

SUSTAINABILITY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

ES 423/523, CRN# 6153, 7098, 6163, 7102

Spring Term, 2021

Science Hall 066; TR 10:30-12:20

4 credits

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Office Hours: MW 12:30-2:20 or by appointment

Course Description:

Welcome to Sustainability and Natural Resources! This course is designed to explore “sustainability” and the many ways in which it is employed. We will begin by exploring what is meant by sustainability, how social structures serve to impact this definition, and how we might operationalize sustainability in practice. We will then explore the ways in which sustainability has been employed in a range of environmental contexts and through a number of natural resource issues. Finally, we will explore the specific case of sustainability in higher education through hands-on engagement with sustainability programs at SOU.

Environmental Science & Policy Program Outcomes:

- 1. Students will be able to define and describe the fundamental scientific processes and major national/international laws or protocols relevant to environmental problems in the natural sciences, physical sciences, and social sciences.**
- 2. Students will communicate effectively about environmental issues in writing, speech and visual images.**
3. Students will be able to analyze hypotheses and environmental problems utilizing statistical and data analyses.
4. Students will be able to construct temporal and spatial models of complex environmental problems and be able to interpret maps and spatial data of natural resource issues.
- 5. Students will act as global citizens and engage in civic activities in their community addressing sustainability.**

Learning Objectives:

While I recognize that you may bring your own set of learning objectives to this course, the following are learning objectives I have for you and on which you will be assessed:

1. Understand the inherently complex nature of “sustainability” and how context serves to modify both its definition and application
2. Know how to operationalize sustainability in both social and natural contexts
3. Clearly identify how sustainability efforts impact issues of social justice including equity, diversity, and inclusion.
4. Know how to develop and implement complex sustainability initiatives

Action Objectives:

By the time you leave this course, you will be able to:

1. Navigate the complex sociopolitical barriers to sustainability
2. Communicate and translate sustainability as a concept and sustainability as a practice in various contexts
3. Provide Southern Oregon University faculty, staff, students, facilities, and administration with campus-wide sustainable solutions

Learning Environment:

In order to meet the above course objectives you will be asked to participate in a variety of learning environments including:

1. Facilitated discussions (both as a facilitator and discussant)
2. Collaborative research
3. Instructor and Peer-led lectures
4. Partnered peer-reviews

Attendance:

You are highly encouraged to attend **every** class period. Meaningful discussions require your attendance. You will be engaged with your peers during every class period. Thus, your absence places undo burden on your peers. If you must miss a class, you will be responsible for notifying me and any group members with which you may be working in advance. I hope you will find our discussions both an exciting and meaningful part of your busy week.

Participation:

Your participation is requested in making this course a success. Group assignments, projects, and discussions are much more meaningful when members of the group are engaged and committed to their peers. I will work hard to create an environment where you feel safe and where you feel you will be heard. I expect each of you to do the same for your peers. Please note that participating in class and talking in class are not synonymous. Perhaps the most crucial

participatory skill you can learn is to listen!

Peer Reviews:

We will be working through several peer reviews this semester. This peer review process is meant to teach you to critically review your peers' work and thinking. While peer reviews are taught as part of the successful writing process, I will be placing emphasis on the review process more than the writing process. Your ability to contribute to the success of another may be one of the most universally important skills you can learn.

Raider Reminder:

Even with all of the changes to our learning and co-curricular environments, we remain upstanding Raiders who abide by the [Code of Student Conduct](#) and [Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#). Make sure that any contact with others is wanted, that any recording is done with informed consent of any other party, and that it involves no illegal downloads or activity.

In addition, we remain committed to the [University's mission and values](#). We provide a healthy, safe and civil campus; respectful, inclusive, and equitable interactions in our virtual classrooms; and no tolerance for racist, sexist, or other forms of hurtful discourse.

COVID-19 Response

In order to reduce risk to the campus community, all staff, faculty, students, and visitors are required to use face coverings when physically present in enclosed public or common areas. Face coverings are also required outdoors when 6-foot distancing is not possible. Face coverings should be worn in combination with other protective measures, such as physical distancing, hygiene etiquette, and proper hand washing.

Additionally, SOU is limiting contact between individuals and restricting access to buildings and other spaces on campus. Please follow all guidelines provided on SOU's main [COVID-19](#) pages and adhere to campus building closures and restrictions. Until regular campus operations resume, access to faculty and many staff members will be limited to remote means. Students are reminded that they must comply with all campus closures and restrictions. Should these guidelines be adjusted, SOU will communicate any adjusted expectations to all students.

SOU Cares and Equity Grievance Reporting

SOU has a wide range of resources to help you succeed. Our faculty, staff, and administration are dedicated to providing you with the best possible support. The SOU Cares Report allows us to connect you with staff members who can assist with concerns, including financial, health, mental health, wellbeing, legal concerns, family concerns, harassment, assault, study skills, time management, etc. You are also welcome to use the [SOU Cares Report](#) to share concerns about yourself, a friend, or a classmate. These concerns can include reports related to academic integrity, harassment, bias, or assault. Reports related to sexual misconduct or sexual assault can be made anonymously or confidentially at https://jfe.qualtrics.com/form/SV_7R7CCBciGNL473L.

The Dean of Students' Office and the Office of Equity Grievance provide recourse for students through the Student Code of Conduct, Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

Policy, and other applicable policies, regulations, and laws. SOU's Equity Grievance Program addresses concerns about sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, intimate partner violence, bias and discrimination for students, staff and faculty.

Academic Honesty Statement and Code of Student Conduct

Students are expected to maintain academic integrity and honesty in completion of all work for this class. According to SOU's Student Code of Conduct: "Acts of academic misconduct involve the use or attempted use of any method that enables a student to misrepresent the quality or integrity of his or her academic work and are prohibited".

Such acts include, but are not limited to: copying from the work of another, and/or allowing another student to copy from one's own work; unauthorized use of materials during exams; intentional or unintentional failure to acknowledge the ideas or words of another that have been taken from any published or unpublished source; placing one's name on papers, reports, or other documents that are the work of another individual; submission of work resulting from inappropriate collaboration or assistance; submission of the same paper or project for separate courses without prior authorization by faculty members; and/or knowingly aiding in or inciting the academic dishonesty of another.

Any incident of academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action(s) as outlined in SOU's Code of Student Conduct:

https://inside.sou.edu/assets/policies/Code_of_Student_Conduct_091820.pdf

In case of loss, theft, destruction or dispute over authorship, always retain a copy of any work you produce and submit for grades. Retain all work that has been graded and returned to you.

Emergency Notifications

SOU is committed to a safe community. Student, faculty and staff emails are automatically enrolled in SOU Alert, the campus emergency communication system. In the event of emergency, closure, or other significant disruption to campus operations, such as inclement weather, messages are delivered via SOU Alert. To ensure timely notification, students, faculty, staff are **strongly** encouraged to visit Inside SOU to register their cell phone numbers and/or add family members to the system. Campus Public Safety is available 24 hours/day by dialing 541-552-6911. CPS responds to safety concerns, incidents, and emergencies and can provide safety escorts to on-campus locations. CPS works in collaboration with Ashland Police and Fire.

Statement on Title IX and Mandatory Reporting

Federal law requires that employees of institutions of higher learning (faculty, staff and administrators) report to a Title IX officer any time they become aware that a student is a victim or perpetrator of gender-based bias, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking. Further, Oregon law requires a mandatory report to law enforcement of any physical or emotional abuse of a child or other protected person, including elders and people with disabilities, or when a child or other protected person is perceived to be in danger of physical or emotional abuse. If you are the victim of sexual or physical abuse and wish to make a confidential disclosure please use the confidential advising available at <https://inside.sou.edu/ssi/confidential-advisors.html>, or use Southern Oregon University's Anonymous Harassment, Violence, and Interpersonal Misconduct Reporting Form: https://jfe.qualtrics.com/form/SV_7R7CCBciGNL473L

SOU Academic Support/Disability Resources

To support students with disabilities in acquiring accessible books and materials, and in planning their study and time management strategies, SOU requires all professors to include information regarding Academic Support and Disability Resources on course syllabi. It is the policy of Southern Oregon University that no otherwise qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be denied access to, participation in, or benefits of any service, program, or activity operated by the University. Qualified persons shall receive reasonable accommodation/modification needed to ensure equal access to employment, educational opportunities, programs, and activities in the most appropriate, integrated setting, except when such accommodation creates undue hardship on the part of the provider. These policies comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other applicable federal and state regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability.

If you are in need of support because of a documented disability (whether it be learning, mobility, psychiatric, health-related, or sensory) you may be eligible for academic or other accommodations through Disability Resources. See the Disability Resources webpage at <https://inside.sou.edu/dr/index.html> for more information or to schedule an appointment. If you are already working with Disability Resources, make sure to request your accommodations for this course as quickly as possible to ensure that you have the best possible access.

Statement on Military and Other Forms of Active Service Duty

Pursuant to Oregon law, any student enrolled at a public university who is a member of the military, state National Guard, or other federal or state service protected by ORS 352.293 who is ordered to active duty for more than 30 consecutive days has the right to request accommodation for such service, subject to the conditions and requirements of applicable Oregon law or regulation. Such accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the right to withdraw from a course without penalty, a grade of Incomplete and option to complete at a later date once service has concluded, and/or the right to credit for any tuition and fees already paid, depending on the student's status.

Any student enrolled at a public university who is a member of the military, state National Guard, or other federal or state service protected by ORS 352.293 who is ordered to active duty for fewer than 30 consecutive days and misses a course session, assignment, examination or other course work due to serving on active duty or is receiving medical treatment for an injury sustained on active duty has the right to request accommodation for their service or medical treatment, subject to the conditions and requirements of applicable Oregon law or regulation. Such accommodations may include, but are not limited to, the right to submit any missed examination, assignment or other course requirement upon completion of service or treatment; and/or the right to have a course grade assigned without submitting missed assignment or examinations, should the instructor determine that sufficient work has been assessed for the determination of a grade.

Any student who expects to be called for active duty should contact instructors as soon as possible to discuss accommodations.

Required Reading:

Sanders, Nada R and John D. Wood. 2015. Foundations of Sustainable Business: Theory, Function, and Strategy. Wiley.

Selected Readings:

Hammond Creighton, Sarah. 2001. Greening the Ivory Tower: Improving the Environmental Track Record of Universities, Colleges, and Other Institutions. MIT Press. London.

Robertson, Margaret. 2014. Sustainability Principles and Practice. Earthscan from Routledge. New York.

Course Assessment:

You will be assessed on the following items:

Sustainability Monitoring	(0-40 points)	40 points
Weekly Quizzes x 10	(0-2 points)	20 points
Exercises x 2	(0-10 points)	20 points
Content Contribution	(0-10 points)	10 points
Mid-term Exam	(0-30 points)	30 points
Final Exam	(0-30 points)	30 points
	Total	150 points

Extra Credit Opportunities (0-8 points)

Grading Guide

140+	A	110-114	C
135-139	A-	105-109	C-
130-134	B+	100-104	D+
125-129	B	95-99	D
120-124	B-	90-94	D-
115-119	C+	89 or less	F

Sustainability Project

This term we will be working together on a sustainability assessment of SOU. The project is meant both to contribute to sustainability efforts on campus and guide you through the political and scientific complexities of institutional analysis. You will be working in small groups to contribute to this project. Project components will have due dates throughout the term as outlined on the assignment.

Weekly Quizzes

The readings assigned in this course have been carefully selected to assist you in meeting the course learning objectives. By carefully reading and reacting to the readings assigned you will be well prepared for course discussions. Each week you will be asked to complete a reading quiz online before class. This quiz will assess the degree to which you have prepared yourself for course discussions.

Exercises

Throughout the term you will be given assignments to help reinforce introduced concepts. These activities are important to your understanding of material presented and will require you to become familiar with proposed or developed sustainable solutions in the Rogue Valley. You are free to work on these exercises individually or in small (2-3 person) groups.

Content Contribution

I will be asking each of you to contribute to the course content this term. There is no reason to believe I have a monopoly on answers! You will be asked to sign up for a 5-minute time slot during which you will share a proposed or early development sustainability initiative. Examples will be detailed in class but might include a 5-minute presentation on an innovative corporate purchasing policy, municipal legislation to impact climate change, or a grassroots movement to redefine currency (think Ashland dollars). Your contribution will need to be well researched, well presented, and must be accompanied by an annotated bibliography.

Late Assignments

Assignments may be submitted up to 24 hours late. Late assignments will receive a 10% grade reduction. Assignments submitted more than 24 hours late will not be accepted. I highly recommend turning in your work early to avoid any point reduction.

Extra Credit

You will have the opportunity to earn up to 8 extra credit points over the course of the term. Extra credit may be earned in one of two ways. First, you may attend an event, lecture, or volunteer event on or off campus and write a one-page reaction based on your experience. Events or lectures must be approved by me prior to paper submission. You will earn two extra credit points for each paper submitted. Second, you may write an op-ed article for submission related to a contemporary environmental issue. I would encourage you to review your article with me before submission. Op-eds will earn up to 4 extra credit points.

Exams

We will have two exams this term. The exams will ask you to demonstrate your ability to recall, synthesize, and apply key concepts taught throughout the term. Success on your exams will depend upon your ability to keep up with the readings and discussions.

Electronic Submission: I DO NOT accept electronic submissions. All assignments must be

turned in via hard copy.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 One World: Human Impacts on the Environment

Why are we even discussing sustainability? What is the problem we are trying to fix?

Sanders and Wood (Chapter 1)
Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (Overview)
Robertson (Chapters 3,4)

Week 2 Defining Sustainability: Politics, Power, and Modified Meanings

What is sustainability? Can it be operationalized for use? How might multiple meanings complicate utility?

Sanders and Wood (Chapter 2)
Robertson (Chapters 1,2)

Week 3 Stakeholder and Decision-Maker Involvement

How do we lead or guide others to sustainable decision-making. What does leadership look like?

Sanders and Wood (Chapter 3)
Robertson (Chapters 6,7)

Week 4 Understanding the Law: Legal Compliance

How can we use laws and regulations to curtail destructive processes and/or incentivize appropriate investment?

Sanders and Wood (Chapter 4)
Robertson (Chapters 8,9)

Week 5 Sustainability Metrics and Reporting

How do we know when we are failing? When can we claim we are succeeding? Where are businesses and institutions reporting?

Sanders and Wood (Chapter 5)
Robertson (Chapter 10)

Mid-Term Exam:

Week 6 Risk Assessment and Accountability

How do we avoid legal, ethical, and/or environmental risks in our institutions? What can we do to reduce the potential for harm?

Sanders and Wood (Chapter 6)
Robertson (Chapters 11, 12)

Week 7 Marketing and Story-Telling

How do we leverage sustainability success to promote financial success? How do we leverage financial success to promote sustainability-related success?

Sanders and Wood (Chapter 7)
Robertson (Chapters 13,14)

Week 8 Supply Chain and Purchasing

How do we modify purchasing behaviors? What should we be looking for in vendors? How do we create sustainable processes in our product delivery?

Sanders and Wood (Chapter 8)
Robertson (Chapters 15)

Week 9 Operations Management and Project Development

What does it take to manage sustainability for an institution? How do you get projects and ideas off the ground? How do you create the capital necessary for institutional successes?

Sanders and Wood (Chapter 9)
Robertson (Chapters 16, 17)
Hammond Creighton (Chapters 1,2)

Week 10 Contributing to Change: Bringing Your Stone to the Pile

Why “change” isn’t just a political campaign, what it requires, and how to lead it?

Robertson (Chapter 18)
Hammond Creighton (Chapters 8,9)

FINAL EXAM!!