ISM UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS

APPROVED BY
THE STUDY COMMISSION
Minutes No. 02-12-2025-14
as of 26th August 2025

GREEN ECONOMICS AND CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

Course code	*GRAB011*
Level of studies	*Graduate*
Number of credits	*6 ECTS*; *36 class hours, 124 hours of self-study, 2 hours of consultation*
Course coordinator (title and name)	*Assoc. prof. dr. J. Boyd, e-mail: jonboy@ism.lt*
Prerequisites	*Undergraduate diploma*
Language of instruction	*English*

DESCRIPTION AND AIMS OF THE COURSE

This course examines how economics, finance and business engage with the defining sustainability challenges of our time. It is structured around four sets of dilemmas that show why sustainability is not simply a technical matter but a field of hard choices, competing interests, and paradoxes.

1. The challenges we face. Economic activity generates prosperity, but at the cost of accelerating climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. The paradox is whether growth can be sustained without exhausting the very systems that support it. Can innovation, technology, and efficiency deliver genuine decoupling, or do we confront limits that compel societies to adapt and rethink prosperity itself?
2. Tools and trade-offs. Societies have developed policy and financial instruments to act: carbon markets, climate finance, adaptation measures, human rights standards, and global agreements. Yet each carries trade-offs: carbon pricing often misfires, adaptation is chronically underfunded, supply-chain rights are neglected, and powerful industries use lobbying to obstruct change. The dilemma is why so many solutions exist on paper but falter in practice.
3. The role of corporations. Firms are under pressure to deliver profits while also being expected to act on sustainability. ESG frameworks and reporting standards are intended to enhance transparency, and in many cases they do. But transparency on its own does not ensure accountability; disclosures can be incomprehensible, inaccessible, or ignored. The challenge is whether sustainability becomes a foundation for long-term trust and value, or remains a compliance exercise that fails to alter behaviour.
4. Knowing but not acting. Never before have we had more data, modelling, and consensus about the scale of environmental crises. Yet the gap between knowledge and action persists, as political will falters, vested interests delay, and societies struggle to translate awareness into change. The dilemma is not only what to do, but how to act at the scale and speed required.

The course combines lectures with interactive seminars. While lectures provide the foundations, much of the learning will come through active discussion, case studies, online modules, and simulations. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings and materials before each session and to contribute actively in class.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course learning outcomes (CLO)	Study methods	Assessment methods
CLO1. To understand economic characteristics and outcomes of the climate change.	Lectures, readings, online modules, self-study, in-class discussions	Exam, presentations, participation, certificates.
CLO2. To assess national and international climate policy design and their implementation issues.	Lectures, readings, online modules, self-study, in-class discussions	Exam, presentations, participation, certificates.
CLO3. To understand what are the costs and benefits and how the costs and benefits of mitigation are measured	Lectures, readings, online modules, self-study, in-class discussions	Exam, presentations, participation, certificates.

CLO4. To learn how to plan strategic development of a company with environmentalist mindset	Lectures, readings, online modules, self-study, in-class discussions	Exam, presentations, participation, certificates.
CLO5. To learn make better-informed environmental policy related decision, all while distinguishing between positive analyses and normative judgements	Lectures, readings, online modules, self-study, in-class discussions	Exam, presentations, participation, certificates.
CLO6. To sharpen critical analysis and communication abilities, especially in the context of complex and systemic climate change issues, and apply systems thinking to real-world business problems.	Lectures, readings, online modules, self-study, in-class discussions	Exam, presentations, participation, certificates.
CLO7. To expand general understanding of the complex decisions faced by managers in business, government, and non-profit organizations.	Lectures, readings, online modules, self-study, in-class discussions	Exam, presentations, participation, certificates.
CLO8. To be challenged to clarify your own values and opinions on issues related to sustainability and climate change.	Lectures, readings, online modules, self-study, in-class discussions	Exam, presentations, participation, certificates.
CLO9. To develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills	Lectures, readings, online modules, self-study, in-class discussions	Exam, presentations, participation, certificates.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism are fully applicable and will be strictly enforced in the course. Academic dishonesty, and cheating will lead to a report to ISM's Committee of Ethics.

QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES

The lecturer will apply multiple teaching methods to keep the students engaged in the topic. Continuous student feedback will be invited and accommodated to improve class experience. Students are encouraged to e-mail the lecturer between the respective classes for any assistance or clarification needed.

COURSE OUTLINE

Session	Lecture Title	Seminar Activity / Assignment
1	Earth's vital challenges	Discussion: trade-offs and environmental impacts
2	Environmental economics I (externalities, commons, free riding)	Simulation: Carbon Negotiation Scenario
3	Mitigation, Economics and Technology	Data workshop: analysing global renewable energy trends
4	Climate Finance: Risk, Adaptation & Resilience	Case study: PG&E "climate bankruptcy"
5	The Future of Energy	Case study: NATO Alliance Negotiations over Soviet Pipeline Sanctions
6	Planetary boundaries & SDGs	Assignment 1: Group presentations on selected SDGs
7	Social sustainability & human rights	Assignment 2: Group analysis of Human Rights Watch corporate reports
8	Politics, corporations & communication	Assignment 3: Populism & Obstruction Project – group presentations
9	Capstone: Denial, Doubt, and Delay in Practice	Assignment 4: Group presentations linking *Don't Look Up* archetypes to real-world cases

DESCRIPTION AND WEIGHTING OF EACH ASSIGNMENT

	Assignment	Description	Weight
1	SDG Group Presentation	Groups present one Sustainable Development Goal, analysing its relevance, progress, and limitations.	15%
2	Human Rights Case Analysis	Group project analysing a corporate human rights case (HRW reports), with in-class presentation and Q&A.	15%
3	Populism & Obstruction Project	Group presentations analysing how a populist government has obstructed environmental or climate policy, followed by in-class Q&A.	20%

4	Capstone: Denial, Doubt, and Delay in Practice	Group presentation using *Don't Look Up* as an anchor, connecting its archetypes to real-world cases of denial, doubt, and delay, with professional recommendations.	20%
5	Accountability Grade	Based on anonymous peer evaluations using objective criteria (attendance, preparation, timeliness, follow-through on tasks).	10%
6	UN CC:e-Learn Certificates (Prerequisite)	Students must submit certificates for all assigned UN CC:e-Learn modules as proof of completion; failure to do so makes them ineligible to sit the final exam.	—
7	Final Exam	Individual written exam covering the full course (concepts, cases, readings, and professional dilemmas).	20%

RETAKE

If a student receives an unsatisfactory grade on the final exam, they may sit a retake exam (worth 20% of the final grade). Eligibility for the retake is conditional on submitting all required UN CC:e-Learn certificates at least 24 hours before the scheduled retake.

REQUIRED READINGS

The full list of reading requirements will be published on eLearning one week before the first class.