

ENGLISH LANGUAGE + WRITING

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SEMINAR AIMS

- Create an awareness of the different aspects of writing that you need to consider to write well in an academic context.

- Establish methods for giving peer response that will make it possible for the writer to improve his/her text.

REMINDER

2021.8.10: Writing workshop



ESSAY – PARTS 1 & 2

PART I - SUSTAINABILITY

Explain using both general terms and by referring to specific, scientific studies, the challenges that humanity currently faces.

Provide a coherent view of how ecological, social and economic dimensions relate to one another.

Explain what we know about the consequences of failing to meet some of the major societal challenges. Give examples related to climate change, wealth and income etc.

Explain what it means that some of these problems pose genuine dilemmas, reconciling what we do know of the consequences of, for example, climate change and biodiversity loss, and unknown future states for societies.

PART 2 – SOCIETAL PROBLEMS & IT IN SOCIETY

Agenda 2030 states 17 goals for achieving a sustainable society.

There are valid differences of opinions for how to solve larger problems, and different perspectives on the relative importance of technology, economy, and social changes.

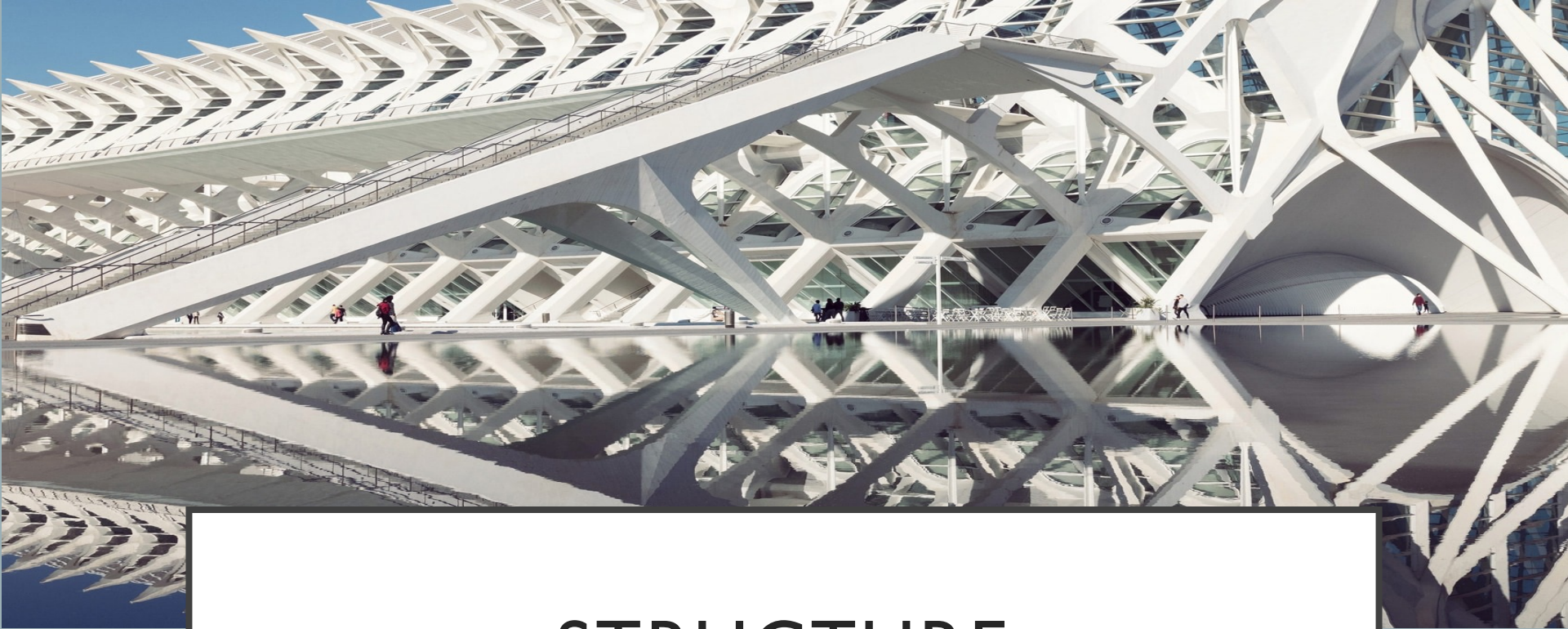
In your text, choose a new IT solution (e.g. app, technology, etc) that promises to solve a societal challenge.

Use the SCOT-tool in Bijker, Hughes and Pinch (1987) or other literature on SCOT-analysis to discuss the potential for this solution.

PART 2 – QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- In what ways might the IT-solution affect society (target group(s), inclusion/exclusion of users, indirect and direct affects)
- What conditions are necessary for this solution to succeed?
- Why might this solution be successful, or not? In what ways could the solution contribute to solving societal challenges?
- What are the potential negative side-effects?

Make use of the literature and material provided thus far, and find your own, relevant scientific studies to support your arguments.



STRUCTURE

COMMENTS ON STRUCTURE

TEXT ORGANIZATION

- The introduction must provide a context and background for the main issues that the text will raise.
- The text must be based on a clear thesis, which should preferably be explicitly expressed in the introduction.

COMMENTS ON STRUCTURE

STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS

- No real introduction to the essay.

This essay will discuss the following points regarding sustainability: ...

The article___ by_____ discusses the complexities of trying to achieve a sustainable society in today's world.
Sustainability means...

End this paragraph with a lead into the next paragraph: The essay discusses the various dimensions of sustainability and then illuminates the consequences and dilemmas that will most likely occur if we fail to meet the societal challenges of our day.

COMMENTS ON STRUCTURE

TOO MANY HEADINGS/SUBHEADINGS

- This is not a report – this is an essay. Paragraphs need to flow into one another as one continuous unit. (See slides about paragraphing)
- No need for so many headings – UNIFY your ideas! – connect your paragraphs to each other.

Final essay is divided into 3 parts: Parts 1 & 2, Part 3 & 4, Part 5

COMMENTS ON STRUCTURE

PROVIDE BACKGROUND

Sustainable development is the main challenge that humanity ~~is and will be~~ facing during the 21st century. † will first define sustainability and sustainable development, then † will explain the reasons why this concept exists and finally † will discuss ~~about~~ the issues and the dilemmas ~~it~~ creates.

How would you rewrite this (especially without using 'I')?

COMMENTS ON STRUCTURE

TEXT STRUCTURE

Paragraph one

- Humanity is facing several environmental problems but sustainable development will solve these problems.
- The paper will explain what sustainable development is and how it will resolve these environmental problems.

Paragraph two

Presents authors' description of sustainable development

Paragraph three

The most serious environmental problem is global warming. Explains global warming.

Paragraph four

- Rejects the idea that we go back to a pre-industrial society, and promotes the idea that we need to come up with smart solutions that achieve sustainable development but allow us to maintain our current way of living.
- In the next section discussion surrounding IT technology can help solve societal challenges. (Connection to part 2)

relation
point of view.

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LANGUAGE

GENERAL COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

In 1990s the “ecological footprint”, which focused on the relation between the population footprint and the amount of land and water area to build sustainable society. (Can you fix this sentence structure error?)

An IT-solution that have existed for a long time but is newly relevant today...

~~In first hand~~ → First/Firstly

Use the following equation:

Spell check for words/typos such as these: on/one, us/use, a/an, its/it's

EXAMPLE I - INTRO PART I

Over the lifespan of the planet earth, the climate ~~have~~ **has** changed drastically back and forth. There ~~has~~ **have** been multiple **time ages [?]** and periods of extreme heat if ~~we look at~~ **considering** the whole history a historical perspective. In the recent **last** million of years, there has been a relatively stable cycle of ice ages and warmer periods. Today, we are in one of these warmer periods; however, ~~we can see~~ **there are some several** differences from the previous periods. In the last 200 years, humans have affected this natural cycle by, among other things, releasing an unusual amount of carbon dioxide and methane gas into the atmosphere [1]. ~~Together~~ **Along** with **a** large scale harvesting of the world's forests, which has an important ~~role~~ **role of in** converting carbon dioxide into oxygen, this cycle is changing. **This creates major challenges for if we want to continue to live sustaining life on this planet and still continuing to develop as people a society.**

*** This last sentence leads into the body of parts 1 & 2

EXAMPLE 2 - INTRO PART I

Sustainability Perspectives of a Future Computer Scientist

Sustainability is a concept that ~~often comes up in~~ **is often present** in today's media landscape. On news and media platforms, pictures of melting icebergs and burning forests ~~is~~ **are** displayed with a **an increasingly** higher frequency as ~~each year goes by~~. The Climate change ~~are, by many,~~ **is** said **by many** to be the biggest challenge ~~we as humans stand against~~ **face** within **in** the **(up)coming** years. ~~It's~~ **However, it is** a challenge with many **[angles/dimensions/perspectives]**, making it a highly complex one to **tackle**. **Both policymakers and industries are going to will** play a large role in solving this complex challenge, which in the end ~~will permeate~~ **affect** most employees and professionals in their work.

*** This last sentence functions as a transition into the next section

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

PUNCTUATION

In a world of constant evolution and new technology the need for human life to be sustainable is more important than ever.

In a world of constant evolution and new technology, **the need** for human life to be sustainable is more important than ever.

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

THE USE OF COMMAS

1. USE A COMMA TO SEPARATE INDEPENDENT CLAUSES

Rule: Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction (and, but, yet, so, or nor, for) when it joins two complete ideas (independent clauses).

EX. He walked down the street, and then he turned the corner.

2. USE A COMMA AFTER AN INTRODUCTORY CLAUSE OR PHRASE

Rule: A comma tells readers that the introductory clause or phrase has come to a close and that the main part of the sentence is about to begin.

EX. Near a small stream at the bottom of the canyon, park rangers discovered a gold mine.

3. USE A COMMA BETWEEN ALL ITEMS IN A SERIES

Use a comma to separate each item in a series; a series is a group of three or more items having the same function and form in a sentence.

- We bought apples, peaches, and bananas today. (series of words)
- Sherlock promised that he would solve the mystery, that he would find the murderer, and that he would bring the murderer to justice. (series of clauses)
- The professor looked through her briefcase, through her desk, and around the office for the lost grade book. (series of phrases)

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

THE USE OF COMMAS, continued

4. USE COMMAS TO SET OFF NONRESTRICTIVE CLAUSES

Rule: Use commas to enclose clauses not essential to the meaning of a sentence. These nonessential clauses are called nonrestrictive. Clauses which are essential are called restrictive. Both restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses may begin with a relative pronoun (such as who, whom, whose, that, which). A relative pronoun refers to the noun or pronoun that precedes it.

- Rachel, who spent the last three days fishing, is back at work again.
(nonrestrictive clause)
- The woman who is standing by the fireplace is a well-known composer.
(restrictive)

5. USE A COMMA TO SET OFF APPOSITIVES

Rule: An appositive is a noun or noun phrase that renames a nearby noun. Appositives offer nonessential information. Nonrestrictive appositives are set off with commas; restrictive appositives are not.

EX. The New York Mets, the underdogs, surprised everyone by winning the World Series. (appositive)

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

COLON (:) / SEMICOLON (;)

Commas, semicolons, and colons help improve sentence structure and create complex sentences.

Semicolons: a general rule of thumb is to use a semicolon when you wish two sentences could be one but can't. The primary use of semicolons is to join two main clauses. It can also be used to connect items on a list when each item already has a comma.

Colons: introduce or define something. Colons can combine two independent clauses, but their primary use is to join independent clauses with a list or a noun. Colons are also your only grammatical option when combining a complete sentence with a noun or a list.

- The painting was very pretty; it was destroyed in the fire.
- The new film was very popular; however, the critics disapproved.
- There were three new delegates at the meeting: Ms. Smith from Boulder, Colorado; Ms. Weinstein from New York, New York; and Mr. Holmes from London, UK.
- I love going to the movies: foreign movies are usually my preference.

EX. Apart from the climate; our current way of living causes other challenges in our society such as undistributed wealth, conflicts and women's rights.

EDIT: Apart from the climate, **the** current way of living **in modern industrial societies** ~~causes~~**creates** other challenges such as: undistributed wealth, **international** conflicts, and ~~women's rights~~**[gender inequality]**.

EX. I can see no remedy for this; one can't order him to do it.

EDIT: I can see no remedy for **this**. **One** cannot order him to do it.

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

VAGUENESS/VOCABULARY

“Human civilization has progressed a lot in the last 200 years.”

- What does “a lot” mean? From what reference point and with what base line?
- What does “progress” mean in this context? Reduction of poverty, decreased mortality rate...?

***Be explicit.

“The ideal solution to solve problem of global warming is to completely stop the activities that cause global warming.”

- The ideal solution to solving the problem of global warming is to completely stop the activities that cause it.

***watch your tenses and articles and avoid unnecessary repetition

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

SOLUTION TO

solution + preposition *to* + noun phrase

the *solution to the problem of ransomware hacks/peace in the Middle East* is...

solution + preposition *to* + *ing*-form verb

the solution to generating more electricity/*managing* nuclear waste is...

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

REDUNDANCY

The ideal solution to **solving the problem of** global warming is to completely stop the activities that cause global warming.

EDIT: The ideal solution to global warming is to completely stop the activities that cause the problem.

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

VOCABULARY

Sustainable development

Sustainability development

Sustainable development = a development that is sustainable

Sustainability development = the development of sustainability

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

USE OF ARTICLES

In English there are three articles: a, an, and the. Articles are used before nouns or noun equivalents and are a type of adjective. The **definite article** (the) is used before a noun to indicate that the identity of the noun is known to the reader. The **indefinite article** (a, an) is used before a noun that is general or when its identity is not known. There are certain situations in which a noun takes no article.

- **Count nouns** - items that can be counted and are either singular or plural
- **Non-count nouns** - items that are not counted and are *always singular*

	COUNT NOUNS	NON-COUNT NOUNS
Rule #1		
Specific identity not known	a, an	(no article)
Rule #2		
Specific identity known	the	the
Rule #3		
All things or things in general	(no article)	(no article)

Since **the** industrial revolution, humans have emitted more greenhouse gas (CO₂) in the atmosphere than for **the** most of **the** recorded history.

I ate **an** apple yesterday. **The** apple was juicy and delicious.

COMMENTS ON LANGUAGE

ACADEMIC REGISTER

- Be restrictive with the use of "I" "we" and "us" in the paper (do not use we in place of the Swedish "man")
- Do not make the text a running commentary of what you are doing.
EX. "Now I will explain the definition of sustainable development. Next, the concept of sustainable development will be defined..."

DO NOT use 'I' to express your **opinions** or **feelings**. (Writing an academic essay is about making an argument or claim, or developing a thesis statement.)

"In my opinion../I believe/"

Instead of "I argue that sugar should be taxed " use:

- Impersonal "There are arguments for a tax on sugar"
- Another subject "The evidence shows that a tax on sugar..."
- Simple statement "Sugar should be taxed"

REFERENCES & CITATIONS

USE OF REFERENCES

- Pick a reference system and make sure you consistently follow that system.
- Any information that is not common knowledge or based on your own analysis or research must be referenced.
- Avoid non-peer reviewed information. Check the validity of your sources.
- The internet is not your brain. If you find information on a website, cite your source.
- Do not quote unless it is crucial to include the exact formulation (e.g. technical definition, rhetorical expression)

See lecture slides for sources on how to reference properly.

REFERENCES & CITATIONS

CITATIONS

The reference should appear at the end of the quotation even if your own words continue after it in the sentence. The reference should come before the punctuation.

EX: Weinstein argues that learning English grammar is, “essential for today’s English-dominant world”(25), though it is not clear that English is the dominant language in the medical field.

Quotes should never be italicized, unless they are in the original.

Changes in a quotation

- Make sure the quotation fits in with the syntax of your sentence. This may mean making some minor changes to the quotation (without changing the original meaning). These changes are then indicated within square brackets []
- If you remove words from the original, this should be signaled in the quotation with three dots “...”

Quotations that are over four lines long (**block quotes**) should be indented about 1cm on each side and appear without quotation marks. Please note that the parenthetical citation is here placed *after* the final punctuation.



WORKSHOP – OCTOBER 8TH

PART ONE - ESSAY DRAFT (WRITTEN FEEDBACK)

- I will provide individual written feedback before the workshop on drafts received by 2021.9.27 (Sections 1-2)

SUBMIT TO: Lisam collaborative workspace folder

- You should review my comments in preparation for the workshop and come prepared with questions
- We will address some general issues with these submissions
- We will discuss peer review as a resource for improving and learning
- We will work on your text in your peer response groups
- We will look at citations and references

PART ONE - ESSAY DRAFT

(PEER RESPONSE)

PEER RESPONSE TO SECTIONS 1+2

- Have a copy of your text and a copy of your peer's response
- Go through your text together and make sure you understand the comments and make notes about how to revise
- Do not restrict yourself to the already written comments
- If the person who gave you comments is not present, ask someone else to read your text and give comments

Important resource for:

- receiving productive feedback from your peers
- revising with the help of feedback

Written feedback by the instructor will be limited

Collaborative group discussion is important as a complement to the written feedback.

**PEER
RESPONSE**
(FROM GRADING
CRITERIA)

You should separate sections 1+2 with a heading

Text Structure and Organization:

You have to improve this (state what needs improvement) to organize the essay better.

Argument, Coherence, and Development: you write well and it is easy to understand, however there is a little confusion. This makes your argument a little incoherent. Use some connecting words to make the sentences relevant to each other.

Language and register: This part is good. It is easy to understand your point.

Reference and Formatting: check the style guide for how to properly reference. You must consistently follow a specific referencing style all the way through.

USE THE GRADING CRITERIA

Text structure and organization:

- The essay has an overall structure, with clear paragraphs.
- The sections could have more of an elaborate introduction and conclusion. For example: section one jumps right into what sustainability means.

Argumentation, coherence and development:

- The development of the essay is generally clear.
- Concepts are introduced in a natural fashion.
- In section one, reason more about how the different perspectives of sustainability are intertwined. Also, present scientific research that shows what the consequences are of climate change (according to the assignment).
- In section two, you fail to demonstrate the IT systems effect on society using relevant references.
- You have not chosen a technology in you text (section two) and discussed its potential societal benefits and challenges.
- The argumentation is not backed up with sources. Some quotes are referenced but not included in the bibliography.

Language and register:

- The language is mostly clear. However, some sentences are hard to understand.
- The essay uses an overall appropriate level of formality. Try to find more appropriate words for “joblessness”, “no cash”, “bite the dust” and “neediness”.

Reference and formatting:

- No clear reference system is put in place
- None of the sources are peer-reviewed papers.
- It is unclear where in the text the sources are used.
- Quotes are not referenced

PEER RESPONSE

PRODUCTIVE COMMENTS

- be specific and detailed
- if possible, indicate a solution.
- include positive feedback but focus on what could be improved
- no false praise

UNPRODUCTIVE COMMENTS

Too general

EX. Language is good but could be improved

Self-evident

EX. The fact that you use the same font in the entire text makes it easy to read.

PART TWO – ASSIGNMENT PREPARATION FOR THE WORKSHOP

*** Note this was meant to be for the seminar but we have now switched it to the workshop

- Read the three assigned articles on sustainability
- Prepare bullet list on most important claims
- Prepare your own arguments around one claim

Hand in before workshop: Upload to LISAM > collaborative workspace

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENT

READ THESE ARTICLES

R. Heinberg, *The Post Carbon Reader: Managing the 21st Century's Sustainability Crises*, ch. "What Is Sustainability?" Watershed Media, 2010.

J. Rockström et al., "A Safe Operating Space for Humanity," *Nature*, vol. 461, pp. 472-475, September 2009.

D. Griggs et al., "Sustainable Development Goals for People and Planet," *Nature*, vol. 495, pp. 305-307, March 2013.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSIGNMENT

- Pick out 3-5 central claims in each of the three papers
- Briefly outline your own argument, question and critique the claims the author makes in the article:

EXMAPLES:

- Can you argue for a different perspective?
- Can you argue for a hidden complexity of one of the article's claims?
- Can you take one of the claims one step further and outline its consequence(s)?

PART TWO - ASSIGNMENT

AT WORKSHOP: DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN POINTS OF THE 3 ARTICLES

- Read the main points of the other people in your breakout group and the way they refute/support some claims
- Compare among the group what claims you have listed and the claims you have argued for/against
- Do you agree/disagree with the different descriptions of the claims made by other group members? Are the lines of argumentations valid/invalid?

WORKSHOP - SUMMARY

We will work on:

1. Written/peer feedback on your first drafts of the essay (parts 1+2) – paying attention to structure, language, and content
2. The assignment

QUESTIONS?

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