SUST 101.02 – Introduction to Sustainability Studies

You may wish to print pages 1 and 2 to have for quick reference in your files. All essential course policies are on pages 3 and 4.

This is a face-to-face class with hybrid as needed; it is not an online course.

Time: Mondays Wednesdays, Fridays, 11:00-11:50
Location: MNS 210

Instructor: Dr. Loren B. Byrne Phone: X 3890 Email: lbyrne@rwu.edu Office: 227 MNS
Office Hours: By appt. ONLY, outside or online: good times are MWF @ 10:30 & 12pm; Tue @3:30

Quotes that summarize Dr. Byrne’s teaching & learning philosophy:

“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
“High-quality learning is absolutely essential for high-quality living.” ~ L. Dee Fink

Course Description:
Sustainability Studies is a transdisciplinary field that examines interrelated environmental, economic, social and technological problems that affect human well-being and solutions to them, across local, regional and global scales. This course provides an introductory survey of the concepts, principles and tools from diverse fields that contribute to understanding and responding to sustainability issues such as energy and water use, climate change, environmental degradation and socioeconomic concerns such as happiness, justice, security and equity. The course introduces perspectives from the natural and social sciences, arts, humanities and professional disciplines and explores how understanding their interconnections increase the prospects for creating a more sustainable future for all humans and other species. The various topics explored will help students develop personal philosophies and worldviews that can inform decision-making for more sustainable lifestyles.

Be Prepared: This course is reading, writing and participation intensive (see quotes 3 and 4 above). This is not because the professor wants to give you “busy” work. Rather, these activities will promote your deeper learning.

Course goals for learning outcomes:
Students should gain foundational knowledge and understanding that should enable them to:

- describe the natural and social scientific concepts and principles of sustainability studies
- identify relationships among human cultures and natural resource use and management
- discuss different and divergent cultural, philosophical and disciplinary perspectives of sustainability
- analyze the impacts of lifestyle choices on the environment and resource use
- apply systems thinking, socio-environmental knowledge and problem-solving skills to work toward the goal of achieving more sustainable lifestyles and social-ecological systems
- discuss key challenges to achieving sustainability at local, regional and global scales

In addition, students should gain:

- understanding & appreciation for the value of quantitative, systems and transdisciplinary thinking
- awareness of diverse worldviews among people and diverse paradigms among global cultures
- improved skills for written and oral communication and self-reflective thinking


Course Components & Grading:
Your grade in this course will be calculated based on the weight for the assignments as follows:
20%: Attendance, participation, in-class & homework assignments (half-sheets, group work, short papers, etc.)
20%: In-class quizzes
10%: Paper 1: Course summary or Wessels’ book review
15%: Solution case study (presentation and paper)
10%: Creative project & essay
20%: Final reflection essay
5%: Final oral exam (discussion about final essays during final exam period)

Grading scale and the meaning of grades: Accumulated points reflect relative success of achieving learning outcomes
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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings (to be completed before that day’s class)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>8/26: Introductions and expectations</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Part 1: Introducing SUST – A Summary</strong>&lt;br&gt;8/28: How do beliefs, norms, &amp; worldviews relate to SUST?</td>
<td>8/28: 2 “This I Believe” essays</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/5: How do we measure energy use &amp; footprints?&lt;br&gt;10/7: <strong>Quiz</strong>/ Is climate change happening &amp; caused by humans?&lt;br&gt;10/9: The social complexity of climate change</td>
<td>10/5: Online footprint analysis&lt;br&gt;10/9: Wessels: Ch 3, pp. 64-79</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>11/16: Lawn &amp; garden case study&lt;br&gt;11/18: Solution case study presentations&lt;br&gt;11/20: Solution case study presentations</td>
<td>11/16: Case study materials</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Online meetings: Dates &amp; times TBD: Nov 30-Dec 4&lt;br&gt;The Creative Spirit Revisited: Personal Expressions&lt;br&gt;Conclusion &amp; Synthesis: Toward Sustainable Lifestyles &amp; Societies</td>
<td>Final reading TBD</td>
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**FINAL EXAM PERIOD: Thursday Dec 10, 10:15-12:15 Required final oral exam discussion**

**The professor reserves the right to modify this schedule as needed during the semester**

**Important dates:**
- **September 23** - Last day to drop course without receiving W grade
- **Oct 27** - Last day to drop course and receive W grade