

Environmental Studies 320
Special Topics: Campus Sustainability
Spring 2013.

TTH, 3:00-4:30, Sage 2215

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Course Description: In this course, we will examine the concept of sustainability at three levels: as a social issue facing the global community; as a guiding principle for the operations, teaching, research, and outreach at institutions of higher education; and as a set of specific challenges facing our own university. An additional focus of this semester's course is Dining Services on campus. In other words, we will discuss the sustainability challenges inherent in delivering food on a campus of 13,000 students. The course is also project based, with a semester-long assignment in which students, in teams, will devise, research, and propose concrete initiatives to make dining services on campus more sustainable. This project will culminate in a presentation to campus sustainability stakeholders at the end of the semester.

An additional goal of this class is to further your liberal arts education. What does this mean? The liberal arts education focuses on general learning, intellectual ability, and critical thinking rather than technical or professional skills. The goal of this class, then, is not just to convey specific information about sustainability but to teach you how to interpret this information critically, and how to understand modern environmental issues in their social, historical, and political context. A liberal arts education provides the tools we need to be active citizens of our communities. In Spring 2008, UW Oshkosh adopted a set of Essential Learning Outcomes to help define the meaning of a liberal education. One of these outcomes is the recognition that a liberal education recognizes our "Responsibility, as individuals and communities." This includes "Knowledge of sustainability and its applications." This course is designed to help us think about our responsibilities to each other, to our communities, and to our environment, with our own campus as a case study.

Learning Outcomes: Upon completing this course, students will:

- Be able to understand and critically analyze major concepts in sustainability, and their particular meanings for higher education.
- Have a basic understanding of the sustainability-related challenges of providing food to a large campus community, with a particular understanding of these challenges at UW Oshkosh.
- Be able to conceive, research, and present a concrete proposal for change in campus sustainability
- Effectively communicate complicated ideas about campus sustainability in written and oral formats

Grading Breakdown: Students will be evaluated on the following components, each of which will be discussed in more detail during class:

- Attendance and participation: 20%
- Sustainability Paper: 15%
 - 4-page analytical paper on the importance of sustainability and its special meanings for universities
- Sustainability & Food Paper: 15%
 - 4-page analytical paper on the issue of food and sustainability
- Best Practices Presentation & Report: 5%
 - 4-5 minute presentation and 2-page report in which students assess the sustainable food efforts at other universities
- Group Sustainable Food Proposal, Paper & Presentation: 25%
- Individual Final Paper: 20%
 - 4-5 page paper on how the project that you worked on advances the goals of sustainability and the specific goals of UW Oshkosh

Attendance, Discussion and Participation: Your participation in discussions and other class activities is essential. This course will only be successful with full student engagement and participation. Attendance will be taken each day; your grade will drop significantly with each absence. If you have more than five unexcused absences, you will fail the course. An "unexcused absence" is any absence for which you cannot provide a note from a doctor, another professor, or some

other documented explanation of your absence. If you simply cannot make a class, please contact one of the instructors before the class meets; perhaps an arrangement can be made to ensure that you are not penalized for missing class for legitimate reasons. Your active participation is the key to your learning the material and to the success of the course—both for you as an individual and for the class as a whole.

Please check your email account regularly for updates and last minute information about upcoming class meetings. Also, email is generally the best way to get in contact with me.

Readings: In an effort to save students the cost of a University-produced reading packet, all course materials have been placed on the Polk Library’s Electronic-Reserve or on the class D2L site. These are REQUIRED readings; you are strongly urged bring them with you to class (in print or on a laptop, iPad, or e-reader) so that you make use them to aid in class discussion.

Course Policies and Conduct: All of us must do our best to be intellectually honest and tolerant of personal differences. Environmental topics are often controversial, and we all have our own beliefs. I hope that everyone will feel safe to express an idea, even if that idea is not a popular one.

There are some university guidelines for behavior that I expect all of us to abide by as well. One of these has to do with plagiarism, or taking credit for the work of others. This is a serious offense and will be treated according to university guidelines; failure of the course is a potential outcome of academic dishonesty. This doesn’t mean you shouldn’t talk with other students about what you are thinking or writing; but when you write something on a paper or exam, it must be in your own words, not copied from someone else. We will discuss what plagiarism means more fully during the course of the semester. If you have any questions about academic honesty, and what might or might not be considered plagiarism, please ask, rather than taking a risk with grave consequences.

Please let me know what I can do to accommodate any disabilities that you might have.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	≤ 59
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66		
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

Course Schedule:

Wk 1: Tuesday, January 29: Introductions & Course Themes

Thursday, January 31: Sustainability: review and new ideas

Reading: Heinberg, “What is Sustainability?” ER

Slaper & Hall, “Triple Bottom Line,” ER

Wk 2: Tuesday, February 5: Sustainability at UW Oshkosh: Campus Tour

Reading: UWO Campus Sustainability Plan, Sections I, II, and V (Exec Summary, Intro, Teaching), ER

Explore UWO Campus Sustainability Initiative Website, <http://www.uwosh.edu/sustainability/>

UW Oshkosh Today clippings, ER

Thursday, February 7: Sustainability at Universities

Reading: APPA, *The Green Campus*, pp. xi-24, ER

Edwards, “Moving Beyond Green,” ER

Wk 3: Tuesday, February 12: Education for Sustainability

Reading: Orr, *Earth in Mind*, ER

Stibbe & Luna, *Handbook of Sustainability Literacy* (skim), ER

Thursday, February 14: Sustainability and the Curriculum

Reading: Sherman, “Sustainability: What’s the Big Idea?” ER

Weissman, “Sustainability & Liberal Education: Partners by Nature,” ER

Wk 4: Tuesday, February 19: Sustainability in Higher Education Paper Due; electronic copy only on D2L

No Reading; Campus Food Tour; Class meets at Blackhawk Commons

Thursday, February 21: Food Services at UW Oshkosh

Reading: UW Oshkosh contract with Sodexo, D2L
UW Oshkosh Campus Sustainability Plan, food section, ER
Pursehouse, "Sustainability in Housing and Dining Operations," ER

Wk 5: Tuesday, February 26: Sustainable Behavior

Reading: Manning, "The Psychology of Sustainable Behavior," ER

Thursday, February 28: Food & Sustainability

Reading: Bomford, "Getting Fossil Fuels Off the Plate," ER
Allen, "Growing Community Food Systems," ER
Roundtable, "And Miles to Go Before We Eat," (Skim) ER

Wk 6: Tuesday, March 5: Food on Campus 1

Reading: Farrell, "Food for Thought," ER

Thursday, March 7: Food on Campus 2

Reading: Case Study Documents, ER

Wk 7: Tuesday, March 12: Biodigester Tour

Reading: Biodigester Fact Sheet, ER

Read the biodigester website, www.uwosh.edu/biodigester/

Thursday, March 14: **Food Paper Due, electronic copy only on D2L; Growing Oshkosh Tour**

No Reading

Spring Break

Wk 8: Tuesday, March 25 Best Practices Presentations

Due: Best Practices Presentations & Reports (reports due on D2L)

Thursday, March 27: In class project work time; research strategy and responsibilities due by end of day

Wk 9: Tuesday, April 2: Landfill Tour

Thursday, April 4: No Class; work on projects

Wk 10: Tuesday, April 9: Project Work; in class project report from each group

Thursday, April 11: Project Work

Wk 11: Tuesday, April 16: Project Work; **Presentation Outline due**

Thursday, April 18: Project Work

Wk 12: Tuesday, April 23: Required Attendance at Earth Week Campus Sustainability Forum; Details TBD

Thursday, April 25: Presentation Dry Run

Wk 13: Tuesday, April 30: Presentation Dry Run

Thursday, May 2: Presentation to Campus Sust. & Dining Services officials; **Group project proposals due**

Wk 14: Tuesday, May 7: Reflections & Wrap Up

Thursday, May 9: **Final Individual Papers Due in electronic copy only to D2L**