

Flagship Online Course: The Age of Sustainable Development

The Age of Sustainable Development is an online course offered by Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs in spring and fall 2014. The course was first launched on 21 January 2014 and is currently hosted on Coursera, one of the largest providers of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC).

The course has been designed as an undergraduate-level introduction to the most challenging question facing our generation: how can the world economy evolve in ways that are socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable? It can also be offered at an introductory Masters or Doctoral level, depending on professors' interest in using the online materials with their own courses.

The course focuses on the complex interplay between the economy and our planet's physical environment, as well as the consequences of human activities on the planet's environment. It discusses the history of economic development; patterns of growth; poverty in its different forms; basic elements of human development including health and education; and the links with food systems, climate change, and managing our ecosystems.

The course is free and open to anyone interested in the field of sustainable development in any part of the world.



Course at a Glance

Total course duration: 14 weeks, beginning January 21, 2014

Students enrolled: 42,069*

Countries of origin represented: 71*

Unique video views: 170,347*

Total discussion forum posts: 4,547*

Teaching assistants: 4

Discussion session languages: 4 (English, Spanish, Chinese, French)

Student members of course Facebook page: 1,061*

*as of 13 February 2014 (3 weeks into course)

Using the Course in a Blended Learning Environment

Several universities have also been offering Professor Sachs' course this spring as part of their core program, using various blended learning models. For those universities that are keen to offer the course as part of an existing accredited program, the course can be used as a virtual textbook to provoke and inspire in-classroom discussions. It can also be modified and extended to suit the specific context of the academic programs. The assessments included in the course form the base on which additional evaluations can be built up as well.

Localized Content &
Material

Evaluations &
Content Papers

Live Discussion &
Activities

In-Classroom Extension of Online Material

SDSN.edu

Professor Sachs' course is part of a broader online education initiative of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), called SDSN.edu. SDSN.edu aims to leverage the unprecedented global expertise represented among the thematic groups and members of the SDSN to provide an innovative educational experience for students and practitioners of sustainable development. In the lead up to 2015, SDSN.edu will provide a compendium of massive open online courses covering the range of sustainable development challenges facing the international community and will partner with SDSN member universities to provide this content as part of a blended learning environment in existing degree programs. In short, through this initiative, we hope to equip a new generation of educated and empowered development practitioners to address the complex challenges facing the planet.

About the Sustainable Development Solutions Network

Launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in August 2012, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) mobilizes scientific and technical expertise from academia, civil society, and the private sector in support of sustainable development problem solving at local, national, and global scales. We aim to accelerate joint learning and help to overcome the compartmentalization of technical and policy work by promoting integrated approaches to the interconnected economic, social, and environmental challenges confronting the world. The SDSN works closely with United Nations agencies, multilateral financing institutions, the private sector, and civil society.

Membership in the Sustainable Development Solutions Network is free and open to universities, research institutions, foundations, civil society, and other organizations. Members should have deep expertise in one or more areas related to sustainable development and commit a substantial amount of their own work towards finding and/or implementing solutions for sustainable development. Please visit the [membership page](#) on our website for more information on how to become a part of this unique network of practitioners.

Contact

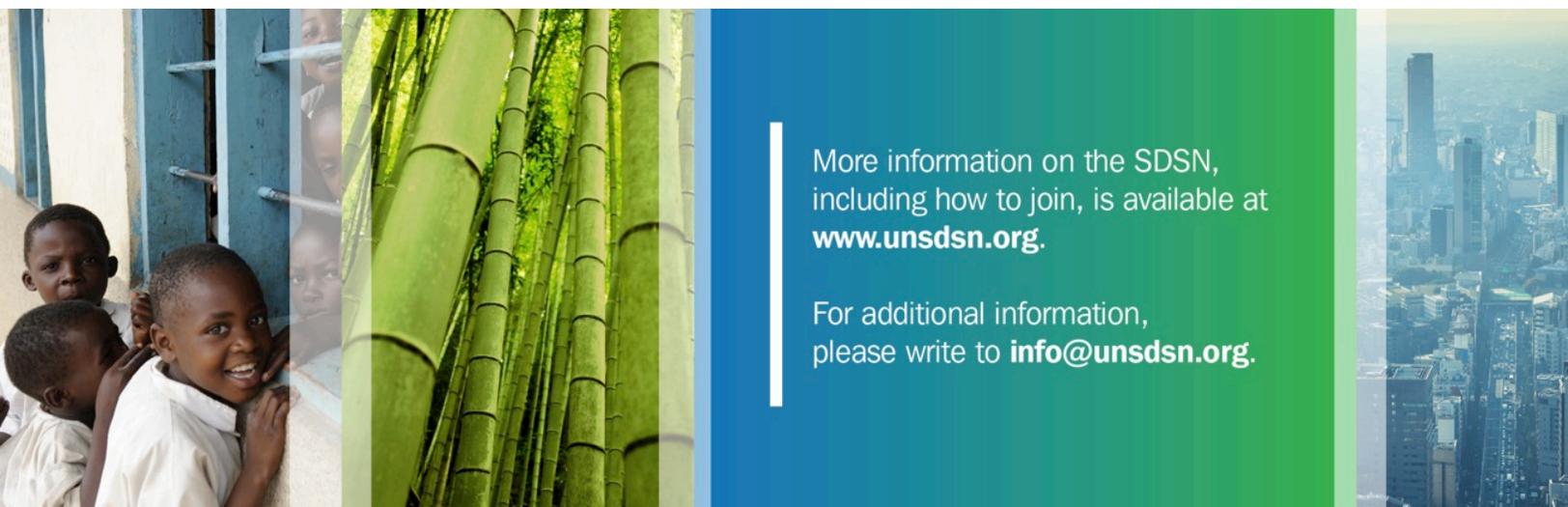
For more information on “The Age of Sustainable Development”, other SDSN online education initiatives, or the broader work of the SDSN, please contact the education team at the Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

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More information on the SDSN,
including how to join, is available at
www.unsdsn.org.

For additional information,
please write to info@unsdsn.org.