

**University of Toronto**  
**School of the Environment**  
**ENV222 Pathways to Sustainability: An Interdisciplinary Approach**  
**– Winter 2022**

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## **General Information**

Time: Lecture – Mondays 2:00-4:00 pm

Tutorials – See Quercus and below for details

Location: Lecture – ES 1050 + Online (zoom links will be available on Quercus)

Instructor: Michael Classens

Email: [michael.classens@utoronto.ca](mailto:michael.classens@utoronto.ca)

Office: 410F Stewart Building, 149 College Street

Office hours: Mondays from 9:30am-11:30am, or by appointment.

### **Teaching Assistants**

Lois Boody

[lois.boody@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:lois.boody@mail.utoronto.ca)

Renecca McMillan

[rebecca.mcmillan@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:rebecca.mcmillan@mail.utoronto.ca)

Christina Nitsis

[christina.nitsis@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:christina.nitsis@mail.utoronto.ca)

Marc Yegani

[marc.yegani@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:marc.yegani@mail.utoronto.ca)

Cindy Zhang

[cindyxing.zhang@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:cindyxing.zhang@mail.utoronto.ca)

## **Course description**

This course explores the concept and practice of sustainability through interdisciplinary and equity perspectives. The course will provide students with a broad introduction to sustainability integrating scientific, technological, economic, political, psychological, historical, and ethical perspectives.

## **Learning Outcomes**

This course is designed to provide you with an introductory, interdisciplinary foundation to sustainability. By the end of the class, you should have confidence in your ability to:

1. Understand and describe key challenges related to sustainability from scientific, social scientific and humanities perspectives
2. Understand and engage in an informed way with the language and discourses of sustainability
3. Understand and describe how issues of equity intersect with sustainability issues
4. Understand and critically engage with existing sustainability interventions
5. Engage in the world around you through a holistic sustainability lens

## **Evaluation**

*\*Note – all written work should be submitted through Quercus.*

Sustainability in the City – 15%  
Interrogative Campus Tour – 20%  
Sustainability in my feeds – 15%  
Learning Journal – 10%  
Take home final exam – 20%  
Tutorial participation – 20%

## **Assignments**

**Sustainability in the City – 15%**

**Due: January 31, 2022**

Take a walk around your neighbourhood, wherever you live, and try looking through a ‘sustainability lens’. Even if you’ve been living in the same place for your entire life, try looking at your surroundings in a way that centres sustainability. Choose at least three things – it could be a building, park, road, store, a wall, a tree, anything at all – and write a brief reflection on each one. You don’t need to answer these specific questions, but some questions you might reflect on include: In what ways is it sustainable? In what ways is it unsustainable? How could it be more sustainable? Who is it sustainable for? Who isn’t it sustainable for? Each site reflection should be between 200 – 250 words (so, 600-750 words total for three sites).

**Interrogative Campus Tour – 20% (Total)**

**Due: Various dates, see below**

Working in groups of 3-5 people, you will identify a site on campus, conduct research on the site, and develop a reflexive, analytical and probing narrative about the site that interrogates the sustainability of the site. You can choose anything on campus – a building, a garbage can, a tree – any element at all. The stories you curate about the site you chose should be critical – that is, investigative and thoughtful – but they need not be negative. Nor should they be uncritically celebratory. On March 28<sup>th</sup> we will conduct the campus tours – you will be both tourist and tour guide (at your own site). This broader assignment includes a number of elements, including:

- **Preliminary site narrative for Interrogative Campus Tour (5%)**  
**Due: February 28, 2022**

For the preliminary site narrative, you will (i) identify a site of interest on campus, (ii) curate some preliminary research on the site, and (iii) develop a draft narrative for the site. The total output should be no more than 1000 words. You are encouraged to include pictures of your site. You should write your narrative as a script – that is, you are encouraged to use less formal language than you might typically in a conventional essay.

- **Final site narrative for Interrogative Campus Tour (10%)**  
**Due: March 14, 2022**

Building on your preliminary draft, you will prepare a well-researched final site narrative of no more than 1000 words. The final draft should be conversational and engaging, though still professional. The final draft should also address, as appropriate, feedback you received on your initial draft. This will be the script you will follow when giving the tour, so feel free to include any prompts or cues you feel necessary. You should also provide pictures in your final submission. Your final site narrative should include references to sources where appropriate and necessary.

- **Campus tour (5%)**  
**Due: March 28, 2022**

We will hold the campus tour during lecture on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Each group will present their narrative at their respective sites. Each group member should deliver some of the site narrative. Details of the tour routes and meeting places will be figured out with your TA in Tutorials.

### **Sustainability in my feeds – 15%** **Due: March 7, 2022**

You will find an item within one of your social media feeds, that addresses sustainability in some way. This could be a news story, a tweet, a promoted post, a Facebook post, whatever you want. I then want you to critically interrogate the piece – what are the sustainability claims being made? What implicit narrative is it forwarding? What are the assumptions of the piece? Drawing on at least two pieces of peer reviewed scholarship, I want you to assess and respond to the piece. For this assignment you will submit (a) a response to the social media post in the format of the post you're responding to (i.e a Twitter post, Instagram post, Facebook post), and (b) in recognition of the limitations of social media, longer format response to the post (no more than 500 words) that elaborates on your response. Your social media post and longer format response should be included in the same document.

### **Learning Journal – 10%** **Due: April 4, 2022**

Reflection is a key part of learning. In order to encourage you to reflect on your learning experience in this class, I ask that you keep a learning journal throughout the course and make at least THREE TOTAL entries of approximately 200 words each. You do not need to submit each entry – submit your consolidated reflections on April 4th. The purpose of the journal is to

document and reflect on whatever aspects of the course were most impactful, problematic, resonant and/or challenging for you. Reflections in particular on your experience as a community-engaged learner and/or group learner are welcome.

**Take home final exam – 20%**

**Due: April 18, 2022**

You will be given a take home exam that will provide you with an opportunity to synthesize and summarize what you learned during the course. The exam will be given to you on the last day of class and you will have until April 18<sup>th</sup> to submit your work.

**Tutorial participation – 20%**

**Due: Ongoing**

Full participation is expected of all students able to do so. In the best-case scenario, this requires – to the best of your ability – attending every scheduled Tutorial (whether in-person or virtually). However, it is also expected that you be well prepared, having carefully read the required readings and able to add insight and depth to class discussions. You’ll also be expected to attentively listen to, and learn from, your classmates during class. The participation grade is based on attendance; contributions to inclusive, insightful and respectful class discussion; familiarity with the readings; and contribution to the learning of your peers. The participation grade will take into account disruptions related to COVID-19 and will be adjusted accordingly. If you are unable to attend tutorial regularly, please contact me or your teaching assistant for support and to (potentially) work out an alternative.

**Readings**

All course readings are available through the University of Toronto library system and/or the course Quercus site.

**Schedule**

*\*Note: This schedule is subject to change*

- Lecture will be held every week, on Monday, from January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (with the exception of February 21, 2022, which is reading week).
- Classes will be online until at least January 31<sup>st</sup> – zoom links will be provided on Quercus for lectures and tutorials.
- Tutorials will NOT be held every week. They will be held (on either Wednesday or Thursday, depending on the session you enrolled in) during the weeks of January 10<sup>th</sup>, January 17<sup>th</sup>, January 31<sup>st</sup>, February 14<sup>th</sup>, February 28<sup>th</sup>, and March 14<sup>th</sup>. See below for details.

Date	Topic/readings	Deadlines
Week 1 January 10, 2022	<b><u>Introduction and course overview</u></b>  <b>Read</b>	<b>Tutorial:</b> Optional

	The syllabus	Q&A Session
Week 2 January 17, 2022	<p><b><u>From progress to prospect, or stuck in the Great Derangement?</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b> An interview with Joni Adamson, “Connecting the humanities and sustainability: An interview with Joni Adamson”. Find it <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Ghosh, A. (2016). <i>The great derangement: Climate change and the unthinkable</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pgs 1-27.</p>	<b>Tutorial:</b> Sustainability in the City
Week 3 January 24, 2022	<p><b><u>The Anthropocene?</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b> Baldwin, A., and B Erickson. (2020). Introduction: Whiteness, coloniality, and the Anthropocene. <i>Environment and Planning D: Society and Space</i> 38(1): 3-11.</p> <p>Pulido, L. (2017). Racism and the Anthropocene. In, G. Mitman, A. Marco, and E. Robert (Eds) <i>Future remains: A cabinet of curiosities for the Anthropocene</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (pgs 116-128).</p>	
Week 4 January 31, 2022	<p><b><u>Learning, thinking and sustainability</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b> Classens, M., E. Hardman, N. Henderson, E. Systemsma, and A. Vsetula-Sheffield. (2021). Critical food systems education, neoliberalism, and the alternative campus tour. <i>Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems</i> 45(3): 450-471.</p> <p>Slater, K., and J. Robinson. (2020). Social learning and transdisciplinary co-production: A social practice approach. <i>Sustainability</i> 12: 7511 doi:10.3390/su12187511</p>	<b>Tutorial:</b> Interrogative Campus Tour  <b>Due:</b> Sustainability in the City
Week 5 February 7, 2022	<p><b><u>Indigenous resurgence, decolonization, and sustainability</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b> Todd, Z. (2016). An Indigenous feminist’s take on the ontological turn: ‘Ontology’ is just another word for colonialism. <i>Journal of Historical Sociology</i> 29(1): 4-22.</p> <p><b>Watch</b> Cottagers and Indians <a href="https://gem.cbc.ca/media/cbc-docs-pov/s04e01">https://gem.cbc.ca/media/cbc-docs-pov/s04e01</a></p> <p><b>Special Guest</b> Nikki Auten</p>	<b>Due:</b> Site selection
Week 6 February 14, 2022	<p><b><u>Speaking sustainability</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b> McBride, BB., et al., (2013). Environmental literacy, ecological literacy, ecoliteracy: What do we mean and how did we get here? <i>Ecosphere</i> 4(5): 1-19.</p> <p>Andersson, E., &amp; Öhman, J. (2017). Young people’s conversations about environmental and sustainability issues in social media. <i>Environmental Education Research</i>, 23(4), 465–485. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2016.1149551">https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2016.1149551</a></p>	<b>Tutorial:</b> Sustainability in my Feeds

February 21, 2022	<b>READING WEEK NO CLASS</b>	
Week 7 February 28, 2022	<p><b><u>(Un)Sustainability: The physical science basis</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b></p> <p>Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2021). Climate change 2021 – The physical science basis: Summary for policymakers. <a href="https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM_final.pdf">https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGI_SPM_final.pdf</a></p>	<p><b>Tutorial:</b> Interrogative Campus Tour</p> <p><b>Due:</b> Preliminary site narrative</p>
Week 8 March 7, 2022	<p><b><u>The (unequal) energy transition</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b></p> <p>Markard, J. (2018). The next phase of the energy transition and its implications for research and policy. <i>Nature Energy</i>, 3(8), 628–633. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1038/s41560-018-0171-7">https://doi.org/10.1038/s41560-018-0171-7</a></p> <p>Rodon, T., Nachtet, L., Krolik, C., &amp; Palliser, T. (2021). Building Energy Sovereignty through Community-Based Projects in Nunavik. <i>Sustainability</i>, 13(16), 9061. <a href="https://doi.org/10.3390/su13169061">https://doi.org/10.3390/su13169061</a></p> <p><b>Special Guest</b> Clare Gutjahr</p>	<p><b>Due:</b> Sustainability in my Feeds</p>
Week 9 March 14, 2022	<p><b><u>Waste not want not...</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b></p> <p>Giles, D. B. (2021). “The Anatomy of a Dumpster: Abject Capital and the Looking Glass of Value” in <i>A Mass Conspiracy to Feed People: Food Not Bombs and the World-Class Waste of Global Cities</i> (pgs 31-54). <a href="https://doi.org/10.1215/9781478021711-003">https://doi.org/10.1215/9781478021711-003</a></p> <p>Ghosh, S. K. (2020). Introduction to Circular Economy and Summary Analysis of Chapters. In S. K. Ghosh (Ed.), <i>Circular Economy: Global Perspective</i> (pp. 1–23). Springer. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-1052-6_1">https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-1052-6_1</a></p>	<p><b>Tutorial:</b> Interrogative Campus Tour</p> <p><b>Due:</b> Final narrative</p>
Week 10 March 21, 2022	<p><b><u>Economy vs the Environment?</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b></p> <p>Raworth, K. (2017). Why it’s time for doughnut economics. <i>IPPR Progressive Review</i> 24(3): 217-22.</p> <p>Kallis, G., Kostakis, V., Lange, S., Muraca, B., Paulson, S., &amp; Schmelzer, M. (2018). Research On Degrowth. <i>Annual Review of Environment and Resources</i>, 43(1), 291–316. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-102017-025941">https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-102017-025941</a></p>	
Week 11 March 28, 2022	<p><b><u>Campus Tour – No Lecture</u></b></p>	<p><b>Campus Tour</b></p>

<p>Week 12 April 4, 2022</p>	<p><b><u>Sustainability and social change</u></b></p> <p><b>Read</b></p> <p>Maloney, M. (2016). Building an Alternative Jurisprudence for the Earth: The International Rights of Nature Tribunal. <i>Vermont Law Review</i>, 41(1), 129–142.</p> <p>Indigenous Environmental Network. (2021). Indigenous Resistance Against Carbon. <a href="https://www.ienearth.org/irac-indigenous-rights-and-responsibilities-framework/">https://www.ienearth.org/irac-indigenous-rights-and-responsibilities-framework/</a></p>	<p><b>Due:</b> Learning Journal</p>
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## Course Policies

- A note on COVID-19:** We are still very much in the midst of the global pandemic. It is important to recognize that this reality will substantively shape our time together in class, as well as our respective lives outside the classroom. The frustrating truth is that we cannot predict the specific impacts of COVID-19 in the coming academic year. However, I hope the following will help guide us.

  - I hope that we are able to conduct community-based research projects this year, and that you all will get to spend time ‘in the field’, so to speak. If this is not possible, we will adjust and find equally meaningful projects to work on and learn from.
  - The pandemic has and will continue to have unequal and differential impacts. I hope that we are all attuned to this fact and resist assuming how the pandemic is being experienced by others in the class.
  - Given the profound disruption of the global pandemic over the past 18 months, many of us are rightfully beleaguered. Given this, I hope we can prioritize being kind, gentle and understanding with each other.
  - I expect that everyone in the class will follow the COVID-19 guidelines established by the university and do their utmost to keep their peers safe and healthy. Updates on COVID-19 protocols can be found here: <https://www.utoronto.ca/utogether>
- Deadlines:** Please do your very best to submit your work on time. In this class, perhaps more than most, your peers will be relying on you to complete your work in a timely fashion. Late penalties of up to 2% per day may apply in cases where work is not submitted on time. If you need extra time for an assignment, please do not hesitate to ask – and please try to do so at least a week in advance of the deadline.
- Academic Integrity:** (<http://uoft.me/CodeofBehaviour>)  
The University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document.  
Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

  - In papers and assignments: Using someone else’s ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement. Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor. Making up sources or facts. Obtaining or providing

unauthorized assistance on any assignment (this includes working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work).

- **Misrepresentation:** Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes. Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information from me, the Writing Centre or the Academic Success Centre.

## Support

*Writing Support:* Writing support is available to all students year-round at Writing Centres: <http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science/>. You can visit the writing centre for help with an writing projects.

**Writing Workshop Series:** <http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus/>.

**English Language Learning:** <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>.

**Academic Success Centre:** [www.asc.utoronto.ca](http://www.asc.utoronto.ca)

*AccessABILITY:* ([www.accessibility.utoronto.ca](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca)) Students with diverse learning styles and needs are very welcome in this course. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services immediately.

*Wellness:* Wellness refers to maintenance of a balanced life, stress reduction and prevention of serious health issues. You are encouraged to seek support early and often. Find out more here <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/>

Support is also available **24/7** for students within and outside of Canada at:

**U of T My Student Support Program** (U of T My SSP) at **1-844-451-9700** or, outside of North America, **001-416-380-6578**.

More info is available at: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/myssp/>