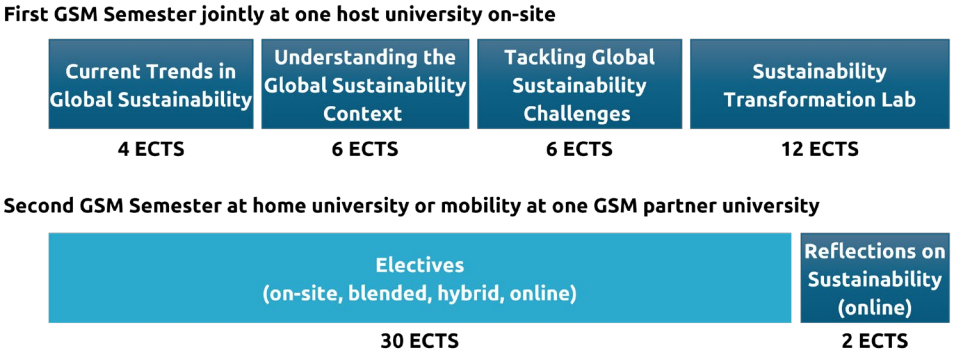
GSM Programme Structure



Current Trends in Global Sustainability

Course Title
Current Trends in Global Sustainability
Teacher(s)
Dr. Günter Stahl, WU Vienna; Hertta Vuorenmaa, Hanken School of Economics; *(other guest lecturers from ENGAGE.EU partner universities)*
ECTS
4,0
Language of instruction
English
Delivery Format
on-site with online elements (blended)
Content
This course functions as an introduction and orientation for all students. The current trends seminar will give an overview of key global trends shaping the sustainability agenda across sectors and regions, with a focus on their implications for sustainability management and responsible leadership. The course addresses sustainability challenges at multiple levels: individual, organizational, societal, and transnational/global. It features guest speakers representing diverse stakeholders—including private-sector companies, NGOs, social ventures, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and government agencies—as well as panel discussions, site visits, peer coaching and structured reflection on students' personal development needs and societal impact goals. Pre-course activities and assignments include brief online self-learning modules, assessments and quizzes, as well as opportunities for students to get to know their classmates and build a sense of belonging and excitement for the learning journey (i.e., onboarding). .
Learning Outcomes
After this course, students will be able to: • Identify and critically analyse key global trends influencing sustainability across economic, environmental, and social dimensions. • Evaluate the implications of global megatrends— such as climate change and the energy transition, resource scarcity, technological disruption and digitalization, social inequality, and seismic shifts in the geopolitical landscape—for business strategy and policy-making. • Assess the roles and perspectives of different stakeholders (e.g., governments, NGOs, corporations, IGOs) in shaping sustainability agendas.

• Reflect on their own values and assumptions in relation to global sustainability and responsible leadership. • Engage in deep self-reflection on their talents, ambitions, and sense of purpose, and evaluate how these relate to their career choices, personal impact, and capacity to contribute meaningfully to society.
Teaching/learning method(s)
Break out scenarios for the students to get to know each other, guest lectures and practitioner dialogues, site visit, structured self-reflection and peer-coaching in small groups
Assessment
• Reflective essay "Charting My Course: Reflections on My Personal Development Journey", involving deep reflection on how students' life experiences shaped their values, goals and sense of purpose—and the implications for their personal development and career goals. – 40% (individual) • Final presentation "Designing Impact: Creating Meaningful Societal Change"– 40% (group) • Participation – 20% (individual, including online activities)
Attendance requirements
Attendance required on site.

Understanding the Global Sustainability Context

Course Title
Understanding the Global Sustainability Context
Teacher(s)
Dr. Wendy Chapple and Dr. Christof Miska, WU Vienna *(other guest lecturers from ENGAGE.EU partner universities)*
ECTS
6,0
Language of instruction
English
Delivery Format
on-site with online elements (blended)
Content
This course delves into the complex nature of the global sustainability context. It fosters a polycontextual understanding of the historical, political, economic, and cultural forces that shape the diverse global sustainability landscape, whilst exploring the universal and interconnected nature of grand challenges and wicked problems. Students will engage with global governance frameworks like the SDGs, analyse the evolving regulatory landscape, and will apply systems thinking to issues such as climate change, human rights, migration, and modern slavery. Through simulations, role-plays, and interactive learning, the course fosters critical, interdisciplinary, and context-sensitive approaches to sustainability. Topics/issues covered: • Grand challenges and wicked problems, global interconnectedness, and context • Complexity and complex systems • Cultural and institutional differences • Global governance and institutions • Evolving regulatory landscape • Deep dives into critical global sustainability issues (e.g., climate change, human rights, modern slavery, migration)
Learning Outcomes
After this course students will be able to: • Critically **evaluate** the global interconnectedness of sustainability challenges and the evolution of frameworks such as the SDGs, identifying their interdependencies, systemic drivers, and obstacles. • **Apply** systems thinking and complexity theory to analyze sustainability issues, being aware of feedback loops, trade-offs, and emergent dynamics across global and local scales. • **Assess** regional and contextual differences (e.g., Global North vs. South, colonial linkages) in sustainability challenges and responses, incorporating polycontextual (e.g., institutional, cultural, legal, economic, historic, etc.) analyses. • **Analyze** the roles and effectiveness of global governance and supranational institutions (e.g., UN, UNGC, Human Rights Council) in promoting sustainable development and accountability. • **Interpret** the evolving sustainability regulatory landscape, including mandatory and voluntary frameworks, and their implications for various sectors and stakeholders.

- **Reflect** on and integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines to derive context-sensitive solutions to wicked problems, such as climate change, human rights, modern slavery, or migration.
- **Design** and communicate context-sensitive, evidence-based arguments and strategies for addressing global sustainability challenges, tailored to different audiences and institutional settings.

Teaching/learning method(s)

This course uses a diverse mix of experiential, participatory, and analytical learning methods designed to help students engage with the complexity and context-dependence of global sustainability issues. These learning methods encourage critical thinking, systems thinking, intercultural sensitivity, and practice-oriented application:

- Role-play simulations in relation to wicked problems
- Systems modeling
- Guest lectures and practitioner dialogues
- Case-based learning
- Group projects and presentations
- Reflective and critical writing

Assessment

- Reflective essay on a wicked problem – 40% (individual)*
- Role-play simulation – 40% (group)
- Participation (classroom activities) – 20% (individual)

Attendance requirements

Attendance required on site.

Tackling Global Sustainability Challenges

Course Title
Tackling Global Sustainability Challenges
Teacher(s)
Dr. Wendy Chapple and Dr. Christof Miska, WU Vienna *(other guest lecturers from ENGAGE.EU partner universities)*
ECTS
6,0
Language of instruction
English
Delivery Format
on-site with online elements (blended), specialist content provided by partners
Content
Leveraging understanding of the polycontextual nature of the global sustainability context, this course adopts the perspective of companies and organizations to understand and evaluate how they can take advantage of the potential that grand challenges and wicked problems provide. It focuses on why and how companies and organizations integrate sustainability into their strategies, cultures, and operations, including practices such as engaging stakeholders, managing impact, and driving innovation. The course also considers the barriers and challenges to successful sustainability integration. Through case studies, immersion projects, and managerial and leadership tools, students learn to develop resilient, future-ready businesses that contribute to sustainable development. Topics/issues covered: • Company and organizational perspectives on global sustainability challenges • Sustainability transformation and business model innovation • Competitive advantage through the addressing of grand challenges and wicked problems • Social and environmental impact • Sustainability reporting and rating agencies • Stakeholder engagement • Human rights due diligence in the value chain • Integrating sustainability at the organizational level (strategy, business model, culture) • Leadership, organizational culture, and sustainable HRM (e.g., EDIB) • Sustainability mindset and sustainability competences • Partnerships and cross-sector collaborations • Futureproofing and scenario planning
Learning Outcomes
After this course students will be able to: • **Investigate** and structure complex sustainability management challenges faced by companies and organizations considering resources and constraints. • **Analyse** the current state of companies and organizations and **evaluate** how emerging systemic trends may affect their operations and sustainability impact. • **Develop** strategic, contextually viable recommendations for sustainability integration given organizational conditions, both in the short and longer term. • **Design** and **assess** sustainability integration and implementation plans, including necessary changes to existing business models. • **Evaluate** the role of leadership in facilitating sustainable business transformation and organizational change.

- **Interpret** sustainability reporting frameworks and rating systems and assess their relevance for corporate accountability and performance.
- **Demonstrate** critical thinking, in order to articulate and defend evidence-based arguments to corporate representatives and stakeholders.
- **Lead** and **coordinate** teamwork, "selling" solutions persuasively and professionally through well-researched presentations.
- **Apply** creative and out-of-the-box thinking to challenge established business practices and develop innovative, creative, and unconventional solutions aligned with sustainable development principles.
- Critically **reflect** on personal sustainability competences and engage in continuous self-directed learning to enhance professional skills.

Teaching/learning method(s)

The course employs a diverse range of interactive and experiential learning methods designed to deepen understanding and to develop competencies to address grand challenges and wicked problems in managerial roles:

- Case studies
- Experiential assignments
- Consciousness-raising experiences
- Guest lectures and practitioner dialogues
- Group projects and presentations

Assessment

- Experiential assignment (immersion or corresponding alternative) – 40% (individual)
- Future-proofing transformation project – 40% (group)
- Participation (classroom activities) – 20% (individual)

Attendance requirements

Attendance required on site.

Sustainability Transformation Lab

Course Title
Sustainability Transformation Lab
Teacher(s)
Prof. Martin Fougère, Hanken School of Economics *Dr. Peter Vandor, WU Vienna* *(other guest lecturers from ENGAGE.EU partners)*
ECTS
12,0
Language of instruction
English
Delivery Format
on-site with online elements (blended)
Content
This course focuses on experiential learning, i.e. students developing, testing and refining social and sustainable business ideas addressing pivotal societal challenges. They are supervised and mentored by faculty members.
Learning Outcomes
• Understand language and core theoretical concepts of social and sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship • Understand the nature of social and sustainable innovation and entrepreneurship as a learning journey, and ways to manage the process • Understand key tools, approaches and resources available for and needed by innovators and entrepreneurs • Gain insights into their personal fit with social and sustainable entrepreneurship • Develop or work on an idea for a social and sustainable enterprise far enough to implement it
Teaching/learning method(s)
• On-site learning through input, discussions, group-work • Individual research and reflection assignments • Continuous group work on self-selected social entrepreneurship ideas or business projects using various qualitative research methods, observation and field experiments • Coaching sessions with faculty • Presentation and discussion of findings with peers, faculty and experts • Guest lectures • Optional: sessions on specific entrepreneurial skills or innovation capabilities
Assessment
Students are assessed on both individual (individual pre- and post-course assignments, active participation in all class settings; 40-50% of the final grade) and group performance (content and delivery of progress update presentations, document submissions to coaching sessions, final presentation, 50-60%). **Hanken Semester:** Individual learning diaries 10% Individual contribution to project work 20% Individual participation 10%

Mid-term report 20% Final report 40% **WU Semester:** Individual pre-course and reflection assignment 20% Individual participation and contributions 20% Course assignments 30% Final presentation 15% Final hand-in 15%
Attendance requirements
Attendance required on site.

Reflections on Sustainability

Course Title
Reflections on Sustainability
Teacher(s)
Dr. Oliver Vettori, WU Vienna / ENGAGE.EU
ECTS
2,0
Language of instruction
English
Delivery Format
online
Content
This course will conclude the GSM learning experience, including a final reflection on your learning journey across both semesters. A special focus lies on methodological approaches to systematically reflecting sustainability policies and practices connected to your own lifeworlds, at university, at work and in your private lives.
Learning Outcomes
After this module students will be able to: • Understand their deeper learnings throughout the course • Understanding the difference between manifest and latent factors influencing approaches to sustainability. • Investigate the "hidden curriculum" on sustainability practices in our institutions/daily lives. • Evaluate the – actual and potential -impact of the GSM program on your goals and attitude.
Teaching/learning method(s)
• Coaching • Mapping tools • Individual and group reflection
Assessment
• Analysis brief on "learnings beyond the learning outcomes" (individual, 40%) • Draft impact grid (group work, 40%) • Quizzes and in class assignments (individual, 20%)
Attendance requirements
Attendance required online (with a maximum of 20% non-participation).