prepare the fieldtrip workbook and the final report.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the [Oral Examination \(viva\) Procedure](#). In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and

in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35>.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.

Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:
<https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236>

Other Information

If you are registered with AccessAbility and have been provided with a Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP), please ensure that you provide your Course Coordinator with a copy as soon as you can, or let your Course Coordinator know that you are still waiting for your RAP.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.

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