



Sustainability – ECON 335*/ SUST 335 (3 credits)

Faculty: Dario Catania

* For *ECON 335* prerequisite: *ECON 201. Principles of Macroeconomics*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course aims to understand the concept of sustainability on its theoretical evolution and its nowadays practical implementation in EU, Italy as well as other parts of the world. Therefore, the course will analyze the relationship between economy, environment and society in the era of globalization. It will also focus on the European Union and other case studies around the world. The course will focus on different concepts such as renewable resource, circular economy, corporate social responsibility and it will focus of some particular subjects such as the food industry, waste management, energy, etc.

In particular, students will study theories and practices of sustainability and will be able to answer the following questions:

- How sustainability is implemented in different parts of the world? Is it successful?
- Is it possible to consider sustainability the future mainstream economic model?
- How we can introduce sustainability in our communities of reference?
- What role should law-makers, governments, enterprises and consumers play for this change?

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course the student will be able to:

- Know the theory and practices of Sustainability
- Understand the social and environmental challenges humanity are facing today and their relationship to different economic models
- Understand the diversity in the Italy and its value added
- Recognize the typical products of the Italian food sector (as an example of territorial and cultural diversity)
- Know about the differences between linear economy and circular economy
- Know the European and Italian policies related to sustainability
- Know the strategies of the so-called "fair economy" in Italy and Europe
- Understand the value of Corporate Social Responsibility and Consumers' awareness to make change happen

CLASS SCHEDULE

Unit 1:

- ✓ Introduction
- ✓ What is sustainability

Unit 2:

- ✓ The history of Sustainability: economy, ecology, ethics
- ✓ From 1800 theories to Fridays for Futures movement

Unit 3:

- ✓ Private sector and sustainability
- ✓ The Hemp stories
- ✓ Corporate Social Responsibility
- ✓ Environmental justice: definition and case studies in Europe, USA and around the world

Unit 4:

- ✓ Climate Change
- ✓ International protocols and the European ETS

Unit 5:

- ✓ Sustainability in agricultural and food sector
- ✓ The world food market

Unit 6:

- ✓ EU and Italian policies on food.
- ✓ The EU Food and Wine Quality Brand: DOC, DOCG, DOP.
- ✓ The Italian food: a strategic economic asset.
- ✓ Organic food in Italy: a strategic economic asset.
- ✓ Other “alternative” agri-food systems in Italy and in the world

Unit 7:

- ✓ Plastic and microplastic: the problem of ocean pollution

Unit 8:

- ✓ Water and drought
- ✓ Water is a public good
- ✓ introduction to the field study

Unit 9:

- ✓ Comments on the field study
- ✓ Akira Miyawaki and naturalistic forestation
- ✓ Food forest and permaculture

Mid-term exam.

The research project is assigned.

Field study: Naples and its contradictions. From Vomero to Historical Center: history of a place. Visiting the first Food Forest in Naples by N'Sea Yet.

Unit 10:

- ✓ Sustainable and responsible tourism
- ✓ Indication to visit Naples in a sustainable way for the fall break

Unit 11:

- ✓ Comments and suggestions about Naples (examples of sustainability or non-sustainability)
- ✓ Sustainable tourism: ecotourism

Unit 12:

- ✓ Sustainable mobility

- ✓ Public mobility and electric vehicles
- ✓ Innovation in Logistic sector

FALL BREAK

Unit 13:

- ✓ Definition of resource
- ✓ Energy resources (non-renewable and renewable resources)

Unit 14:

- ✓ Sustainability and energy
- ✓ Renewable resources and energy around the world
- ✓ Case in Italy: nuclear power and the emerging energy communities

Unit 15:

- ✓ Sustainability and waste management
- ✓ Consumption and consumerism
- ✓ The Fair trade and other forms of alternative trade

Unit 16:

- ✓ New economy and new lifestyles
- ✓ Life Cycle Assessment
- ✓ From linear economy to circular economy.

Field study: Naples and its virtuous examples of sustainability. Visit to the first Energy Community of Southern Italy in Ponticelli and to the Marine Protected Area of Gaiola in Posillipo.

Unit 17:

- ✓ Sustainable Architecture
- ✓ Materials, techniques, passive houses and smart cities

Unit 18:

- ✓ Sustainability in ICT
- ✓ How digitalization can help the ecological transition

Unit 19:

- ✓ The textile industry and the impact of fast fashion
- ✓ Sustainability in the fashion industry

Final exam and presentation of the research project.

TEXTS

The Climate Crisis and the Global Green New Deal: The Political Economy of Saving the Planet, by Noam Chomsky, Robert Pollin, Verso Books, latest edition.

The instructor will also use original material in class, as well as articles from the main international journals and sources (such as: World Bank, EU Commission, United Nations, Oxford University – Our World in Data, etc.), plus all relevant material published by the and European Union on sustainable development.

ASSESSMENT

20%: Attendance and Participation

25%: Mid Term Exam

25%: Research project

30%: Final Exam

A research project (10 pages min.), presented both as an essay and as an oral presentation in class, will allow students to investigate in depth one aspect of the course which particularly interests them. It will assess their ability to choose appropriate subject matter conducive to academic exploration and collect appropriate primary and secondary materials and analyze and present them in an original way, contextualized within the information discussed throughout the course.

Mid-term and Final Exam will test students' ability to analyze material and theories presented during the course through short answers and essay questions.

Grading Scale

Students must earn 95 points to receive an A in the course, 90 for an A-, 87 for a B+, 83 for a B, 80 for a B-, 77 for a C+, 73 for a C, 70 for a C-, 67 for a D+, 63 for a D, and 60 for a D-. Students earning less than 600 points will receive an F.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

- ✓ **Attendance:** You are allowed 2 unexcused absences (1 in the summer terms). Documentation for any other absence MUST be produced and APPROVED by the professor or the Academic Director. For absences due to illness, please provide the professor with a doctor's note upon returning to class as well as inform them and/or the school the first day of illness. Each unexcused absence after the 2nd will reduce your grade by 3 percentage points.
- ✓ **Make-Up Exams:** Students who miss an assignment or exam for a valid reason must present documentation (from a medical doctor, a coach, a representative from student life, or other university official) to make it up.
- ✓ **Using Electronic Devices:** The use of laptop computers, tablets, cell phones, or any other electronic devices during class is prohibited unless explicitly authorized by the instructor. Students caught using such devices in class will be **penalized 5 points** for each offense.
- ✓ **Academic Honesty:** Any act of academic misconduct in this course will result in an F for the assignment involved.

