

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SOC 521/COD 521
COURSE SYLLABUS
FALL 2004

Course Information:

Meeting Place: 204 Kethley Hall

Meeting Times: Mon 6:00–9:00 p.m.

Instructor Information:

Instructor: Dr. Alan Barton

Office: 201F Kethley

Telephone: (662) 846-4097

E-mail: abarton@deltastate.edu

Webpage: http://ntweb.deltastate.edu/vp_academic/abarton/

Office Hours: The instructor holds regular office hours at the following times:

Monday 11:00–11:30 am; 2:00–6:00 pm

Tuesday 3:00–5:00 pm

Wednesday 11:00–11:30 am; 2:00–4:00 pm

Thursday 3:00–4:00 pm

If you cannot make one of these times, use the above contact information to set up an appointment.

Course Webpage:

Additional materials and up-to-date course information can be found on the course webpage at:

http://ntweb.deltastate.edu/vp_academic/abarton/SOC421, Fa 04/SOC421Syllabus.htm

Course Overview:

This course provides a practical, policy-oriented review of the concept of sustainable development. While the concept of sustainability has a long history in resource management, the notion that development must be sustainable rose to international prominence in the 1980s, received substantial attention and interest in the 1990s, and continues to shape international policy today. We will study the evolution of the concept of sustainable development, focusing primarily on three conferences sponsored by the United Nations in 1972, 1992 and 2002. We will consider the products of these conferences critically and practically to assess the viability of the concept of sustainable development in the local, national and international arenas.

This is the core course in the Sustainable Development track for Community Development M.S. students. It is a concentration course for undergraduate students majoring in sociology or social sciences, and is an elective for undergraduate and graduate students studying social science education.

Prerequisites: SOC 101 or permission of instructor.

Readings:

Books:

World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987. *Our Common Future*. Oxford University Press, New York.

Bruno, Kenny & Joshua Karliner. 2002. *earthsummit.biz: The Corporate Takeover of Sustainable Development*. Oakland, CA: Food First Books.

The books are available at the university bookstore. You should purchase both books or otherwise arrange to complete the reading assignments from these books.

Articles and Reports:

Bonnett, Michael. 1999. Education for Sustainable Development: A Coherent Philosophy for Environmental Education? *Cambridge Journal of Education* 29(3):313-324. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Boston, Tim. 1999. Exploring Anti-Environmentalism in the Context of Sustainability. *Electronic Green Journal*, December. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Buvinić, Mayra. 1999. Promoting Gender Equality. *International Social Science Journal* 51(12):567-574. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Cernea, Michael M. 1993. The Sociologist's Approach to Sustainable Development. *Finance & Development* 30(4):11-13. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Falvey, L. 2003. Agri-history and Sustainable Agriculture: A Consideration of Technology and Ancient Wisdom. *Asian Agri-History* 7(4):279-294. Available from the Agri-History website.

Hopkins, Charles A. and Rosalyn McKeown. 1999. Education for Sustainable Development. *Forum for Applied Research and Public Policy* 14(4):25- 29.

McKeown, Rosalyn and Charles Hopkins. 2003. EE ≠ ESD: Defusing the Worry. *Environmental Education Research* 9(1):117-128. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Munasinghe, Mohan. 1993. The Economist's Approach to Sustainable Development. *Finance & Development* 30(4):16-19. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Nelson, Robert H. 1996. The Future of the National Forests. *Society* 34(1):92-98. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Olsen, Molly Harriss. 1996. Charting a Course for Sustainability. *Environment* 38(4):10-15, 30-36. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Palmer, A.R. 1999. Ecological Footprints: Evaluating Sustainability. *Environmental Geosciences* 6(4):200-204. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Pauly, Daniel, Villy Christensen, Sylvie Guenette, Tony J. Pitcher, U. Rashid Sumails, Carl J. Walters, R. Watson and Dirk Zeller. 2002. Towards Sustainability in World Fisheries. *Nature* 418(6898):689-695. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Pigozzi, Mary Joy. 2003. UNESCO and the International Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2015). *UNESCO International Science, Technology and Environmental Education Newsletter* 28(1/2):1-6. Available from the DSU Library's

Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Rees, Colin. 1993. The Ecologist's Approach to Sustainable Development. *Finance & Development* 30(4):14-15. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Singh, Naresh and Jonathan Gilman. 1999. Making Livelihoods More Sustainable. *International Social Science Journal* 51(162):539-545. Available from the DSU Library's Full-Text Electronic Journals.

Smith, Fred L., Jr. 1994. Sustainable Development – A Free-Market Perspective. *Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review* 21(2):297-308.

United Nations Conference on Environment & Development. 1992. Agenda 21 and the Rio Agreements. Available from the UNCED website.

United Nations Environment Programme. 1972. Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. Available on the UNEP website.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). 1999. The Day of 6 Billion website. Read sections under "Fast Facts" and "The Issues" links.

United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development. 2002. Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Available on the WSSP website.

The articles for this course are available on-line. Follow the links and/or directions on the course website to access the readings.

The Course Outline below lists the reading assignments for each class meeting; you should do the assigned reading BEFORE the class meeting for which it is assigned.

See the course webpage for tips on how to study the course readings.

Course Objectives:

Once you successfully complete this course, you will be able to:

- (1) Define the concept of **sustainable development** from a variety of perspectives.
- (2) Explain how the idea of **sustainability** and **development** have **changed** through history, and how **policy** has evolved in line with these changing conceptions.
- (3) Discuss **United Nations** efforts to structure and implement sustainable development internationally and locally.
- (4) Apply sustainable development **policy statements** to current environmental and development issues, and **analyze** the effects of these policies.
- (5) Critically examine **current trends** in sustainable development, and relate these to theories of globalization.

These objectives contribute to overall course goals:

- (1) Developing **critical thinking skills**. The class discussions, readings, writing assignments and exams are designed to encourage you to develop and use higher-order thinking skills, including analytical, synthetic and applied thinking. See the course website for more information on thinking critically.
- (2) Understanding the **social structures and processes** that condition our lives. A basic goal of all sociology courses is to help you understand the nature and workings of these social structures, and how they open opportunities and impose constraints on individuals operating within these structures. C. Wright Mills called this using your "sociological imagination;" activities in this course are designed to encourage you to use *your* sociological imagination. See the course website for more information on the sociological imagination.

Course Organization and Approach:

This course uses a *participatory, learner-centered, adult education* approach. An adult education approach recognizes that **YOU are responsible** for your own learning. The professor can only provide opportunities to learn, but cannot force you to learn. You are expected to work hard in this course, meaning that for every hour of class time, you should spend at least two to three hours outside of class preparing by doing readings, assignments, studying for quizzes and exams, and thinking about the course material.

You are expected to take responsibility for the success of the course, that is, you should take an active interest not just in the course material, but in the course itself, making it a success for all participants. Factors such as interest, motivation, creativity, and initiative are important elements in evaluating a student's performance in the course and assigning a grade.

Assignments and Grading:

There are a total of 100 points available for the semester. Your final score is simply the sum of all points earned over the semester. If you accumulate 90 or more points over the course of the semester, you will get an "A" in the course. If you accumulate 80 to 89 points, you will get a "B," for 70 to 79 points you will get a "C," and for 60 to 69 points you will get a "D." If you total less than 60 points, your final grade will be an "F." Note that you start with zero and earn points; you do not start with 100 and lose points.

If you comply with all course requirements and submit all of the assignments satisfactorily and on time, you can expect a "C" in this course. To receive a higher grade, you must demonstrate a superior grasp of the course material and an ability to apply the material in productive ways. It is also helpful to show an interest in the course material and in learning, and an achievement-based orientation.

Assignments:

You must complete the following assignments:

(1) Participation in Class Discussions (15 points)

- You are expected to do all of the assigned readings and attend all class sessions
- You are expected to engage in classroom discussions, reflecting on the topic and readings
- The quality of your contributions to class discussions is more important than the quantity of contributions
- Participation in class discussions is not graded based on whether what you say is “right” or “wrong;” rather, you are expected to engage the material critically, and demonstrate an understanding and ability to apply the course material in productive ways

(2) Weekly Essays (30 points)

- You will prepare and submit ten two-page essays over the course of the semester
- Prior to each class session, a topical question pertaining to the videos and/or readings will be posted on the website; you may use this question as a guide to prepare the essay which is due at the next class session
- Twelve questions will be posted; you must submit essays in response to any ten of these
- The papers should be typed, 10 or 12 point font, 1 inch margins, double spaced
- Each essay is worth 3 points
- For out-of-class assignments, you are expected to do your own work – see the policy on plagiarism and cheating posted on the course website; this policy will be enforced with no exceptions

Additional Resources: See the course website for tips on writing papers for this course, and for the writing assignments

(3) Discussion Leader (20 points)

- You will lead class discussion on the readings one time during the semester
- The objective of each discussion is to assess the practical value of sustainable development as a strategy
- Begin by determining the social and policy importance of the assigned reading, then identify a documented current environmental issue to which you can apply the material in the reading; this may be through an article from a newspaper, news

magazine or reputable web site

- You should then facilitate a class discussion on the topic, encouraging participation by all members of the class; your responsibility is to get other students talking about the topic, mediate the contributions of other students to keep the discussion focused, and guide the discussion to ensure that the critical issues are covered
- In leading the discussion, you should prepare and give a short presentation on the week's readings focusing on the social and policy dimensions; following this you should present the current topic, then lead the class in a discussion that illuminates the value (or lack of value) of the policy using the practical example

Additional Resources: See the course website for guidelines on leading a discussion, and for a schedule of discussion leaders and topics

(4) Research Paper (15 points)

- You will select a topic that we study this semester (e.g. the Rio conference, the role of corporations in sustainable development), and prepare a 10-page essay based on your own research on the topic
- You should focus your paper so that it treats one aspect of your overall topic in depth, and highlights the policy dimensions of the topic
- The paper is due on Dec. 1, 2004

Additional Resources: See the course webpage for a guidelines on writing the research paper

(5) Final Exam (10 points)

- You MUST take the final exam, at a time to be arranged
- The final exam is comprehensive, and consists of two short essay questions

(6) Discretionary (10 points)

- The instructor will evaluate your performance based on factors such as motivation, interest, and improvement over the course of the semester

Policies and Expectations:

(1) **YOU are responsible** for learning the course material and for your progress in the course

- You are expected to **attend class regularly**. An attendance sheet will be passed around at every class session. **Make sure you sign the attendance sheet at each class meeting** – this will serve as the official record of attendance, and if your name is not on the sheet, you will not receive credit for attending on that date.
- You are expected to **complete all of the assignments** and know all material presented during class sessions, whether you attended the class or not. If you miss a class session, you should check with another student to see what you missed.
- “ I didn’ t know” is **NEVER** a valid excuse. If you don’ t know something, it is your job to find out.

(2) Missed assignments **CANNOT** be made up

- It is assumed that if you miss class or an assignment, you are making a choice that prioritizes other activities above the class; for this reason, **none of the assignments or coursework can be made up**.
- Assignments are due at the time specified; **no late assignments will be accepted**.
- If you miss an exam or writing assignment, you will receive a grade of zero for that assignment. You are not required to turn a writing assignment in every week, but cannot make up assignments if you do not turn in the required number by the end of the semester.
- If you must miss a presentation or other in-class activity, it is up to you to arrange to trade with another student before the event. Please notify the instructor of such changes. Points will be **deducted** from your grade if you simply do not show up for a presentation.

(3) Illnesses and emergencies **MUST** be documented

- If you must miss a class due to illness or another personal emergency, notify the instructor **BEFORE** the missed class period either by e-mail or telephone.
- If you cannot notify the instructor in advance, bring a note from a doctor or other professional to the next class meeting.
- Illnesses and emergencies pertain **only** to you, not to your family, friends or others.
- If you must miss class for an official university activity, you should make arrangements with the instructor **BEFORE** the missed class. Appropriate documentation is required.
- Notified absences (i.e. you notify the instructor before the event) count as one-half absence. Excused absences (i.e. you bring a note from a doctor or other

professional) will not count against you for the first two; after that, each excused absence counts as one-half absence.

- You are responsible for all material presented during the class, even during an excused absence. You should get class notes from another student for all class sessions you miss.
- It is in your interest to provide the instructor with **written** notification (e.g. a note or e-mail) or documentation for any missed classes. It is risky to simply tell the instructor and expect him to remember.

(4) Class **discussion** is an important element in this course

- The purpose of the discussion is to provide you with an opportunity to practice thinking skills in a safe environment.
- In discussions, you are encouraged to explore ideas presented in the readings, lectures, and films, to think about and apply concepts, and to develop arguments and evaluate evidence.
- You must demonstrate **appropriate respect** for the opinions and ideas of other students. If you repeatedly show disrespect for other students, you will be asked to leave the classroom.
- Class discussions are **NOT** a time to chat with other students about topics not related to the course. Talking privately with others while the rest of the class is trying to carry on a discussion is disruptive, bothersome, and disrespectful to other students and to the professor. If you repeatedly talk out of turn, you will be asked to leave the classroom.
- It is acceptable (and encouraged) to disagree with the perspectives of other students, but you should phrase this to show disagreement with the idea or opinion, not with the person presenting the idea or opinion.
- Please make sure that all pagers, cell phones, etc. are **turned off** during class time. If your phone or pager repeatedly interrupts class, you will be asked to leave the classroom.
- If you are asked to leave the classroom for disruptive or disrespectful behavior, you **cannot** make up **any** work you miss as a result.

(5) You are expected to **comply with all academic standards and ethics** as defined in the DSU Bulletin and Handbook

- You are expected to do **your own work** in this course. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will **NOT** be tolerated.
- If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, see the course webpage for links to the course policy and the DSU Library's "Plagiarism Prevention: A Guide for Student." If it is still unclear, see the instructor. IT IS **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO UNDERSTAND THESE GUIDELINES**. If at some point in the semester you are suspected of committing plagiarism, pleas of "I didn't know what plagiarism was"

will not be accepted.

- The sanctions for plagiarism are outlined on the course policy that is linked from the course webpage. Make sure you are aware of these **BEFORE** you submit any work in this class.

- (6) Do NOT bring cell phones or other portable communication devices to class during quizzes, exams, or in-class assignments. If the instructor sees a cell phone or other device during a quiz, exam or in-class assignment, your work will be collected immediately and you will be asked to leave the classroom.
- (7) Appropriate arrangements will be made to accommodate medical problems or diagnosed disabilities. If you require special arrangements, have Dr. Richard Houston at the Reily Health Center (846-4690) contact the course instructor.

Course Outline:

Day/Date	Topic	Assignment	Readings
Week 1: Bureaucracy in Practice			
Monday Aug 23	REGISTRATION		
Week 2: Introduction to Sustainable Development			
Monday Aug 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review syllabus • Discussion: What is sustainability? • Video: <i>Prophets & Loss</i> 		Cernea (1993); Rees (1993); Munasinghe (1993)
Week 3: Workers of the World, Unite!			
Monday Sep 6	LABOR DAY HOLIDAY		
Week 4: History of Conservation and Sustainable Development			
Monday Sep 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Sustainability Through History • Video: <i>On the Edge</i> 	Writing Assignment No. 1 Due	Nelson (1996); Pauly, et al. (2002); Falvey (2003)
Week 5: The Stockholm Conference, Setting the Agenda for Sustainable Development			
Monday Sep 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Sustainable Development Policies in the 1970s 	Writing Assignment No. 2 Due	UNEP (1972)

Day/Date	Topic	Assignment	Readings
Week 6: The Brundtland Commission: Envisioning Sustainable Development			
Monday Sep 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Diffusing the Sustainable Development Ideal • Video: <i>The Hudson Riverkeepers</i> 	Writing Assignment No. 3 Due	<i>Our Common Future</i> , Ch. 1-6
Week 7: Issues in Sustainable Development: 1980s			
Monday Oct 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Issues in Sustainable Development in the 1980s • Video: <i>Cadillac Desert, An American Nile</i> 	Writing Assignment No. 4 Due	<i>Our Common Future</i> , Ch. 7-12
Week 8: The Rio Conference			
Monday Oct 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Sustainable Development Policies in the 1990s • Video: <i>Houses in the Fields</i> 	Writing Assignment No. 5 Due	UNCED (1992)
Week 9: Aftermath of the Rio Conference			
Friday Oct 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Implementing Agenda 21 • Video: <i>Sustainable Futures</i> 	Writing Assignment No. 6 Due	UNCED (1992)
Week 10: Issues in Sustainable Development: 1990s			
Monday Oct 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Issues in Sustainable Development in the 1990s 	Writing Assignment No. 7 Due	Read: Olsen (1996) and Palmer (1999), and 2 of the following: Smith (1994); Boston (1999); Buvinić (1999); Singh & Gilman (1999)
Week 11: The Johannesburg Conference			
Monday Nov 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Is Sustainable Development a Feasible Idea? • Video: <i>NOW with Bill Moyers</i> 	Writing Assignment No. 8 Due	UNWSSD (2002)

Day/Date	Topic	Assignment	Readings
Week 12: Issues in Sustainable Development: Current			
Monday Nov 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: Current Issues in Sustainable Development 	Writing Assignment No. 9 Due	Hopkins & McKeown (1999); Bonnett (1999); Pigozzi (2003); McKeown & Hopkins (2003)
Week 13: A Critical View of Sustainable Development			
Monday Nov 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: Globalization & Sustainable Development 	Writing Assignment No. 10 Due	<i>earthsummit.biz</i> , Ch. 1-4
Week 14: Greenwashing and Bluewashing			
Monday Nov 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: Corporate Strategies and Sustainable Development Video: <i>Earth on Edge 2</i> 	Writing Assignment No. 11 Due	<i>earthsummit.biz</i> , Ch. 5-7
Week 15: The Future of Sustainable Development			
Monday Nov. 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion: Sustainable Development in the 21st Century 	Writing Assignment No. 12 Due	UNFPA (1999)
Thursday Dec 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINAL EXAM, 6:00–9:00 pm 	Final Exam	

Additional Resources:

See the course website for links to additional resources.

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**PREPARATION and PERSEVERANCE are the KEYS to SUCCESS**

**Be prepared; don't give up**

See the course webpage for the perspectives of others on preparation and perseverance.