Lets have ENBUS 407 – Sustainability Accounting, Indicators and Reporting

Course instructor: Amr ElAlfy, Office: EV3-4326; Email: aelalfy@uwaterloo.ca

Meetings

Lectures on Thursday from 2:30 am -5:20 pm in Room EV3-4412

Office hours

Thursdays from 1:00 pm-2:15 pm in Room EV3 4326, 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 class.

3. I will aim to put up the PowerPoint Presentations that I plan to use after the respective class. Please note that this does not provide ALL of the information that will be delivered in the lecture but can help guide you through the material.

4. I will also use the D2L system to deliver information to students in the course. I expect (assume) that you will be checking the course website regularly (at least every working day).

Tips for success

1. Attend all sessions.

2. Come prepared for all sessions and follow up on all sessions.

3. Plan ahead: check when assignments are due, tests and examinations are scheduled.

Creating an effective learning environment in the lecture hall

1. Please arrive on time.

2. I will get you out of the classroom in good time – please wait until I dismiss the class to prepare for your departure.
   a. Please do not disturb your classmates’ abilities to learn.
   b. Please do not talk in class.

3. Laptops or other devices that enable you to connect with D2L and other sources in the internet will be used for some activities in class. Thus, bring you laptop, tablet, etc. Please type quietly.
4. Our time together is valuable. I will, however, work to make the lectures informative, relevant and interesting. Throughout term, I will welcome suggestions as to how the learning environment can be improved.

**Pre-requisite**

3rd/4th year Environment and Business students.

**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](https://learn.uwaterloo.ca)).

**Course assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report Presentation 1¹</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First and Second tests²</td>
<td>20% per test³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Assignment⁴</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation / Activities⁵ or Best Sustainability Report Competition ⁶</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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). Submissions received between ONE AND TWO DAYS AFTER the due date and time indicated above will have a 20 per cent penalty applied to them (of the 100 available per cent per assignment).

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

² There will be two in-class tests. The first test will be held on Thursday 10 October; the second test will be held on Thursday 28 November. The test will consist of multiple-choice and open questions and will be ‘closed book’.

³ If a student is unable to write the tests (due to extenuating circumstances, supported by appropriate documentation), an alternative test or assessment will be provided.

⁴ Please consult the course website for the question and the due date for the final assignment.

⁵ Please consult the course website for the question and the due date for participation / activities. Generally, activities will be started in class and will be submitted individually. Best 4 out of 5 activities.

⁶ Optional a group of up to 8 students can participate in the Competition for Best Sustainability Report. Details will be presented in class.
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available per cent for that assignment). Students not handing in their submissions within TWO DAYS of the due date and time will receive a mark of zero on that assignment. Exceptions will be made in extraordinary circumstances (usually related to medical emergencies supported by documentation). Students anticipating that their assignment will be submitted late are encouraged to contact the course instructor at the earliest possible time.

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’

- September 25 – Report Presentation due to drobox (submit electronically by 11:59 pm)
- September 26 – Report presentation (2:30 pm in class)
- October 10 – Test 1 (2:30 pm in class)
- November 28 – Test 2 (2:30 pm in class)
- See the course webpage for the due dates for the class activities (submit electronically)
- December 5 – 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. 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. Readings that are not accessible through the library can be downloaded on the course website either under ‘Readings’ or in ‘Course Reserves’. All readings are identified in this course outline.

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 5th, 2019
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
- Gross National Happiness (GNH)
  - http://www.grossnationalhappiness.com/gnhIndex/introductionGNH.aspx
- OECD’s Better Life Index
  - http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org

Lecture 2: Thursday, September 12th, 2019
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 19th, 2019

**The Emergence of Sustainability Accounting**

*Guest speaker: Jon Beale, SDSN Canada.*

**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, September 26th, 2019

**The Purpose of Sustainability Accounting and Reporting**

**Group Presentations**

See Group Presentation 1 in this course outline and the course website

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

**Required Resources:**

### Lecture 5: Thursday, October 3rd, 2019

**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
- Theory of change

**Required Resources:**
Lecture 6: Thursday, October 10th, 2019
Test 1: 2:30 – 4:00 PM.

Lecture content:
- Global Reporting Initiative Framework

Required Resources:
www.globalreporting.org

October 17th: No Classes

Lecture 7: Thursday, October 24th, 2019
Sustainability Accounting Tools

Guest Speaker: Alice Boa Manager, Sustainable Business Solutions, PwC Canada.

Lecture content:
- Sustainability Balanced Scorecard
- Carbon Disclosure Project

Required Resources:
Suncor CDP Report
www.cdp.net
Lecture 8: Thursday, October 31st, 2019

Social Return on Investment

Guest speaker: Dr. Sean Geobey

Lecture content:
- Social Return on Investment

Required Resources:


Lecture 9: Thursday, November 7th, 2019

Sustainability Rating

Guest speaker: TD Bank, CSR and ESG Reporting Team.

Lecture content:
- Types and methods of sustainability ratings

Required Resources:


Lecture 10: Thursday, November 14th, 2019

Guest speaker: Brock Dickinson - Entrepreneur in Residence

Section 1: Key Performance Indicators, SASB

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

Required Resources:

Section 2: Measuring Impact: The IRIS approach

Required Resources:
www.iris.thegiin.org
www.thegiin.org

Lecture 11: Thursday, November 21st, 2019

Guest speaker: Chris Coulter – CEO GlobeScan

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, November 28th, 2019**
**Test 2: 2:30 – 4:00 PM.**
Course wrap-up, discussion of final assignment, course evaluation.