

American University of Central Asia
Course Information
School of Entrepreneurship and Business Administration
Fall 2017

Course Title:	Business and Sustainability
Course Code:	BUS 280, ID 4292
Course Coordinator:	Srdjan Uljevic M.Soc.Sci / MA / MSc
Course Duration:	05.09. – 14.12.
No. of Credit Units:	6
Class meeting:	T/T, 9:25 – 10:40, C02
Mode:	Full-time
Contact:	uljevic_s@auca.kg
Appointments/Hours	TBD

1. Abstract:

Our planet is going through tremendous physical change on a scale never before witnessed in human history. There is hardly any ecosystem left that has not yet been, to some degree, negatively affected by our economic activity whether directly by extraction or indirectly by pollution, or both. Natural resources previously considered almost unlimited and inexhaustible, such as fisheries, are being heavily depleted at the expense of the prosperity of the next generations. At the root of the problem lies the unrelenting logic of the modern, international capitalist system - the pursuit of growth. This paradigm, along with unabated population growth and consumer orientated societies, is the driving force behind the current, non-sustainable economic development. Business plays instrumental role in facilitating this paradigm through the use of resources, energy, and more importantly, by continuously recreating the dominant narrative of consumerism that underpins our global culture.

The central question this course will tackle is: *How can business be changed so it becomes a driving force for sustainable future?* In order to answer this question we will tap into disciplines of international relations, environmental science, and economics. In the same vein, students are encouraged to think “outside-of-the-box”, in other words, to think across individual disciplines.

2. Course Aims:

This course aims at introducing students to a variety of ideas, concepts and theories that

challenge the paradigm of growth. At the same time students will learn about real-world examples of how businesses are adapting to more sustainably friendly practices. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the course, the following topics will be covered:

- History, structure and importance of the liberal international order, within which global business operates
- Main debates and theoretical concepts that have been at the forefront of the discussions about growth, since the 1970s until now
- Case studies of some of the more successful sustainable resource management schemes in the world

3. Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester students should be able to:

- Understand the role of international institutions that are at the heart of the modern international liberal order
- Explain the reasons behind successful resources management schemes, including the Forest and Fisheries Stewardship Councils
- Demonstrate the fundamental knowledge of various concepts and theoretical approaches related to the nexus between growth and environment
- Argue for a particular concept or theory in writing while stressing its assumptions and weaknesses compared to other concepts or theories

4. Assessments

This is a seminar style course that will combine lectures with a heavy dose of class-discussions. In each class students will be expected to actively participate in debates revolving around required readings for that week. Class attendance is mandatory.

Students will be evaluated according to class attendance and participation, essay, and a written exam (quiz).

Class attendance and participation (20%)

Class attendance and participation (CAP) carries 20% of the final grade. **Class attendance is mandatory because this is a seminar style course where learning is gained through discussion.**

Students who did not attend a class will need to produce a valid medical certificate (with date and stamp) and provide authentication from the AUCA medical office. Unexcused absence will be penalized. Students who have missed 30% of classes will have their attendance grade reduced by 2 marks. Sliding scale principle will be applied.

Simply attending all of the classes does not automatically mean an “A” for CAP. Students

who actively engage in class discussions and contribute towards the learning experience of their classmates will be rewarded.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students are expected to have read all the required readings before coming to class. It is critical that students come prepared for each class so they can participate with questions, comments, answers, and provide feedback to their classmates.

Essay (40%)

Students are required to submit an [argumentative essay](#) between 2000 and 2500 words, excluding reference/bibliography. The exact topic will have to be discussed and agreed with the lecturer in advance, before submission. **Due date will be at the beginning of the class on week 9.** Submission will be done through Moodle. Late submission will be penalized with at least half grade (B+ becomes B) unless a student can provide with medical or some other written evidence. I strongly encourage students to take full advantage of academic writing services provided by the Writing and Academic Resource Center (WARC). Do not submit first draft.

Exam (40%)

There will be a closed book, in-class examination. The quiz will consist of multiple-choice questions and will include all the topics examined in the course. The exam will take place at the end of the semester, week 16. The exact date and time will be provided at a later date.

5. Course Policies:

Course instructor reserves the right to modify any and all portions of this syllabus at any time during the period of the course. Any modifications will be communicated in writing to students.

6. Submission of Assignments:

Written assignments are to be completed in [APA style format](#) on the date they are due. Late submission will be penalized with at least half grade unless a student can provide with medical or some other written evidence. Students should exclusively use peer journal articles and books published by renowned academic houses for references.

7. Academic Integrity

- I. The use of cell phones (talking, texting, etc.) during class is strictly prohibited. Students violating this policy will be given one (1) warning. A second violation of this policy will result in the student being counted absent for the class.
- II. The use of any other electronic devices (tablets, laptops) during class for any purpose not related to the furtherance of the class objectives is strictly prohibited. Students

violating this policy will be given one (1) warning. A second violation of this policy will result in the student being counted absent for the class.

- III. Students are expected to follow the AUCA ACADEMIC HONESTY code. All types of plagiarism are strictly prohibited. If a student fails to observe this requirement, the instructor may assign an “F” for the work or an “F” for the whole class, depending on the type of assignment and relevant circumstances. Students are expected to read and follow the section on the Student Academic Dishonesty of the AUCA Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct.
- IV. You are encouraged to study together and to discuss information and concepts covered in lecture and the sections with other students. You can give "consulting" help to or receive "consulting" help from such students. However, this permissible cooperation should never involve one student having possession of a copy of all or part of work done by someone else, in the form of an e-mail, an e-mail attachment file, a diskette, or a hard copy.

8. GRADING CRITERIA

A 100-93%	B- 82-80%	D+ 69-67%
A- 92-90%	C+ 79-77%	D 66-61%
B+ 89-87%	C 76-73%	D- 62-60%
B 86-83%	C- 72-70%	Failing Grade: below 60%

9. Explanation of Grades Obtained

A	Student demonstrates exceptional understanding and able to critique existing literature and shows good abilities to derive policy implications; Performs well in every aspect of class participation and submits final paper of Journal quality.
B	Ability to think conceptually and to perform in class participations, and in final paper. Student is able to form plausible arguments and provides reasonable conclusions.
C	Marginal ability to analyze material presented in lectures and readings. While the student has attended class and involved in discussions, performance is merely class average.
D	Limited ability to analyze material presented in lectures and readings. While the student has attended class and involved in discussions, performance has been below class average.

Poor learning or lack of effort, the student has failed to demonstrate even a minimal capacity to analyze concepts and theories. Misses most classes and performed very poorly in, or even failed to participate in class discussions. The final paper, if submitted, has been of a poor standard or plagiarized.

F

10. Tentative Course Schedule:

Topics	Required Readings	Notes	Other
Week 1 (04.09. – 08.09.) Introduction to the course	World Wide Fund for Nature – “Living Planet Report 2016”, summary.	Note1: Before each class please read all of the required readings. Note2: For additional and optional learning sources please see under “Recommended readings” below.	
Week 2 (11.09. – 15.09.) What is the Purpose of Business?	“The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits” by Friedman. “The Ecology of Commerce” by Hawken, chapters 1 and 2.	Link: http://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/13/archives/a-friedman-doctrine-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to.html? r=0	
Week 3 (18.09. – 22.09.) Understanding the Wider Context: What is the Liberal International Order?	“International Relations” by Goldstein and Pevehouse. Chapters 8 and 9. “The Future of the Liberal World Order” by Ikenberry.		
Week 4 (25.09. – 29.09.) Limits to Growth	“Limits to Growth – The 30 Year Update” by Meadows, Randers and Meadows. Preface plus first 2 chapters.		
Week 5 (02.10. – 06.10.) Tragedy of the Commons	“Tragedy of the Commons” by Hardin. “Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons,		



	Global Challenges” by Ostrom.		
Week 6 (09.10. – 13.10.) Sustainable Development	<p>“Global Environmental Policy – Concepts, Principles, and Practice” by Eccleston and March, chapter 3.</p> <p>“Our Common Future – Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development”, by Gro Harlem Brundtland, first 57 pages (including foreword).</p>		
Week 7 (16.10. – 20.10.) Environmental Economics vs. Ecological Economics	<p>“Global Environmental Policy – Concepts, Principles, and Practice” by Eccleston and March, chapter 9.</p> <p>“Environmental Science – A global Concern” by Cunningham and Cunningham, chapter 23.</p>		
Week 8 (23.10. – 27.10.) Linear vs. Circular Economy	“Waste to Wealth: The Circular Economy Advantage” by Lacy and Rutqvist, Executive Summary and Section 1.		
Week 9 (30.10. – 03.11) Degrowth Guest lecturer: Dr Begaiym Esenkulova - Associate Professor of Law Division (AUCA) Case study: The Chinese Mining Project	“Degrowth: A Vocabulary for a New Era” by D’Alisa, Demaria, and Kallis.		ESSAY SUBMISSION
Week 10 (06.11. – 10.11.)	NO CLASSES - FALL BREAK		
Week 11 (13.11. – 17.11) Case Study: Forest Stewardship Council	“Forestry Market” – International Institute for Sustainable Development.	Link:	



	“Forest Stewardship Council” - International Institute for Sustainable Development.	https://www.iisd.org/business/viewcasestudy.aspx?id=114	
Week 12 (20.11. – 24.11.) Case Study: Nike	“Nike Considered: Getting Traction on Sustainability” – MITSloan.		
Week 13 (27.11. – 01.12.) Case Study: Fair Trade Coffee *30.11. Thanksgiving, no class	“Fair Trade Coffee – The Mainstream Debate” – MITSloan.		
Week 14 (04.12 – 08.12.) Case Study: Oakhurst Dairy	“The Sustainable Business Casebook” by Gittell, Magnusson, and Merenda, chapter 10.		
Week 15 (11.12. – 15.12.) Review			
Week 16 (18.12. – 22.12.) Examination	Final exam (quiz)		

11: Recommended readings and other on line sources

There is no one textbook for this course. We will be using different textbooks, articles, video clips, and policy papers. Required readings are listed in the table above and will be uploaded to a dedicated Google drive. Below are additional, recommended readings and on line sources.

Week 2

Ray Anderson: The Business Logic of Sustainability (16min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iP9QF_IBOyA

Milton Friedman on Self-Interest and the Profit Motive, part 1 and 2 (5min each)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ev_Uph_TLLo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPqdRqacpFk>

Week 3

G. John Ikenberry - Building a Liberal International Order (1hour)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqEmt64mihw>

G. John Ikenberry - The Rise of China and the Future of Liberal World Order (1hour)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lv7TVg1Cfvs>



Week 4

“Loss of Fertile Land Fuels ‘Looming Crisis’ Across Africa” – New York Times, July 31 2017

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/29/world/africa/africa-climate-change-kenya-land-disputes.html>

“Amazon Deforestation, Once Tamed, Comes Roaring Back” – New York Times, Feb 27 2017

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/24/business/energy-environment/deforestation-brazil-bolivia-south-america.html>

Week 5

“China’s Appetite Pushes Fisheries to the Brink”, NYT

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/30/world/asia/chinas-appetite-pushes-fisheries-to-the-brink.html? r=0>

Week 6

International Institute for Sustainable Development

<http://www.iisd.org/topic/sustainable-development>

World Business Council on Sustainable Development

<http://www.wbcsd.org/>

Week 8

“Circular Economy...it’s the way forward”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IK00v_tzkCI

Week 10

<http://www.biom.kg/>

Week 11

Case Studies: FSC in Practice

<http://www.fsc-uk.org/en-uk/about-fsc/what-is-fsc/case-studies>

Greenpeace – FSC

<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/campaigns/forests/solutions/alternatives-to-forest-destruct/>