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Course Information



GLOBAL CHALLENGES



SUSTAINABLE FUTURES





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Welcome to Global Challenges and Sustainable Futures 2020!

What are the challenges facing humanity today and in the future? How can we create and rediscover sustainable ways of living on this planet?

During the course we will focus on current global issues, imagine alternative futures and explore strategies for transformational change towards a better future. Throughout the semester, different perspectives and approaches are analysed and discussed in sessions with knowledgeable and inspiring guest lecturers, in order to offer a multidisciplinary understanding of current sustainability issues and different trajectories into the future. Embarking on this journey of discovery, international and Swedish students will be asked to reflect critically on

global challenges that the world is facing in order to imagine alternative sustainable futures. Along the way, students will explore their own role in the causes and solutions of these sustainability challenges.

The course is coordinated by Arturo and Emmy. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at: arturo.vidal@cemus.uu.se and emmy.pater@cemus.uu.se.

Course Structure

The course is worth 7,5 credits (ECTS) and is thus given at 25% of a full-time study workload, which equals around 10 hours per week. Class is on Tuesday evenings from 17:15 to 20:00, for the entire autumn semester. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we plan to do **all sessions online** with videoconferencing. Please ensure you have a device with working camera and microphone.

The course is divided into three themes: Global Challenges (Part I), Alternative Futures (Part II) and Sustainable Transformations (Part III). Each part is centered around a key question:

Part I: Global Challenges

What local and global sustainability challenges are we facing?

Part II: Alternative Futures

What could a sustainable future look like?

Part III: Sustainable Transformations

What are possible strategies on different scales to act on sustainability challenges?

Simple Schedule

	Denotes mandatory session, part of examination. Missed mandatory sessions require attending a make-up Seminar.
Part I: Global Challenges	
Date	Session
Tues 1st Sep. 17:15- 20:00	Course Introduction Introduction to Part I & Introduction to 30 Day Challenge
Tues 8th Sep	Class Activity



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17:15- 20:00	Lecture: Where are we coming from? The Anthropocene <i>Guest Lecture: Erik Isberg</i> <i>Friday 11th of September: Start of 30 day challenge</i>
Tues 15th Sep. 17:15- 20:00	Class Activity Lecture: Where are we now? Planetary Boundaries <i>Guest Lecture: David Collste</i>
Tues 22th Sep. 17:15- 20:00	Class Activity Lecture: Local Governance in the South & Agenda 2030 <i>Guest Lecture: Fredrik Uggla</i>
Tues 29th Sep. 17:15- 20:00	Bubble-hopping: How do we break the cycle? <i>Guest Lecture: Emma Stenström</i>
Tues 6th Oct. 17:15- 20:00	Seminar: The Virtual Challenge Hunt <i>Sunday 11th of October: end of 30 Day Challenge</i>
Part II: Alternative Futures	
Date	Session
Tues 13th Oct. 17:15- 20:00	30 Day Challenge Presentations <i>25th of October: Deadline "30 Day Challenge Reflection - Draft"</i>
Tues 20th Oct. 17:15- 20:00	Introduction to Part II Lecture: Futures Thinking <i>Guest Lecture: Josefin Wangel</i>
Tues 27th Oct. 17:15- 20:00	Class Activity Workshop: Speculative Fiction <i>Guest Lecture: Andrew Merrie</i>
Tues 3rd Nov. 17:15- 20:00	Class Activity Lecture: "Global South Future Scenarios" <i>8th of November: Deadline "30 Day Challenge Reflection - Peer Review"</i>
Tues 10th Nov. 17:15- 20:00	Scenario Workshop: Back to the Future



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Part III: Sustainable Transformations	
Date	Session
Tues 17th Nov. 17:15- 20:00	Introduction to Part III Doughnut Model - Application to Amsterdam
Tues 24th Nov. 17:15- 20:00	Class Activity Seeds of a Good Anthropocene: Degrowth Guest Lecture: Sachiko Ishihara
Tues 1st Dec. 17:15- 20:00	Workshop: Transition Town Guest Lecture: Rob Hopkins <i>6th of December: Deadline "Roadmap Video Presentation"</i>
Tues 8th Dec. 17:15- 20:00	Class Activity Lecture: Urban and Rural Transformations in the Global South (Equity, poverty and power) Guest Lecture: Magnus Lembke
Tues 15th Dec 17:15- 20:00	Debate: Battle of the Strategies Roadmap Discussions
Tues 12th Jan. 17:15- 20:00	ReSeminar (only for those who missed mandatory sessions) <i>17th of January: Deadline "Individual Assignment: Roadmap for a Sustainable Future"</i>

All university locations can be found on the UU Mazemap: www.uu.se/map

Address of Geocentrum (where the CEMUS library is located): Villavägen 16, Uppsala

Examination

The examination of the course is broken down into several components, including written tasks, oral presentation and active participation in seminars. All requirements must be completed in order to pass the course. Further instructions on examination components will be distributed during the course.

The final grade for the course is categorized as “Fail, 3, 4, 5”. While all examination components must be completed, the final course grade will be determined by the grade of the Individual Assignment.

Examination Layout

The student is examined through written preparation for (2 credits) and active participation in seminars and workshops (1.5 credits), and through written documentation (3.5 credits) and oral presentation (0.5 credit) of a project.

Learning Objectives

On completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- *from a multidisciplinary perspective account for the present sustainability challenge in a global context;*
- *account for different causes to and possible solutions to the sustainability challenge in a specific city or region, and be able to relate these to global challenges within the sustainability field;*
- *reflect and critically relate to his/her own role relating to the causes and solutions of the sustainability challenge;*
- *evaluate and relate to different visions and ideas about what a sustainable future could entail.*

Examination Schedule

Every session that is part of the examination structure is mandatory to attend. If you miss a mandatory session, you can fulfill this examination by attending the “ReSeminar” on the 12th of January.

Date	Type of Examination	Title	Grading
Throughout the course	<i>Written Preparation</i>	Weekly Preparation Tasks (complete at least 10 out of 12)	Pass/Fail
Tues 6th Oct. 17:15 - 20:00	<i>Active Participation in Seminar</i>	The Virtual Challenge Hunt	Pass/Fail
Tues 13th Oct. 17:15 - 20:00	<i>Oral Presentations</i>	30 Day Challenge Presentations	Pass/Fail



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Mon 19th Oct. 12:00 PM (noon)	<i>Written Documentation</i>	Reflection on 30 Day Challenge (500 words)	Pass/Fail
Mon 2nd Nov. 12:00 PM (noon)	<i>Written Documentation</i>	Peer Review of two “30 Day Challenge Reflection” Papers (On Studium)	Pass/Fail
Tues 10th Nov. 17:15 - 20:00	<i>Active Participation in Seminar</i>	Scenario Workshop: Back to the Future	Pass/Fail
Mon 7th Dec. 12:00 PM (noon)	<i>Oral Presentations (by video)</i>	Roadmap Video Submission	Pass/Fail
Tues 15th Dec. 17:15 - 20:00	<i>Active Participation in Seminar</i>	Debate: Battle of the Strategies Roadmap Discussions	Pass/Fail
Tues 12th Jan. 17:15 - 20:00	<i>ReSeminar</i>	Make-up session ONLY for those who have missed a mandatory seminar.	Pass/Fail
Sun 17th Jan 23:59	<i>Written Documentation</i>	Individual Assignment: <i>Roadmap for a Sustainable Future</i> (2000 words)	Graded on a scale of Fail, 3,4,5.

Examination Descriptions

Weekly Preparation Tasks

Each week a preparation instruction will be posted as an Assignment in Studium. Each preparation task will connect to themes associated with the next class, and will prepare students for the mandatory seminars and final written paper. These preparation tasks will be posted on Studium after class on Tuesdays and are to be completed by next class, before Monday at 12:00 am. The content submitted will inform a large part of the related class activity on Tuesday.

The nature of the tasks will vary, but they will employ a range of critical and creative thinking faculties. Some tasks will be more reflective, whereas others will involve more explorative activities.



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Students are allowed to miss two out of the twelve submissions, otherwise, all written preparation tasks should be completed as part of the examination requirement.

Virtual Challenge Hunt

Global Challenges are all around us, like troublesome ghosts inhabiting our world. How can we visualize and engage with these global issues in a fun way?

During Part I, students will examine one Global Challenge deeply, in groups. As they gather experiences and insights about this challenge, they will use gamification to connect the problems, consequences and possible solutions of this Global Challenges. By mapping their experiences with this Global Challenges onto a virtual city or region, students create an online environment where other students can interact and learn about their Global Challenge in a fun and interactive way. On the 6th of October, each group will play and review another group's Virtual Challenge Hunt, followed by a discussion. Specific instructions for this paper will be posted on Studium.

30 Day Sustainability Challenge

What would an ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable society look like? This course is about trying to answer this question - or even better, trying to create new answers to this wicked question, collectively and creatively.

But everything can start small, and a sustainable society can start from yourself and around you. How do you want to live? Is a 'good' life and a 'sustainable' life conflicting for you? Or do both go hand in hand? How could you engage politically? What does "acting for sustainability" mean? Push yourself to think about these questions. It is easy to criticize others. But what about you?

From the 11th of September to the 11th of October, choose something you will do differently every day that contributes towards 'sustainability'. Do it for 30 days. At the end of the 30 days, we will have a workshop to share your experience, and you are to submit a written reflection. We encourage you to do things together with your course-mates or (even better) friends or family outside the course. Doing a challenge together can be a great way to explore different meanings of sustainability.

Check out the videos of previous students' 30 Day Challenges, get inspired and share ideas in the "Discussions" forum on Canvas!



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Presentations

At the end of the 30 days, on the 13th of October, you will share and reflect on your experiences in the “30 Day Challenge” seminar. Therefore we ask you to visualise your experience in a creative way (e.g. video, photolog, slideshow, an art piece, etc.) and show it during this seminar.

Reflection Paper

The 30 Day Challenge is followed by an assignment to write a reflection paper of around 500 words (+/- 10%). You will reflect on your experiences by using the “Three Spheres of Transformation” framework by O’Brien. Specific instructions for this paper will be posted on Studium. This paper is due on the 19th of October, at 12:00 PM (noon).

Two weeks after having submitted their 30 Day Reflection Paper, students will peer review the Reflection Paper from 2 other students, according to a set of criteria. Specific instructions for this paper will be posted on Studium. The Peer Reviewing will occur within Studium, and is due on the 2nd of November, at 12:00 PM (noon).

Back to the Future: Scenario Workshop

During Part II of the course, students will develop certain skills for Futures Thinking, through the Preparatory Tasks and class activities. At the end of Part II, the Scenario Workshop will allow students to combine and apply these skills in groups, by developing a future scenario and presenting this to the class creatively.

Battle of The Strategies: Debate

During Part III of the course, students will explore different strategies for sustainable transformations, each with their strengths and weaknesses. On the 15th of December, students will debate on behalf of one of these strategies against a different strategy, debating which strategy will lead to a more desirable future. Students will be assigned a strategy on the day itself.

Roadmap for a Sustainable Future

During Part III of the course, students will choose and evaluate a strategy to address sustainability challenges in a particular city or region, creating a “Roadmap” for a better future. During scheduled class activities in Part III, you will have the opportunity to explore three different strategies that focus on sustainable transformations:

- Seeds of a Good Anthropocene
- Transition Town
- Doughnut Model



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Students will apply one of these strategies to a city/region of their choice, and critically reflect on which sustainability challenge it addresses, which future vision is built into this strategy, and how this strategy relates to O'Brien's "Three Spheres of Transformation".

Roadmap Presentations

Before Monday 7th December at 12:00 PM (noon), students will submit a short video on Studium, describing their Roadmap: their chosen strategy, how they plan to apply it to their chosen city/region, and briefly outline how they are using the "Three Spheres of Transformation" framework. Before the seminar on the 15th of December, students will watch a number of their peer's videos and leave at least one comment or question. During the seminar, students will discuss and give peer feedback on each other's Roadmaps, to help with writing the final Individual Assignment.

More specific instructions for the video submission and peer reviewing will be posted on Studium.

Individual Assignment

In 2000 words (+/- 10%), students will apply their chosen strategy to a city/region of their choice. In the assignment, students describe the sustainable development challenges that this strategy addresses, discuss what kind of future vision the challenge could lead to, and reflect on the strategy's potential by using O'Brien's "Three Spheres of Transformation" framework. This paper is due on the 17th of January, at 23:59. More specific instructions will be posted on Studium.

Literature

During the course, we will use weekly learning material, in addition to the two course books. On Studium, the online learning environment, we will prepare an online "compendium" with 1-3 texts, videos, audio files and/or other learning material per week. Just click on the specific session under "Modules" to find the literature and videos for that day.

There are two mandatory course books which will be used throughout the course: "Global Issues: An Introduction" and "From What Is to What If". There are copies of "From What Is to What If" available at the CEMUS library, in the Geocentrum building. These copies can only be read in the CEMUS library and cannot be loaned out. Both books are available online through the UU library, at <https://ub.uu.se/>.



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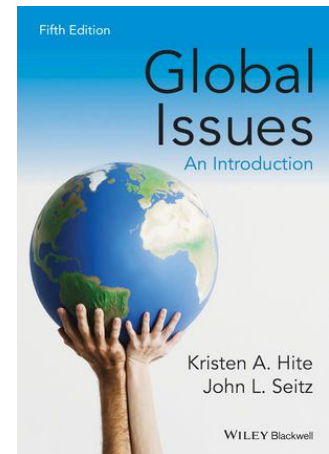
Global Issues: An Introduction

By John L. Seitz and Kristen A. Hite.

5th edition, 2016. ISBN 9781118968857

This book is an introduction to many of the most important environmental, economic, social, and political concerns of modern life. It reflects the most important aspects of an increasingly globalized world. It has a focus on development, climate change, pollution, and governance. This textbook unites the perspectives and approaches of geography, political science, sociology, ecology, international relations, economics, and development studies.

With coverage of topics ranging from wealth, poverty, and population to food, energy, and natural resources, this text moves beyond the international to be truly global in focus. The book teaches the essential environmental, economic, social, and political issues of the world today.



From What Is to What If

Unleashing the Power of Imagination to Create the Future We Want

By Rob Hopkins, Published October 2019

ISBN 1603589058



In these times of deep division and deeper despair, if there is a consensus about anything in the world, it is that the future is going to be awful. There is an epidemic of loneliness, an epidemic of anxiety, a mental health crisis of vast proportions, especially among young people. There's a rise in extremist movements and governments. Catastrophic climate change. Biodiversity loss. Food insecurity. The fracturing of ecosystems and communities beyond, it seems, repair. The future—to say nothing of the present—looks grim. From What Is to What If is a call to action to reclaim and unleash our collective imagination, told through the stories of individuals and communities around the world who are doing it now, as we speak, and witnessing often rapid and dramatic change for the better.



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Imagination is central to empathy, to creating better lives, to envisioning and then enacting a positive future. Yet imagination is also demonstrably in decline at precisely the moment when we need it most. In this passionate exploration, Hopkins asks why imagination is in decline, and what we must do to revive and reclaim it. Once we do, there is no end to what we might accomplish.

The People Behind The Course

Arturo Vidal has been working at CEMUS for almost two years. He is a former CEMUS student and a master's student in Sustainable Development. He is originally from Peru, but has spent almost the last 17 years in Europe. He likes languages and sports, as well as meeting people from different parts of the world.

Emmy Pater started working at CEMUS this year. After a bachelor's degree in Neuroscience and Artificial Intelligence, she realized that robots weren't going to save the world for us, and decided to study a master's degree in Sustainable Development in Uppsala. Originally from the Netherlands, she enjoys being mistaken for a Swede. When Emmy isn't working on her master's thesis on her Environmental Escape Game, she enjoys doing musical improvisation and outdoors activities.

Work Group

The following people have contributed their ideas and feedback to creating this course: Daniel Mossgren; Sara Andersson; Lakin Anderson; Lovisa Håkansson; Laila Mendy; Annik Bernhardt; Sachiko Ishihara; Alexis Engström; Michael Boyden

Contact Information & Consultation Hours

If you have any questions regarding the course, please contact us. The best way is by email, either the course email address or our personal email addresses. You can of course come by our office, but since we do not work full time we cannot guarantee we will be there. We will most likely be in the office in the hours leading up to the lectures on Tuesdays.

Emmy's e-mail: emmy.pater@cemus.uu.se

Arturo's e-mail: arturo.vidal@cemus.uu.se



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Course portal: www.cemus.uu.se/gcsf (in addition to Studium)

Address of CEMUS department: Villavägen 16, 75236 Uppsala