SUST 401 – Working toward Sustainability

Time: Monday & Thursday 2:00-3:20   Location: MNS 213

Instructor: Dr. Loren B. Byrne   Phone: X 3890   Email: lbyrne@rwu.edu
Office: 243 MNS   Office Hours: Mon, & Wed. 11am-Noon, Thursday 1-2, or by appointment

Quotes that summarize Dr. Byrne's teaching and learning philosophy:
> *"High-quality learning is absolutely essential for high-quality living."* ~ L. Dee Fink
> *"The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled."* ~ Plutarch
> *"Teachers open the door. You must enter by yourself."* ~ Chinese proverb
> *"(Intelligence) is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration."* ~ Thomas Alva Edison
> *"Today a reader, tomorrow a leader."* ~ W. Fusselman
> *"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it is tied to everything else in the universe."* ~ John Muir

Course description:
Prerequisites: SUST 101; and SUST 301 or consent of instructor
        This course is the capstone for the SUST sequence in the sustainability studies minor. As such it is meant to advance and deepen students' awareness and understanding of environmental, social and economic issues facing human societies and their interdependencies. Following from the theme suggested by the title, the first part of the course will examine historical and recent developments that exemplify individuals and communities working toward more sustainable lifestyles, environments and social systems. The second part of the course will focus on dimensions of working toward more effective communication of sustainability issues and goals including social psychology, rhetorical strategies, and methods for framing and delivering messages to diverse audiences and stakeholders. In the final part of the course, students will work in groups to complete community-based projects that seek to accomplish a sustainability-related goal. A central theme tying the three sections together is environmental citizenship: the idea that individuals have responsibility for taking actions that contribute to the creation of vibrant and sustainable local environments, communities, and economies.

Course goals/outcomes:
   After this course, students should be able to:
   ➢ Articulate clear, personal reflections on their knowledge base, values and visions about, and interpretations of, sustainability and environmental citizenship
   ➢ Explain historical & recent developments in sustainability-related social movements
   ➢ Critique the effectiveness of public communication messages & strategies using a range of criteria
   ➢ Work as part of a team to initiate and complete a well-defined community-based project
   ➢ Communicate the personal & societal value & relevance of sustainability thinking and action to diverse audiences using clear, effectively framed messages & strategies

Required texts
   McKibben, Bill. 2007. Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future.
   Other readings to be provided digitally or as hard-copies

Important dates: Feb 13 - last day to drop the course without receiving a W
                        March 26 - last day to drop the course and receive a W

Assignment submission & class communications:
        The online system *Bridges* will be used for submission of assignments and to provide course materials. Email (.rwu accounts only) is used to provide course information and communicate important reminders. Students are responsible for using these resources and should communicate any concerns to the professor ASAP.

Academic support services

If you are a student with a disability and you wish to receive academic accommodations for any aspect of this course, you must first register with Disability Support Services on the second floor of the University Library in the Center for Academic Development. All students wishing to receive accommodations must inform the professor and submit required forms *7 days* (± 1 day) in advance of every date for which an accommodation is sought.

Attendance policy:

Because we form a learning *community* in this course, the presence and participation of each student in each class benefits us all. Thus, attendance is expected (*read: required*) for all class meetings. Excused absences will be granted only for legitimate reasons (severe illness or other extenuating circumstances such as family emergencies) and only when the student informs the professor (by email is OK) in advance of the expected absence (ASAP or at least 12 hours notice for emergencies or illness).

➤ If you will miss class for legitimate religious observances, you must inform the professor ASAP.
➤ You will not receive credit for missed in-class work or exams due to unexcused absences.
➤ NO MAKE-UP **or extra credit** opportunities will be given in place of missed in-class work (incl. exams).
➤ Students are responsible for turning assignments in on time even if they miss the class period when the assignment is due. *Points will be deducted* from all assignments turned in late and dates will be established after which assignments will not be accepted and a score of zero will be assigned.

Academic integrity and classroom civility (including cell phone policy)

By becoming an RWU student, you have agreed to abide by the Academic Integrity pledge ("…to pursue the highest ideals of academic life… to be honest…") which means that you will not cheat, fabricate information, plagiarize, be fraudulent or interfere with others' work. The University Statement on Plagiarism in the Undergraduate Catalog reads: "A first offense may result in failure of the course involved, plus an entry on the student's permanent record. A second offense is punishable by expulsion from the University." **So don't plagiarize!** The professor of this course is skilled in identifying plagiarism and will document this or any other instances of academic dishonesty in any student's permanent file and/or will allow a student to fail the course.

In addition, maintaining academic integrity (e.g., civility) includes respecting others and learning how to disagree with ideas while not being disagreeable. All students should respect their classmates and the learning environment of a classroom; this includes not being disruptive by talking out of turn, texting on mobile devices or using computers for non-class purposes! **Such disruptions are distracting and disrespectful to the professor and other students and will not be tolerated**. Any student who violates these classroom policies will bear the consequences following the definitions, policies and procedures described in the University Catalog. In addition students engaging in such behaviors may be identified by name to the class, or be asked to leave the classroom if they do not conduct themselves civilly or cannot refrain from texting in class. In such instances, the student will receive an unexcused absence with loss of credit for in-class activities.

Required assignments & grading:

Students' grades will be based on the following:	**% Value of final grade**
➤ "It's good to know & share things" presentation	12
➤ "Media matters" project	12
➤ Project (incl. paper & presentation)	40
➤ Discussion	22
➤ Current event presentation/discussion lead	5
➤ In class and short writing assignments	9

Grading scale and the meaning of grades:

A= ≥ 93% - Excellent   A- = 90-92.9% Great   B+ = 87-89.9% Very Good   B= 83-86.9% Good   B- = 80-82.9% Good
C+= 77-79.9% Average   C= 73-76.9% Average   C- = 70-72.9% Average   D= 60-69.9% Poor   F= ≤59.9% Failure

➤ Further details about the assignments and their assessment will be provided in a timely fashion.

➤ **Remember: Ultimately you are responsible for your own learning and participation in group projects! No one else but you can rewire the neurons in your brain to generate personal understanding and knowledge. No one else but you can force you to contribute in positive ways to group dynamics and help complete group projects.**

SUST 401 Working toward sustainability: Semester outline

Week	Topic	Readings *(complete before class)*
1	1/26: Introduction & reflections	
2	**Part 1: Environmental citizens & communities** 1/30: The great work: What *are* we trying to do? 2/2: The self & spirit in sustainability & society	1/30: *Great Work* intro 2/2: final chap. - Uhl's *Dev. Ecol. Consciousness*
3	2/6: Knowing our roots: Earth Days I 2/9: Activism & social movements: Earth Days II	2/9: McKibben Intro & Ch 1
4	2/13: Is this a wacky, radical, leftist hippie thing? Or *Is activism a dirty word?* *& Project development* 2/16: What is environmental citizenship? *& Project development*	2/13: *Soul of a Citizen* selections 2/16: Environmental Citizenship readings
5	2/20: No class; Monday classes meet on Wed. 2/22: It's good to know & share things I 2/23: It's good to know & share things II	*Student presentations*
6	2/27: *Project development* 3/1: Should we strive to have "no impact"?	
7	3/5: Big SUST Ideas & Visions of Ecotopia 3/8: Stories of SUST progress *& Project development*	3/1: Various websites 3/8: McKibben Ch 2
8	**Part 2: Toward More Effective Communication** 3/19: People matter: Insights from social psych 3/22: Democratic engagement with communities	3/19: TBD & McKibben Ch 3 3/22: Watershed project reading
9	3/26: Words matter: Rhetorical strategies 3/29: Framing matters: effective marketing	3/26: TBD 3/29: TBD
10	4/2: Media matters: delivering a message I **Part 3: Action! Putting it all together** 4/5: Vietnam case study & Project time	4/2: Case studies in PR issues 4/5: TBD
11	4/9: Media matters: delivering a message II 4/12: Project time	
12	4/16: Media presentations 4/19: Project time	*Student presentations*
13	4/23: Discussion & Project time 4/26: Project time	4/23: McKibben Ch 4
14	4/30: Project time 5/3: Project time	
15	5/7: Final Discussion & Project time	5/7: McKibben Ch 5

FINAL EXAM PERIOD: Wednesday May 16, 4-6pm: *Student presentations & final project/paper due*

The professor reserves the right to modify this schedule at any time if necessary

WORKSHEET FOR IDENTIFYING RHETORICAL STRATEGIES IN ORGANIZATIONAL TEXTS

In order to describe the rhetorical strategies in the artifact that you have selected, please identify and give examples of statements in the rhetoric that fall into the following areas.

Ethos: Appeals to Organizational Credibility

Competence

Community

Pathos: Appeals to Emotions

Needs: Identify the need being created or appealed to

Values: Identify the value being appealed to

Values advocacy

Explicit appeals to values

Demonstration of how products or services uphold values

Discussion of philanthropic activities consistent with values

Praise of individuals who embody values

Identification

Common ground

Assumed "we"

By antithesis

Unifying symbols

Logos: Use of Claims and Evidence

Claims

Evidence

Statistics

Testimony

Examples

Reasoning

Inductive reasoning

By example

By analogy

Causal reasoning

Deductive reasoning

Strategies for Organizing Appeals

Introduction

Main body

Conclusion

Navigation (Web-based materials)

Stylistic Strategies

Language choices

Visual choices

Branding

Strategies for Delivering Appeals

What form is the rhetoric presented in (press release, newsletter, Web site, blog, event, etc.)?

Remember to consider whether the sample of rhetoric is similar to any of the types of rhetoric that occur with regularity in organizations (identity, issue, risk, crisis, or internal). If so, also consider the specific strategy questions posed at the end of the relevant chapters.