ERS 370 – Corporate Sustainability: Issues and Prospects
Course Outline

Course instructor:
Ian Rowlands (EV2-2026; ext. 32574; irowlands@uwaterloo.ca).
Office hours: (9 Sept-2 Dec) Wednesdays 1-2pm and Wednesdays 4-5pm (NOT 25 Sept, 9 Oct and 20 Nov)

Meetings:
The course will meet in lectures and tutorials.
All students are expected to attend lectures, on Tuesdays from 9:30am-11:20am in HH-138. (Note that there will be no lecture on 12 November.)
All students are expected to attend their assigned tutorial, either Wednesdays from 9:30am-10:20am in EV3-3408 or Wednesdays from 2:30pm-3:20pm in EV3-3406. Students are expected to ‘stick with’ their assigned tutorial and are not allowed to attend ‘the other one’. (Note that there will be no tutorials on 13 November and 20 November.)

Course purpose:
The purpose of the course is to examine the ways in which sustainability issues and business operations have interacted, considering progressively ‘greener’ corporate responses and broader sustainability challenges.

Course structure/approach:
On most weeks (apart from weeks 11 and 12, which will largely be turned over to student presentations), one key topic in corporate sustainability will be investigated. Each week, students will be expected to do required readings in advance and to attend the lecture – where I will usually ‘lecture’ for about an hour, and we will then have some kind of video/discussion/hands-on activity’ for the second hour. The following day, in tutorial, we will discuss readings and/or explore further a key concept from the previous day.

Course readings:
All readings are available electronically – either through UW course reserve (CR) or at a particular website (WEB). (Note that you are encouraged to read the articles in the order in which they are listed on this course outline.)

Course assessment:
The course will be assessed by six elements. Full details regarding expectations for each are provided in individual ‘rubrics’, available on the course website.

1) Participation – 15%

2) Take-home essay answer – 15% -- distributed (through the course website) on Tuesday, 8 October at 8:30am; due (in the dropbox on the course website) by Friday, 11 October at 12:01pm.

3) Final examination – 25% or 30%* -- This will be during the final examination period, between 5 December and 20 December, inclusive, and every student is expected to be available throughout the final examination period. Details of the final examination – including structure and candidate questions – will be provided on the course website at 8:30am on 27 November and will be discussed in tutorials that same day. The final examination will be two hours in duration, will cover the entire course, will require answers written in sentence-paragraph format, and will have extensive choice available.

4) Project outline – 10% -- due (in the dropbox on the course website) by Wednesday, 30 October at 11:59pm.

5) Project presentation – 5% (on either 19 November or 26 November)
6) Project – 25% or 30%* -- due (in the dropbox on the course website) by Monday, 2 December at 11:59pm.

* - Students’ marks will be calculated in two manners – one with final examination and the project weighted 30:25, respectively, and one with them weighted 25:30, respectively; whatever method yields the higher result will be used to calculate the mark.

Note on submissions through the LEARN dropbox:
Before you will be permitted to submit any assignment through the dropbox, you must complete the ‘assignment checklist’ which is presented to you in the form of a ‘quiz’ in LEARN. Though labeled a ‘quiz’, this will not be marked in any way, but must be completed before the dropbox for this particular assignment is open to you. The questions (which concern issues of ‘academic integrity’) refer, of course, to this particular assignment.

Note on late submissions:
Late submissions will be penalised 5 per cent (of the 100 per cent available for that particular assignment) for each day (or part thereof) late. Assignments will not be accepted after seven days (beyond the due date) have lapsed. Accommodation will be made in exceptional circumstances (usually related to medical emergencies supported by documentation). As soon as students realise that their assignment may be submitted late, they are encouraged to contact the course instructor. Please note that the LEARN system records submission times, and ‘late will be late’ – so, for the record, if the submission is time-stamped 12:00, and the deadline was 11:59, it will be graded ‘late’.

Responsibilities of students regarding academic integrity:
A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm. Students who are unsure what constitutes an academic offence are requested to visit the on-line tutorial at http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/ait/

Within ENV, those committing academic offences (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) will be placed on disciplinary probation and will be subject to penalties which may include a grade of 0 on affected course elements, 0 on the course, suspension, and expulsion.

Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy 70, Student Grievance, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm

ENV students are strongly encouraged to review the material provided by the university’s Academic Integrity office (see: http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/Students/index.html).

Miscellanea:
Research ethics: Please note that the University of Waterloo requires all research conducted by its students, staff, and faculty which involves humans as participants to undergo prior ethics review and clearance through the Director, Office of Human Research and Animal Care (Office). The ethics review and clearance processes are intended to ensure that projects comply with the Office’s Guidelines for Research with Human Participants (Guidelines) as well as those of provincial and federal agencies, and that the safety, rights and welfare of participants are adequately protected. The Guidelines inform researchers about ethical issues and procedures which are of concern when conducting research with humans (e.g. confidentiality, risks and benefits, informed consent process, etc.). If the development of your research proposal consists of research that involves humans as participants, then please contact the course instructor for guidance and see http://iris.uwaterloo.ca/ethics/

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.
Religious observances: As applicable, each student needs to inform the instructor at the beginning of term if special accommodation needs to be made for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

Course topics and associated readings:

**Week 1 (10 and 11 September)** – introduction, context, definition, evaluation of business impacts on environment/sustainability, history of corporate environmentalism

**Required readings:**

**Week 2 (17 and 18 September)** – scales of corporate greening

**Required readings:**

**Week 3 (24 and 25 September)** – drivers and motivators for corporate environmental management, local case-study, preview course assignment

**Required readings:**

**Optional reading:**
**Week 4 (1 and 2 October)** – do ‘win-wins’ exist in corporate environmentalism? Under what conditions does it make strategic sense for companies to pursue corporate sustainability activities?

**Required readings:**


**Optional reading:**


**Week 5 (8 and 9 October)** – standards, ISO, ISO14000, ISO26000, the limits/potential of voluntary action, the role of government

**Required readings:**


**Week 6 (15 and 16 October)** – corporate innovations: organisational, hybrid organisations, partnerships, system approaches, industrial ecology, customer engagement

**Required readings:**


**Week 7 (22 and 23 October)** – what is ‘sustainable business’?

**Required readings:**


**Week 8 (29 and 30 October) – transnational corporations**

**Required readings:**


**Week 9 (5 and 6 November) – small- and medium-sized enterprises, conversation with Orb Energy CEO Damian Miller (http://tvc.cutec.org/work/damian-miller/); preview presentations**

**Required readings:**


**Week 10 (12 and 13 November) – Lecture and tutorials cancelled this week.**

**Week 11 (19 November only)**

Student presentations. Guest commentator: Tim Jackson (UW Vice-President, University Relations)

**Week 12a (26 November)**

Student presentations. Guest commentator: Jennifer Lynes (UW Associate Professor and Director, Environment and Business Program)

**Week 12b (27 November) – current agenda, prospects and ways ahead, course review, examination preview, course evaluation**

Ian Rowlands, 30 August 2013