

SUS101 Foundations of Sustainability - Investigating Planetary Health

School: School of Law and Society

2025 | Semester 1

UniSC Sunshine Coast
UniSC Moreton Bay

**BLENDED
LEARNING**

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Online

ONLINE

You can do this course without coming onto campus.

Please go to usc.edu.au for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

What is sustainability? Short answer - changing the world for the better. This course provides you with foundational knowledge of sustainability concepts and issues. It uses an interdisciplinary approach to ensure you are equipped with a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena and practices that have shaped the planet and the lives of all living things. You will explore ethics, philosophy, complex systems thinking and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Weekly asynchronous online learning materials	1hr	Week 1	13 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus Tutorial 2 hours	2hrs	Week 1	10 times
ONLINE			
Learning materials – Weekly asynchronous online learning materials	1hr	Week 1	13 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Synchronous tutorial	2hrs	Week 1	10 times

1.3. Course Topics

Sustainability overview, history and actors

Ethics, Values and Happiness

Sustainability thinking tools

Sustainability applications: Conservation and Law

Measuring and communicating sustainability

SDG project work

2. What level is this course?

100 Level (Introductory)

Engaging with discipline knowledge and skills at foundational level, broad application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts and with support. Limited or no prerequisites. Normally, associated with the first full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES		GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...		Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1	Identify and describe sustainability concepts, models and approaches	Sustainability-focussed
2	Describe and evaluate the concept of ethical responsibility towards present and future generations.	Ethical
3	Investigate and evaluate the UN Sustainable Development Goals	Sustainability-focussed
4	Research and communicate information to expert and non expert audiences.	Engaged

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1. Pre-requisites

Not applicable

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Early feedback is given through embedded module learning quizzes on course readings.

Also practice reflective writing and peer feedback will occur during tutorial time.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Examination - not Centrally Scheduled	Individual	20%	1.5 hours	Week 4	Online Test (Quiz)
All	2	Artefact - Creative	Individual	40%	1500 words - 10 minutes max	Week 8	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece	Individual or Group	40%	1200 words equivalent References, images, titles and tables are not included in the word count.	Week 13	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

All - Assessment Task 1: Sustainability Concepts and Approaches

GOAL:	This exam will review key concepts and ideas presented in the lecture, weekly readings and the tutorials		
PRODUCT:	Examination - not Centrally Scheduled		
FORMAT:	50 randomised Multiple Choice Questions		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Identification of sustainability concepts, models and approaches	1
GENERIC SKILLS:	Problem solving, Information literacy		

All - Assessment Task 2: Demonstrating Sustainability Phronesis

GOAL:	This task (Video) is designed to capture your understanding of the course materials as a form of 'practical wisdom' (phronesis) to be applied in your future life and career. This wisdom is informed by the knowledge of ethics, science and social sciences and understandings of UN conventions, agreements, SDG goals and protocols that help to enable a sustainable future.													
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Creative													
FORMAT:	Academic format with references (APA 6) This is written or oral (narrated PPT presentation saved as a MP4) or video will be presented as a reflection on course materials. It may use first person, images, quotes and must reference and cite specific course materials and papers. See Canvas Task 2 assessment folder for more information													
CRITERIA:	<table><tr><th>No.</th><th></th><th>Learning Outcome assessed</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Description of course sustainability issues/concepts, models and approaches</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Identify and evaluate sustainability themes and perspectives that link to your future career and life practice.</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Communication</td><td>4</td></tr></table>	No.		Learning Outcome assessed	1	Description of course sustainability issues/concepts, models and approaches	1	2	Identify and evaluate sustainability themes and perspectives that link to your future career and life practice.	2	3	Communication	4	
No.		Learning Outcome assessed												
1	Description of course sustainability issues/concepts, models and approaches	1												
2	Identify and evaluate sustainability themes and perspectives that link to your future career and life practice.	2												
3	Communication	4												
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy													

All - Assessment Task 3: Speculative Fiction - Futures

GOAL:	You will examine a contemporary sustainability issue within the SDG framework. You will take the baseline empirical data and then project this into a future where the goal and indicators have been met. You will describe a world where the SDG is achieved and what it took to get us there. Explicit in this narrative are the ethical points and decisions that had to be made in order to propel us forward into living more sustainably. You will use an ethical lens to explore the future possibilities																
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece																
FORMAT:	You may work individually or in a group of up to three. You will have up to 1000 words per person. You are encouraged to use diverse data sets to produce a convincing and engaging future. Please see the Canvas course site for details.																
CRITERIA:	<table><tr><th>No.</th><th></th><th>Learning Outcome assessed</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Description of sustainability issue linked to the SDG</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Evaluation of the behaviors, values and ethics of the issue</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Evaluation of the complex interactions between economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Communication</td><td>4</td></tr></table>	No.		Learning Outcome assessed	1	Description of sustainability issue linked to the SDG	1	2	Evaluation of the behaviors, values and ethics of the issue	2	3	Evaluation of the complex interactions between economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions	3	4	Communication	4	
No.		Learning Outcome assessed															
1	Description of sustainability issue linked to the SDG	1															
2	Evaluation of the behaviors, values and ethics of the issue	2															
3	Evaluation of the complex interactions between economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions	3															
4	Communication	4															
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy																

6.4. Assessment to competency mapping

PROGRAMME DELIVERY MODE	ASSESSMENT TYPE	TITLE	COMPETENCY	TEACHING METHODS
EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS				
All delivery modes	Artefact - Creative	Demonstrating Sustainability Phronesis	4.1.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			12.2.4	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			17.2.2	Taught
			17.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			17.3.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
	Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece	Speculative Fiction - Futures	4.1.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			17.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			17.3.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
	Examination - not Centrally Scheduled	Sustainability Concepts and Approaches	1.1.1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.1.2	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.1.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			1.1.4	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			2.3.4	Taught, Practiced
			4.1.4	Taught, Practiced
GEOGRAPHY THRESHOLD LEARNING OUTCOMES				
All delivery modes	Examination - not Centrally Scheduled	Sustainability Concepts and Approaches	1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
POLICY FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF AUSTRALIAN PLANNING QUALIFICATIONS 2016				
All delivery modes	Examination - not Centrally Scheduled	Sustainability Concepts and Approaches	2.2.3	Taught, Practiced, Assessed

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

8.2. Specific requirements

Nil

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

Less than 15 minutes: No penalty

From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty

More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](tel:0754301168) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](tel:0754563864) or email safe@usc.edu.au.

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call [07 5430 1226](tel:0754301226) or email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au.

10.5. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au.

10.6. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 1226.

10.7. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email AccessAbility@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 2890.

10.8. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

10.10. General Enquiries

In person:

- **UniSC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **UniSC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **UniSC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **UniSC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **UniSC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **UniSC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au