

## ESPM 3003/GLOS 3304: Sustainable People, Sustainable Planet (3 cr.)

3:35 – 4:50 Tuesdays and Thursdays.

This course will be team-taught from an interdisciplinary perspective. Instructors are:

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### Course Description:

*Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs* (Brundtland 1987). Sustainability recognizes that economic growth, social equity, and environmental integrity are all worthy goals, but that these goals compete, so that it is impossible to maximize all three of them concurrently. Some objectives of sustainability are therefore realized at the cost of other equally valid objectives. *Sustainable People/Sustainable Planet* provides an historical, ethical, and technical overview of various models for understanding sustainability. It also demonstrates, by utilizing a variety of real-world case studies, the conflicts and trade-offs that occur from trying to put sustainability into practice.

### Course Objectives:

*Sustainable People/Sustainable Planet* is intended for sophomores and above. There are no other prerequisites, but you should have previous exposure to critical reading, writing, and thinking. The course is designed to satisfy two CLE electives: Environment and Citizenship/Public Ethics. It is also the gateway course into the new Sustainability Studies Minor (see <http://www.sustainability.umn.edu/minor/>).

By taking this course, you will:

- ◆ Explore a diversity of historical, cultural, religious, ethical, and professional perspectives.
- ◆ Learn to appreciate and integrate competing economic, social, and environmental goals.
- ◆ Examine and discuss real-world case studies involving trade-offs in achieving sustainability.
- ◆ Learn how to integrate concepts of sustainability into your own lifestyle.

### Class Format:

Class material will be presented through a combination of lecture and discussion, making frequent use of participatory learning activities, and supported by associated writing assignments. There will be two 75-minute class periods per week, with each class period typically structured around one (or occasionally two) essential readings. We will present theoretical principles of sustainability in conjunction with real-world case studies, often using two or more class periods to develop each case from multiple perspectives. We'll finish the semester with an investigation of sustainable living, addressing sustainability issues that affect your own daily living.

**Textbooks and Readings:**

*The Environmental Ethics & Policy Book*, edited by Donald Van DeVeer and Christine Pierce, Wadsworth Publishing, Belmont, CA (\$90.95). Additional articles will be available on WebCT.

Critical reading is a central foundation of this class. Although we read classic philosophical texts in this course, we do not treat them as museum pieces; instead, we aim to put them to work in our modern world to see how they have influenced popular perceptions regarding sustainability. See <http://www.studygs.net/index.htm> for helpful strategies for critical reading.

**Credits and Workload Expectations**

In keeping with official UMN policy, this 3 credit class should require 9 hours of work per week for the average student. Classroom activities will account for 3 of those hours, so you can expect to spend 6 additional hours per week on coursework. Most of this time will be spent reading—so you shouldn't take this class unless you're prepared to invest ample time in reflective reading.

<b>Component of Grade</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Points</b>
3 Microthemes (@ 25 points)	37.5	75
4 Jigsaw Memos (@ 15 points)	30.0	60
3 Assignments (@ 15 points)	22.5	45
Participation	10.0	20
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>200</b>

**Microthemes:**

A microtheme is a short, focused response to a single question or reading submitted on one side of a 5x8" index card (this format forces you to be focused!). Its purpose is to teach you to interpret the reading, to give a succinct summary of the main points of an argument, or respond to a critical question that calls for you to take a position on a question and defend it by means of persuasive writing. This task builds reading comprehension skills, gives practice in following and formulating arguments, and prepares you to write critical essays of your own—all of which are crucial to the development of civic judgment and capacities for civic and ethical deliberation. Additional details will be provided in a specific handout for each microtheme.

**Jigsaw Memos:**

For four of our class sessions we will be conducting "Jigsaws," which are activities designed to promote collaborative learning and the sharing of multiple perspectives. At least two types of Jigsaws will be used: article-based and issue-based. For article-based Jigsaws, we will divide the class into 3 to 4 groups, with each group reading a different article. For issue-based Jigsaws, we will assign you a specific role to play in a controversy. To help you prepare for your role, we'll require you to write a one-page memo (worth 15 points) that either summarizes the key points from your reading (article-based) or outlines the arguments you will use for your role (issue-based). You must build a case from your assigned perspective, even if it conflicts with your personal views. During class, you will first meet with an "expert group", consisting of students that have read the same article or are playing the same role, and here you will develop and refine your arguments. Then you will meet with an "exchange group" consisting of one member from each of the expert groups, and there you will try to negotiate a resolution to the controversy. At the end of each class period, we will conduct a brief whole-class discussion of the controversy.

### Assignments:

There are three assignments worth 15 points each (Environmental Voting Record, My Ecological Footprint, and Waste Assessment Journal Report). Each of these assignments will be described in greater detail in later handouts.

*Environmental Voting Record:* You will use the website of Project VoteSmart to summarize the environmental voting record of your incumbent Congressional representative, as well as a potential Presidential candidate from each major political party.

*Ecological Footprint:* You will use the web to calculate your ecological footprint, and you'll be asked to respond to three questions: 1) How can you reduce your personal footprint by at least 50%? 2) Why do Americans, on average, have much larger footprints than citizens of other developed nations in Western Europe and Japan? 3) How do average American footprints compare to average footprints for developing nations, and what implications does this have to concerns about "overpopulation" in the developing world?

*Waste Assessment Journal:* You will pick 3 days over the course of the semester to keep a complete record of your consumption and waste (we recommend two week days and one weekend day). Part of your task will be to come up with a personal definition of waste. You will write a short report assessing your waste habits for the day we discuss waste.

### Attendance and Participation:

The remaining 20 points are for attendance and participation. This class requires active participation, but you can't participate unless you come to class fully prepared, having carefully read and considered all of the assigned readings. Asking or answering questions in class is a great way to actively participate, although we know that some of you will be uncomfortable doing this. However, we do expect you to participate fully when we break into smaller groups. Grading criteria for participation are as follows: F = little or no participation, D = below average participation with little understanding of issues, C = moderate participation and reasonable insight, B = above average participation and insight, and A = frequent and courteous participation (without dominating) with mature and thoughtful insights. Although it is more common for students to be shy and rarely speak, recognize that it is sometimes possible to talk too much.

### Grading:

We will follow the University of Minnesota's Uniform Grading Policy.

A	Achievement that is <b>outstanding</b> relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B	Achievement that is <b>significantly above</b> the level necessary to meet course requirements.
C	Achievement that <b>meets</b> the course requirements in every respect.
D	Achievement that is <b>worthy of credit</b> , even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
F	Represents failure and signifies that the work was either: 1) completed but at a level <b>not worthy of credit</b> , or 2) <b>not completed</b> and there was no agreement between the student and instructors that the student would be awarded an Incomplete.

In addition to the letter grades listed above, we will also award pluses and minuses. Incompletes will only be assigned in the case of extraordinary circumstances arising late in the semester that prevent normal completion of course requirements. If you enroll with S/N grading, you must complete all course requirements and earn a C- or better to receive a grade of S (Satisfactory).

The majority of your grade will be based on writing assignments. Good writing shows mastery of the readings, cites them, relies on their main principles but does more than simply *restate* them. It also displays economy of information and argumentation. We will evaluate writing assignments based on these criteria.

- *Outstanding* (i.e., A+). Displays understanding of the material presented in the reading; takes a position and supports it clearly by drawing supporting points from specific places in the assigned readings and making defensible assertions. The logic of the argument is visible in the architecture of your essay, evidenced by effective topic sentences and eloquent transitions. The essay makes a persuasive argument refuting the thesis and strategically anticipates and refutes the objections of one who holds a rival view.
- *Excellent* (A-). Displays all of the above, but is weaker in one area. E.g., it may lack eloquence or show occasional problems in organization or fail to effectively anticipate and refute the objections of a rival view.
- *Above Average* (B). It is generally persuasive and offers fairly specific evidence to support the argument, but is either noticeably weaker on logic, or somewhat weaker on both logic and refuting the objections of a rival view.
- *Meets Basic Requirements* (C). Must display a basic understanding of the material and put forward a fairly clear line of argument in response to the question. It scores less well because it does not use specific examples from the text, describes the readings rather than deploying them strategically, does not anticipate the objections of a rival view, or has problems with interpretation, logic or sentence structure.
- *Worthy of Credit* (D). Must display a basic understanding of the material but is not fully responsive to the question, well-argued, well-organized, and well-supported by evidence from the text.
- *Fail*. Does not display even a basic understanding either of the material or of the issue at stake in the question.

### **Scholastic Dishonesty**

Scholastic dishonesty is any act by a student that misrepresents the student's own academic work or that compromises the academic work of another. Examples include plagiarizing (the presentation of another's writing or ideas as your own), cheating on assignments or examinations, and engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work. For guidelines for correct citing of sources, please go to <http://tutorial.lib.umn.edu/> and click on "Citing Sources," or follow instructions provided on our assignment sheets.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask. You can learn more about UMN policies on dishonesty at the Office for Student Academic Integrity: <http://www.osai.umn.edu/>

## **Class Schedule:**

[Note: Lecture topics and assigned readings may change slightly. Numbered readings are from the textbook; whereas ‘\*’ denotes supplemental articles available through WebCT Vista.]

### **PART I: INTRODUCTION TO SUSTAINABILITY**

- 1) Introduction—Class format, expectations, introductions, and definitions.
- 2) "What, Me Worry?"—Evidence that planet Earth is in trouble.
  - #89, Robert Goodland, “The Case That the World Has Reached Limits”
  - Distribute Microtheme 1.

### **PART II: RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES**

- 3) What got us into this mess?—Is Christianity to blame?
    - #4, Lynn White, Jr. “The Historic Roots of our Ecologic Crisis”
    - \*, Wendell Berry, “The Gift of Good Land”
- MICROTHEME #1 DUE (White vs. Berry)**
- 4) Thinking Otherwise—Religion Addresses its Responsibilities to Creation
    - #8, Sallie McFague, “The World as God’s Body” (starting at “Sin...”, pp. 79-88)
    - Distribute Jigsaw Memo 1
  - 5) Jigsaw #1: “Do indigenous societies hold a key to sustainability that modern industrial societies have lost?”
    - \*, Winona LaDuke, “Voices from White Earth”
    - \*, Clive Ponting, “The Lessons of Easter Island”
    - \*, William Cronon, excerpt from “Seasons of Want and Plenty”

#### **JIGSAW MEMO 1 DUE**

- 6) What got us into this mess?—Is Property Ownership to Blame?
  - \*, John Locke, “The Second Treatise of Government,” selections

### **PART III: CONTROVERSY: THE TRAGEDY OF THE COMMONS**

- 7) The “Tragedy of the Commons”
  - #47, Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons”
  - Distribute Microtheme 2.
- 8) The “Dilemma of Common-Pool Resources”
  - \*, Gary Snyder, “Understanding the Commons”
  - \*, Ostrom et al., “Revisiting the commons”
- 9) The Oceans as a Commons: Tragedies and Triumphs
  - Video: *Empty Oceans, Empty Nets*
  - Distribute Voting Records Assignment

#### **PART IV: ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES: IS MAN THE MEASURE OF ALL THINGS?**

10) Anthropocentric Perspectives

- \*, R. Guthrie, “The Ethical Relationship Between Humans and Other Organisms”

**MICROTHEME #2 DUE (Tragedy of the Commons)**

11) Are Other Animals Part of the Moral Community?

- \*, Susanne Antonetta, “Language Garden”
- #16, Tom Regan, “The Case for Animal Rights” (143-149)

12) Thinking Otherwise—Species as Part of the Moral Community?

- #67, Holmes Rolston III, “Why Species Matter” (476-484)

**ENVIRONMENTAL VOTING RECORD DUE**

13) Thinking Otherwise—Ecosystems as Part of the Moral Community?

- #25, Aldo Leopold, “The Land Ethic” (215-224)
- Distribute Jigsaw #2

14) Jigsaw #2: “Those ‘Rascally’ Rabbits”: Four Perspectives on Biocontrol

- \*, Bouda et al, “Those ‘Rascally’ Rabbits”

**JIGSAW MEMO 2 DUE**

#### **PART V: ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES: IS THE BOTTOM LINE THE BOTTOM LINE?**

15) Is Economical Ethics an Oxymoron?

- #39, Freeman, “The Ethical Basis of the Economic View of the Environment”
- Distribute Microtheme #3

16) In-Class Decision Case—Should this Dam be Built?

- \*, “The Endangered Species Act”; *T.V.A. v. Hill* (The Snail Darter Case)

17) Controversy over Harvesting Old-growth Redwoods in California

- #84, Lisa Newton, “The Chainsaws of Greed” (559-571)
- Distribute Jigsaw #3

18) Jigsaw #3: Response to Environmental Activists

- #30, Devall and Sessions, “Deep Ecology” (263-268)
- \*, Dave Foreman, “Putting the Earth First

**JIGSAW MEMO 3 (ROLE-PLAYING) DUE**

19) Redefining Economic Sustainability—Sustainable Livelihoods

- \*, Vandana Shiva, “The Seed and the Spinning Wheel.”

**MICROTHEME #3 Due**

#### **PART VI: POPULATION VS. CONSUMPTION: 1<sup>ST</sup> VS. 3<sup>RD</sup> WORLD PERSPECTIVES**

20) The Problem of Population: Is human population growth the root of our problems?

- #57: Partha Dasgupta, “Population, Poverty and the Local Environment”

21) The Problem of Consumption: Is excessive consumption the root of our problems?

- \*, John Ryan and Alan Durning, “Stuff, The Secret Lives of Everyday Things”

## **ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT ANALYSIS DUE**

### **PART VII: SUSTAINABILITY AS GLOBAL PUBLIC POLICY: RIO AND BEYOND**

#### 22) The Road to Rio and Beyond

- \*, “The Rio Declaration”
- \*, Herman Daly, “Five Policy Recommendations for a Sustainable Economy”

#### 23) Climate Change—Controversies and Conclusions

- #92, The National Academy of Sciences, “Climate Change Science” (620-622)
- Distribute Jigsaw #4

#### 24) Jigsaw #4: Climate Change: What Can Be Done About It?

- \*, Stavins and Whitehead, “Dealing With Pollution”

### **JIGSAW MEMO 4 DUE**

### **PART VIII: LIVING IT: INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY INTO OUR DAILY LIVES**

#### 25) Sustainable Cities

- Reading To Be Announced

#### 26) Waste Not, Want Not: The Problem of Garbage

- \*, William Rathje, and Cullen Murphy, “What We Say, What We Do”

### **WASTE ASSESSMENT JOURNAL REPORT**

#### 27) Your Money or Your Life?

- \*, Vicki Robin, “What’s Money Got to do with it?”

#### 28) Higher Education

- \*, David Orr, “What is Education For?”
- **Student Evaluations of Teaching**