

PKU Globex Julmester

Sustainability Theory and Practices (3 Credits)

可持续性理论与实践

(Course Code: 00333109)

Instructor	Tracy Morse (tracy.thomson@strath.ac.uk) Donald Robertson (donald.j.robertson@strath.ac.uk) Centre for Sustainable Development, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom	
Synopsis	<p>This course offers a holistic and interdisciplinary introduction to the theory and practice of sustainability, providing foundational knowledge relevant to students from all disciplines. Participants will explore the origins and evolution of sustainability thinking, develop an understanding of today's complex global challenges, and apply this knowledge to real-world contexts through practical design and problem-solving activities.</p> <p>Through lectures, discussions, interactive exercises and project-based learning, students will engage with key sustainability concepts such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the planetary boundaries framework, and the science-policy interface. They will also examine how different knowledge systems and interdisciplinary ways of working can help address today's complex global challenges. Applying these ideas in practice to real-world case studies, students will explore design processes for inclusive and sustainable development, human-centred design, sustainability in business, and emerging models of sustainable policymaking.</p> <p>The course will be led by academics from the University of Strathclyde's Centre for Sustainable Development. Professor Tracy Morse and Donald Robertson bring international sustainable development experience to the teaching and aim to combine academic rigour with practical application and real-world skill development (with some fun thrown in as well). As well as both course leaders, the course will feature expert guest speakers from the University of Strathclyde (online) and from Peking University (in-person) where schedules permit.</p>	
Audience	Open to all Undergraduate and Graduate Students of any academic discipline (no prerequisites).	
Classroom	TBA	
Schedule	<u>Class</u> : 2-5 PM, M-F, July 6 – July 24, 2026	<u>Total Contact Hours</u> : 45
Objective	Students will develop a holistic understanding of the core principles of sustainability and sustainable development. Students will develop critical skills to help identify and engage with complex global challenges and how their discipline-specific skills can be applied as part of interdisciplinary teams to help solve these challenges.	

Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The concept of sustainability and sustainable development. 2. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and global progress on sustainability. 3. Three Dimensions of Sustainability: the environmental limits of our planet, the social foundations for society and our economic systems within the context of sustainability. 4. Knowledge systems and multi/inter/transdisciplinary ways of working to solve complex sustainability challenges. 5. Discussions on important sustainability concepts/theories (<i>examples</i>): the Energy Trilemma, Nexus Challenges, climate change risk, justice' in sustainable development, 'polycrisis', ethics in sustainability, science-policy interface. 6. Applying sustainability in practice (<i>examples</i>): Design process for inclusive development in sustainability, human-centered design, active citizenship, sustainability in business, emerging models and approaches to sustainability. 7. Critical evaluation of sustainable solutions.
Reference	<p>Material needed for this class will be provided during the course including lecture material, tutorial reading/case studies as well as suggested further reading on key topics.</p> <p>Other useful core course texts:</p> <p>Cohen, M.J., 2020. <i>Sustainability</i>. John Wiley & Sons.</p> <p>Sachs, J.D., 2015. <i>The age of sustainable development</i>. Columbia University Press.</p> <p>IDEO (2015) Human Centred Design.</p>
Grading	<p>Three Assessments (indicative), note that attendance will be monitored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Week 1: Quiz on taught class material (individual) (30%) - Week 2: Midterm presentation on case study-based exercise (group) (30%) - Week 3: Final presentation/report (group) (40%) <p>100% Total</p>



Tracy MORSE

tracy.thomson@strath.ac.uk

Centre for Sustainable Development
University of Strathclyde, UK

Tracy Morse is Professor of Environmental Health and Head of Strathclyde Centre for Sustainable Development. Having previously been based in Malawi for 20 years, she leads an interdisciplinary research team with a focus community health and mechanisms to address the determinants of health in low and middle income countries. Working with a number of partners globally, she is focused on promoting the importance of inter- and transdisciplinary research in addressing sustainable development for all, and supporting the transformational change needed to support attainment of UN SDGs.



Donald ROBERTSON

donald.j.robertson@strath.ac.uk

Centre for Sustainable Development
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
University of Strathclyde, UK

Donald Robertson is a Teaching Fellow and researcher with the Centre for Sustainable Development at the University of Strathclyde. Donald has many years of applied international research experience at the interface of science, policy, and practice, focused on complex sustainability and water resource challenges both in the UK and internationally. In a teaching capacity Donald leads several interdisciplinary sustainability courses at the University of Strathclyde and has been teaching as part of the GLOBEX Julmester programme since 2023. Donald brings experience and expertise to the teaching programme in topics including: the role of data in sustainability decision making, monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder engagement, environmental governance, participatory research methods, geosciences, environmental management, and interdisciplinary research approaches.