

Course Overview

Understanding Green and Sustainable Transitions

SL2555 LP3 2020

Dates:

Credits: 7,5 ECTS credits

Course Responsible:
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Course Team:

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Course Objective

Crises are windows of opportunity where transformative change in society can take place. Therefore, now is the time to 'deliberately' design a new, green economy. This course will explore key sustainability challenges and the underlying drivers of the current unsustainable system. The course will cover strategic approaches to sustainable development and a variety of tools to support transitions towards sustainability. The course is aimed at early- to mid-career professionals who are interested in supporting their sector in these transitions. The course will focus on two sectors in particular: tourism and manufacturing. The course is the first of two courses, which leads to a 15 credits certification.

Course Content

The content of the course includes:

- An introduction to strategic sustainable development (both what it is and why it is important to understand)
- An introduction to systems thinking, complexity, and the role of crises and disturbance in societal change
- Several theories of change applied to complex social-ecological systems, and the role of disturbance in creating change
- An introduction to several tools, methods, and concepts that support the implementation of green and sustainable transitions

Learning Environment

The course is given on distance. The teaching includes recorded lectures, webinars, and discussion forums both asynchronously and in real time. The lectures introduce theories, concepts, methods and tools, while webinars are used to address students' questions and engage them in more dynamic discussions. Teachers with different scientific backgrounds, professional experience, and perspectives deliver and facilitate the course. The students' different educational backgrounds, professional experiences and cultural backgrounds are also taken advantage of in the learning process.

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives are set out in three sections and are the overall guide for this course. All of the class activities, readings and course work have been designed in order to facilitate students to meet these learning objectives. All of our assessment points throughout the course are also designed to align with these objectives and enable students to show that they have attained the appropriate knowledge, skills and judgement and to meet the course purpose.

Knowledge and understanding

On completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Explain what strategic sustainable development is and why it is needed
- Identify the defining features of complex social-ecological systems and explain how these features affect how change happens in society
- Describe different ways change is theorised in the field of sustainability



Competence and skills

On completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Engage in constructive and reflective dialogue about sustainability transitions with peers in an online format
- Theorise how sustainability change happens, drawing on scholarship on change in the field of sustainability

Judgement and approach

On completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Identify appropriate tools, methods, and concepts for navigating times of disruption and disorganisation in a given context and rationalise why they are appropriate

Assessments (Examination)

Below is a list of all of the assessment points in this course. All assessments must be passed/completed to pass the course. We have five different types of assessment. Each assessment has its own Canvas assignment where you get detailed instructions which includes a grading rubric for each assignment. These are visible when the assignment goes live. Students shall get their grades through Canvas (directly from assignment through SpeedGrader or from a Canvas message from staff).

All assignments are graded as pass/fail (G/U). This is to enable you to focus on learning rather than on trying to get a good grade. As such, we encourage you to explore, experiment, and take intellectual risks in order to maximise your learning in this course.

Assignment 1: Pre-webinar questions

Every Thursday during the course, you will submit questions based on the week's material. These questions count for course credit, and you are required to submit them at least six out of a possible nine times. These questions will be used to help the teaching team design the week's webinar.

Assignment 2: Quiz

The quiz will be taken online, and 70% is considered a passing grade. Multiple attempts are available.

Assignment 3: Discussion forum posts

You will be required to complete two discussion posts. For each of these, you will also provide peer reviews on two other posts created by your classmates. In order to pass the assignment, you must submit your own discussion post and submit peer reviews.

Assignment 4: Theory of change individual assignment

This is an assignment where you are encouraged to be creative and use critical thinking skills and has two parts. For the first component, you will create a visualisation of a theory of change for a sustainability problem in a particular context. For the second component, you will write text to accompany this visualization.

Assignment 5: Comparing sustainability tools and concepts group assignment

The final assignment is a group assignment. It will be an opportunity for you to collaborate with classmates to compare the appropriateness of different sustainability tools and concepts for a given scenario.

Note:

To be graded, the assignments must be submitted on time. Late submissions, as well as poor participation in project group activities, is considered as a fail for that submission opportunity, unless otherwise negotiated and agreed with the course examiner.

All submission deadlines are outlined below.

If you are planning to take the companion course to this one, Enabling Green and Sustainable Transitions, you must have received a passing grade for the pre-webinar questions, on the quiz, and on the discussion posts in order to enrol. It is also advised that you submit pre-webinar questions early in the course (rather than later), in case you need a re-attempt.

Alignment of assessments with learning objectives

Assessments				
1	2	3	4	5

ECTS	0.5	0.5	1.5	2	3
Knowledge and understanding					
On completion of the course the student will be able to:					
Explain what strategic sustainable development is and why it is needed	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Identify the defining features of complex social-ecological systems and explain how these features affect how change happens in society	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Describe different ways change is theorised in the field of sustainability	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Abilities and skills					
On completion of the course the student will be able to:					
Engage in constructive and reflective dialogue about sustainability transitions with peers in an online format			✓		✓
Theorise how sustainability change happens, drawing on scholarship on change in the field of sustainability				✓	
Judgment and approach					
On completion of the course the student will be able to:					
Identify appropriate tools, methods, and concepts for navigating times of disruption and disorganisation in a given context and rationalise why they are appropriate	✓				✓

Canvas and the Calendar

Canvas will contain all the elements of the course such as lectures, workshops, tutorials, and assignments. All planned sessions will be visible there and any changes in the schedule will be reflected there as well. Reading materials are listed based on the weekly themes and organised in the Modules on Canvas. Webinar materials will be available in the folders associated with each Module on Canvas. All assignment descriptions and links to submit assignments will only be made visible once the assignment begins.

Reading lists

The required readings for this course include the [Sustainability Handbook](#) and the items listed in Canvas. See the welcome letter for information on how to buy the textbook.

Student wellbeing

This course is running in a time of extraordinary circumstances. Learning can offer a respite from other stressors, but it can also be a stressor itself and exacerbate other stressors as well. As part of Blekinge Institute of Technology's student services, therapists are available to students free of charge:

Conversations with these therapists are confidential.

You can find further information here: <https://www.bth.se/eng/education/help-and-support/health-care-service/>

Inclusion

It is our intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are inclusive of gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions on how the course might better live up to this intent are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. If any of our class meetings conflict with your religious events, please let me know so that we can make arrangements for you. If you go by a different name or have different pronouns from what is in your official documentation, please don't hesitate to let us know how you would prefer to be addressed. If you have a disability, find out what accommodations BTH offers to support your learning here: <https://studentportal.bth.se/en/page/studying-withdisabilites>

If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to speak with a member of the teaching team. Remember that you can also submit anonymous feedback (which will lead to us making a general announcement to the class, if necessary to address your concerns).

We, the teaching team, are still in the process of learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in webinars, the discussion forum, or in group work (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to us about it. (Again, anonymous feedback is always an option).

Contacting the staff

As this is a distance course, all contact with the staff is online. We have weekly webinars where you can ask questions to staff on content. There are also online forums for questions with the staff. This is by far the quickest way to contact

SL2555 Understanding Green and Sustainable Transitions



us as we are a team of 7 and regularly check the discussion forums. A benefit of using the discussion forum as the main contact method is that many questions and answers benefit the class from being held in a public sphere as many hold similar questions.

If you have specific questions relating to: IT you can contact: ithelpdesk@bth.se or if relating to course certificates or course administration matters you can contact: studentreception@bth.se.

For all other questions please use rxl@bth.se.



A typical week in the course

Note that the 'week' is set up to start on a Tuesday and finish on a Monday!

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Independent learning 	Explore the week's material on canvas (readings, videos, etc)						
Assessment 			Pre-webinar questions submission				
	Other assessments due						
Collaborative learning 	Reflect in the discussion forum						Webinar
	Webinars with guest contributors						



Key dates

All times in this calendar are in Stockholm time.

All weekly webinars run from 15:00-16:00 Stockholm time. The date and time of webinars with guest lecturers are to be confirmed. All dates and times may be changed before the course starts.

All assignments are due at 17:00 Stockholm time.

Stockholm times change on March 28th from Central European Time CET to Central European Summer Time (CEST). To translate the Stockholm time into your time zone, go to <http://www.worldtimeserver.com/meeting-planner.aspx>

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday













Saturday

Sunday



Intro & Why sustainability?	<p>Jan 18 Webinar: Intro</p>	Jan 19	Jan 20	<p>Jan 21 Pre-webinar question submission: Why sustainability?</p>	Jan 22	Jan 23	Jan 24
	Thinking in systems	<p>Jan 25 Webinar: Why sustainability?</p>	Jan 26	<p>Jan 27 Webinar: Guest Lecturer (TBC)</p>	<p>Jan 28 Pre-webinar question submission: Thinking in systems</p>	Jan 29	Jan 30
What is sustainability?		<p>Feb 1 Webinar: Thinking in systems</p>	Feb 2	<p>Feb 3 Webinar: Guest Lecturer (TBC)</p>	<p>Feb 4 Pre-webinar question submission: What is sustainability?</p>	Feb 5	Feb 6
	Why theorise change?	<p>Feb 8 Webinar: What is sustainability?</p>	<p>Feb 9 Quiz</p>	Feb 10	<p>Feb 11 Pre-webinar question submission: Why theorise change?</p>	<p>Feb 12 Discussion post: Complex sustainability problems</p>	Feb 13



Theories of change	Feb 15 Webinar: Why theorise change? 	Feb 16	Feb 17	Feb 18 Pre-webinar question submission: Theories of change 	Feb 19	Feb 20	Feb 21
	Feb 22 Webinar: Theories of change 	Feb 23	Feb 24	Feb 25 Pre-webinar question submission: Theories of change 	Feb 26	Feb 27	Feb 28
Amplifying success and embracing failure	Mar 1 Webinar: Theories of change 	Mar 2	Mar 3 Theory of change assignment submission 	Mar 4 Pre-webinar question submission: Amplifying success & embracing failure 	Mar 5 Webinar: Guest Lecturer (TBC) 	Mar 6	Mar 7
	Mar 8 Webinar: Amplifying success and embracing failure 	Mar 9	Mar 10 Webinar: Guest Lecturer (TBC) 	Mar 11 Pre-webinar question submission: Appraising tools and concepts 	Mar 12 Discussion post: Amplifying the impact of sustainability initiatives 	Mar 13	Mar 14



Comparing sustainability tools and concepts	<p>Mar 15</p> <p>Webinar: Appraising tools and concepts</p>	Mar 16	Mar 17	<p>Mar 18</p> <p>Pre-webinar question submission: Comparing sustainability tools and concepts</p>	Mar 19	Mar 20	Mar 21
	Wrap up	<p>Mar 22</p> <p>Webinar: Comparing sustainability tools and concepts</p>	Mar 23	Mar 24	Mar 25	<p>Mar 26</p> <p>Group assignment submission</p>	Mar 27