



## Course Outline (DRAFT)

<b>Course Code</b>	RSM 436 H1 F
<b>Course Name</b>	Sustainable Finance
<b>Term, Year</b>	Fall, 2022
<b>Class Schedule</b>	Th 1-3, OI 4422
<b>Web page URL</b>	<a href="https://q.utoronto.ca">https://q.utoronto.ca</a>

## Instructor Details

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Office Hours</b>
Jan Mahrt-Smith	<a href="mailto:jan.mahrt-smith@rotman.utoronto.ca">jan.mahrt-smith@rotman.utoronto.ca</a>	416 946 8597 (email preferred)	By appointment (email first)

## Course Description

This course prepares students for jobs where decision makers must apply their business and finance training together with a keen understanding and appreciation for sustainability issues and goals. Examples for these jobs include:

- Finance roles in investment, asset management and private equity where ESG/CSR<sup>1</sup> and other sustainability related objectives/measures are fast becoming required knowledge.
- Equity analysis, risk management, and accounting roles, where understanding the ESG/CSR and sustainability risks and opportunities of firms is important.
- Advising roles for institutions facing pressures to divest from fossil fuels and other “sin” stocks in their endowments, pension funds, etc.
- Roles inside large and small non-financial corporations and not-for-profit institutions where financial literacy and finance skills are required in the pursuit of goals related to sustainability.
- Work in sustainability related non-profit or government agencies where a basic understanding in finance is helpful for “scaling up” any potential solutions by raising and deploying large amounts of financial capital.

This is a finance course, but it is not aimed specifically at students with mostly technical finance skills or highly technical finance career goals. We expect students in the course to have a wide range of proficiency in finance as well as pursuing diverse career goals. There will be a bit of math, but not too much. We do believe that all students will share a commitment to understanding sustainability issues. A background in sustainability is not required, but an interest is helpful. The course is a mix of cases and lectures, including discussions and guest speakers, and it involves a final hands-on group project.

Finally, this course attracts students across a wide spectrum of sustainability “beliefs”: from those who want to dedicate their lives to sustainability objectives and changing to the world for the better, to those who work for fossil fuel or mining companies who seek to understand and consolidate and even expand the important roles of their firms in a modern world. We all learn the most by understanding all perspectives and appreciating each other’s knowledge and energy – all in an environment of mutual respect.

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<sup>1</sup> ESG scores: Environmental/Social/Governance ... these are more-or-less standardized metrics that are reported by firms and ratings agencies to summarize firms’ exposure and activity in these areas. CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility.

## Course Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- **Apply** financial tools and models to understanding and solving problems generally referred to as sustainability challenges (environment stresses, climate change, poverty, UN social development goals, income inequality, etc.).
- **Measure** and manage risks and opportunities associated with sustainability factors (ESG/CSR and other metrics) for investors, financial institutions and corporations.
- **Evaluate** the role of financial actors in generating sustainability problems and in solving these problems using financial markets and financial scale.
- **Understand** the role and impact of financial markets and instruments on sustainability related problems and solutions.
- **Discuss** sustainability from the perspective of a financial trained and sustainability-sensitive decision maker who faces audiences that may or may not be trained well in either finance or sustainability.
- **Critically examine** government policies and regulations and their impact on sustainability goals using the tools and models of financial economics.
- **Comment on** the opportunities and challenges faced by real companies (small and large) in the sustainability arena - especially as it intersects with finance. This can include Social Entrepreneurship, Fintech solutions, and applications of AI/Blockchain.
- **Appreciate** various career opportunities in the sustainable finance sector.

## Course Prerequisites

Contact Rotman Commerce Academic Services for academic advising if needed.

Pre-requisites are RSM332 and RSM333 (Capital Markets and Corporate Finance). If you want to take 332 and/or 333 as co-requisites, please talk to the Commerce Office. We will ask you to drop this course if you were to drop 332 or 333 during the term.

## Course Materials

There are no textbook or electronic materials to purchase. Readings will be posted on Quercus.

## Evaluation and Grades

Grades are a measure of the knowledge and skills developed by a student within individual courses. Each student will receive a grade on the basis of how well they have command of the course materials, skills and learning objectives of the course.

For situations in which students are not granted an academic accommodation from the Commerce Office or the Accessibility Services Office at Uoft for a missed or late deliverable, the missed or late deliverable will not be accepted. If a student has an approved accommodation, the deadlines will be adjusted to reflect the individual circumstance.

At this point the plan is for students not to submit assignments through the Ouriginal platform (plagiarism prevention), unless the instructor deems it necessary at any point later during the course.

Deliverable Item	Weight (%)	Due Date
Class Participation	15	Ongoing
Individual Short Paper Outline	5	Class 6 (online)
Group Project Outline	10	Class 7 (online)
Group Project	30	Class 10 (online and in class)
Quiz	25	Class 11 (in class)
Individual Short Paper	15	Sunday 11:59pm after Class 12 (online)

## Expectations on Deliverables (Standard Rotman Commerce Language)

### *Writing Assignments and Presentations*

The group project and the individual paper are – in part – intended to help you to continue to develop your communication skills. How well you communicate your ideas, in writing or orally, will be considered in the evaluation of the assignment **but it is a very minor component for the individual paper in this course.** In your written assignments, you should aim for clarity, strong organization, concision, professionalism, and correct grammar. Your presentations should reflect strong planning and organization, clarity of speech, and an engaging demeanour. Sources, whether in written or presentation assignments, should always be correctly attributed.

Support is available through the RC Centre for Professional Skills (CPS) for students who would like help or feedback on their writing or speaking (presentations). CPS offers both individual and group appointments with trained writing instructors and presentation coaches who are familiar with the RC program and common types of business assignments. You can also access your college Writing Centres for help with written assignments.

You can [book an appointment with a writing or presentation coach](#) through the RC Centre for Professional Skills Writing Centre. For more information about writing centres, student supports, and study resources, see the [Writing and Presentation Coaching academic support page](#).

### *Group Assignments*

The group project – not surprisingly – requires students to work in teams. Learning to work together in teams is a crucial transferrable skill you will use not only in your coursework, but also in your future careers. Support is available if you encounter common teamwork challenges such as:

- Team members feeling left out of the team.
- Team members not responding in a timely manner to communication.
- Division or quality of work among team members being unequal or unfair.

Consult the [Centre for Professional Skills Teamwork Resources page](#) for tips, strategies, and best practices. You can also [book an appointment with a teamwork mentor](#) through the RC Centre for Professional Skills Writing Centre. Teamwork mentors can help you resolve or mitigate conflict, strategize on planning, or improve team communication.

If you are a student registered with Accessibility Services, and extensions are one of your academic accommodations, consult with your Accessibility Advisor about the teamwork in this course.

## Class Participation

Class participation will occur in a safe, equitable, respectful, and kind classroom environment. This is non-negotiable and students are encouraged to provide feedback and help the instructor improve the course in this dimension.

Student performance will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- Does the student help to advance class discussion (through questions or comments or answers)?
- Does the student participate actively during the in-class activities?
- Does the student know the case/reading facts and the business and/or sustainability issues raised?
- Can the student articulate focused, insightful, and relevant (non-repetitive) questions that bring the class forward in understanding a case or topic?
- Can the student respond to queries of the instructor and other students in ways that show thoughtfulness and some pre-class preparation of materials?
- Can the student distinguish the main, important ideas and refrain from simply listing a number of points without any good sense of which "matter" most?

The goal is to keep the conversation moving, to learn from each other, to challenge ideas, and to keep yourself and others focused and engaged and (yes) entertained.

## Late or Missed Deliverables

Students who miss a test or assignment for reasons entirely beyond their control (e.g., illness) may request special consideration.

In such cases, students must:

1. Notify the instructor AND the Rotman Commerce Program Office **before or on the date** of the missed course deliverable. If you cannot reasonably contact them because of your special circumstance, you must contact them immediately when you are able. In all cases make sure you send an email so we have a system time-stamp of your communication.
2. Complete a [Request for Special Consideration Form](#) and submit it along with your Absence Declaration on [ACORN](#) (please read the instructions on how to use the Absence Declaration in ACORN) within **2 business days** of the originally scheduled course deliverable.

Students who do not provide this information will be given a grade of 0 (zero) for the missed course deliverable. [Once approved, students will be granted accommodation by extending deadlines until their time allotted for special consideration is over. For the final quiz, there will be a make-up date.](#)

[Class participation does not significantly suffer if a student misses one or two classes since the instructor only records “positive” contributions and does not punish for “negative” contributions or “absence”. However, missing significantly more than two classes will likely put students in a position to be disadvantaged in accumulating positive contributions. If you miss more than two classes due to circumstances beyond your control, contact the instructor so we can work things out – documentation will be expected in most cases.](#)

## Statement on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course are expected to strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another’s differences. U of T does not tolerate discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

## Commitment to Accessibility

The University is committed to inclusivity and accessibility, and strives to provide support for, and facilitate the accommodation of, individuals with disabilities so that all may share the same level of access to opportunities and activities offered at the University.

If you require accommodations for a temporary or ongoing disability or health concern, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please [email Accessibility Services](#) or [visit the Accessibility Services website for more information](#) as soon as possible. Obtaining your accommodation letter may take up to several weeks, so get in touch with them as soon as possible. If you have general questions or concerns about the accessibility of this course, you are encouraged to reach out to your instructor, course coordinator, or Accessibility Services.

## Original

[At this point, we do not expect students to use Ouriginal \(plagiarism deterrence\). However, if the instructor considers it necessary at a later point in the term, the following will apply:](#)

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University’s plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool’s reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of this tool are described on the [University’s Plagiarism Detection Tool FAQ](#) page from Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation.

## Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is a fundamental value essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will continue to be valued and respected as a true signifier of a student's individual work and academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously.

[The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the process for addressing academic offences and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment (this includes collaborating with others on assignments that are supposed to be completed individually).

On test and exams

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
  - Looking at someone else's answers.
  - Misrepresenting your identity.
  - Submitting an altered test for re-grading.
- Misrepresentation
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
  - Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) medical notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated by the procedures outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. If you have any question about what is or is not permitted in the course, please do not hesitate to contact the course instructor. If you have any questions about appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information from the instructor or other U of T or RC resources such as the RC Centre for Professional Skills, the College Writing Centres or the Academic Success Centre.

## Email

At times, the course instructor may decide to communicate important course information by email. As such, all U of T students are required to have a valid UTmail+ email address. You are responsible for ensuring that your UTmail+ email address is set up and properly entered on ACORN. For more information visit the [Information Commons Help Desk](#).

Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Gmail or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Gmail accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that important messages from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

## Recording Lectures

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are considered by the University to be an instructor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act.

The classroom is not wired for recording, and much of the course is class discussion and some guest speakers. Therefore, recording is not practical and students are not allowed to record sessions using their own devices. Students may take pictures of boards or screens in ways that do not disturb others.

**However**, at this point, the instructor **is** planning to record the computer screen (presentation materials) and the course audio as best as possible with their own laptop. These recordings may be made available,

on request, to students who were absent due to illness or other reasons that were deemed “special considerations” by the Rotman Commerce program, and to students who were granted access by Accessibility Services. They may not be shared with others by these approved students. Recordings are an imperfect substitute for physical presence, and because of the technological limitations there may be times where this fails despite best efforts.

## Weekly Schedule

This draft schedule may change, especially around guest speaker availability

Session	Topic	Notes
1	Introduction	Form groups of 5 for term project before/during/after class
2	ESG Ratings	
3	Sustainable Investing in Public Equity Markets	
4	Sustainable Investing: a case study	Possible Guest Speaker
5	Climate Change – current evidence and future risks/opportunities	Possible Guest Speaker
6	Fixed Income Markets: green bonds, green banks, other green/sustainable bonds and lending	Short Paper Outline due
7	Micro-Finance and SME lending in developing countries	Group Project Outline due
8	Social Impact Financing, FinTech and Sustainability	
9	Biodiversity and Finance	
10	Indigenous Topics in Finance	Possible Guest Speaker Group Project due
11	Quiz	
12	Group Presentations and Discussions (winning 3 groups by vote <sup>2</sup> )	Individual Short Paper due Sunday 11:59pm after class

Please note that the last day you can drop this course without academic penalty is November 16, 2022.

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<sup>2</sup> These votes have **no** impact on grades – students merely vote on which topics are most interesting to them for the last class





## Other Useful Links

- [Become a volunteer note taker](#)
- [Accessibility Services Note Taking Support](#)
- [Credit / No-Credit in RSM courses](#)
- [Rotman Commerce Academic Support](#)

## URL links for print

- Book an appointment with a writing or presentation coach: <http://uoft.me/writingcentres>
- Writing and Presentation Coaching academic support page: <https://rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/current-students/academic-support/writing-and-presentation-coaching/>
- Centre for Professional Skills Teamwork Resources page: <https://rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/teamwork-resources>
- Book an appointment with a Teamwork Mentor: <http://uoft.me/writingcentres>
- Request for Special Consideration Form: <https://rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/current-students/forms-requests-and-appeals/forms/>
- ACORN: <http://www.acorn.utoronto.ca/>
- Email Accessibility Services: [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca)
- Accessibility Services website: <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>
- University's Plagiarism Detection Tool FAQ: <https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>
- The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>
- Information Commons Help Desk: <http://help.ic.utoronto.ca/category/3/utmail.html>
- Become a volunteer note taker: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/program/volunteer-note-taking/>
- Accessibility Services Note Taking Support: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/service/note-taking-support/>
- Credit / No-Credit in RSM courses: <https://rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/current-students/degree-requirements/credit-no-credit-option/>
- Rotman Commerce Academic Support: <https://rotmancommerce.utoronto.ca/current-students/academic-support/>