

University Studies Program
GENERAL EDUCATION FOR THE 21st CENTURY

**Sustainability
and Your Quest II
Course**

Bringing it all together

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Your Quest II Course

- Reinforces goals of USP and important elements of this program (goal of liberal arts education, FYE, etc.)
- Tailored to first-year students
- Introduces students to your discipline
- Integrates ***signature question***
- Integrates ***ethical reasoning***

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

**Expectations for Signature
Question in Your Course**

Syllabus must include:

- The full text of the Signature Question
- The full *definition of Sustainability* from the USP Teaching Resources website
- Course description must mention sustainability and provide an explanation of the importance of the SQ to an incoming student

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Essential Learning Outcome

Knowledge of sustainability and its applications

The ability to **understand** local and global Earth **systems**, the qualities of ecological integrity and the **means** to restore and preserve it, and **understand the interconnectedness** of ecological integrity, economic well-being, and social justice, in order to **analyze** complex environmental, economic, and social issues and to **respond effectively** to them.”

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

But...

- Do we need to agree upon a shared definition of sustainability?
- Should there be room for exploration of conflicting views, disagreements, challenges of this term?

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

**Expectations for Signature
Question in Your Course**

- Course should introduce students to the three “pillars” of sustainability and the connections between them, but courses only need to focus primarily on one pillar. **NOTE:** Disciplinary courses bear more responsibility for introducing students to definitions and pillars of sustainability than Quest Writing or Quest Speaking courses, although all instructors must include sustainability in their course

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Expectations for Signature Question in Your Course

- Instructors are encouraged to integrate sustainability fully into their course, but the minimum requirement for Quest II is that *30-50% of the learning outcomes, assignments, and assessments* for the course pertain to sustainability

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Expectations for Ethical Reasoning in Your Course

- Explanation of the role of ethical reasoning in liberal education
- Explicit evidence that Ethical Reasoning has been incorporated into the learning outcomes, assignments, and assessments

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Integration

- How?
- Use disciplinary topics, approaches, materials, tools, etc. to examine sustainability and ethical issues (and vice versa)
- Sustainability, your disciplinary goals, and the larger goals of Quest II (*ethical reasoning!*) and the USP are integrated as much as possible
- It's not *something else* you have to do- it is what you do

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Example

- Case study and role-playing exercise: Creating a protected area in Oaxaca, Mexico (Anthro/ES 368: Human Dimensions of Wildlife Conservation)
- What sustainability issues are raised?
- Are there ethical dimensions to this case?
- How does this case study incorporate anthropological issues?

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Sustainability Rubric

Five "core competencies" are part of this desired outcome:

- Knowledge
- Analysis
- Applications
- Engagement
- Ethical Reasoning and Attitudes

"Fuzzy" and overlapping boundaries!

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Sustainability Rubric

- This rubric is meant to assess a student at different developmental stages in their college education ("meta-rubric")
- It is not meant to assess your class, or to be used as-is for assessment in your class
- However, it can be very helpful in thinking about the goals for your class- what you want students to learn- and designing learning outcomes and assessments for your own class

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Your Quest II Course

- What are the links between your discipline and ***sustainability***? What topics or ideas might provide opportunities for exploration?
- How do ***ethical issues*** intersect with these topics or ideas? (case studies?)
- What are your goals related to these issues for students in your course?

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Backwards Design

- Think about goals: what ideas, skills, and knowledge do you want to endure for your students?
1. Identify desired results
 2. Determine acceptable evidence
 3. Plan learning experiences

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Designing Learning Outcomes for Your Course

- *Describe what students should think, know and be able to do when they finish the course*
- Specific to your course
- Measureable (behavioral)
- Aligned to course topics, assignments, and assessments (ePortfolio?)
- Realistic

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Assessments and Assignments

- How will you assess whether students have met these learning outcomes (especially those for sustainability and ethical reasoning)? What will be uploaded to the ePortfolio?
- What assignments or pedagogical strategies can you imagine to help students meet these goals?

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Pedagogical Techniques

- Sustainability will not come from “ready-made solutions”, and will require interdisciplinary, holistic, creative thinking
 - *How we teach is as important as what we teach*
- “To operationalize education associated with sustainability, teaching approaches must focus on elements related to the process of learning, rather than the accumulation of knowledge- to develop graduates with capabilities to *improvise, adapt, innovate, and be creative.*” Thomas (2009), “Critical Thinking, Transformative Learning, Sustainability Education, and Problem-Based Learning in Universities”

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH

Additional Resources

- Campus sustainability: campus as a case study and a living laboratory
- Events ([Earth Charter Community Summit](#), Earth Week)
- Your colleagues!

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
OSHKOSH