

Capitalism, Justice, and Sustainability

Course hours:	Thursday, 2:30-5:20
Location:	Online
Office hours:	Online on Wednesday 4- 6pm and by appointment

Course Objectives and Description:

A concept that has come to be central in addressing the most urgent questions facing societies today is the idea of ‘sustainability’. The word is used everywhere, from government policy through to commercial advertising, but it is used in a variety of ways and with diverse assumptions. The purpose of this course is to gain a clearer understanding of the various elements in sustainability – social and economic as well as environmental. An essential part of that understanding is grasping the way that the global political and economic environment of capitalism impinges on how we understand sustainability, but also what impacts capitalism has on sustainability, including crucial questions of justice. Attention is paid to alternatives to the status quo, including the growing importance of ecological economics, the degrowth movement, *Buen Vivir*, co-operative businesses, and community-based social enterprises.

Course Format:

The course will be conducted mainly through a combination of online lectures and group and plenary discussions built around assigned readings and related topics. Additional key resources will include relevant videos, guest lecturers and events.

Sustainability issues are complex and require that we exchange ideas from our different perspectives. One of the advantages of this course is that it is conducted largely as a seminar, which means that regular attendance, especially given that we are online, is essential. The online format is obviously different in some ways, but it allows for ‘face to face’ contact (closeups on your screen!) in class and in groups. I have scheduled the class to be basically synchronous, ‘real time’, because this contact matters so much. We will see, as we proceed, whether this arrangement needs some adjustment. Each class will build on the work of the previous sessions. Therefore, it is in your best interest to be present at all class sessions. You will, of course, be connected online, but I ask that you do not keep other connections (email, etc.) active while you are taking part in the class. Other connections just reduce what you will get from the class, and are unfair to your classmates.

I reserve the right to require withdrawal for what it seems to me an unreasonable number of missed classes. **Only in exceptional circumstances will students with unexcused absences from more than 2 class sessions be permitted to remain in the class.**

Textbook and Web support

The textbook for the course is Naomi Klein’s book, *This changes everything: Capitalism vs. The climate*, published in 2015 by Simon and Schuster. Links for online purchase of a hard copy or an electronic version are found at <http://www.simonandschuster.com/books/This-Changes-Everything/Naomi-Klein/9781451697407>.

As an important supplement to the textbook, readings will be assigned from other sources, mainly journals. Most of these are accessible online. In general, it is best to locate them by going through the Library Home Page. It is expected that students will access the class readings well before the class in which the reading discussion will take place.

Evaluation Elements:

Students will be evaluated according to the following schedule:

Title	Individual or Group	Type (Exam, Hand-in Assignment, Presentation, Quiz, Other)	Due Date	Weight / % of grade
Free Writings (4)	Individual	Electronic submission via Brightspace	18 September 2020 9 October 2020 23 October 2020 6 November 2020 By 5:00 pm	5%
Readings Summaries	Individual	Electronic submission via Brightspace	By 2 p.m. the day before each class, in Brightspace	20%
Mid-Term Essay	Individual	Electronic submission via Brightspace	Monday, 2 November 2020 By 5:00 pm	30%
Term Paper Presentation	Group	Class presentation, each member participating	November 26th and December 3 rd	5%
Term Paper Final Submission	Group	Electronic submission via Brightspace	Friday, 11 December By midnight	40%
Total				100%

Requirements for Graded Work:

(1) Free Writing Exercises (5%)

Students may select a topic relevant to the subject matter of this course on which to write four short (maximum of 250 words) pieces of free writing according to the schedule set out below. Content of the free writing may be any thoughts arising from course content. You are expected to connect your writing in some way with material in course lectures, discussion and /or readings. You may want to summarize your understanding of some material that has been discussed, send your comments about a lecture you attended, explore the connections between the material and some other thinking you are doing, and or raise questions about it.

Each student will be expected to turn in four free writing exercises during the course. Free writings should be submitted via Brightspace as an **attached Word file** with text no smaller than 12-point font. I rely on the Brightspace entries for grade calculation, so I cannot accept handwritten or emailed free writings. Exercises are due on:

- Free writing 1: Friday, September 18th - no later than 5pm
- Free writing 2: Friday, October 9th - no later than 5pm
- Free writing 3: Friday, October 23rd - no later than 5pm
- Free writing 4: Friday, November 6th - no later than 5pm

Free writing exercises sent after the dates indicated will not be considered. Free writings are worth a total of 5%. Students submitting all four assignments on time will receive 100% for this portion of the course grade, three assignments 78% two assignments 68%, and 1 assignment 58%.

(2) Readings Summaries (20%)

For each session, there are a number of readings. Some are academic and some are from the popular media. Each student will be allowed to turn in up to 14 reading summaries of the academic readings (guidelines below) during the course. This exercise has several benefits. It helps students read with understanding and improves analytical skills. It also benefits classroom discussions by preparing students for participation.

Summaries are worth a total of 20%. Students submitting all 14 summaries will receive 100% for this portion of the course grade. Students turning in fewer than 14 will receive a percentage grade equal to the percentage of 14 that the number turned in represents. For example, turning in 13 would earn 93%, 10 would earn 71%, 7 would earn 50%, and so on.

N.B.: The purpose of summaries is to prepare you for the day's class presentation and discussion. Therefore, in order to receive credit for a summary, you must be present for the class to which it is attached. If your name does not appear on the attendance list for the class, you will not be able to receive credit for summaries due for that class.

Requirements for your summaries to be considered:

- Summaries must be submitted via Brightspace **by 2 p.m. on Wednesday before the Thursday class** for which that reading has been assigned.
- Please upload your summary as a Microsoft Word document. Do not upload a pdf, and do not enter your summary in the comments section as text.
- **Summaries not submitted by Brightspace will not be considered.**
- You must be present for the class to which the summary is related.
- Summaries should be **a minimum of 200 and a maximum of 250 words**, double-spaced, 12-point type. Longer or shorter summaries will not be counted.
- **The following questions must be answered in summaries if they are to be counted.**

Please include a heading to indicate the title of the article, name of the author and your name]

What is the **thesis of the paper**?

What is the **main supporting argument**?

What is your **evaluation** of the work? For example: Do the concepts make sense? Are the assumptions reasonable?

What questions have been generated for you?

- **Do not use quotations** from the article. Provide a summary in your own words.
- Summaries will be checked for fit with directions, but they will not receive written evaluation or comment. Summaries that do not answer the above questions will not be counted toward your grade.

(3) Mid-term Essay (30%)

For this essay, you are asked to identify some organization and/or movement in BC that can be seen as a **response to currently prevailing views** about what the economy is or how it should be structured, about

environmental issues, about appropriate political arrangements, or about poverty and/or inequality. You should bring out the **alternative views** that are **explicit or implicit** in the organization's structure and functioning, and discuss how these seem to function in the environment where they are located. You are expected to support your essay with at least four published resources including websites, two of them should come from the class readings material.

Maximum length of essays is **1500 words, including bibliography**. Essays will be assessed in terms of:

1. The clarity of the structure of the essay, including its overall point or 'thesis'.
2. The clarity of expression in the essay, including statement of the point of the essay ('thesis statement') and the steps in your supporting exposition and argument.
- 3. How convincing your explanation is of a prevailing view, and how your chosen organization's view differs.**
4. Your analysis of the way that the organization's alternative view functions in the organization's environment, including its relation to the view to which it is an alternative.
5. The appropriateness and application of your published resources.

Please make an arrangement by email. Bring the following to the consultation: (1) the organization you will be writing about, (2) the prevailing view that it questions, (3) the alternative view that it represents, and (4) how you will connect with the class material discussed in class.

An electronic copy of the essay is due no later than Monday, **November 2nd, by 5:00 pm**. The essay should be word-processed, 12 pt. font and **double-spaced** and Microsoft Word document, using a standard method, such as APA 6th, for identifying citations and bibliography, and submitted via Brightspace.

Late work will be penalized at the rate of 5% for each day it is late. Start early; don't leave this assignment to the last minute! You may find it useful to look at the slides located at <http://www.slideshare.net/wsymes/a-well-structured-essay> for useful tips on how to construct a good essay.

(4) Term Project Class presentation (5%)

Students will work in assigned groups of four on the term paper (see below). I recommend that groups meet the first week of November at the latest to plan your paper. Please send one page before the consultation outlining: 1) working title of your paper, 2) background information on the topic, 3) a concise tentative thesis statement, (4) a tentative outline of the proposed paper, and (5) a bibliography of at least two sources

For many students, framing a good thesis statement is one of the biggest challenges. A useful guide to forming a thesis statement is found at

<http://minerva.union.edu/motahare/srs200/Guidelines%20for%20the%20Term%20Paper%20Proposal.pdf>.

Before you submit your term project (see below), you have the opportunity to present an overview of your term paper to the class in order to receive further constructive feedback from your peers that will enable you to improve your submission.

Presentations will be a maximum of 15 minutes each, plus 10 minutes for Q&A.

You may include images and multi-media, but the presentation is basically an oral presentation of the main points/highlights of your term paper. It is expected that each member of the group will participate actively. If you want to use presentation software (e.g. PowerPoint), have one member of your group mount the display using the 'Share Screen' tab in Zoom. Do not use Google Drive or any online application.

Presentations will be made November 26th and December 3rd.

(5) Term paper (40%)

Papers are to be a maximum of 3,000 words (word-processed, 12 pt. font and double-spaced and Microsoft Word document). Longer papers will be penalized. It is expected that papers will make use of at least six published resources, no more than three of them web sites.

At the end of the course, we want to respond collectively to the question “what is possible?”. Students are encouraged to document and analyse local and/or global initiatives that can be seen as potential alternatives to the pandemic and social, ecological, cultural and political crisis we are facing. Those initiatives could focus on, for example, local food, homelessness, hunger, poverty, microcredit, local currencies, race, equity, decolonization, human rights, democracy, ethical purchasing, climate change, biodiversity, traditional knowledge, indigenous economic development, etc. It is expected that your essay goes **beyond description** and you use those initiatives to analyse and bring some of the readings discussed in class into the discussion. Use a recognized format, such as APA 6th, for acknowledging citations and showing your bibliography.

Group term papers should be submitted electronically by means of Brightspace, **no later than midnight, Friday, December 11th**. Five percentage points will be deducted per day from late term papers up to a maximum of 3 days (Monday, December 14th). Papers will not be accepted after that date.

Papers will be graded mainly on (1) the clarity with which things are expressed (that includes everything from individual statements up to the overall progress of the reasoning), (2) the plausibility of assumptions, (3) the use and (where appropriate) the explanation of relevant concepts and distinctions, (4) the quality of argument for the conclusions you draw, 5) the appropriate use of bibliographical sources. Errors in spelling and grammar will be marked, and will affect the grade where they affect clarity.

At the end of the course, each student will be asked to fill out a **peer evaluation form** for group work. Percentages from students’ evaluation form are factored into the individual grades given for group work and will affect student’s final grade. It is clearly in your best interest to work responsibly with your group.

Grading Scale:

Graded material in this course will be marked and reported to the Registrar using percentages. The percentage grade, the corresponding letter grade and comparative grading information will be displayed on student transcripts (official and administrative). The following table demonstrates the equivalent letter grades:

Percentage Range	Grades	Grade Point Value	Description
90 – 100	A+	9	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
85 – 89	A	8	
80 – 84	A-	7	
77 – 79	B+	6	Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
73 – 76	B	5	
70 – 72	B-	4	
65 – 69	C+	3	Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
60 – 64	C	2	
50 – 59	D	1	Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
	E	0	Conditional supplemental.
	F	0	Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.

“N” (incomplete) grades: All graded components must be completed or you will receive a failing grade of N (grade point value of 0).

Final course grades are official only after they have been approved by the Program Director and may be subject to change up until that point.

Course Ground Rules:

- (1) You cannot expect to do well in this course without taking part in weekly online classes.
- (2) You are expected to participate actively in class and will be randomly called upon to participate in class discussions. You are expected to participate in class by raising your hand, using the chat, posting and sharing resources, etc.
- (3) You are expected to read the readings assigned for each class, and cannot expect to benefit fully from classes without that preparation.
- (4) You are expected to contribute with such things as: (a) the main point of papers being discussed, (b) clarification of fundamental concepts, (c) clarification of important facts and/or steps in supporting argument, and (c) provocative questions that the reading invites. You are also expected to relate the reading to outside material or material previously discussed in class.
- (5) Through the course we want you to develop not just an opinion but an informed opinion. If you register in this course just to add a course to your list, this is probably not a good choice for you.
- (6) Students who miss a class are responsible for checking with other class members to ensure that they do not miss assignments, or announcements of changes in scheduling.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individual or group work. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust, and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research, and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

Acts of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

- using the exact words of a published or unpublished author without quotation marks and without referencing the source of these words.
- duplicating a table, graph or diagram, in whole or in part, without referencing the source.
- paraphrasing the conceptual framework, research design, interpretation, or any other ideas of another person, whether written or verbal (e.g. personal communication, ideas from a verbal presentation) without referencing the source.
- copying the answers of another student in any test, examination, or take-home assignment.
- providing answers to another student in any test, examination, or take-home assignment.
- taking any unauthorized materials into an examination or term test (crib notes).
- impersonating another student or allowing another person to impersonate oneself for the purpose of submitting academic work or writing any test or examination.
- stealing or mutilating library materials.
- accessing test prior to the time and date of the sitting.
- changing name or answer(s) on a test after that test has been graded and returned.
- submitting the same paper or portions thereof for more than one assignment, without discussions with the instructor(s) involved.

Students should be aware that all instructors reserve the right to use any plagiarism detection software program(s) to detect plagiarism for essays, term papers and other assignments.

Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student's transcript, or a suspension.

Provisional Schedule:

Except where indicated, readings are available online through the library. (For guidance in obtaining reading online through the library, see the document 'Accessing Online Journal Articles' just under the Course Outline on Brightspace.)

Copies of material posted on Brightspace for this course were made pursuant to the [Fair Dealing Guidelines](#) of the University, library database licenses, and other university licenses and policies. Copies may only be used for the purpose of research, private study, criticism, review, news reporting, education, satire or parody. If copies are used for the purpose of review, criticism or news reporting, the source and the name of the author must be mentioned. The use of this copy for any other purpose may require the permission of the copyright owner.

Session	Date	Topics	Preparation
1	10 Sep	A. Introductions, Course Overview Structure & Expectations. B. How global challenges are reflected in your lives & community	Read: Course Outline (Available on Brightspace) CCPA BC reports: https://www.policynote.ca/recovery/ https://www.policynote.ca/bc-economic-security/ Coronavirus Will Change the World Permanently. Here's How. https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/19/coronavirus-effect-economy-life-society-analysis-covid-135579
2	17 Sep	A. What is Capitalism, and neoliberalism? B. What is Sustainability?	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hopwood, B., Mellor, M., & O'Brien, G. 2005. Sustainable Development: Mapping Different Approaches. <i>Sustainable development</i>, 13(1): 38-52. Harvey, D. (2007). Neoliberalism as creative destruction. <i>The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science</i>, 610(1), 21-44. COVID-19: What has COVID-19 Taught Us about Neoliberalism? https://www.wilpf.org/covid-19-what-has-covid-19-taught-us-about-neoliberalism/ Hopwood & Harvey summaries due by 2 pm Wednesday Free writing #1 due by Friday, September 18th, 5 pm.
3	24 Sep	Climate Change Environmentalism of the Poor	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Klein, N. (2015). <i>This changes everything: Capitalism vs. The climate</i>: Simon and Schuster. Chapter 4 (pp. 120-160) and 6 (pp. 191-229) People are dying: how the climate crisis has sparked an exodus to US. The Guardian https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/jul/29/guatemala-climate-crisis-migration-drought-famine Klein summaries due by 2 pm Wednesday (one for chapter 4 and another for chapter 6)

Session	Date	Topics	Preparation
4	1 Oct	Poverty, Inequality and Environmental Justice	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anguelovski, I., and J. Martínez Alier. "The 'Environmentalism of the Poor' revisited: Territory and place in disconnected glocal struggles." <i>Ecological Economics</i> 102 (2014): 167-176. • The Guardian: UN Chief slams 'myth, delusions and falsehoods' around inequality" https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/jul/18/un-chief-slams-myths-delusions-and-falsehoods-around-inequality • Video: When the Two worlds Collide https://www.youtube.com/watch?vQe9ZyBqKOLg <p>Anguelovski & Martinez-Alier summary due by 2 pm Wednesday</p>
5	8 Oct	Exploring Alternatives: Degrowth	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackson, T. (2009). Prosperity without growth? The transition to a sustainable economy. Report Sustainable development Commission: chapters 3 (pp. 29-36), 4 (pp. 37-46), and 9 (pp. 85-92). Available at http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/data/files/publications/prosperity_without_growth_report.pdf <p>Jackson summary (one summary combining the three short chapters) due by 2 pm Wednesday</p> <p>2nd Free writing due by Friday, October, 9th, 5 pm</p>
6	15 Oct	Exploring Alternatives: <i>Buen Vivir</i> and Rethinking Development	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gudynas, E. (2011). Buen Vivir: today's tomorrow. <i>Development</i>, 54(4), 441-447. • Escobar, A. (2015). Degrowth, postdevelopment, and transitions: A preliminary conversation. <i>Sustainability Science</i>, 10(3), 451-462. • Video: <i>Escobar</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KI4TuUjoiU8 <p>Guest speaker</p> <p>Escobar & Gudynas summaries due by 2 pm Wednesday</p>
7	22 Oct	Exploring alternatives: Social Movements	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vieta, M. (2010). The social innovations of autogestión in Argentina's worker-recuperated enterprises: Cooperatively reorganizing productive life in hard times. <i>Labor Studies Journal</i>, 35(3), 295-321. <p>Black Lives Matter May Be the Largest Movement in U.S. History https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/07/03/us/george-floyd-protests-crowd-size.html</p> <p>How the Pandemic Is Affecting BIPOC Canadians, by Various Measures https://theyee.ca/Analysis/2020/07/22/Pandemic-Affecting-BIPOC-Canadians/</p> <p>Optional training is not enough: we need to enforce accountability to tackle systemic racism https://www.martlet.ca/systemic-racism-uvic/</p> <p>Vieta summary due by 2 pm Wednesday</p> <p>3rd Free writing due by Friday, October 23rd, 5 pm</p> <p>OJO VIETA AND CLT SHOULD GO TOGETHER</p>

Session	Date	Topics	Preparation
8	29 Oct	Exploring Alternatives: economic democracy	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gibson-Graham, J. K. 2006. Ch 3: Constructing a Language of Economic Diversity, in <i>A Post capitalist Politics</i>: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 53-78. [Chapter posted on Brightspace.] Peredo, A. M., & McLean, M. (2019). <i>Decommodification in action: Common property as countermovement. Organization.</i> <p>Gibson-Graham and Peredo et al. summaries due by 2 pm Wednesday</p> <p>Mid-Term Essay due by Monday, November 2nd, 5 pm</p>
9	5 Nov	Exploring Alternatives: learning from Indigenous alliances Course Project Proposals	<p>Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peredo, A. M. (Work in progress). <i>Back to the future: Indigenous enterprise and decolonization.</i> [Paper posted on Brightspace] <p>Peredo summary due by 2 pm Wednesday</p> <p>4rd Free Writing due by Friday, November 6th, 5 pm</p>
10	12 Nov	Independent group work on term papers	Connect with group members online
11	19 Nov	Investing in alternatives: Where do we go from here?	<p>Read</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Klein, Naomi. Ch. 13 and Conclusion from <i>This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate</i> (Toronto: Random House, 2014). Jackson, T. (2009). Prosperity without growth? The transition to a sustainable economy. Ch 10 pp. 93-100, & Ch 11 pp. 101-107) <p>The world after Crisis: what is possible? Lessons? Solidarity, basic income, buen vivires, Indigenous ontologies, community-based, etc.</p> <p>Guaranteed basic income: https://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/eggleton-and-segal-covid-19-presents-lessons-in-how-a-guaranteed-basic-income-program-could-work/</p> <p>Klein (one summary for the two chapters) and Jackson summaries due</p>
12	26 Nov	Course evaluation, and Class presentations of Term Paper Summary	
13	3 Dec	Class presentations of Term Paper Summary	Group Term paper due by midnight, Friday December 11th

Course Evaluations

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey provides vital feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching,

Accessibility Statement

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSD) as soon as possible.