# **DukeGreenClassroomCertification-Logo**

# **Nicholas School of the Environment**

# **ENV 811: Introduction to Business and the Environment**

# **Fall 2023**

**Course Syllabus**

**Course instructor:**

Holly Emerson

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holly.emerson@duke.edu

Office hours: by appointment

**Classroom assistant(s):**

CA Office hours to be determined based on class and CA scheduling needs

**Course description**

This course introduces students to 1) systems thinking in a sustainable business context and business motivations for engaging in sustainable practice and 2) creating value with environmental and social corporate governance, business organization and management practices. You will engage in real-world situations and learn practical skills. You will apply systems analysis tools to consider the global context for sustainability and to evaluate business value chains. You will examine the ways in which businesses operate within an environmental, social and economic context to address global problems such as climate change, degradation of water, land and air, overconsumption, and the unsustainable use of natural resources. You will then probe stakeholder, regulatory and financial drivers for business sustainability. Using the lessons learned in class, you will advise the proper authorities on how best to deploy a social responsibility and sustainability program. You will build your capacity for leadership, teamwork and use the tools of business to advance environmental sustainability goals.

Active learning is a core value of our course. We will study critical issues in business and the environment through case study case analysis, in-class and on-line discussions and applied team projects. We will bring current business challenges into the classroom. Because we all learn from each other, exceptional communication is a core value. Our goal is to create a community in which we can engage in lively and respectful discussions with each other. Communication skills will be honed as you complete written assignments, such as focused e-mails and decision memos, and work with team mates to deliver presentations on assigned topics.

Our overall goal is for you to develop a holistic view of business interactions with the environment so that you can be prepared to develop managerially, financially and technically sustainable solutions to problems in private sector, corporate, NGO, and public agency settings.

**Statement on Diversity and Inclusion**

We work together to create a course environment in which students from diverse backgrounds are comfortable in sharing their knowledge, experience ,and views, and benefit equally from what we are learning. We believe that a diverse community of students adds significant value to our learning experience. We intend to promote a classroom culture in which everyone is heard and is respectful of diversity: gender identity, age, race, disability, political perspective, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, nationality, culture and religion. We welcome and appreciate your suggestions on how to improve the effectiveness of our course for you and for others.

**Land Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge that the land Duke University occupies is land that belongs to the Shakori, and Catawba people.  We recognize the Coharie, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Haliwa-Saponi, Lumbee, Meherrin, Occaneechi Band of the Saponi, Sappony, and Waccamaw Siouan peoples whose lands include what is known today as North Carolina. We recognize those peoples for whom these were ancestral lands as well as the many Indigenous people who live and work in this region today.

**A note on course format**

Much of our work is done in groups, and we will mix up these groups occasionally, so that all students can get to know each other. We will also host “after class” discussion forums on Canvas so that our conversations can continue.

**We are committed to creating an active and inclusive classroom community in which we can learn from each other. We also recognize, that, if circumstances change, we may need to transition to a fully online format.**

**Course communication**

We will post announcements on the course Canvas site on a regular basis. Students should e-mail us with questions you may have about lectures, videos, readings or assignments. We will work hard to respond within 48 hours.

**Course materials**

Videos, readings and cases are provided electronically on Canvas and through HBP.

**Please submit your assignments via Canvas.**

You should label your individual assignments as follows:

***Last Name\_First Name\_Assignment Title\_Semester.***

“**Jursak\_James\_Clorox Memo\_Fall2023”**

And your group assignments as follows:

***Team Name\_Assignment Title\_Semester***

 ***“*Amazon\_Value Chain Presentation\_Fall2023*”***

Grades in this course will be based on:

**Assignments**

Unless otherwise stated, case assignments will be released on a Wednesday immediately following class. They will be due the following Sunday at 11:59 pm.

Case assignments are individual assigments. They are open book, you are free to use any resource available to you. Your work should be your own. Do not confer with fellow classmates over answers.

**A note on late assignments**

Please let us know in advance, if you will not be able to complete an assignment on time, and we can negotiate an alternative timeframe. If we don’t hear from you, the assignment will be considered late and receive a lower grade, one-half grade per 24-hour day late.

**Academic integrity**

All activities of Nicholas School students, including those in this course, are governed by the Duke Community Standard.

**TO UPHOLD THE DUKE COMMUNITY STANDARD:**

* I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors;
* I will conduct myself responsibly in all my endeavors; and
* I will act if the Standard is compromised.

**Grading scheme**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Requirement** | **Percent of Grade** |
| Class participation (includes forum posts) | 10% |
| Case Memos | 20% |
| Case Presentations | 20% |
| Mid-term Team Presentation | 15% |
| Final Team Case Presentation | 25% |
| Final Team Case Brief | 10% |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Percent Grade** | **4.0 Scale** |
| A+ | 97-100 | 4.0 |
| A | 93-96 | 4.0 |
| A- | 90-92 | 3.7 |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.3 |
| B | 83-86 | 3.0 |
| B- | 80-82 | 2.7 |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.3 |
| C | 73-76 | 2.0 |
| C- | 70-72 | 1.7 |
| E/F | Below 70 | 0.0 |

| DATE | TOPIC | PREPARATION/ASSIGNMENTS  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 1August 28 | **Introduction to course** |
| Week 1Aug 30 | **Tool: Communication tools for the ESG professional** | Read* Co-creating the Future: The Dawn of Systems Leadership (HBP)
* [Strategic Perspectives of Sustainability](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652616304358)
* [A Friedman doctrine – The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits](https://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/13/archives/a-friedman-doctrine-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to.html)
* [Harvard Law: Stakeholder Capitalism and ESG as Tools for Sustainable Long-Term Value Creation](https://corpgov.law.harvard.edu/2022/06/11/stakeholder-capitalism-and-esg-as-tools-for-sustainable-long-term-value-creation/)
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| Week 2Sept 5 | **Labor Day – no class** |
| Week 2Sept 6 | **Governance – legal structures C/S/B corps** | Read: * [Sustainability is an Innovation Problem](https://d3.harvard.edu/sustainability-is-an-innovation-problem/)
* Two and a Half Cheers for Conscious Capitalism
* [Sustainable Statements](https://greenbusinessbureau.com/business-function/executive/sustainability-statements/)
* [Shaping the Sustainable Organization](https://www.accenture.com/us-en/insights/sustainability/sustainable-organization?c=acn_glb_buildingsustaingoogle_12379606&n=psgs_0921&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI87yXjY6e-QIVwQxlCh14oAfoEAAYASAAEgJIYPD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds)
* New Belgium
* What You Don't Know About Making Decisions
* The Change Leadership Sustainability Demands
* [How to choose a corporate status](https://finvisor.com/corporation-type/)

**Assignment: indiviual memo #1*** **New Belgium case:write a 2 page memo to the CEO on the vision for sustainability at New Belgium.**
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| Week 3Sept 11 | **Corporate sustainability strategy**  | Read: * [The value proposition for corporate ESG issues](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-value-proposition-for_b_3953694)
* Sustainable Business Went Mainstream in 2021
* Unilever’s New Global Strategy: Competing through Sustainability
 |
| Week 3Sept 13 | **Tool: Materiality assessments** | Briefly review: * [SASB materiality map](https://www.sasb.org/standards/materiality-map/)
* [GRI and materiality – how has it changed?](https://www.globalreporting.org/media/r2oojx53/gri-perspective-the-materiality-madness.pdf)

Read:* [The Challenge of Double Materiality: Sustainability Reporting at a Crossroad](https://www2.deloitte.com/cn/en/pages/hot-topics/topics/climate-and-sustainability/dcca/thought-leadership/the-challenge-of-double-materiality.html)

**Assignment: individual presentation #1****Prepare a two slide presentation (with notes) on recommendations to the Unilever board of directors for future company actions.** |
| Week 4Sept 18 | **Systems thinking** | Read: * [5 reasons CR professionals need a value chain map](https://www.greenbiz.com/article/5-reasons-cr-professionals-need-value-chain-map)
* [EPA Lean & Environment Toolkit](https://www.epa.gov/sustainability/lean-environment-toolkit-content-acknowledgments): Chapter 2 Identifying Waste
* [EPA Lean & Environment Toolkit](https://www.epa.gov/sustainability/lean-environment-toolkit-content-acknowledgments): Chapter 3 Value Stream Mapping
* Future Proof Your Climate Strategy

Watch: * [Sally Uren on System Change for Sustainability (GreenBiz 2019)](https://youtu.be/70zdK0eb7mU?si=82vlUNS3kn5j99tO)
* [Got a Wicked Problem? First Tell Me How to Make](https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_wujec_got_a_wicked_problem_first_tell_me_how_you_make_toast?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare)
 |
| Week 4Sept 20 | **Tool: Value stream mapping** | Read:• EMMA Safety Footwear: Designing a Circular ShoeConsider:* What measures did EMMA take to become a circular company? Did the company go far enough?
* How did the company promote sustainability?
* Consider the fashion industry sector from a system perspective. What are the benefits here? What management problems may arise?

**Assignment: individual memo #2****How would you advise EMMA to stay the sustainability course in light of a value stream map you perform?**  |
| Week 5Sept 25 | **Impacts – Circular economies and design** | Read * [Whole Systems Design: Introduction to Lifecycle Thinking part 1](https://knowledge.autodesk.com/search-result/caas/simplecontent/content/whole-systems-and-lifecycle-thinking-part-1.html)
* [Whole Systems Design: Introduction to Lifecycle Thinking part 2](https://knowledge.autodesk.com/search-result/caas/simplecontent/content/whole-systems-and-lifecycle-thinking-part-2.html)
* The Limits of the Sustainable Economy

Watch:* [Whole Systems Design: Introduction to Lifecycle Thinking](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7mC9xaJC2dQ)
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| Week 5Sept 27 | **Tool: LCA** | Read:* Dow and the Circular Economy: Trash to Treasure?

**Assignment: individual presentation #2****Prepare a two slide presentation for Dow’s investor relations team** |
| Week 6Oct 2 | **Partnerships**  | Read: * Four Steps to Sustainable Business Model Innovation
* Taking Environmental Partnerships Seriously
* [EPA](https://www.epa.gov/p2) P2
* World Wildlife Fund for Nature case
 |
| Week 6Oct 4 | **Tool: B Corp Assessment** | * [We Mean Business](https://www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/)
* [SE4All](https://gocarbonfree247.com/?gclid=CjwKCAjwu5yYBhAjEiwAKXk_eL_37jCjy8nf3XmkCDV7ntt1QrjbANovxF2iPt3nQF0oApngGcDXPhoCibEQAvD_BwE)
* [Leveraging the power of collaborations](https://www.sustainability.com/thinking/leveraging-the-power-of-collaborations/)
* B Corp Tool revisited (from week 2)

**Midpoint Assignment Introduction:** * **Mining in Madagascar**
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| Week 7Oct 9 | **Corporate Procurement of Renewables** | Resources:* Clean Energy Buyers Asociation (CEBA) <https://cebuyers.org/>
* A Policy Roadmap for 24/7 Carbon Free Energy (CFE) <https://cloud.google.com/blog/topics/sustainability/a-policy-roadmap-for-achieving-247-carbon-free-energy>
* Watttime <https://www.watttime.org/>
* Bloomberg New Energy Finance <https://about.bnef.com/> (available through the Bloomberg Terminal)
* Sustainable Energy in America Factbook <https://bcse.org/factbook/>
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| Week 7Oct 11 | **Midpoint Presentation** |
| Week 8Oct 16 | **Fall recess – no class** |
| Week 8Oct 18 | **ESG Reporting** | Read: * Designing Your Company’s Sustainability Report
* Overselling Sustainability Reporting

Tools~~:~~* GRI and ISSB
* TCFD and CDP
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| Week 9Oct 23 | **Stakeholder Activism** | * Engaging with Stakeholders: 12 Pitfalls to Avoid on the Path to Managing Reputational Risks
* [Post, J. E., Preston, L. E., & Sachs, S. (2002). Managing the extended enterprise: The new stakeholder view. California management review, 45(1), 6-28.](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.2307/41166151)
 |
| Week 9Oct 25 | **Tool: Stakeholder analysis** | Read:* [Five Step Approach to Stakeholder Engagement](https://www.bsr.org/en/our-insights/report-view/stakeholder-engagement-five-step-approach-toolkit)
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| Week 10Oct 30 | **Supply chain**  | Read: * [Ending child labour, forced labour and human trafficking in global supply chains (Alliance 8.7, 2019).](https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_716930/lang--en/index.htm)
* [Supply chains are key for carbon reduction in the food sector](https://www.greenbiz.com/article/supply-chains-are-key-carbon-reduction-food-sector)
* [Costco and Walmart: a tale of two supply chains](https://www.greenbiz.com/article/costco-and-walmart-tale-two-supply-chains)

Review:* [Walmart’s Project Gigaton](https://www.walmartsustainabilityhub.com/climate/project-gigaton)
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| Week 10Nov 1 | **Tool: Ecovadis, Sedex, CDP Supply Chain** | Read:* [Engaging the Chain: Driving Speed and Scale, CDP](https://cdn.cdp.net/cdp-production/cms/reports/documents/000/006/106/original/CDP_SC_Report_2021.pdf?1644513297)

Review:* <https://ecovadis.com/>
* [Sedex Introduction](https://youtu.be/Xpd2FRq_qq4)

**Assignment: individual presentation #3 (make-up)****Prepare a presentation for Costco’s management with recommendations for Scope 3 targets and a communication plan.** |
| Week 11Nov 6 | **Government - policy** | Read:* What if Banks had to Disclose the Climate Impact of their Investments?
* [Profiting from Environmental Regulatory Uncertainty: Integrated Strategies for Competitive Advantage](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228246081_Profiting_from_Environmental_Regulatory_Uncertainty_Integrated_Strategies_for_Competitive_Advantage)
* [WEC Explainer: Which countries have introduced a carbon tax?](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/07/carbon-tax-emissions-countries/)
 |
| Week 11Nov 8 | **Tool: Harvard policy tracker** | Read: * [Regulatory Tracker](https://eelp.law.harvard.edu/portfolios/environmental-governance/regulatory-tracker/)
* First Solar
* [Government Policy and Firm Strategy in the Solar Photovoltaic Industry](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1525/cmr.2011.54.1.17)

Consider these questions for class discussion as you read the case:* How important is recycling to the solar energy industry? What are the regulatory incentives for entering the solar panel recycling market?
* What is the nature of the solar panel recycling market? What are the opportunities and threats?
* What is First Solar's business plan to recycle solar panel modules?

**Assignment: individual memo #3 (make-up)****Recommend to Alex Heard and Suhhwant Raju whether or not they should pursue solar module recycling as a profit center.** |
| Week 12Nov 13 | **Customers** | * [Spotting Greenwash with ESG Data](https://www.reprisk.com/news-research/reports/spotting-greenwashing-with-esg-data/8b244690)
* How Greenwashing Affects the Bottom Line
* [Factset: spotting greenwashing](https://insight.factset.com/spotting-greenwashing-with-esg-data)
* Rio Tinto
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| Week 12Nov 15 | **Tool: The Sins of Greenwash, Green Guides** | * [The Sins of Greenwashing](https://www.ul.com/insights/sins-greenwashing)
* [FTC Green Guides](https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/topics/truth-advertising/green-guides)
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| Week 13Nov 20 | **Investors**  | Read: * [Larry Fink Letter](https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/investor-relations/larry-fink-ceo-letter)
* Shareholders Are Pressing for Climate Risk Disclosures
* The Comprehensive Case for Sustainability
* [Making a Better Business Case for ESG](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/making_a_better_business_case_for_esg)
* [Sustainability a CFO Can Love](https://hbr.org/2014/04/sustainability-a-cfo-can-love)
* [How to talk to Your CFO About Sustainability](https://hbr.org/2021/01/how-to-talk-to-your-cfo-about-sustainability)
* [Tesla, Exxon Mobil, and S&P 500’s ESG: How Does This Work?](https://seekingalpha.com/article/4516270-tesla-exxon-mobil-sp-500-esg-how-does-this-work)
* [NYU Stern Return on Sustainable Investment (ROSI) model](https://www.stern.nyu.edu/experience-stern/about/departments-centers-initiatives/centers-of-research/center-sustainable-business/research/return-sustainability-investment-rosi)
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| Week 13Nov 22 | **Thanksgiving recess – no class** |
| Week 14Nov 27 | **Final Presentations** |
| Week 14Nov 29 | **Final Presentations** |