

**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:

- 1) Chris Laszlo and Nadya Zhexembayeva, ‘Business Reality Reshaped: The BIG Three Trends’, in *Embedded Sustainability: The Next Big Competitive Advantage* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), pp. 6-29, 235-240 (CR).
- 2) Stephanie S. Pane Haden, Jennifer D. Oyler and John H. Humphreys, ‘Historical, Practical, and Theoretical Perspectives on Green Management: An Exploratory Analysis’, *Management Decision* (Vol. 47, No. 7, 2009), pp. 1041-1055 (CR).

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

Required readings:

- 1) Sukhbir Sandhu, ‘Shifting Paradigms in Corporate Environmentalism: From Poachers to Gamekeepers’, *Business and Society Review* (Vol. 115, No. 3, 2010), pp. 285-310 (CR).
- 2) Queensland Government, ‘Business Sustainability Roadmap’, <http://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/sustainability/pdf/siroadmap.pdf> (NOTE: This appears as a ‘folded brochure’ on the web ... Read, first page right-hand, then second page left-hand and right-hand and then first page left-hand.) (WEB)
- 3) Bob Willard, ‘The 5-Stage Sustainability Journey’, <http://sustainabilityadvantage.com/2010/07/27/the-5-stage-sustainability-journey/>, 27 July 2010 (WEB).
- 4) Vijay Kanal, ‘Five Stages on the Sustainability Journey’, <http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/2010/12/13/five-stages-sustainability-journey>, 13 December 2010 (WEB).

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

Required readings:

- 1) Ian Worthington, ‘Why Firms Go “Green”: Drivers and Motivations’, in *Greening Business: Research, Theory, & Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 67-85 (CR).
- 2) Darcy Hitchcock and Marsha Willard, ‘Sustainability as a Strategic Issue’ (Chapter 1), *The Business Guide to Sustainability: Practical Strategies and Tools for Organizations*, second edition (Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2009), pp. 3-24, 275-276 (CR).
- 3) David Hutchinson, Jang Singh and Kent Walker, ‘An Assessment of the Early Stages of a Sustainable Business Model in the Canadian Fast Food Industry’, *European Business Review* (Vol. 24, No. 6, 2012), pp. 519-531 (CR).
- 4) Naomi Carniol, ‘Company Slashes Heating Bill by 91%’, *The Globe and Mail*, last updated 23 August 2012, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/small-business/sb-growth/sustainability/company-slashes-heating-bill-by-91/article4260666/> (WEB).

Optional reading:

- 1) Daniel C. Esty and Andrew S. Winston, ‘Who’s Behind the Green Wave’, from *Green to Gold: How Smart Companies Use Environmental Strategy to Innovate, Create Value, and Build Competitive Advantage* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 65-99, 328-332 (CR).

**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:

- 1) Noah Walley and Bradley Whitehead, ‘It’s Not Easy Being Green’, *Harvard Business Review* (Vol. 72, No. 3, May-June 1994), pp. 36-44 (CR).
- 2) Tobias Hahn, Frank Figge, Jonatan Pinkse, Lutz Preuss, ‘Trade-offs in Corporate Sustainability: You Can’t Have Your Cake and Eat It’, *Business Strategy and the Environment* (Vol. 19, No. 4, May 2010), pp. 217-229 (CR).
- 3) Forest L. Reinhardt, ‘Bringing the Environment Down to Earth’, *Harvard Business Review* (Vol. 77, No. 4, July-August 1999), pp. 149-157 (CR).
- 4) Stefan Ambec and Paul Lanoie, ‘Does It Pay to Be Green? A Systematic Overview’, *Academy Management Perspectives* (Vol. 22, No. 4, 2008), pp. 45-62 (CR)..

Optional reading:

- 5) Natalie Stoeckl, ‘The Private Costs and Benefits of Environmental Self-Regulation: Which Firms Have Most to Gain?’, *Business Strategy and the Environment* (Vol. 13, 2004), pp. 135-55 (CR).

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

Required readings:

- 1) Lauren De Sanctis, ‘ISO 14000’, in Mary K. Theodore and Louis Theodore, *Introduction to Environmental Management* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2010), pp. 45-60 (CR).
- 2) Lars Moratis and Timo Cochius, ‘Chapter 2: What is Social Responsibility (According to ISO 26000)?’, in *ISO 26000: The Business Guide to the New Standard on Social Responsibility* (Sheffield: Greenleaf Publishing, 2011), pp. 9-26, 187-189 (CR).

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

Required readings:

- 1) Gareth Kane ‘Creating a Culture for Change’ (part of Chapter 3), in *The Three Secrets of Green Business: Unlocking Competitive Advantage in a Low Carbon Economy* (Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2010), pp. 35-44, 190 (CR).
- 2) Jonathan Doh, ‘Partnering with NGOs: The 4 Keys to Success’, <http://nbs.net/partnering-with-ngos-the-4-keys-to-success/>, 19 July 2012 (WEB).
- 3) Brewster Boyd, Nina Henning, Emily Reyna, Daniel E. Wang, and Matthew D. Welch, ‘Chapter 1: Why Hybrid Organizations?’, in *Hybrid Organizations: New Business Models for Environmental Leadership* (Sheffield: Greenleaf Publishing, 2009), pp 5-10, 154-159 (CR).
- 4) Gil Friend with Nicholas Kordesch and Benjamin Privitt, ‘Part VI: The Truth About Green Design’, in *The Truth About Green Business* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Natural Logic, 2009), pp. 102-104, 106-108, 110-112, 114-116, 118-120, 222-223 (CR).
- 5) Peter Fisk, ‘Chapter 6: Engaging Customers’, in *People, Planet, Profit* (Philadelphia, PA: Kogan Page Ltd., 2010), pp. 109-126 (CR).

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

Required readings:

- 1) Amory B. Lovins, L. Hunter Lovins and Paul Hawken, ‘A Road Map for Natural Capitalism’, *Harvard Business Review* (Vol. 77, No. 3, May-June 1999), pp. 145-158 (CR).
- 2) Albin Kälin, ‘The Development of Climatex® Lifecycle™: A Compostable, Environmentally Sound Upholstery Fabric’, in Martin Charter and Ursula Tischner (eds), *Sustainable Solutions: Developing Products and Services for the Future* (Sheffield: Greenleaf Publishing, 2001), pp. 393-401 (CR).

- 3) Wendy Stubbs and Chris Cocklin, 'Conceptualizing a "Sustainability Business Model"', *Organization & Environment* (Vol. 21, No. 2, June 2008), pp. 103-27 (CR).

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

Required readings:

- 1) Petra Christmann and Glen Taylor, 'International Business and the Environment', in Pratima Bansal and Andrew J. Hoffman (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Business and the Natural Environment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 50-69 (CR).
- 2) Alissa J. Stern, 'The Case of the Environmental Impasse', *Harvard Business Review* (Vol. 69, No. 3, May-June 1991), pp. 14-22 (CR).

**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:

- 1) Stephen Brammer, Stefan Hojmosse and Kerry Marchant, 'Environmental Management Practices in SMEs in the UK: Practices, Pressures and Perceived Benefits', *Business Strategy and the Environment* (in press), 12pp (CR).
- 2) Laura J. Spence, 'Primer: Business Sustainability for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)', <http://nbs.net/wp-content/uploads/SME-Primer.pdf> (WEB).
- 3) 'Small But Mighty Firms Make "Proactive CSR" Pay Off', [http://nbs.net/wp-content/uploads/Small\\_but\\_mighty\\_firms\\_make\\_csr\\_pay\\_off.pdf](http://nbs.net/wp-content/uploads/Small_but_mighty_firms_make_csr_pay_off.pdf), August 2012 (WEB).
- 4) Eric Koester, 'Becoming a Greentrepreneur (a.k.a. Green Entrepreneur)', in *Green Entrepreneur Handbook: The Guide to Building and Growing a Green and Clean Business* (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2011), pp. 11-19 (CR).

**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