

ENG-650

**Sustainability in my research**

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Cursus	Sem.	Type
EDOC General and external courses		Opt.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	2
Session	
Exam	Oral presentation
Workload	60h
<b>Hours</b>	<b>64</b>
Lecture	20
Exercises	16
Project	28
<b>Number of positions</b>	<b>12</b>

**Frequency**

Every year

**Remark**

Participants who want to enroll should provide a one-page (max) motivation letter to [jacopo.grazioli@epfl.ch](mailto:jacopo.grazioli@epfl.ch) AND [michka.melo@epfl.ch](mailto:michka.melo@epfl.ch)

**Summary**

This course is designed to develop the necessary transversal skills to foster sustainability integration in the present and future research of the PhD students

**Content**

In the current era of socio-ecological crisis, research must step up and play a role to shape a future sustainable and just society. Sustainability must be integrated in research activities and research activities should find paths to contribute to sustainability. This challenge cannot only be interpreted as a disciplinary or even as an interdisciplinary problem; it requires first and foremost a preliminary effort to develop specific transversal skills. This class aims to offer PhD student an introduction to key sustainability concepts as well as a space for students to reflect on how they could contribute further to sustainability, by acting on their research questions, as well as on their research practices. The course provides a background on sustainability but it focuses on three important transversal skills to foster it: (1) system thinking, (2) ability to communicate effectively to a diverse audience, (3) Identify and assume the different roles, including leadership, that are involved in well-functioning teams. The course is hands-on and it includes a serious-game workshop to introduce the tragedy of the commons, a journal-club on landmark sustainability papers, an individual project tailored to the specific research of each enrolled PhD student as well as methodological and, when possible thematic, coaching for the individual project. Additional details about the course are available on Moodle link

**Note**

In-person attendance to sessions is key.

4 in-person slots:

- Slot 1: 12th September
- Slot 2: 30th September
- Slot 3: 1st October
- Slot 4 (final presentation): 3rd December

**Keywords**

sustainability, system thinking, leadership, effective communication, socio-environmental responsibility, planetary

boundaries

## **Learning Prerequisites**

### **Required courses**

Interest for sustainability topics

## **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, the student must be able to:

- Develop leadership skills to act effectively on sustainability-related challenges
- Explain key sustainability concepts to a heterogeneous audience
- Apply research practices to sustainability by: a) Formulating a research question/project to solve a sustainability-related issue / b) (and/or) Identifying and prioritizing actions to make research practices more sustainable

## **Resources**

### **Moodle Link**

- <https://go.epfl.ch/ENG-650>