CRN 23726
HNRS SS 1520 Perspectives in Social Science
Sustainability: What It Is and How to Do It
Weber State University
Fall 2016
Community Engaged Learning (CEL) Designation

Professors: Dr. Hal Crimmel, Dr. Alice Mulder, Jenn Bodine
Meeting Place: Elizabeth Hall, 203
Meeting Time: TR 10:30-11:45

Contact Information for Dr. Crimmel:
Office / Office Hours: Elizabeth Hall 435A / TR 12:00-1:00 and by appointment
Phone / Email / Webpage: 801-626-8044 / hcrimmel@weber.edu / http://faculty.weber.edu/hcrimmel/

Contact Information for Dr. Mulder:
Office / Office Hours: Social Science 302/ T/TH 2:30-3:30 and by appointment
Phone / Email: 801-626-6198 / amulder@weber.edu

Contact Information for Jenn Bodine:
Office / Office Hours: Facilities Management Building / by appointment
Phone / Email: 801-626-6421 / jenniferbodine@weber.edu

Required Texts:
Handouts, weblinks, and/or readings as assigned on the course WSU Canvas site.

Course Description:
This introductory course offers an integrative, multi-disciplinary approach to sustainability. It connects disciplines and ideas from the sciences to the humanities, and provides students with a broad background in sustainability concepts, theory and practice through the modules listed below. In this course students have opportunities to make connections between disciplines, between their own lives and the physical world, and between their own lives and the social, economic, and political spheres. The course also provides a structured opportunity for students to practice community-engaged learning and student research.

Specifically, the course focuses on the topics of ecology basics, climate change science, environmental thought, environmental economic policy, current/contemporary environmental issues, land use and the built environment (sustainable planning, energy conservation, renewables, green technology) among others. Students completing the course will next semester be ready to work as a WSU Environmental Ambassador for the Office of Sustainability, where they could plan, contribute to, or implement projects that grow out of their academic work in this class.

Course-Specific Learning Outcomes that students will demonstrate by the completion of the course are:

- knowledge of key concepts and terms relevant to ecology, sustainability, and environmental thought
- knowledge of social, economic, and environmental interactions and interdependencies
- knowledge of specific issues such as climate change, air and water quality, and energy conservation
- knowledge of some sustainability implementation and assessment tools
- knowledge and experience with community-engaged learning practices
Honors Student Learning Outcomes

The Honors learning outcomes for this class include:
- appreciation for the interrelationship of things, and the multiple perspectives from which a subject can be addressed
- the comprehension of abstract arguments and the ability to move between the general and the particular
- informed interest in current issues and events

Social Sciences General Education Mission Statement

Mission statement: The mission of the Social Science general education area is twofold: 1 - to provide students with a basic understanding of humans and their behavior within their environments; and 2 - to empower students to contribute to society in their particular professions and as engaged citizens of their various communities.

Learning Outcomes: Students completing a social science general education course will demonstrate their understanding of the following three outcomes:

Interactions between individuals and society - Students will describe how individuals and groups influence and are influenced by social contexts, institutions, physical environments and/or global process.

Application of concepts, theories, and methods - Students will apply basic social science concepts, theories, and/or methods to a particular issue and identify factors that influence change.

Diverse perspectives - Students will identify an argument about a social phenomenon and understand alternative explanations.

For more information, see http://www.weber.edu/academicaffairs/social_science.html

Policies:

Class Participation & Conduct: Please come to class on time and prepared to discuss assigned reading and your writing. Active participation improves your final grade; lack of participation hurts your final grade. No texting once class has started.

Attendance: There are no “excused absences,” but you get two absences without penalty. Every absence thereafter, regardless of reason, will reduce your final grade by two points. Six absences or more typically results in a failing grade. Habitually arriving late to class may count toward your absence total.

Late papers/assignments: All work is due in class on the assigned date. Late papers will not be accepted unless you have made prior arrangements. Late paper penalties may apply.

Academic Dishonesty: As specified in PPM 6-22 IV D, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is “the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person’s or group’s ideas or work.” Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure of a specific assignment, or, in more serious cases, failure of the entire course.

Core Beliefs: According to PPM 6-22 IV, students are to “[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student's core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a
copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs.”

**Disability Accommodation:** PPM 3-34 notes: “When students seek accommodation in a regularly scheduled course, they have the responsibility to make such requests at the Center for Students with Disabilities (tel. 626-6413) before the beginning of the quarter [semester] in which the accommodation is being requested. When a student fails to make such arrangements, interim accommodations can be made by the instructor, pending the determination of the request for a permanent accommodation.”

**Emergency Campus Closure:** In the event of an extended campus closure, check the class Canvas page for further instructions about how to keep up with class. It will be your responsibility to check in frequently with the class Canvas page in order to complete the class.

**Assignments and Grades:**

Your grade for the course is based on numerous components listed below. Each component is weighted as indicated in terms of its percentage of your final grade.

- Attendance, active class participation and preparation (15%)
  - includes frequent and quality contributions to class discussions, completing assigned readings, participating in peer editing workshops, and working effectively in class small groups.
- Reading and concepts journal (20%)
- Short response paper #1 (5%)
- Short response paper #2 (5%)
- 5-Page Paper (15%)
- Community Engaged Learning components:
  - Component I Attendance at two sustainability events (5%)
  - Component II (5-page paper and presentation) (30%)
  - Component III (letter to elected representative) (5%)

**Community Engaged Learning Components (worth 40% of course grade)**

This course is a designated Community Engaged Learning (CEL) course. As such part of your coursework will involve experiential learning through attendance at two sustainability-related events and completion of the three CEL components described below.

**Project topic and goal**

One aim of this course is to get you engaged with sustainability at the personal, local community, and state levels. To accomplish this goal you will be asked to complete the following three components.

The first component will be to attend and reflect on two sustainability related events this semester. Various options will be posted on Canvas or announced in class.

In the second component you will conduct an experiment using the community-based social marketing strategies we will be discussing. To complete this component select the behavior you would like to change to a pro-sustainability behavior. Second, select the community you would like to change. The community can be as small as your own household or circle of friends or as large as the Weber State University Ogden campus. Design a behavior change strategy and implement the strategy for at least three weeks. Report and reflect on your experiences in writing and in a class presentation.

For the third component you will flex your citizen muscle by writing to your state representatives about a sustainability issue of personal interest and that relates to something we have discussed this semester. Your letter must include the following: 1) Factual information regarding why the issue is important, 2) Proposed strategies for addressing the issue, 3) Why the issue is relevant to the citizens of Utah or your home state, 4) How taking action will positively impact the state.

**Course Outline**
The following is a tentative schedule of topics and readings for the semester. Please note that we may not always have time to discuss all assigned readings in class—please do not be disturbed by this. Part of the goal of this class is to expose you to as many ideas and perspectives as possible, even if we cannot always fully discuss them as a class!

**Reading Abbreviations:** Weisman = *World Without Us*, WI = *Worldwatch Institute – Is Sustainability Still Possible?*

**Week One: Introduction: Exploring the Workings of Humans and Nature**
- 8/30  Assessment / Course Introduction / Ecological Footprint (see WI Ch. 4) / **Discussion of CEL Project**
- 9/1  The World Without Us? / Weisman Prelude, Ch. 1 and 2 / **Bring ecological footprint results**

**Week Two: Humans and Nature Cont’d and Sustainability as a Concept**
- 9/6  Ecological basics, planetary boundaries, Ecosystem Services WI Ch. 2 and Ch. 3
- 9/8  The city without us? / Weisman Ch. 3 / **Short Response Paper #1 Due**

**Week Three: Global Issues and Local Sustainability – WSU in practice**
- 9/13  Weisman Ch. 4 and Ch. 6 / WSU Sustainability Efforts, **Campus tour**
- 9/15  

**Week Four: Humans, Natural Resources and Sustainability**
- 9/20  Plastics and Petrochemicals / Weisman Ch. 9 and 10
- 9/22  Energy Efficiency and Conservation: WI Ch. 14 and 16 / “Do the Math” short video in class / **Short Response Paper #2 Due**

**Week Five: Sustainability – Behavior and Social Change**
- 9/27  On Canvas – Doug McKenzie Moore readings
- 9/29  Pathways to Sustainability and From Individual to Social Change, WI Ch. 23

**Week Six: Humans, Natural Resources and Sustainability**
- 10/4  Weisman Ch.13 / **Rough Draft of Component I 5-Page Paper Due**
- 10/6  Sustaining Freshwater WI Ch. 5 **Final Draft of Component I 5-Page Paper Due**

**Week Seven: Underlying Issues: Culture and Consumption**
- 10/11  Culture of consumption / watch “The Men Who Made Us Spend” (link on Canvas)
- 10/13  Creating a Sustainable Civilization, WI Ch. 10 / **Reading Journals due & Submit Project idea**

**Week Eight: Energy Continued and Fisheries/Food**
- 10/18  *Field Trip to Net Zero Studio*,
- 10/20  Oceans, Sustainable Fisheries / Weisman Ch. 19 and WI Ch. 6

**Week Nine: Food Continued**
- 10/25  Farms / Weisman Ch. 11
- 10/27  Growing food and solutions / WI Ch. 17

**Week Ten: Nuclear Energy, Climate Change Issues**
- 11/1  Climate Change and Displacements / WI Ch. 31
- 10/3  Weisman Ch. 15

**Week Eleven: Renewable and Alternative Energy**
- 11/8  Beyond Fossil Fuels / WI Ch. 8
- 11/10  Examples of success in deploying renewable energy / WI Ch. 15 **Check in on projects (a verbal update)**

**Week Twelve: Policy and Economics**
- 11/15  Patagonia’s “Responsible Economy” readings (see Canvas for link) /
- 11/17  WI Ch 13 and watch Hunter Lovins on youtube (see Canvas for link) **Reading Journals due**
Week Thirteen:
11/22  Building an Enduring Environmental Movement, Weisman, Coda and WI Ch. 27 / Letter to Legislator
       Assignment due
11/24  Thanksgiving Holiday – no class

Week Fourteen:
11/29  Individual CEL project presentations in class
12/1   Individual CEL project presentations in class

Week Fifteen: Course Conclusions
12/6   Individual CEL project presentations in class
12/9   Wrap up, course conclusions, WI Ch. 34