Freie Universität Bozen
Libera Università di Bolzano
Università Liedia de Bulsan

Syllabus
Course description

Course title	**Sustainability Economics *ONLINE***
Course code	**27611**
Scientific sector	SECS-P/02 - ECON-02/A
Degree	Master in Public Policy and Innovative Governance (LM-63)
Semester and academic year	1 semester - 2025/2026
Year	2nd study year
Credits	6
Modular	No

Total lecturing hours	36
Total lab hours	-
Total exercise hours	-
Attendance	Attendance is recommended but not mandatory.
Prerequisites	B1 level in English is required to sit the exam.
Course page	https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/economics-management/master-public-policy-innovative-governance/

Specific educational objectives	The course covers the applied economics aspects of sustainability. It begins with a general look at the concept of sustainability, its economic and social implications and, as a consequence, the reasons why that should be an ultimate objective of economic policy. The course continues with the economic theory and practice of environmental policy, with a look at several policy instruments (command and control, environmental liability, environmental taxes and trading schemes). The instruments will be discussed from the theoretical and, above all, practical points of view. The general criteria for evaluating environmental policy will be then discussed with a focus on equity and public acceptability. The course then continues with a discussion of the methods normally used to assess sustainability dimensions in public policy with a particular look at environmental valuation methods. Practical examples will cover, among other things, the valuation of urban and rural environmental assets, including alpine landscapes. The course then focuses on some practical case studies of sustainability in action, like the economics of sustainable transport and cities. It concludes with a look at sustainability in other sectors, with examples from energy, and tourism among others.

Lecturer	**Alberto Maria Zanni**
Scientific sector of the lecturer	SECS-P/02 - ECON-02/A
Teaching language	English
Office hours	18 hours MySNS – My timetable Webpage: https://www.unibz.it/en/timetable/?sourceId=unibz&department=26&degree=14100
List of topics covered	Sustainability, Environmental Economics and the Theory of Externalities; Economics of Environmental Policy; Environmental valuation; Sustainable transport; Sustainability in other sectors.
Course Outline	1. The concept of sustainability and its economic implications 2. Economic theory and practice of environmental policy (externalities, optimal pollution, abatement costs) 3. Command and control instruments; subsidies, environmental taxation and trading systems 4. Evaluation of environmental policy instruments 5. Valuation of environmental assets (economic values, WTA and WTP, revealed preference methods, stated preference methods, alternatives to the more traditional methods) 6. The economics of sustainable transport and cities 7. Sustainability in other sectors (tourism and energy)
Teaching format	Frontal lectures, exercises, presentations, face-to-face discussions.

Learning outcomes	**Knowledge and understanding** Students will know and understand analytical tools used in environmental and sustainability economics and acquire knowledge on the theory of externalities with empirical applications in various sectors **Applying knowledge and understanding** Students will be able to comprehend and apply research contributions. They will learn how to compare the effectiveness of different environmental policy instruments and learn how to design environmental valuation studies, interpret theoretical ideas and applied research results. **Making judgments** Students will be able to reflect on specific problems and formulate judgments that include the valuation of environmental commodities and evaluation of environmental policies. **Communication skills**

	Students will be able to communicate content, key concepts, research ideas, problems and solutions as well as empirical research results to both a specialist and non-specialist audience. **Learning skills** Students will develop the ability to connect economic theory with real-world sustainability challenges. This entails independently expanding their understanding through in-depth engagement with scientific research and empirical analyses. They will cultivate skills essential for conducting thorough literature reviews and formulating precise research questions.

Assessment	**For Attending students:** I) Presentation (40% of the final grade). The presentation requires critical discussion of a case study in sustainability economics. II) Final exam (60% of the final grade). The final exam consists of analytical problems in multiple choice questions and short essay question form. The final exam tests Skill 1 (Knowledge and understanding). The presentation allows to verify Skills 2, 3 and 4 (Applying knowledge and understanding, Making judgements, Communication skills). The skill concerned with autonomous study (Skill 5, Learning skills) is indirectly verified, because passing the final exam requires autonomous execution of exercises suggested by the lecturer and face-to-face discussions. **For non-attending students** or students who do not take the presentation, the final exam is 100% of the final grade.
Assessment language	English
Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks	Evaluation criteria relevant for both project assignment and exam: correct procedure and solution. In addition, solutions to problems require the ability to summarize, evaluate, and demonstrate critical thinking.

Required readings	These will be provided at the beginning and during the course
Supplementary readings	The lectures will draw from journal articles. Additional literature will be given during class.