

Sustainability Studies



Faculty	Course Type	Credits	Prerequisites	Semester
Dr. Priyadarshini Karve	General	4	None	Any

Brief Overview

The human race today has favoured a particular path of development that focuses on the economic prosperity of the individual. This approach totally ignores the ‘connectedness’ of individuals to each other, of humans to their ecosystems, and of ecosystems with each other. This irrational and unscientific viewpoint of development has also made it unsustainable, and the price will be paid by this and future generations over the next 100 years or so. The course is aimed at a two-fold objective –

- Understanding the unavoidable consequences that have arisen out of the choices made in the 18th and 19th centuries, and to explore ways and means of minimizing the damage, if possible.
- Exploring alternative paths to create a more sustainable and equitable world, the foundations of which need to be laid today so that it can take over when the havoc created by the past mistakes is brought under control.

The course is thus aimed at empowering the students with a rational and scientific approach to deal with the developmental challenges in their professional and personal lives. At the end of the course, the students would have developed enough understanding to carry out a sustainability assessment of any path of development in any sector. They would also have gained an insight into how a sustainable path is possible without compromising basic requirements of a comfortable quality of life. It is expected that these skills will give them a competitive edge in an increasingly environment conscious corporate world too.

Course Objectives

This course aims to -

- Create awareness of the unsustainability of the current development paradigm, and to introduce the concept of sustainable development, through underlying scientific principles.
- Bring out the critical and dual role that science and technology plays in deciding the course of development through the example of mega dam projects and related issues.
- Introduce the concept of ‘appropriate technology’ and its implications for sustainable and equitable development.
- Understand the context of climate change issues bringing sustainability to the forefront of political debate.
- Develop scientific understanding of climate change and mitigation and adaptation strategies.
- Create awareness of the not-much-talked-about history of social responses to oppose the unsustainable development paradigm overtaking the world.

Teaching Methodology

The course is conducted mostly through interactions between the instructor and the students, with regular class leads by the students. The students also conduct case studies, and also collect additional information from books or web based resources.

Requirements

Attendance is a basic requirement of the course. There will be in all 06 class assignments, which involve writing essays and/or classroom presentations in oral or poster format. The students also have to write an end of term paper that requires inputs from all the learning modules that form part of the course. Class assignments will be graded on the basis of content and presentation. The end of term paper will be graded on the basis of originality and depth of analysis, logical flow, as well as linguistic and stylistic considerations.