Lets have ENBUS 407 – Sustainability Accounting, Indicators and Reporting

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Meetings

Synchronous online Lectures on Bongo Thursdays 2:00 pm to 3:00 PM. Links to the lectures will be posted on LEARN.

Office hours

Thursdays from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm on Bongo/LEARN and by appointment via email.

Delivery of course material

1. Material for this course will be delivered by the D2L system. Go to https://learn.uwaterloo.ca/
2. The course outline is available on the course website (through the D2L system). We will discuss it in our first synchronous class.
3. I will also use the D2L system to deliver information to students in the course. I expect that you will be checking the course website regularly (at least every working day).

Tips for success

1. Try to join all synchronous classes and follow up on the asynchronous course material.
2. Come prepared for all sessions and follow up on all synchronous sessions, which will be recorded and posted on LEARN as well.
3. Plan ahead: check when assignments are due, tests and examinations are scheduled.

Creating an effective learning environment

1. We will agree on the communication protocol on our first class.
2. Our time together is valuable. I will work to make the lectures informative, relevant and interesting. Throughout term, I will welcome suggestions as to how the learning environment can be improved. Learning should be a joyful process!

Course description

The course focuses on theory and practice of corporate sustainability accounting and reporting. It offers insights about corporate sustainability, the emergence and purpose of sustainability accounting, accounting frameworks and tools, and sustainability ratings. Furthermore, trends and quality assurance of sustainability reporting will be discussed.
Course Website

Course information will be delivered through the D2L system (https://learn.uwaterloo.ca).

Course assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report Presentation 1</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Assignment – CSR Concept Map</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Assignment- Final Report</td>
<td>25 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation on Discussion Boards or</td>
<td>15 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Best Sustainability Report Competition</td>
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Policy on late submissions

Submissions received up to ONE DAY AFTER the due date and time indicated above will have a 10 per cent penalty applied to them (of the 100 available per cent for that assignment).

Note on digital submission

Only digital submissions will be accepted. All assignments must be submitted through the respective drop box on the course website.

Summary of ‘due dates’

- October 8th – Presentations due to drobox (submit electronically by 11:59 pm)
- October 22nd – First assignment due (submit electronically by 11:59 pm)
- October 29 – Quiz 1 (On LEARN)²
- December 2nd – Quiz 2 (On LEARN)
- See the course webpage for LEARN discussion boards format (max 150 words)³
- December 8 – Final assignment due (submit electronically by 11:59 pm)

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

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¹ Individually corporate sustainability reports will be presented on LEARN. Details of the presentation can be found on the course website under Content – Activities and Assignments – Report Presentation 1.

² If a student is unable to write the mid-term tests (due to extenuating circumstances, supported by appropriate documentation), an alternative test or assessment will be provided.

³ Engage in 3 of the posted discussion boards or optional a group of up to 10 students can participate in the Competition for Best Sustainability Report (FSI) competition, details will be provided on LEARN.
http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/. Students who are unsure what constitutes an academic offence are requested to visit the on-line tutorial at: http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/ait/

**Research Ethics:** Please also 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.)’ (http://www.research.uwaterloo.ca/ethics/human/). Recognise, however, that students are instructed NOT to contact any ‘outside organisations’ to complete their written assignments for this course.

**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:** Please 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.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm. When in doubt, please contact your Undergraduate Advisor for details.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (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. 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.


**Appeals:** A decision made, or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 – (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 (Student Appeals). See: http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm

**Consequences of Academic Offences:** 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).
Course readings
All readings are listed in the respective section in the D2L system. All readings are identified in this course outline. I will add some industry reports on LEARN throughout the term.

Introduction/Objective
The course explores methods and tools of sustainability accounting and reporting. General and corporate sustainability indicators will be introduced and discussed to create a basis for sustainability accounting and reporting. Students will learn the theoretical background of corporate sustainability accounting and reporting. Additionally, they will conduct critical analyses of corporate accounting and reporting.
# Course outline

## Lecture 1: Thursday, September 10th, 2020

**Introduction to General Sustainability Indicators and Assessment**

**Lecture content:**
- Introduction to environmental, economical, and societal sustainability indicators

**Required Resources:**
- Social Progress Index
  - [http://www.socialprogressimperative.org/data/spi](http://www.socialprogressimperative.org/data/spi)
- Gross National Happiness (GNH)
  - [http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/gnhIndex/intruductionGNH.aspx](http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/gnhIndex/intruductionGNH.aspx)
- OECD’s Better Life Index
  - [http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org](http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org)


## Lecture 2: Thursday, September 17th, 2020

**Introduction to Corporate Sustainability**

**Lecture Content:**
- Weak and strong sustainability
- Triple-bottom line
- De-growth
- Eco-efficiency
- Shared value

**Required Resources:**
### Lecture 3: Thursday, September 24th, 2020
**The Emergence of Sustainability Accounting**

**Guest speaker**: Joe Battikh (Ericsson)

**Sustainability Reports: What and how do they report?**

**Lecture content:**
- What is corporate sustainability?
- External pressure
- Cost management
- Reputation management
- The history of sustainability accounting and reporting

**Required Resources:**


### Lecture 4: Thursday, October 1st, 2020
**The Purpose of Sustainability Accounting and Reporting**

**Lecture content:**
- Outside-in vs. inside-out sustainability.
- The business case for sustainability vs. the sustainability case of business
- Stakeholders vs. shareholders

**Required Resources:**


### Lecture 5: Thursday, October 8th, 2020
**The Sustainability Accounting Framework**

**Lecture content:**
- Sustainability induced impacts (risks and benefits) vs. Impacts of business on sustainability
- Environmental and carbon accounting and reporting
- Social accounting and reporting

**Required Resources:**


### October 15th: No Classes
Lecture 6: Thursday, October 22nd, 2020

Lecture content:
- Global Reporting Initiative Framework

Guest speaker: Eliana Fleifel (SDSN Canada)

Required Resources:
www.globalreporting.org

Lecture 7: Thursday, October 29th, 2020

Sustainability Accounting Tools

Guest Speaker: RBC Sustainability Team

Lecture content:
- Sustainability Balanced Scorecard
- Carbon Disclosure Project

Required Resources:
Check Suncor CDP Report on LEARN
www.cdp.net

Lecture 8: Thursday, November 5th, 2020

Social Return on Investment

Guest speaker: Dr. Sean Geobey

Lecture content:
- Social Return on Investment

Required Resources:
http://www.socialvalueuk.org/app/uploads/2016/03/SROI%20IMPACT%20MAP%20TEMPLATE.xlsx
Sustainability Rating

Guest speaker: Khaled Ammar (Thomson Reuters Innovation Lab)

Lecture content:
- Types and methods of sustainability ratings

Required Resources:

Lecture 10: Thursday, November 19th, 2020

Section 1: Key Performance Indicators, SASB, and TCFD

Lecture content:
- Why Key Performance Indicators?
- What are Key Performance Indicators in different sectors?

Required Resources:

Guest speaker: Alice Boa (PWC)

Section 1: Quality Assessment of Sustainability Reporting

Lecture content:
- Motivations for assurance
- Audit criteria
- Assurance guidelines
- Audit challenges

Required Resources:


Section 2: Trends in Sustainability Reporting

Lecture content:
- Integrated Reporting

Required Resources:
Ernst & Young. (2013). 2013 Growing Trends in Corporate Sustainability (pp. 36): Ernst & Young.


Lecture 12: Thursday, December 3rd, 2020

Course wrap-up, discussion of final assignment, course evaluation.