Course Descriptions None 2026-2027

Course Title	Sustainability and Human Health
Course Code	EBC2188
ECTS Credits	5,0
Assessment	Whole/Half Grades

Period

Period	Start	End	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
1	31-8-2026	16-10-2026		X			X

Level	Intermediate/Advanced
Coordinator	Maud Huynen For more information:m.huynen@maastrichtuniversity.nl
Language of instruction	English
Goals	Students are able to: * understand what is meant with (planetary) health; * explain how human health depends on the health of the planet by exploring relevant examples (pollution, climate change, zoonotic disease emergence) * explore mental health, well-being and behaviour in relation to sustainable development * reflect on the (central) role of human health in the sustainable development debate.
Description	Our health is (or should be) a key component in the sustainable development debate. For example, the first principle of the seminal 1992 United Nations Rio Declaration on Environment and Development states that "Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature". Similarly, the World Health Organization argues that "sustainable development cannot be achieved when there is a high prevalence of debilitating illnesses, and population health cannot be maintained without ecologically sustainable development". Throughout the course, students will reflect on the (central) role of human health in the sustainable development debate. In the past the exploitation of the environment has benefited our health, for example by increasing food production to feed billions of people. However, the exploitation and contamination of the environment is now beginning to threaten our health. Hence, the same natural systems that have benefited us for so long (by providing key ecosystem services in support of our wellbeing), are now suffering from the consequences of human activities. It has, for example, been estimated that diseases caused by pollution were responsible for an estimated 9 million premature deaths in 2015—16% of all deaths worldwide. And climate change is now perceived by many as one of the key global health threats of the 21st century. The emerging field of planetary health explicitly accounts for the importance of natural systems in terms of averted cases of disease and the potential harm that comes from human perturbations of these systems. This course will discuss how human health depends on the health of our planet and explores relevant examples of this interlinkage (e.g. pollution, climate change, zoonotic disease emergence). Next to looking at our physical health, we will also explore mental health, well-being and human behaviour in relation to sustainable development.
Literature	Planetary health textbook, Journal papers, Internet
Prerequisites	Exchange students who wish to register for courses within the Minor Sustainability should contact the International Relations Office (IRO) via iro-incoming-sbe@maastrichtuniversity.nl. Incoming exchange students at SBE can choose to: * follow the complete Minor Sustainability programme; or * register for selected parts of the minor only. Full Minor Options Students can choose between the following options: * Full minor excluding the Project Sustainability course (25 ECTS) Students will be registered for all courses within the minor except the Project Sustainability course. * Full minor including the Project Sustainability course (30 ECTS) Students will be registered for all courses within the minor, including the Project Sustainability course. Partial Minor Options Students who only wish to follow specific parts of the minor can choose from the following options: <u>Period 1 package (12.5 ECTS)</u> Registration includes the following courses: * Sustainability and Social-Ecological Systems (EBC2187, 5 ECTS) * Sustainability and Human Health (EBC2188, 5 ECTS) * Systems Thinking Competency (EBS2074, 2.5 ECTS) <u>Period 2 stand-alone courses</u> * Social and Sustainable Entrepreneurship (EBC2189, 5 ECTS) * From Climate Conflict to Climate Justice (EBC2190, 5 ECTS) These courses may be taken independently, without registering for other courses within the minor. <u>Period 2 combined option (7.5 ECTS)</u> Students may register for the skills course: * Collaboration Competency: Exploring Negotiation and Conflict Resolution (EBS2075, 2.5 ECTS) only in combination with: * From Climate Conflict to Climate Justice (EBC2190, 5 ECTS) Together, these courses amount to 7.5 ECTS. Please note that exchange students have already received additional information about the Minor Sustainability and the available registration options in the course registration email. Students are advised to read this information carefully before applying.
Keywords	
Transitional Regulations	
Teaching methods	PBL / Lecture
Assessment methods	Written Exam / Presentation
Evaluation in previous academic year	For the complete evaluation of this course please click http://iwio-sbe.maastrichtuniversity.nl/rapporten.asp?referrer=codeUM

This course belongs to the following programme / specialisation		
	UM-wide minors	Minor Sustainability
	SBE Exchange Bachelor	Minor Sustainability
	SBE Exchange Master	Minor Sustainability
	SBE Non Degree Courses	Minor Sustainability