

Syllabus 'Sustainability & Practical Ethics' / CHE, NL

Name of Institution: CHE / Ede Christian University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands)

Course Number/Name: Sustainability & Practical Ethics

Place in year: 1st of Sept - middle of Nov

Number of Contact Hours (full semester total): 420

Number of Credits (or EC, please specify): 15 EC

Prerequisites for the course: 2 years of Higher Education

Length of the course (in weeks): 10

Instructor Name(s):

- Mr Jelle Terpstra
- Ms Jody de Blois
- Ms Hylkje Algra

Textbooks used:

- Articles related to Intervention Mapping, targeting lifestyle and health promotion.
- Articles from the 'Positive Peace Report', and by UNDP.

List of assignment in the course and their value within the course:

1. The individual assignment consists of a building a Position Paper in which they explain and defend their position on sustainability and their professional identity. In it they analyze a relevant case, and come up with solutions, related to their profession and with arguments springing forth from the sustainability mindset principles.
2. Students are required to participate (in small groups) one day / week in creating sustainable communities. The method they will use is Intervention Mapping, targeting lifestyle and health promotion. The reason is that community life creates a sense of belonging and connection among the members of a community, while also promoting the health and well-being of those individuals. And this relates strongly to the SDG's : to create inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable society.
3. Students may choose for their third assignment, between a live debate, a workshop intercultural conversation or participating in a blended intensive program with a week on location in Helsinki (Finland).

Detailed Course Description/Objectives:

In this course students will study in a multidisciplinary environment in which they will learn to frame (international) problems from a sustainable development philosophy. The sustainability mindset principles provide a guideline in looking to solutions. Sustainability, of course, is a systemic question – often the key to success in one area will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another. The work of Isabel Rimanoczy provides the theoretical framework, critically compared with some philosophers.

Sustainable development is a much broader concept than getting solar panels or stop eating meat. It implies a concern for future generations and for the long term health and integrity of the dimensions of our living environment. It embraces concern for the quality of life (not just income growth), for equity between people in the present (including prevention of poverty), for inter-generation equity (people in the future deserve an environment which is at least as good as the one we currently enjoy, if not better) and for the social and ethical dimensions of human welfare (especially Human Rights, as that is under constant pressure). It also implies that further development should only take place as long as it is within the carrying capacity of natural systems.

Special attention is given to the relationship between the (future) 'professionalism' of the students and the whole concept of sustainability. Many times this concept is too abstract for students to work with (and they tend to just focus on easy solutions, like stop eating meat). This course will help the future professional to think of her/himself as a 'sustainability-professional'.

Students are taken on a learning journey in which they discover for themselves that environmental, urban and health challenges are interrelated, that an integrated approach is required that undertakes action at various levels simultaneously. Subjects are:

1. A stewardship perspective on sustainability (also from a Christian worldview).
2. Sociological issues (justice) and a flourishing society
3. Psychological issues (loneliness, social exclusion) and human capital
4. Health questions related to the impact of lifestyle and social dynamics on health
5. The economic and political question of climate change
6. History of urbanization and trends for the coming decade

Each accounts for circa 2 EC (a total of 10 EC).

The **other 5 EC** can be gained by delving into the subject of the history and politics of the United Nations sustainable development goals; or into intercultural communication practice; or into a blended intensive program together with several other European universities (with an intensive week in Helsinki, Finland, in the middle of October).

Learning Outcomes.

1. *Develop a Comprehensive Understanding of Sustainability Concepts:*
 - Students will gain an in-depth understanding of sustainability principles and their application in various professional contexts. This includes an awareness of social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability.
2. *Enhance Critical Thinking and Ethical Decision-Making:*
 - Through analysis of case studies and engagement in debates, students will refine their critical thinking skills. They will learn to evaluate ethical dilemmas and make informed decisions in their professional lives.
3. *Apply Intervention Mapping and Community Engagement Techniques:*
 - Students will acquire practical skills in intervention mapping and community engagement, enabling them to design and implement sustainable solutions in diverse settings.

By analyzing a case and proposing solutions, students learn to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios. This enhances their problem-solving skills, crucial for any professional role.

Working in small groups fosters teamwork and leadership abilities. Students learn to collaborate, delegate, and lead projects, skills highly valued in the workplace.

Engaging with communities teaches empathy, social awareness, and the importance of sustainable practices in a social context. These are key competencies for professionals in fields related to social work, urban planning, and public policy.

This course will provide students with a unique learning experience in which they will both become aware of the complexity of building a better and more sustainable world while at the same time providing them with knowledge regarding this very important challenge for the professionals of the 21st century.