



Faculty of Social Sciences

## **MESS24, Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science: Economy and Sustainability, 7.5 credits**

*Miljö- och hållbarhetsvetenskap: Ekonomi och hållbarhet, 7,5 högskolepoäng*  
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

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### **Details of approval**

The syllabus was approved by The Board of the Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies on 2022-06-09 (STYR 2022/1370). The syllabus comes into effect 2023-01-16 and is valid from the spring semester 2023.

### **General information**

The course is a second term compulsory course within Lund University Master's Programme in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science (LUMES), 120 credits.

*Language of instruction:* English

*Main field of study*

Environmental Studies and  
Sustainability Science

*Specialisation*

A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as  
entry requirements

### **Learning outcomes**

Upon the completion of the course, the student shall

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

- demonstrate knowledge of different economics paradigms and their relevance for sustainability, for example neoclassical economics, heterodox economics, environmental economics, capital theory, ecological economics, de-growth and post-growth
- identify different claims and strategies for reconciling environmental and social concerns with the pursuit of economic growth and development, such as privatisation and marketisation, regulatory arrangements, and civil society initiatives

- describe the implications of different economic paradigms for sustainability in different geographical and societal contexts, for instance circular economy, care economy, environmental and ecological economics, alternative currencies, green bonds, social and care economy, etc.

### **Competence and skills**

- demonstrate the ability to use economic tools and methods of various economic paradigms, for example circular economy, alternative currencies, green bonds, and social economy
- constructively and respectfully engage in group work to successfully complete defined tasks
- demonstrate skills in communication and the ability to present own conclusions orally and in writing.

### **Judgement and approach**

- demonstrate knowledge of the policy implications and trade-offs involved in different economic paradigms and their relation to sustainability
- demonstrate the ability to critically assess implicit assumptions, normative approaches and values in initiatives and projects seeking to foster sustainable and economic development
- demonstrate the ability to recognise and evaluate different economic paradigms and their relation and implications for sustainability, for example social equity and environmental protection.

### **Course content**

The course briefly reviews economic theories and economic growth and analyses their environmental and social consequences, for instance, environmental degradation, social welfare and equity. Students will develop competences in critically assessing the implications of different economic paradigms for transformative change and weighing the trade-offs for each. During the course, students will:

- Critically review and problematise the economics of growth, for example the tensions between economic growth and environmental protection, and what policies and economic tools address and potentially reconcile these tensions. Based on this understanding, the course then introduces different paradigmatic and critical perspectives in economics.
- Recognise and evaluate different approaches that aim to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, ecological footprints and carbon emissions and problematise different claims of decoupling in relation to welfare, equity and environmental degradation.
- Critically address the claims of alternative ideas for transforming the economic system(s) and practices, including ways to reconcile different societal needs with environment (for example post-growth, de-growth, responsible consumption and production).

The course applies a range of practical qualitative and quantitative methods of research in both fieldwork and deskwork, including, but not limited to, observation, questionnaire interviews, cost-benefit analysis, and life cycle analysis.

## Course design

The course consists of lectures, seminars and student exercises. Individual and group-based exercises and assignments are combined to stimulate and allow students to demonstrate competencies to identify, understand and analyse different economic paradigms and theories and the implication for sustainability. Students will have opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge introduced in the course to concrete empirical cases selected by the student for the written group take-home exam and the written individual take-home exam.

Unless there are valid reasons to the contrary, compulsory participation is required in the oral presentation of the written individual take-home exam and in the oral presentation of the written group take-home exam. Students who have been unable to participate due to circumstances such as accidents or sudden illness will be offered the opportunity to compensate for or re-take compulsory components. This also applies to students who have been absent because of duties as an elected student representative.

## Assessment

Course assessment is based on:

- Written group take-home exam (3 credits)
- Written individual take-home exam (4,5 credits)

The course includes opportunities for assessment at a first examination, a re-sit close to the first examination and a second re-sit for courses that have ended during that school year. Two further re-examinations on the same course content are offered within a year of the end of the course. After this, further re-examination opportunities are offered but in accordance with the current course syllabus. A student who has taken two examinations in a course or a part of a course without obtaining a pass grade is entitled to the nomination of another examiner unless there are special reasons to the contrary. Students getting a passing grade cannot re-take an exam or re-submit a paper to get a higher grade.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

## Grades

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Three, Four, Five  
The highest grade for the course is Five and the lowest grade for passing is Three. Grades for a non-passing result is Fail. The student's results are assessed with reference to learning outcomes of the course. For grade Five, the student must show an excellent result in all learning outcomes. For the grade Four, the student must show a very good result in all learning outcomes. For the grade Three, the student must show a sufficiently good result in all learning outcomes. The grade Fail means that the student has not reached the learning outcomes of the course.

At the start of the course, students are informed about the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus and the grading scale and how it is applied on the course.

The grade for the entire course consists of the average grade of the two exams that are assessed according to the Fail-5-4-3 grading scale. The written individual take-home exam is worth 60% of the final grade. The written group take-home exam is worth 40% of the final grade. For a grade of 3 on the entire course the student must have been awarded at least 3 on both exams.

Exam	Credits	Grades	Part of final grade for the course
Written group take-home exam	3	Fail-3-4-5	40%
Written individual take-home exam	4,5	Fail-3-4-5	60%
Oral presentation of written individual take-home exam	-	Fail-Participated	-
Oral presentation of written group take-home exam	-	Fail-Participated	-
Total	7,5		100%

Example: The student got the grade of 3 on the written individual take-home exam and the grade of 5 on the written group take-home exam (and participated in the compulsory components). The final grade is 4  $((3*60)+(5*40))/100=3.8$ .  $< 3.5$  is rounded down and  $3.5 >$  is rounded up.

## Entry requirements

To be admitted to the course, the student must have fulfilled course requirements of at least 30 higher education credits in the programme.

A good command of spoken and written English, equivalent to English 6/B (advanced) proficiency in the Swedish secondary system, is required. Equivalent assessments will be made according to national guidelines.

## Further information

The course cannot be included in a degree together with MESS36, Economy and Sustainability, 7,5 credits, or MESS08, Development and Sustainability, 7,5 credits.