



**LUND**  
UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Social Sciences

**MESS53, Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science:  
Sustainability and Inner Transformation, 7.5 credits**  
*Miljö- och hållbarhetsvetenskap: Hållbarhet och inre omställning,  
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 2017-06-01 to be valid from 2018-09-03, autumn semester 2018.

### General Information

The course constitutes a 3rd term elective (non-compulsory) course at LUMES, Lund University Master's Programme in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science.

*Language of instruction:* English

*Main field of studies*

Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science

*Depth of study relative to the degree requirements*

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

### Learning outcomes

Upon the completion of the course, the students shall:

#### Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate critical knowledge and understanding of the complex interlinkages between sustainability and inner transformation.
- Show a critical understanding of inner transformation as a social phenomenon.

#### Competence and skills

- Demonstrate the ability to critically investigate the potential role of inner transformation in societies' transition towards sustainability.

- Discuss in speech and writing the notion of inner transformation in sustainability science and learning.

### **Judgement and approach**

- Demonstrate the ability to critically reflect upon the notion of inner transformation in the context of a specific sustainability field (such as climate adaptation and/or risk reduction), associated theories, concepts and practices.

### **Course content**

Humanity is facing increasingly complex environmental and sustainability challenges. Current coordination mechanisms, problem-solving strategies, and modes of scientific inquiry, teaching and learning appear insufficient to address these challenges and bring about transformative change towards more sustainable pathways. As a result, the notion of inner transformation (or inner transition) has emerged as a new area of exploration. The course explores this new area and creates space and opportunities for learning and knowledge development on this topic. Inner transformation, as used here, describes changes in the sphere of human interiority related to people's (expanded) consciousness, associated values, mindsets and/or beliefs. Accordingly, it relates to all kinds of activities that can support such changes (e.g., mental, religious and indigenous practices/knowledge). The course critically discusses related concepts and activities.

The overall aim of the course is to critically assess the potential role of inner transformation for sustainability, and how this is reflected in sustainability science. This also involves a critical reflection about inner transformation as a social phenomenon. Inner transformation through expanded consciousness is an inherent capacity of the human organism that is rooted in the fundamental activities of consciousness. It has increasingly been the subject of academic studies based on established concepts and theories of e.g., attention, awareness, emotional intelligence and mindfulness disposition. Inner transformation is often viewed as a pre-requisite to the development of compassion, and involves a fundamental shift in the way people think about and ultimately act on both local and global economic, social and ecological crises.

The specific objectives of this course are threefold. Firstly, it allows students to develop a critical understanding of the potential interlinkages between inner transformation and sustainability (in theory and practice). Examples of topics where sustainability and inner transformation have been linked in literature include: subjective well-being, sustainable behavior and consumption, the human-nature connection, equity issues, and social activism. Secondly, inner transformation theories and practices are assessed in relation to a specific sustainability field, such as climate change adaptation and/or risk reduction. Potential topics and concepts include mindful climate action and organizational mindfulness for strategic adaptation mainstreaming. Thirdly, the course allows students to engage and critically reflect on the nature of inner transformation and its salience to sustainability science and learning.

### **Course design**

The course is comprised of different learning activities, including lectures, literature seminar(s), and theoretical exercises.

## Assessment

The course is examined by a written assignment and an oral presentation.

Three opportunities for examination are offered in conjunction with the course: a first examination and two re-examinations. 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.

*Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.*

## Grades

Marking scale: Fail, Three, Four, Five.

The highest grade for the course as a whole is 5 and the lowest passing grade is 3. The grade for a non-passing result is Fail. The student's performance is assessed with reference to the learning outcomes of the course. The grade 5 denotes outstanding performance in all learning outcomes. The grade 4 signifies very good performance in all learning outcomes. To receive the grade 3, the student must obtain minimum criteria in fulfilling all course learning objectives. The grade Fail signifies that the student has not fulfilled the learning outcomes of the course, or that additional work is required before the credit can be awarded.

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

### Overall course grade

The grade for the entire course consists of the weighted grade of graded tasks. The written assignment contributes 70%, and the oral presentation 30%, of the final grade. To receive a grade of 3 for the entire course, the student must have been awarded at least 3 on both assignments.

## Entry requirements

To be admitted to the course, students must be admitted to Lund University International Master's Programme in Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science 120 credits, and have fulfilled course requirements of at least forty higher education credits in the programme.

## Further information

Subcourses in MESS53, Environmental Studies and Sustainability Science:  
Sustainability and Inner Transformation

Applies from H18

1801 Sustainability and Inner Transformation, 7,5 hp  
Grading scale: Fail, Three, Four, Five