

Third-cycle education course:
Re-Framing Sustainability
5hp – Västerås, Sweden

Purpose

The aim of this course is to provide critical perspectives on sustainable transitions. While sustainability has become a driving concept in industrial processes, public policies, political discourse, academic research and teaching, societal commitments, its understanding and in particular the ways towards it have never been so diverse and even divergent.

In this course the intent is not to choose one among these perspectives and approaches but rather exploring the multiplicity of voices in the name of “sustainable transitions”. At the same time the aim is to offer critical tools to navigate that complexity and to reflect upon the different researchers’ roles.

On the one hand, sustainability is a driving factor for new markets, business models, and new partnerships towards sustainable value creation. On the other hand, sustainability implies to look at situated re-organizational processes at the boundaries between technoscientific knowledge, materiality, political choices and ethical postures. In other words, sustainability will be framed as practices taking place in specific contexts and involving a plurality of socio- and material actors. The course will provide theoretical suggestions and will work through case studies to explore sustainable transition in practice and its implications in terms of organizing, management and politics.

The course will first provide some critical perspectives on sustainability and sustainable transitions. Then based on current and influential research, the course invites to enter and to discuss different issues connected to sustainability in society: e.g. in business, in democratic processes and in organizing.

- The course requirement is to be enrolled as a Ph.D. candidate in business administration, industrial engineering and management or adjacent academic fields.
- The course is open also to students from outside MDU.
- For information and for applying to the course please contact Madeléne Westerberg: madelene.westerberg@mdu.se. It will be possible to partly participate remotely via zoom, depending on the circumstances.

Learning objectives

After the course, the Ph.D. candidate shall be able to:

1. Describe and critically discuss different contemporary critical perspectives on sustainability and distinguish some central epistemological approaches (SEM1).
2. Describe and critically analyze how sustainability impact different societal levels, as well as how these levels are related to each other; this includes applying ethical considerations related to sustainable transitions (SEM1).
3. Present and discuss, in text and orally, how contemporary and influential research on sustainability may inform and/or affect the PhD's project (INL1 and 2).
4. Critically review, value and constructively comment on academic texts and presentations (INL1).
5. Critically discuss one's own ongoing research project from relevant perspectives on sustainability and relate the project to a suitable theoretical and methodological domain (INL1 and INL2)

Language: English

Learning activities

The learning activities are concentrated on four days as follows. Each session is accompanied by compulsory readings prior to each seminar.

Session 1

Course Introduction.

Thinking about sustainability in the history of social thoughts, as (un)democratic processes and systemic change.

- The Anthropocene in history, politics and social theory
- Sustainable urban governance
- Independent researcher and/or embedded activist? Defining yourself in systemic changes for sustainability

Session 2

Sustainability, a sociomaterial perspective in research and teaching.

- A sociomaterial research perspective on sustainability
- Responsibility as sociomaterial practices
- Reframing pedagogical methods for sustainability from a sociomaterial perspective

Session 3

Sustainability in business: effects and outcomes.

- Circular economy and circular business models
- Alternative sources of energy
- Business and ethics

Session 4

(10.15 – 15.00): Students' presentation.

Examination:

SEM1 (1.5 credits) pass/fail: Active participation in all sessions.

INL1 (1 credits) pass/fail: Oral Presentation and opposition.

INL2 (2.5 credits) pass/fail: Academic paper.

Grades: A-F scale.

Literature (preliminary list)

Session 1:

Fell, T. and Mattsson, J. (2021). The Role of Public-Private Partnerships in Housing as a Potential Contributor to Sustainable Cities and Communities: A Systematic Review. *Sustainability*, 13(14), 1-25.

Gunter, H. M. (2021). Terry Wrigley – an appreciation of an activist researcher life. *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 54(1), 121-124, DOI: 10.1080/00220620.2021.2016742

Luguetti, C., and Oliver, K. L. (2018). ‘Getting more comfortable in an uncomfortable space’: learning to become an activist researcher in a socially vulnerable sport context. *Sport, Education and Society*, 23(9), 879-891

Scholz, R. W. (2017). The normative dimension in transdisciplinarity, transition management, and transformation sciences: New roles of science and universities in sustainable transitioning. *Sustainability*, 9(6), 991.

Wesley, J. (2019). The Line Between Researcher and Activist, The Chronicle of Higher Education; Washington (Nov 17, 2019).

Hamilton, C. (2013). Climate change signals the end of the social sciences", The Conversation: <http://theconversation.com/climate-change-signals-the-end-of-the-social-sciences-11722>.

Galaz, V. (2017). Anthropocene and planetary boundaries in Pattberg and Zelli (eds) *Encyclopedia of global environmental governance and politics*. Edward Edgar Publishing, 3-8.

Burke, A et. al, (2016). Planet Politics: A Manifesto from the End of IR. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 44(3), 499-523.

Lövbrand, E., Beck, S., Chilvers, J., Forsyth, T., Hedrén, J. et al. (2015). Who speaks for the future of Earth?: how critical social science can extend the conversation on the Anthropocene. *Global Environmental Change*, 32, 211-218
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2015.03.012>

Tängh Wrangel, C. and Causevic A. (2021). Critiquing Latour's Explanation of

Climate Change Denial: Moving Beyond the Modernity/Anthropocene Binary,
Millennium: Journal of International Studies, early
online: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/03058298211054877>

Session 2.

Blok, A., Nakazora M. and Winthereik B. R. (2016). Infrastructuring Environments. *Science as Culture*, 25(1), 1-22, DOI:10.1080/09505431.2015.1081500.

Bruzzone, S. (2012). Climate change and re-organizing of land use. Flood-control area as network effect. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37(6), 2001-2013.

Bruzzone, S. (2022). A posthumanist research agenda on sustainable and responsible management education after the pandemic". *Journal of Global Responsibility*, 13(1), 56-71. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JGR-05-2021-0045>.

Gherardi, S. and Laasch, O. (2021). "Responsible management-as-practice: mobilizing a posthumanist approach". *Journal of Business Ethics*, doi: 10.1007/s10551-021-04945-7.

Jasanoff, S. (2010). A New Climate for Society. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 27(2-3), 233–253. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276409361497>.

Joks, S., Law, J. (2017). Sámi salmon, state salmon: TEK, technoscience and care. *The Sociological Review*, 65, 150-171.

Kimura, S. (2016). When a Seawall Is Visible: Infrastructure and Obstruction in Post-tsunami Reconstruction in Japan. *Science as Culture*, 25(1), 23-43, DOI: 10.1080/09505431.2015.1081501

Laasch, O., Suddaby, R., Freeman, R. E., and Jamali, D. (2020). Mapping the emerging field of responsible management: domains, spheres, themes, and future research. In *Research Handbook of Responsible Management*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Lövbrand, E., Beck, S., Chilvers, J., Forsyth, T., Hedrén, J. et al. (2015). Who speaks for the future of Earth?: how critical social science can extend the conversation on the Anthropocene. *Global Environmental Change*, 32, 211-218
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Orlikowski, W. J. (2009). The sociomateriality of organisational life: considering technology in management research. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 34, 125-141.

Puig de la Bellacasa, M. (2011). Matters of care in technoscience: Assembling neglected things. *Social Studies of Science*, 41, 85–106.

Waterton, C., & Tsouvalis, J. (2015). On the political nature of cyanobacteria: intra-active collective politics in Loweswater, the English Lake District. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 33(3), 477-493.

Session 3.

Lahti, T., Wincent, J., and Parida, V. (2018). A definition and theoretical review of the circular economy, value creation, and sustainable business models: where are we now and where should research move in the future?. *Sustainability*, 10(8), 2799.

Frishammar, J., and Parida, V. (2019). Circular business model transformation: A roadmap for incumbent firms. *California Management Review*, 61(2), 5-29.

Parida, V., Burström, T., Visnjic, I., and Wincent, J. (2019). Orchestrating industrial ecosystem in circular economy: A two-stage transformation model for large manufacturing companies. *Journal of Business Research*, 101, 715-725.

Bressanelli, G., Perona, M., and Saccani, N. (2019). Challenges in supply chain redesign for the Circular Economy: a literature review and a multiple case study. *International Journal of Production Research*, 57(23), 7395-7422.

van Loon, P., and Van Wassenhove, L. N. (2020). Transition to the circular economy: the story of four case companies. *International Journal of Production Research*, 1-8.

Kazeminia, A., Hultman, M., and Mostaghel, R. (2016). Why pay more for sustainable services? The case of ecotourism. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(11), 4992-4997.

Stål, H. I., and Corvellec, H. (2018). A decoupling perspective on circular business model implementation: Illustrations from Swedish apparel. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 171, 630-643.

Peronard, J. P., & Ballantyne, A. G. (2019). Broadening the understanding of the role of consumer services in the circular economy: Toward a conceptualization of value creation processes. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 239, 118010.