Course Descriptions None 2026-2027

Course Title	Dynamics of Business in the Anthropocene
Course Code	SSP2053
ECTS Credits	5,0
Assessment	Whole/Half Grades

Period

Period	Start	End	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2	26-10-2026	11-12-2026		X			X

Level	Introductory
Coordinator	Clarence Bluntz, Frank Boons For more information:c.bluntz@maastrichtuniversity.nl; f.boons@maastrichtuniversity.nl
Language of instruction	English
Goals	* Evaluate systemic barriers to sustainability transitions (including the growth imperative) and critically assess the role of different actors (business, governments, civil society and individuals) in enabling or hindering transformation. (Links to SSPS 1.1) * Analyse provisioning systems using systems thinking to explain why current production and consumption patterns fail to meet human needs within planetary boundaries (Links to SSPS 2.1.) * Design intervention strategies based on positive tipping points that could catalyse systemic changes in provisioning systems, synthesising insights from political economy, ecological economics, and management. (Links to SSPS 3.3)
Description	This course provides the theoretical foundations to understand, discuss and tackle transitions challenges in relation to production-consumption systems. The students of this course will already know about climate change and rising social inequalities, but probably not so much about how business and economic activities are tied to these issues. The goal of this course is, therefore, to introduce students to the challenges of business in sustainability transitions. This will enable them to start their journeys toward future transformative occupations, whatever and wherever these may be. We'll address such questions as: * What is a business, actually? * What are the links between production-consumption systems, economic growth, social and environmental impacts? * What are the dominant theories about the role(s) of business in society? * Can a business be sustainable? * What is degrowth, and what does it mean for business?
Literature	The course is based on a number of academic books and papers. Students who want to know more can have a look at Fanning, A. L., O'Neill, D. W., & Büchs, M. (2020). Provisioning systems for a good life within planetary boundaries. Global Environmental Change, 64, 102135; and Brand, U., & Wissen, M. (2021). The imperial mode of living: Everyday life and the ecological crisis of capitalism. Verso Books.
Prerequisites	Exchange students should refer to the International Relations Office via email in case they would like to register for this course: iro-incoming-sbe@maastrichtuniversity.nl. Only limited spots available, first-come first-serve principle.
Keywords	Degrowth, Capitalism, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Stakeholder theory
Transitional Regulations	
Teaching methods	Lecture / Groupwork / Coaching
Assessment methods	Written Exam / Portfolio
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

Master Sustainability Science in Transforming Societies - Business for Sustainability	Compulsory Courses
SBE Exchange Master	Master Exchange Courses