

SUSTAIN 3S03 – Implementing Sustainable Change

Liana Bontempo, MPH, RD, Fall 2021

Please contact asp@mcmaster.ca for information about this course.

Class: Tuesday 7:00 – 9:00pm

Location: Microsoft Teams

Instructor: Liana Bontempo

Office Hours: Monday to Friday between 9am to 4:30 pm by appointment at <https://bit.ly/bookliana>

Office: Microsoft Teams

Tutorials: Microsoft Teams

Tutorial L01: Thursday 10:30-11:30

Tutorial L02: Thursday 11:30-12:30

TA 01: Sandra Alexander

TA 02 : Mubariz Maqsood

COURSE OVERVIEW

Sustainability is a term everyone has heard, but few understand. Beneath the many values, worldviews, practices, and attitudes it suggests, is the problem of putting theory into action. This course will explore agency, leadership, and strategy effectiveness within the context of sustainability.

Emphasis will be placed on developing interdisciplinary perspectives and collaboration skills through community-based experiential learning projects designed to help students put theory into practice, while also theorizing their practice. This course will count towards the [Interdisciplinary Minor in Sustainability](#).

Important Notes

This course uses Avenue to Learn to post assignments, rubrics, readings, and other notices. It is important to visit Avenue to Learn regularly to be kept informed of any new information. Most course assignments will be submitted via Avenue to Learn (<http://avenue.mcmaster.ca/>).

Classes and Tutorials will take place using Microsoft Teams.

Additional non-course-specific information, including events and opportunities, will be shared using MacSustain social media platforms, specifically [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

COURSE STRUCTURE

Sustain 3S03 is made up of readings, lectures, and tutorials, all of which are *mandatory*.

- Readings *must* be completed prior to each class.
- Lectures are a blend of lecture time, facilitated discussion, and group work.
- Tutorial time will be used for facilitated and self-guided group work and project-related meetings.
- Additional information on class assignments, which include a project plan and a personal reflection, will be provided through workshops presented in video format.

Course Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a deep understanding of various meanings, perspectives, and theories of sustainability through written assignments, discussions, and practical application.
2. Generate solutions to sustainability problems through implementing critical thinking and interdisciplinary problem solving skills.
3. Create meaning by making connections between academic theory and action through reflection.
4. Evaluate outcomes by critiquing processes and impacts of various factors leading to results.

Required Readings:

Consistent with the goals of the Sustainable Future Program, all Required Readings are available via open access, and can be found on Avenue to Learn the week prior to corresponding lecture.

COURSE EVALUATION

Item	Mark Worth	Due Date
Experiential Learning Project	50% (see below for breakdown)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly Progress Update to Community Project Champion 	(15%)	Weekly updates are due via email by 4:00pm Friday.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Plan (Group) 	20%	October 8 th , 2021 at 4pm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress Report Interviews (Group) 	10% (2 at 5% each)	Interview #1: During week of October 18th, 2021 Interview #2: During week of November 8th, 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Presentation and Philanthropitch (group) 	5%	December 7 th , 2021
Attendance & Participation (Individual)	10%	
Reading Summaries (Individual)	15%	Due on the last Thursday of the corresponding month. Article chosen for summary is up to student's choice.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Summary September 	5%	Summary of one reading during the month of September is due by September 30 th at 4pm via A2L
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Summary October 	5%	Summary of one reading during the month of October is due by October 28 th at 4pm via A2L
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading Summary November 	5%	Summary of one reading during the month of September is due by November 25 th at 4pm via A2L
Final Reflection (Individual)	15%	Friday, December 17, 2021 by 4:00 PM. Submitted in Word via A2L
Final Report Page	10%	December 7 th , 2021 via A2L by 4pm

EVALUATION DETAILS

Experiential Learning Project

In line with the overall goals of the Sustainable Future Program, students will have the opportunity to take part in a self-directed, community-based, and experiential project related to their personal passions and interests in sustainability. In order to achieve this goal, students

enrolled in Sustain 3S03 will complete an Experiential Learning Project. Through completing their project, students will engage in practical research and application by working with individuals, groups and/or organizations on campus and/or within the community to implement a real-world sustainability initiative. All students will work in groups of between 2 and 4. Groups will be determined based on students' choice of project, the rationale they include for their project selection, and their tutorial schedule. Each group will work with a Community Project Champion¹ (CPC) to plan and implement their project.

Project Selection (Tutorial Participation, Individual)

Following presentations by all CPCs during the first class, students will rank their project choices. Students will rank their options and write 1-5 sentences describing the preferences. Students will be given a survey monkey link to complete the task.

Any student who does not submit their request on time, or enrolls late, will be placed into a group as chosen by the course instructor or TA.

Due: by 8:00AM on Thursday, September 16th, 2021, via Survey Monkey Link

Weekly Progress Update to Community Project Champion (15%, Group Mark)

To ensure effective teamwork and that mutually beneficial relationship between students and the community are fostered, students will provide a weekly progress update to their Community Project Champion. To receive full marks, the update should include: work completed this week, any challenges, next steps, any questions for the CPC, and a draft agenda for the following week's meeting. This should facilitate frequent communication between students and CPCs so that all parties are informed on a weekly basis of the project's progress and direction. Once the students send their update to their CPC, they must forward their sent email to their TA ensuring the update is appropriate, clear, and includes sufficient detail to receive full marks.

Due: weekly updates are due via email by 4:00pm Friday.

The first update is due on September 20th, 2021 (students will draft their first update/introductory email to CPCs during tutorial on Sept 16th).

Project Plan (20%, Group Mark)

Consider your Project Plan as a road map that guides you to where you want to go, suggests what you will see along the way, and plans what you will accomplish. Upon choosing a project and forming a project group, all members of the group must then work together with their CPC to prepare a Project Plan. The Project Plan will include an overview, a list of objectives and your intended deliverables of the project. A good project plan will define the project's scope, have a detailed timeline of milestones, events and actions, and will include important information about group management. The Project Plan should provide all necessary details and information so the TA and CPCs can effectively support the successful implementation of the project. The plan should also show evidence that the group has clearly thought through the steps required for implementation, the timeline and goals are feasible, and that expected challenges are clearly stated with a proposed method for managing any negative consequences that would impact

¹ Community Project Champions (CPCs) are individuals who are external to the course and will assist in guiding the projects.

implementation of the initiative. Please note that multiple drafts are encouraged to focus effort on continuous project review and management.

Due: October 8th, 2021 at 4pm

**Students must have their Project Plan reviewed by their Project Champions and by one other group prior to submission.

Progress Report Interviews (2 @ 5% each, Group Mark)

Each group will take part in a total of two, 50 minute interviews with the Senior Manager of Academic Sustainability Programs and/or a member of the instructional team. These interviews take place outside of lecture and tutorial time and must be scheduled in advance by each project group. During each interview, the group will present their project overview, objectives, and deliverables. The group will also discuss their progress made to date, communicate their evaluation of how their progress aligns with their initial Project Plan, and discuss any adjustments to the Project Plan resulting from various factors such as external impacts, new opportunities, and/or unforeseen challenges. The group should come prepared to ask and answer questions relating to the project. All group members should be knowledgeable of the various aspects of the project, even if the key tasks have been divided. The point of the interview is meant to ensure that the project is on track and to ensure that CPCs and students are aligned. A grade will be given on a pass/fail basis.

As noted within the respective sections of this syllabus, the most recent version of each group's Project Plan is to be submitted electronically in Word via Avenue to Learn prior to the group's Interview. Grades will be pass/fail based

Interview #1: During week of October 18th, 2021

Interview #2: During week of November 8th, 2020

Philanthropitch (5% Group Mark)

Students will develop a philanthropitch, a 3 minute presentation that "sells" their project to a prospective funder or supporter. Students will present to the class on the final lecture. Presentations will be recorded and, with students' support, shared online. Grades will be determined by an in-class Dragon's Den-style vote by their peers. Course instructor has the final say.

Due: Slides are due by 9am and the Pitch will be delivered during Course Symposium during class time on December 7th, 2021

Attendance & Participation (10% Individual Mark)

Students are expected to attend each lecture and tutorial having watched the class video, complete all identified tasks related to the course, participate in class discussions (orally or in the chat), and engage in group work sessions.

Attendance will be taken during each lecture and tutorial. Students who attend all classes will receive full marks for attendance. Consideration will be given to students providing 24 hours'

notice and a valid reason to the course instructor/TA. Additionally, students are required to prepare for class. Preparation marks will be given based on completion and review of assigned tasks or documents on Avenue to Learn.

Students are required to contribute during discussions and activities. Students who provide meaningful contribution, via active participation, will receive full marks for participation. Note that classes are designed to encourage participation through various means including peer discussions, small group tasks, activities, and reflections on learning and group work.

Reading Summaries (15% Individual Mark)

Students are required to submit 3 reading summaries over the term. Each summary is due on the last Thursday during the **months of September, October and November**.

Due: Each monthly summary can be submitted any time before the last Thursday of the corresponding month by 4pm, submitted via A2L.

Final Reflection (15% Individual Mark)

Students are encouraged to utilize their personal journal to reflect on their experiences and learning from their course project. Students are then encouraged to pull from these personal reflections to prepare a formal reflection of academic quality.

Please note that formal evaluation will be based on the Report on Guided Reflection, found on A2L.

Due: Friday, December 17, 2021 by 4:00 PM. Submitted in Word via A2L
There is a *flexible* limit of 2,000 words, not including references or image captions.
Students are to include three references, two of which must be from readings or lecture.

Final Report Page (10%)

Each group has the opportunity to prepare a one-page report. A selection of the report pages will be included within the McMaster Academic Sustainability Programs Annual Report and published online. A Final Report Page Template can be found on A2L, and samples of past reports can be found online [here](#). The Final Report Page will include the initiative title, overview, list of objectives, report of the group's achievements, as well as a list of project collaborators. Each report page should also include a relevant and eye-catching photo. Each report must be sent to each project collaborator for review prior to final submission. Students must copy the Senior Manager of Academic Sustainability Programs (whalenk@mcmaster.ca) on the email sent to all project collaborators. Students will have the opportunity to work with the Senior Manager and the Coordinator of the Academic Sustainability Programs Office to ensure the report is of publication quality.

Students must ensure they have closely followed the guidelines provided. Please be prepared to undergo multiple revisions when collaborating on the final report page. Collaborator approvals and student release forms must be submitted along with the final submission.

COURSE-SPECIFIC POLICIES

Group Work

An objective of this course is to provide students with the opportunity to develop their teamwork and interpersonal skills. Throughout the course, students will be provided with a variety of opportunities for interdisciplinary discussion and group work. If and when challenges or conflicts arise, students should utilize the opportunities to employ strategies to improve the group dynamics going forward. To support formative assessment and feedback on group work skills, students will have an option to conduct weekly self and group assessments.

Students are encouraged to work as a team and seek support from the course instructor early on if challenges arise. Initial actions will include a facilitated discussion with all group members focused on listening and seeking first to understand in order to resolve the conflict and strengthen group dynamics.

In extreme circumstances, and once group members have attempted to address the situation as a team, they may approach the TA or course instructor to proceed with further action. In such an instance, the group will be requested to submit documentation of the problem. After an initial warning, and if no significant improvement is made, the course instructor reserves the right to adjust any individual's assignment mark up to 50% of the group grade. Students are encouraged to seek support from the course instructor or TA early on if challenges arise.

Assignment Submission Guidelines

Format: All assignments should be submitted in Word format via Avenue to Learn, unless otherwise stated. See assignment-specific criteria for instructions.

Style: APA Style is preferred, but just be consistent. See [OWL](#) for support.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will be penalized 15% each day, including Saturday, starting at 4:01pm the following day. A maximum of three days will be permitted for late assignments, after which the assignment will receive a grade of zero, unless specific arrangements have been made with the course instructor. Any arrangements for late submission must be made at least 24 hours before the assignment is due. In the case of extenuating circumstances, please contact and discuss with the TA or the course instructor.

A Note on Research Ethics

All students conducting research with human participants as part of their projects will need to consider the following:

1. Students must complete an MREB Application form and gain Ethics Clearance. The Application Form and support is found online here: <https://research.mcmaster.ca/ethics/macrem/>
2. Student must have their MREB Application reviewed and approved by Kate Whalen and McMaster Research Ethics Board *prior* to beginning their research. Note that this process takes

an average of four weeks, so students should begin as soon as possible and plan their research accordingly. All student researchers will be emailed feedback and/or clearance to their McMaster email address.

4. Students conducting research with medium to high levels of risk will require additional work and time for ethics clearance. This includes, asking for personal information, taking photos, or in-person interviews, to name a few. Students are encouraged to obtain guidance from Kate Whalen early on to gain feedback on their application.

Course modifications

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 his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Communications

- It is the student's responsibility to:
- Maintain current contact information with the University, including address, phone numbers, and emergency contact information.
- Use the University provided e-mail address or maintain a valid forwarding e-mail address.
- Regularly check the official University communications channels. Official University communications are considered received if sent by postal mail, by fax, or by e-mail to the student's designated primary e-mail account via their "@mcmaster.ca" alias.
- Accept that forwarded e-mails may be lost and that e-mail is considered received if sent via the student's @mcmaster.ca alias.
- Check the McMaster/Avenue email and course websites on a regular basis during the term.

UNIVERSITY POLICY

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

Some courses may 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 www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Courses with an On-line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, 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 a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

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.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of 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.

Academic Accommodations 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.

Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) applies to universities. Instructors should take care to protect student names, student numbers, grades and all other personal information at all times. For example, the submission and return of assignments and the posting of grades must be done in a manner that ensures confidentiality - see <http://www.mcmaster.ca/univsec/fippa/fippa.cfm>

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”.

Academic Accommodations 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.

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.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE AND TOPIC LIST

Date	Topic
September 7	Intro to class, syllabus, and CPC pitch night
September 14	Sustainability through history, resilience, and the UN SDG's
September 21	Facts to Fiction
September 28	Sustainability in the age of uncertainty
October 5	Narratives: using Arts and Sciences
October 12	Fall Break
October 19	Ecological Economics
October 26	Community and Behaviour Change Theories
November 2	Intersectionality and Climate Justice
November 9	Implementing change with cultural safety and competency
November 16	Food As a Pedagogical Tool
November 23	Current Solutions: Technological and Nature-Based
November 30	Funding your project
December 7	Theory to Praxis: course wrap and philanthropitch

