

DIPLOMA IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE



AN INVITATION TO HELP BUILD
A SUSTAINABLE WORLD





This prospectus was produced by the third-year students during lockdown in 2020. They worked remotely and collaboratively to determine the structure and draft the content.

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USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

- **Diploma enquiries:** diploma@sun.ac.za
- **Stellenbosch University Call Centre:** +27 (0)21 808 9111
- **Bursaries:** Undergraduate, www.sun.ac.za/english/maties/Pages/BursariesAndLoans-BursariesAvailable.aspx
- **Bursaries & Loans:** General +27 (0)21 808 4627
- **Division Student Fees:** +27 (0)21 808 4913/4519/4521; www.sun.ac.za/english/maties/fees
- **Division Student Records:** +27 (0)21 808 4575
- **Faculty Secretary:** Ms Nazli Daniels, Ndaniels@sun.ac.za; +27 (0)21 808 4837
- **Undergraduate Internationals:** interoff@sun.ac.za; +27 (0)21 808 2565; www.sun.ac.za/english/maties/what-can-i-study/undergraduates.

DO YOU WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT?

We are looking for students who want to creatively and innovatively address global challenges.

The Diploma focuses on building entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills. Entrepreneurs are independent people who use their skills and knowledge to create new businesses or social enterprises for themselves and others. Intrapreneurs are innovative, action-orientated and self-motivated people who work in organisations and companies and drive innovations in service and product delivery.

The Diploma in Sustainable Development uses applied learning within a working and living context of sustainable development innovation and implementation to develop our student's skills and abilities. Our students graduate with focused knowledge and skills in the field of sustainable development and social entrepreneurship.

OUR DESIRED GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES



AN ENGAGED CITIZEN

Leader and collaborator, social entrepreneur who is effective in a diverse environment

An empathetic innovator, an advocate for social and environmental rights, an authentic voice, a thought leader



AN ENQUIRING MIND

A lifelong learner, critical and creative thinker who exercises responsibility for learning and using knowledge

A reflective activist; a grounded philosopher, curious, creative, passionate



A WELL-ROUNDED INDIVIDUAL

Is connected to heart, head and hands; takes responsibility for own development, takes informed and considered decisions

A balanced dreamer and realist, hopeful, has integrity, is humble with powerful energy, lives the principles of Ubuntu, community, Earth and culture



A DYNAMIC PROFESSIONAL

An innovative problem solver who uses sustainable and effective technology

A strategist, a leader in complexity, a facilitator, a planetary steward, trail blazer, a professional communicator

ABOUT THE DIPLOMA

Faculty: Economic and Management Sciences
Department: School of Public Leadership

Presented at the Lynedoch Ecovillage, in partnership with the Sustainability Institute.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

The programme is designed to provide you with theoretical knowledge and practical experience in sustainability and social entrepreneurship so that you can contribute to bringing about social and ecological justice. The Diploma is a three-year, 360 credit programme that provides a NQF (HEQF) 6 accreditation.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS*

- Overall National Senior Certificate average of at least 55%, excluding Life Orientation
- Mathematics 50% or Mathematical Literacy 60%
- English Home Language 50% or English First Additional Language 60%

SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection is based on academic merit and on the written motivation that you complete as part of the Departmental application form. At most 30 students are selected. We recommend completing the AQL National Benchmark Test (NBT) to strengthen your application. You do not need to complete the MAT NBT.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Application procedure and closing date Apply by 30 June of the year before your intended studies. You must complete two applications:

1. The official University application, available from www.maties.com.
2. The Departmental application, which will be sent to you via email within three weeks of completing the University application.

APPLICATION ENQUIRIES

- Enquiries relating to your online university application: University Call Centre, +27 21 808 9111; info@sun.ac.za
- Enquiries relating to your departmental application: Programme Coordinator, +27 21 881 3952; email diploma@sun.ac.za

*Admission requirements for 2022 will be revised.

WHY WE LEARN

The global challenges that face us need creative, bold and new solutions. The Diploma in Sustainable Development prepares us to be change agents and entrepreneurs in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world.

“If the scale of the resource challenge is unprecedented, so too is the know-how available to address it... Companies that seek to get and stay ahead need to find the right people with the right skills; conventional practices and talent may not be enough.”

– McKinsey’s 2014 Sustainability & Resource Productivity report

We need to work together as communities and countries to combat challenges such as climate change, poverty and inequality, and hunger. This means that we need to build networks that can tackle complex problems and catalyse entrepreneurial opportunities to bring about social change. We learn how to do this in the Diploma by working in groups to solve problems set in class and to implement **collaborative solutions** as part of our practical work.

The Diploma teaches us how to understand and work in complex systems and empowers us to find ways to reduce consumption and reliance on non-renewable natural resources. And it helps us to find ways to **create work for ourselves and others** that benefits society while not harming the planet. It does this by immersing us in both theory and practical experience.

Business professionals need the skills for “problem solving in contexts of risk, ambiguity and uncertainty. Strength in inductive and inferential reasoning lead problem solvers to determine the solution that has the strongest likelihood of success, given information at hand.”

– Insight Assessment, Top 5 Critical Thinking Skills Important for Business, n.d.

We need to have an **interdisciplinary approach** to learning and to the world – and so we learn about many topics, tools and techniques. Students in the Diploma programme attend workshops in different venues and we go on field trips to meet innovative business owners and non-governmental organisations. We have guest lecturers who share their experiences of working in a VUCA world. We are taught how to think critically and creatively, and how to work collaboratively on business ideas and in finding solutions to the world’s biggest challenges.

“The development of new skills, like systems-thinking mindsets, is lagging far behind where we need to be.”

– Harvard Business Review, 2015



Most importantly, the Diploma emphasises **experiential learning**, which means that we are continually asked to reflect on what we have learned. This helps us to understand ourselves and others better. Emotional intelligence and empathy are key elements of successful collaborative partnerships – the kind necessary to shift the world towards sustainability. Changemakers need to be aware of power relationships, organisational culture and how to be a good leader in different contexts.

We learn both in and from nature to understand the interconnections between people and planet and how to create solutions that draw on nature's intelligence through biomimicry. The Diploma teaches us **systems thinking** to map the development and use of products, technologies and practices with their actual or potential, as well as unintended, consequences.



“The top 9 skills that employers are looking for are communicational skills, problem-solving skills, leadership skills, organisational skills, teamwork skills, commercial awareness, analytical skills, digital skills and innovative thinking.”

– Europe Language Jobs' The Top 9 skills employers want in 2020

WHAT WE LEARN

“I have learned how to master my emotions and to deal with those of others.”

“We learn about the different types of leadership and how to lead by example, treating all people with respect and tolerance.”

“The modules on entrepreneurship have unlocked a hunger in me. I have become opportunity obsessed.”

The Diploma in Sustainable Development offers a series of interlinked modules over three years. These modules cover theory, tools and practical skills to empower us as entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs in the working world. We learn how to develop our ideas and build campaigns to drive change in the world. Beyond that, we are equipped with the necessary personal skills, including facilitation, mentoring, heightened emotional intelligence and the ability to work in diverse teams, to make our work impactful and meaningful.

YEAR 1	
Module name	Credits
Complexity, Ecology and Sense of Place	10
Sustainable Design Technologies 1	20
Creative Expression for Social Entrepreneurs	15
World Views, Ethics and Belief Systems	10
Economics for a Green Economy	10
Global Sustainability Perspectives	10
Personal Leadership Development	10
Introduction to Entrepreneurship	35
YEAR 2	
Module name	Credits
Ecoliteracy for the 21st Century	10
Social Entrepreneurship 1	10
Image and Storytelling for Changemakers	15
Raising and Managing Capital	10
Social Activation and Engagement	15
Sustainable Design Technologies 2	15
Civilisation, Revolution and Leadership	10
Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship 1	35
YEAR 3	
Module name	Credits
Social Entrepreneurship 2	10
Communication, PR and Journalism Studies	10
Mentorship and Facilitation	10
Building Sustainable Cities	10
Sustainable Development Internship	40
Sustainability Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation	10
Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship 2	30

“Our three-year entrepreneurial journey moves through training on systems thinking to help us solve complex problems, aligning our work with the Sustainable Development Goals, using problem-solving tools and techniques to ensure that our solutions are appropriate to the context, and innovative enough to bring about change. We learn about the importance of curiosity and are inspired to be life-long learners. And we learn how to work together.”



WHERE WE LEARN



We learn in a diversity of spaces. Content is not just theoretical but is placed in a living context so that we can understand how what we learn and how we apply it impacts on real people, communities and spaces. We learn in classrooms, in nature, on field trips and by working in groups. The places and spaces where we learn play an important role. They help to inspire us to be more creative while making us feel safe enough to experiment with new ways of learning.

LYNEDOCH ECOVILLAGE

Most classes are presented at the Lynedoch Ecovillage. The ecovillage is home to a Montessori pre-school, Spark primary school, a WWF SA centre, the Sustainability Institute and Stellenbosch University's undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in sustainable development. The Ecovillage is 11 kilometres from Stellenbosch and transport is provided to and from main campus.

“The difference between the Diploma students at the Sustainability Institute and the students at the main campus is that they write about it while we experience it first-hand. One thing about experiences is that they become memories and cannot be erased.”



The Sustainability Institute is a space of collaboration, right down to how the desks and chairs are arranged. There is an emphasis on building a supporting learning culture and a positive atmosphere. Harassment and judgement of others is not accepted.

We can talk freely to our facilitators who celebrate our success and support our individual expression and freedom of speech.

Our classroom is in the old Farmhouse, which we helped to design in 2018. It has two classrooms, a bathroom, breakaway space and work hub. Just a short walk away from the Farmhouse is the Green Café, library and work hubs in the main building. The café is a great place to relax, socialise and eat the delicious farm-to-fork lunches and drink freshly squeezed juices – while chatting about how to change the world! The library is a meeting and group work venue that overlooks the Lynedoch Valley. We can book a work hub to do individual and group work between classes. WiFi access is provided.

The Diploma programme uses place-based learning, meaning that the space we learn in is sometimes as important as what we are learning. Favourite spaces at the Sustainability Institute are the Amphitheatre where we meet every morning and host large outdoor events and the shaded grass under the oak tree. Lessons are often taught here in the middle of nature and it is a peaceful place to sit and think.

At the heart of Lynedoch Ecovillage is the food garden, which we also helped design and maintain. Working in the garden provides us with emotional, physical and learning benefits. We go to the garden to reflect, at times of celebration and for community gatherings. We also go on fieldtrips to learn about projects. Content is not just theoretical but is placed in a living context so that we can understand how what we learn and how we apply it impacts on real people, communities and spaces.

HOW WE LEARN

How we learn has a profound effect on the kind of leaders that we will become and determines the kind of change we will make in the world.

The Diploma uses five styles of learning: reflective journaling, experiential learning, action learning, group work and co-learning. The combination of these five learning styles enables us to explore and understand how we work best, what we have to offer, and how to handle complex challenges.

GROUP WORK

The world of work is rapidly changing and so are the skills we will need. One way that we learn skills such as collaborating and negotiating with others, practicing emotional intelligence, managing others, thinking critically and interdisciplinary problem solving in the Diploma is through group work. This kind of collaborative work not only helps us develop work skills but also helps us to develop our personal sense of self and agency.

“In my second year, we were asked to design a social media campaign on an issue of our choice. My group focused on body positivity with a campaign motto of “My mind, My body, My choice” and aimed to encourage radical self-acceptance. In this process, working with these women, I learned to love myself. My team pushed me to voice my opinions. I grew as an individual in this process.”

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

We engage with real-world experiences on field trips and visits to businesses and work hubs. We learn through experience, which gives us a richer understanding of the theory that we learn in class.

Learning in different environments, including nature, helps to broaden our understanding of the world, making us more tolerant and insightful. This, in turn, means that our work will be more effective. We actively put theory into practice in different contexts.

“What you see and experience you can never unlearn, whereas what you jot down with no practical experience can easily be forgotten.”

REFLECTIVE JOURNALING

We record our personal thoughts, ideas and experiences and, most importantly, reflect on them. This helps us connect our learning to our lives and to what is happening in the world. It helps us to find our voice and sense of agency. Journaling is a great tool that has contributed to our academic and personal growth.

“Journaling allows new thoughts, questions and emotions to arise, which deepens our insights about ourselves as well as the content we learn in class.”

CO-LEARNING AND BUILDING A NETWORK

We learn from our peers and from our facilitators who are working professionals. We are also exposed to expert guest lecturers. We exchange ideas, stories and experiences with each other. There is a strong sense of mutual respect as our facilitators view themselves as co-creators rather than authority figures. This helps us to develop critical communication and critical thinking skills, as well as supporting us in being more creative and collaborative in our work.

ACTION LEARNING

In the Diploma, we learn by doing. Action learning is the process by which individuals gain knowledge and skills through activities that allow them to build their competence in different areas. We develop competence by practising what we have been taught – in real-time. This helps us to develop skills, but also to understand our own strengths and weaknesses.

We are tasked with starting our own businesses as part of the entrepreneurship module. This gives us the chance to understand the practicalities and complexities of establishing and running a business. It is one thing to be taught entrepreneurship theory in a classroom environment and quite another to start a business.

“While my group’s business venture did not make a lot of profit on the market day, we did learn about market research, marketing, finances, product and service development.”

WHERE TO FIND US

We are based at the Sustainability Institute in Lynedoch Ecovillage just outside of Stellenbosch, about 40 kilometres from Cape Town.

www.sustainabilityinstitute.net

GPS coordinates: 33° 56.7” S 18° 46.07.4” E

Directions from Cape Town

Take the N2 highway – Take Exit 33 – Turn left onto Baden Powell Drive (R310) – Continue on Baden Powell Drive – Turn left onto Vlaeberg Road at the traffic lights – Head over the bridge and take the first right – Follow signs to Lynedoch and the Sustainability Institute.

Directions from Stellenbosch

Head west on Merriman Ave toward Bird Street – Turn onto Adam Tas Road/R310/R44 – Turn slightly right to stay on Adam Tas/R310 – Continue following R310 – Turn left onto Baden Powell Drive/R310 – Turn right onto Vlottenburg Road (opposite Van Ryn’s) – Turn left into Lynedoch Rd and follow signs to Lynedoch and the Sustainability Institute.

From Somerset West/Strand

Head west on Main Rd/M9 toward Coronation Ave – Turn right onto Broadway Blvd/R44 – Continue to follow the R44 – Turn left onto Annandale Road – Turn left onto Baden Powell Drive/R310 – Turn right onto Vlaeberg Road (at the next traffic lights) – Head over the bridge and take the first right – Follow signs to Lynedoch and the Sustainability Institute.



