

PIA5100: MANAGING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Managing Sustainable Development

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

5100

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

Sustainable development is a multi-disciplinary topic and area of practice that has captured the attention of not only policy makers but also businesses, non-profit organizations, citizens, consumers, and lobby groups. Its importance has been marked by the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a blueprint for all parties to strive for. These Goals resonate well with the trends in recent years where decision makers are not merely interested in projects, organizations, and investments that drive economic progress but also those that have sustainability impact to the environment and the society as a whole. This 360-degree view about development requires a new way of thinking about how managers of development projects, organizations, and ventures approach development opportunities and challenges, and the framework and tools that can be deployed to achieve these Goals.

This course aims to equip students -- as future leaders and managers of projects, organizations, and ventures that have a stake in sustainable development -- with a way of thinking, planning and managing sustainable development and development projects by drawing upon cutting-edge strategies and evidence. The course will be both analytical and practical and includes themes pertaining to "current issues" in development projects, organizations, and ventures, the different frameworks and tools (e.g., certification and standards, metrics, models) to make sense of and implement development in a sustainable manner, as well as emerging themes related to sustainable development such as circular economy and new technologies (e.g., blockchain). Case studies will be used to illustrate key concepts, examples, and best practices on the topic.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

	CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identity the objectives and key issues in sustainable development.	10	x	x	x
2	Develop understanding and critical thinking of the various frameworks and tools to analyze, plan, and manage sustainable development projects, organizations and ventures.	40	x	x	x
3	Develop competency in defending and articulating why and how development initiatives and projects are successful, accountable, and legitimate using different tools, reporting and evaluation.	40	x	x	x
4	Sharpen the ability to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of various framework and tools for development and communicating them responsibly to internal and external constituents.	10	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Defining sustainable development; understanding the narratives and rhetoric of sustainable development; operational issues in sustainable development efforts.	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	Class discussion and debate	An opportunity for students to be critical about various concepts, principles and methods related to sustainable development; distinguishing between facts vs socially constructed reality; distinguishing different paradigms of development.	1, 2, 3, 4	
3	Use of multi-media aids (films, news coverage, documentaries, online resources, etc.)	A means to provide concrete examples and ideas; encourage imaginative thinking and critical reflection.	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	Individual assignment	This will be a 4-page long critical review of a sustainable development case where students apply the concepts, tools, methods learned to examine, appreciate, and ask questions about the case.	1, 2	
5	Group project	This is a group work where students will "defend a client" whose sustainable development project went wrong or faced problems. Students will choose their own topic or project and apply all that they have learned to help address the client's issues.	1, 2, 3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1 In-class Participation and Discussion	2, 4	10	Individual Assessment	Yes

2	Individual Assignment	1, 2, 3	40	Individual Assessment	No
3	Group Project Presentation and Report	1, 2, 3, 4	50	Group Assessment	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Additional Information for ATs

- The grade is calculated according to the % weighting assigned;
- The submission of all component assignments is required for passing the subject;
- Student must pass all component(s) (standard of passing) if he/she is to pass the subject.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

In-class Participation and Discussion (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Evaluated based on attendance quality, quantity, and quality of weekly participation in leading articles discussions.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Perfect attendance, excellent contribution to weekly class, be a positive influence in the class.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good attendance, good contribution to weekly class.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Some attendance, some contribution to weekly class.

Marginal

(D) Adequate attendance and contribution to weekly class.

Failure

(F) Limited attendance, limited contribution to weekly class, creating major or minor issues in the class.

Assessment Task

Individual Assignment (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

- Ability to give direct and adequate answers to questions
- Critical and analytic skills to assess arguments and concepts learnt in the course
- Grasp of the subject matter dealt in the course

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Ability to respond to offer review in a critical, creative, and precise manner; strong evidence of original thinking; good capacity in analyzing and synthesizing information; superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Sufficient understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems.

Marginal

(D) Adequate understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems.

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; obvious weakness and flaws in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

Group Project Presentation and Report (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

- Research skills to delineate and synthesize materials
- Ability to give direct and adequate responses to challenges
- Critical and analytic skills to assess arguments and concepts learnt in the course
- Grasp of the subject matter dealt in the course

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) The ability to delineate materials; the use of relevant and stimulating materials; good and creative organization of materials; ability to conduct in-class discussion; capability in responding to questions derived from alternative perspectives; evidence of superior critical analysis and synthesis; excellent grasp of subject matter; evidence of in-depth knowledge.

Good

(B+, B, B-) The use of materials largely relevant to the topic; indications of good grasp of subject; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature; good ability to initiate dialogues with other students.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Basic understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems during discussion.

Marginal

(D) Acceptable understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems during discussion.

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

In-class Participation and Discussion (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

- Evaluated based on attendance quality, quantity, and quality of weekly participation in leading articles discussions.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Perfect attendance excellent contribution to weekly class, be a positive influence in the class.

Good

(B+, B) Good attendance, good contribution to weekly class.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Some attendance, some contribution to weekly class.

Failure

(F) Limited attendance, limited contribution to weekly class, creating major or minor issues in the class.

Assessment Task

Individual Assignment (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

- Ability to give direct and adequate answers to questions
- Critical and analytic skills to assess arguments and concepts learnt in the course
- Grasp of the subject matter dealt in the course

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Ability to respond to offer review in a critical, creative, and precise manner; strong evidence of original thinking; good capacity in analyzing and synthesizing information; superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.

Good

(B+, B) Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Between adequate and sufficient understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems.

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; obvious weakness and flaws in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

Group Project Presentation and Report (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

- Research skills to delineate and synthesize materials
- Ability to give direct and adequate responses to challenges
- Critical and analytic skills to assess arguments and concepts learnt in the course
- Grasp of the subject matter dealt in the course

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) The ability to delineate materials; the use of relevant and stimulating materials; good and creative organization of materials; ability to conduct in-class discussion; capability in responding to questions derived from alternative perspectives; evidence of superior critical analysis and synthesis; excellent grasp of subject matter; evidence of in-depth knowledge.

Good

(B+, B) The use of materials largely relevant to the topic; indications of good grasp of subject; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature; good ability to initiate dialogues with other students.

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Between basic and acceptable understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems during discussion.

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

Sustainable development; Contestation and narratives; Stakeholders of development; Alternative organizations and organizing; Certifications and standards; Metrics of development; Financial analysis for development; Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG); Policy issues in development; Circular economy; New technologies for development

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

	Title
1	Jeffrey Sachs. 2015. <i>The Age of Sustainable Development</i> . Columbia University Press: New York.
2	Parmar, B. L., Freeman, R. E., Harrison, J. S., Wicks, A. C., Purnell, L., & De Colle, S. (2010). Stakeholder theory: The state of the art. <i>Academy of Management Annals</i> 4(1), 403-445.
3	Mair, J., & Rathert, N. (2021). Alternative organizing with social purpose: Revisiting institutional analysis of market-based activity. <i>Socio-Economic Review</i> 19(2), 817-836.
4	Marquis, C. (2020). <i>Better business: How the B Corp movement is remaking capitalism</i> . Yale University Press.
5	Purwohedi, U., & Gurd, B. (2019). Using Social Return on Investment (SROI) to measure project impact in local government. <i>Public Money & Management</i> 39(1), 56-63.
6	Serafeim, G. (2021). <i>ESG: Hyperboles and Reality</i> . Harvard Business School Research Paper Series Working Paper 22-031.
7	Reinsberg, B. (2019). Blockchain technology and the governance of foreign aid. <i>Journal of Institutional Economics</i> 15(3), 413-429.
8	Singh, A. (2020). The myth of 'debt-trap diplomacy' and realities of Chinese development finance. <i>Third World Quarterly</i> 42(2), 239-253.
9	Ekins, P., Domenech, T., Drummond, P., Bleischwitz, R., Hughes, N. and Lotti, L. (2019), "The Circular Economy: What, Why, How and Where", Background paper for an OECD/EC Workshop on 5 July 2019 within the workshop series "Managing environmental and energy transitions for regions and cities", Paris.

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Easterly, William. 2001. <i>The Elusive Quest for Growth</i> Cambridge: The MIT Press.
2	Susan Baker, 2015. <i>Sustainable Development</i> . 2nd Ed. Oxon: Routledge.
3	Zajontz, T. (2022). The Chinese infrastructural fix in Africa: Lessons from the Sino-Zambian 'road bonanza'. <i>Oxford Development Studies</i> 50(1), 14-29.
4	The Global Compact. <i>Who Care Wins: Connecting Financial Markets to a Connected World</i> .
5	Sandoval, M. (2020). Entrepreneurial activism? Platform cooperativism between subversion and co-optation. <i>Critical Sociology</i> 46(6), 801-817.
6	The United Nations website for the 17 Development Goals indicators
7	IPCC Climate Change 2022 Report: https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/