

We recognize and acknowledge that McMaster University meets and learns on the traditional territories of the Mississauga and Haudenosaunee nations, and within the lands protected by the "[Dish With One Spoon](#)" wampum, an agreement amongst all allied Nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

SUSTAIN 1S03 – INTRODUCTION TO SUSTAINABILITY

2023 Summer Term

Instructor: Dr. John Maclachlan | **E-mail:** SUST1S03@mcmaster.ca | **Office:** N/A

“What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”-

Dr. Jane Goodall

Introduction

An introduction to sustainability from an interdisciplinary perspective which examines the historical and societal lenses through which sustainability is viewed. Students will learn terminology, theories and concepts to effectively communicate across disciplines and on various topics of sustainability. The ideal for this course is to bring ideas together to form new ideas to tackle and understand the challenges and opportunities that will inevitably appear as we move to a more sustainable way of living.

Course Learning Objectives

- Understand various perspectives of sustainability.
- Understand the meanings underlying sustainability theories.
- Retrieve relevant knowledge on general themes and major points from course content.
- Plan and carry out experiential learning activities.
- Create meaning by generating connections between academic theory and action through reflection.

Lectures and Course Structure

Lectures and readings will be online and asynchronous. This means you can go to them whenever and as many times as you wish. All content lectures will be available to you as of 9:00am on May 1st. The course instructor may add supplemental lectures throughout the term (case studies tying to the lecture material and the virtual tutorials). Overall learning will take place through a mixture of online lectures, readings, and videos. The readings and videos are there to assist in your success in the Tutorial Discussion and

Avenue Discussion Boards where in-depth discussions will take place. This course, as all courses fundamentally do, relies on you keeping up with the material to be successful.

Attendance and Emails Policy

Virtual office hours will be held with the TAs and instructions for these will be posted on Avenue to Learn. It is not the instructional team's responsibility to go over an entire lecture with you so please have specific questions ready.

While it is generally not appropriate to use email to ask detailed questions (including asking about what was discussed in the lectures) it is a bit different in an online course. Please email SUST1S03@mcmaster.ca for all questions or ask within the Teams course shell. If you feel comfortable use the class discussion board as that will be monitored daily (during the work week). As a rule, you should not expect to receive answers to emails on weekends or in the evening. Rather, emails will typically be responded to during regular working hours on weekdays, and as schedule allows. Emails sent 24 hours prior to or on a due date for any assignment cannot be expected to be answered.

When asking a non-personal question, you are encouraged to use the Avenue discussion board. It is likely that any question you have (whether it be clarification or simply of interest) is had by others as well. The instructor will frequent the discussion board.

As a courtesy, and to ensure your emails are properly answered, you must include your name and student ID number in the email signature. **Emails must be sent from McMaster email accounts and should be sent to the course email**, or they will not be read or responded to. Emails should be written in a professional manner, spell-checked, and proof-read before sending them. The subject line **must** state for which course the query is about. Online discussion terminology must be avoided.

Materials & Fees

Required Materials/Resources

- There are no resources for you to purchase other than what is available online. You may need to log into the McMaster Library Off-campus Access (<https://library.mcmaster.ca/services/off-campus-access>) to access some material.

Virtual Course Delivery

To follow and participate in virtual classes it is expected that you have reliable access to the following:

- A computer that meets performance requirements [found here](#).
- An internet connection that is fast enough to stream video.
- Computer accessories that enable class participation, such as a microphone, speakers and webcam when needed.

If you think that you will not be able to meet these requirements, please contact uts@mcmaster.ca as soon as you can. Please visit the [Technology Resources for Students page](#) for detailed requirements. If you use assistive technology or believe that our platforms might be a barrier to participating, please contact [Student Accessibility Services](#), sas@mcmaster.ca, for support.

Course Overview and Assessment

Course Overview/Topics

(These are the topics to be covered in the lectures. The teaching team reserves the right to alter topics where necessary)

Lecture	Topic(s)
1	Introduction to Sustainability
2	Biosphere
3	Human Sphere
4	History of Sustainability
5	Climate Change
6	Water
7	Ecosystems and Habitat
8	Pollution
9	Energy
10	Green Buildings and Cities
11	Sustainable Sites
12	Food
13	Products

Evaluation

Assessment Schedule

Item	Due Dates	Weight
Experiential Learning Projects (2 at 20% each)	July 7th @ 4pm July 21st @4pm	40%
Online Quizzes (Best 4 of 5 +1% for Student Information)	Throughout term (see A2L for details)	20%
Biophilia Assignment	July 28 th @ 4pm	20%
Tutorials (Participate in 4 of 5)	Throughout Term	20%

Experiential Learning Project 40% total (2 at 20% each)

In line with the overall goals of the Sustainable Future Program, students will have the opportunity to take part in self-directed, community-based, and experiential education related to their personal passions and interests in sustainability. To achieve these goals, as part of their Experiential Learning Projects, students will complete two community-based, experiential learning activities of their choosing throughout the course.

After taking part in each of their two chosen activities, students will document their experiences through the creation of personal reflections. To support interdisciplinary learning and reflection learning, students will share findings from their experiences with their classmates. Students will complete each experiential learning project, which will include research, taking part in the experiential activity, preparing a reflection, and engaging in group discussion within tutorial.

Student will be provided with experiential learning opportunities that are both online and in-person with sufficient options for both. Students should not participate in any experiential learning activity that may put them or others at any risk – including risk to exposure related to COVID-19. Student must exercise good judgement when referring to an approved experiential learning activity to ensure that it meets the

required level of precaution associated with issued government and university guidelines at the time that the student is engaging in the activity as circumstances may have changes from the time it was posted.

Sufficient opportunities for virtual experiential learning activities will be provided to students allowing them to meet the criteria of the “Experiential Learning Project” regardless of geographic location and without need to access any space outside their dwelling.

Please refer to the Avenue to Learn for full details, including links to resources and rubrics. If you are unsure if an activity qualifies contact your TA during Office hours or via Teams.

Online Quizzes: 20%

Students will complete online quizzes throughout the term (starting the week of June 26th). The material covered will include instructor posted content, assigned readings, and assigned TED Talks and/or other related media. Students are expected to monitor A2L for assigned quizzed and announcements. There will be four quizzes with the lowest quiz grade dropped. The quizzes follow Universal Design Protocols as you are given 60 minutes to complete the quiz from the moment you begin.

There is also 1% for the Student Information Quiz (with the content quizzes making up the remaining 19%)

Due: Please check Avenue for the weekly quiz schedule beginning on June 26th.

BIOPHILIA ASSIGNMENT 20%

Students will have the opportunity to explore what aspects of nature they feel connected to.

Please refer to Avenue to Learn for full assignment details, including links to resources and rubrics.

TUTORIALS 20%

Throughout the term the virtual tutorial slot you are assignment is used for office hours and discussion.

All tutorials will take place on Microsoft Teams. There are five weeks during the term where you are to participate in the discussion or the tutorial. *You need to attend four of the five tutorials to receive full marks.* For these weeks there will instructions on Avenue as to how you need to prepare and what

constitutes participation. For all weeks that are not ‘participation weeks’ your TA will be available for questions about the course. The ‘participation weeks’ are the weeks of: June 26th, July 10th, July 17th, July 24rd, July 31st. Please see Avenue to Learn for details or contact your TA via Teams

Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

[McMaster Student Absence Form \(MSAF\)](#): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

MSAF and Accommodations - Course Specific Information

In this course MSAFs are not needed as we will be following Universal Course Design strategies that eliminate their needs. For the Reflection and Biophilia assignments you will all be given a one-week grace period. This means that while the assignments are due on Fridays at 4pm you can avoid any late penalties if it is handed in by the following Friday at 4pm (this is longer than the grace period awarded by an MSAF). As the quizzes and tutorial participation grades are each graded best 4 of 5 an MSAF is not necessary as a universal accommodation is built into the grading.

Missed or Late Work

Quizzes and tutorial participation may not be made up. Assignments have a late penalty of 20% per day that starts as soon as the grace period ends.

Courses with An On-Line Element - Avenue to Learn

[Avenue to Learn](#) (A2L) is an online system that will be used in this class for communicating information relating to the course (e.g. lecture notes, etc.). To log in to A2L, use your MacID login and password. See the A2L home page above for more instructions if you need them. **It is the student’s responsibility to check A2L regularly (i.e. AT LEAST twice a week) for updates.**

Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this

disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor. If you encounter any technical problems with this service, go to the [Avenue to Learn help](#) website for support. **Please note that it is not the responsibility of the teaching staff of SUSTAIN 1S03 to assist you with A2L issues.**

Mark Appeals and Avenue to Learn Grades

You will have **one week** (i.e. 7 days) from the date that marks for an evaluation (e.g. quiz) are released to appeal your mark. All grades will be released digitally and if you wish to appeal a grade, you must send a note via email (including your name, McMaster email address, and student ID number) to the instructor stating why you wish to have the assignment looked after. In any case, if the request is found to be insufficiently justified (e.g. simply wanting a higher mark is insufficient), the matter will not be further investigated. Remember that a resubmitted paper is entirely regraded meaning the grade can go up or down.

Your marks will be recorded on A2L. **It is your responsibility to check that all marks entered into A2L are recorded properly.** You must notify the instructor about any errors with regards to how your marks are entered. You have until 48 hours prior to the final exam to report any A2L mark issues.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services \(SAS\)](#) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous Or Spiritual Observances (Riso)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

This course will use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software,

etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to the [McMaster Office of Academic Integrity](#)

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities \(the "Code"\)](#). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

Student Conduct

Students' behaviour in all aspects of this course should meet the standards of the McMaster University Student Code of Conduct. Any inappropriate behaviour directed against any of your colleagues, T.A, or the instructor will not be tolerated. Disruptive behaviour during lectures will also not be tolerated.

This also means that the A2L Discussion Board is an extension of the classroom. These spaces are to be considered inclusive and safe. Abuse, ridicule, slander, inappropriate language, and discrimination towards the instructor, teaching staff, and other students will not be tolerated in any capacity. This may lead to various disciplinary measures including, but not limited to, removal of access privileges to the A2L for SUSTAIN 1S03.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

Acknowledgement of Course Policies

Your registration and continuous participation (e.g. on A2L, in the classroom, etc.) to the various learning activities of SUSTAIN 1S03 will be considered to be an implicit acknowledgement of the course policies outlined above, or of any other that may be announced during lecture and/or on A2L. **It is your responsibility to read this course outline, to familiarize yourself with the course policies and to act accordingly.** Lack of awareness of the course policies **cannot be invoked** at any point during this course for failure to meet them. It is your responsibility to ask for clarification on any policies that you do not understand.

The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of the course and will notify students accordingly (in class and post any changes to the course A2L).

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their email and avenue for updates.