



Course Information

Course Name: Principles of Sustainability
Course ID: SUS 101
Semester: Summer 2018
Mode: Online

Instructor Information

Name: Robert Darst
Email: rdarst@umassd.edu
Phone: 508-999-8989
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 4:30-5:30 PM, Eastern Time (online)

Weekly Course Structure

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Virtual office hours 4:30-5:30 PM EDT End-of-week short essay due by 11:59 EDT	Weekly start - online	Virtual office hours 4:30-5:30 PM EDT Reading response due by 11:59 PM EDT		Reading response due by 11:59 PM EDT	

Course Description

This course provides an interdisciplinary introduction to the principles and problems of sustainability. A “sustainable” social, economic, and political system is one that can meet the needs of the current generation without undermining the ability of future generations to meet their needs. A system is unsustainable if generates its own demise by destroying the social, economic, and environment base upon which it depends. We will examine key concepts in sustainability, challenges to global economic and environmental sustainability, and the values and ethics involved in sustainable living and policymaking.

Prerequisite: None

Course Credits: Three

Required Text: No textbook is required for this course. All readings are available on the course web site.

Required Materials: None.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Identify and critically assess the fundamental concepts, principles, and practices of sustainability.
- Identify the causes of, and evaluate solutions to, unsustainable social and economic practices around the world.

- Identify and critically assess the ethical and value conflicts that arise in debates over (un)sustainable social and economic practices around the world.
- Identify and critically assess alternative perspectives and arguments about the relationship between humans and the natural environment.

UMass Dartmouth University Studies Learning Outcomes

This course may be used to fulfill *either* University Studies Cluster 4A, Human Questions and Contexts, *or* University Studies Cluster 4C, The Nature of Global Society. **It will not fulfill both.** If you have already fulfilled 4A or 4C, this course will fulfill the other one. If you have not yet fulfilled either, this course will remain “uncommitted” until you take another course that fulfills one of these two clusters, at which point this course will fulfill the other one.

Cluster 4A, Human Questions and Contexts. After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Explain different perspectives on: a) what it means to be human and how the significance of human existence has been understood; b) the nature of human relationships and how these relationships are evidenced in regard to the broader world; and c) how knowledge is obtained, maintained and changed, as well as how individuals come to understand and think about the world around them.
- Recognize ethical issues in complex contexts and evaluate the ethical positions taken by themselves and others.
- Locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources.
- Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on human questions and contexts.

Cluster 4C, The Nature of the Global Society. After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Explain basic problems faced by societies and cultures outside the US or issues that shape societies globally.
- Locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources.
- Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on global society.

Communication Plan

Expectations for Electronic Communication

Please use email **ONLY** when the subject is of a personal and confidential matter. If the question you ask is of a nature that even one other person in the course could benefit from the answer, post the question in the appropriate discussion board forum.

I check my email daily Monday through Friday during normal business hours only. You can expect a reply from me via email within 24 hours during the workweek. You **may** get an email reply during the weekend, but that would be an exception, not the rule.

Time Considerations

Students should be prepared to spend a minimum of 3 hours a week on reading and on course assignments. While you may feel that I’m displaying a lot of information to you on a weekly basis remember that in a traditional “live” course you would be coming to class for 3 hours and then spending an additional 3-6 hours (at least) outside of class on assignments and reading. In our online course environment, my expectation is that you will be spending those 3 “class hours” on your own, working on the concepts that you would usually get in a live lecture. Please be sure to budget your time accordingly!

Methods of Instruction

Final Grade Breakdown:

Responses to Readings	50% (8 x 25 points = 200 points)
Short Essays	50% (4 x 50 points = 200 points)

Explanation of Final Grade Components:

Responses to Readings (8 total, 25 points each). Each week of the course includes two modules of assigned readings, videos, and/or activities. After completing each module, you will submit a response to a question posed about that module. Each response should be 300-400 words long.

Short Essays (4 total, 50 points each). At the end of each week, you will submit a short essay addressing the issues raised in the course thus far. The prompt for each essay is posted on myCourses. Each essay should be 900-1000 words long.

Letter grades will be determined as follows:

Letter Grade	Point Range	Letter Grade	Point Range
A+	386-400 points	C+	307-319 points
A	373-385 points	C	293-306 points
A-	360-372 points	C-	280-292 points
B+	346-359 points	D+	266-279 points
B	333-345 points	D	253-265 points
B-	320-332 points	D-	240-252 points

Late Assignments: Late responses to the reading submitted within 72 hours of the deadline will be penalized 5 points; short essays submitted within 72 hours of the deadline will lose 10 points. No late assignments will be accepted after 72 hours.

Incomplete Policy

According to the university catalogue, an incomplete may be given only in exceptional circumstances at the instructor's discretion. The student must be passing at the time of the request or be sufficiently close to passing. If the work is not completed within one year of the recording of the incomplete grade, the grade will become an F(I). The incomplete policy for this course is that at least 70% of the course must be already completed and an exceptional circumstance (i.e. medical issue) must exist. If you feel you require an incomplete for an exceptional reason, you need to email me and state your reasons for the incomplete in writing. We will then decide on a course of action.

Course Conduct

UMass Dartmouth policies regarding equal opportunity, discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence apply to all learning environments wherever they are located and from wherever they are taught. This applies to all UE face-to-face, off campus, blended, and online courses. Please see the [Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion policies page](#) for more information.

Student Academic Integrity Policy

All UMass Dartmouth students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity and scholarly practice. The University does not tolerate academic dishonesty of any variety, whether as a result of a failure to understand required academic and scholarly procedure or as an act of intentional dishonesty.

A student found responsible of academic dishonesty is subject to severe disciplinary action which may include dismissal from the University. The procedure for responding to incidents of academic dishonesty may be found in Section III of this document. You may also refer to the Student Handbook for information about the judicial process.

A high standard of academic integrity promotes the pursuit of truth and learning and respect for the intellectual accomplishments of others. These are values that are fundamental to the mission of this University. Such values are undermined by academic dishonesty.

Academic freedom is a fundamental right in any institution of higher learning. Honesty and integrity are necessary preconditions of this freedom. Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are legitimate only when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged and deemed appropriate by the instructor of the course. Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the University community, and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses.

Maintenance of the standards of academic integrity and the successful administration of this policy depend on the mutual cooperation of faculty and students.

Faculty cooperation is essential for successful application of the procedures defined by this Academic Integrity Policy. Faculty members promote academic integrity by making clear on their syllabi their expectations concerning homework assignments, collaborative student efforts, research papers, examinations, computer-based infractions, and the like. Efforts should be made to detect and to prevent cheating and plagiarism in all academic assignments. If faculty members have evidence of academic dishonesty, they are expected to report such evidence promptly.

Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of the course. Students are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean of the instructional unit.

The intent of this policy is to make clear the standards of academic integrity at UMass Dartmouth.

*For additional information on violations, infractions, and consequences visit the [UMass Dartmouth Student Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Center for Access and Success

In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please meet with the instructor at the beginning of the semester and provide the appropriate paperwork from the [Center for Access and Success](#). The necessary paperwork is obtained when you bring proper documentation to the Center.

Credit Hour Definition

One credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks (includes exam week) for one semester or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time.
2. At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Because this is a 3-credit class, 3 hours per week of in-class work and 6 hours per week of out-of-class work are required.

Other Resources for UMass Dartmouth Students

Tutoring

If you have difficulty with the coursework, please:

- Contact me directly using the contact information listed at the top of this document.
- Contact the Academic Resource Center (ARC) for support:
 - Location: Liberal Arts Room 007
 - Phone: 508.999.8708
- For help with writing assignments you can also make use of [online writing tutoring](#).
 - Online tutoring can also be accessed by clicking the "Online Tutoring" link at the top of the myCourses Dashboard.

Technical Help

- 24/7 email, live chat, and phone support for myCourses is available at the [myCourses support portal](#).
- Support information for all other UMass Dartmouth technologies can be found on the [Technical Resources page](#).

Course Schedule

Unit Start/End Dates	Unit Topic	Student Responsibilities
Week 1 (07/17/18 – 07/23/18)	1. What is Sustainability? 2. Systems Thinking	Reading: Modules 1 & 2 Activity: Reading Responses 1 & 2 Assessment: Short Essay #1
Week 2 (07/24/18 – 07/30/18)	3. The Climate System 4. The Economic System	Reading: Modules 3 & 4 Activity: Reading Responses 3 & 4 Assessment: Short Essay #2
Week 3 (07/31/18 – 08/06/18)	5. Negative Externalities and Unequal Exposure to Environmental Hazards 6. The Tragedy of the Commons	Reading: Modules 5 & 6 Activity: Reading Responses 5 & 6 Assessment: Short Essay #3
Week 4 (08/07/18 – 08/13/18)	7. Conservation, Biocentrism, and Animal Rights 8. Spirituality and Sustainability	Reading: Modules 7 & 8 Activity: Reading Responses 7 & 8 Assessment: Short Essay #4

Required Readings

No textbook is required for this course. All readings are available on the course web site.

<p>1. What is Sustainability?</p>	<p>Kate Raworth, "A Safe and Just Space for Humanity: Can We Live Within the Doughnut?" Oxfam Discussion Paper (2012)</p> <p>World Wildlife Fund, <i>2016 Living Planet Report</i>, Part 1</p> <p>Global Footprint Network, "What is Your Ecological Footprint?"</p>
<p>2. Systems Thinking</p>	<p>Donella H. Meadows, <i>Thinking in Systems: A Primer</i> (2009), Part 1</p>
<p>3. The Climate System</p>	<p>Steve Easterbrook, "The Climate as a System" (2013)</p>
<p>4. The Economic System</p>	<p>Annie Leonard, "The Story of Stuff" (2007)</p> <p>Michael Maniates, "Individualization: Plant a Tree, Buy a Bike, Save the World?" <i>Global Environmental Politics</i> (2001)</p> <p>World Wildlife Fund, <i>2016 Living Planet Report</i>, Part 2</p>
<p>5. Negative Externalities and Unequal Exposure to Environmental Hazards</p>	<p>John Cassidy, <i>How Markets Fail: The Logic of Economic Calamities</i> (2009), Chs. 2 & 9</p> <p>Larry Summers - Biography</p> <p>The Summers Memo (1991)</p> <p>Daniel R. Faber & Eric J. Krieg, <i>Unequal Exposure to Ecological Hazards 2005: Environmental Injustices in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts</i> (2005).</p>
<p>6. The Tragedy of the Commons</p>	<p>Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons." <i>Science</i> (1968)</p> <p>United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), <i>The State of World Population 2011</i> (excerpts)</p> <p>Stefano Carattini, Simon Levin & Alessandro Tavoni, "Cooperation in the Climate Commons." Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy Working Paper No. 292 (2017)</p>
<p>7. Conservation, Biocentrism, and Animal Rights</p>	<p>Damian Carrington, "Avoiding meat and dairy is 'single biggest way' to reduce your impact on Earth." <i>The Guardian</i>, May 31, 2018</p> <p>U.S. Department of the Interior, "Gifford Pinchot: A Legacy of Conservation" (2017)</p> <p>Gifford Pinchot, The Fight for Conservation (1910), "Principles of Conservation"</p> <p>Aldo Leopold, "The Land Ethic" (1949)</p> <p>Peter Singer, <i>Animal Liberation</i> (1975), Chapter 1</p>
<p>8. Spirituality and Sustainability</p>	<p>DCR Massachusetts, "Walden Pond State Reservation" (2007)</p> <p>Henry David Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> (1854), Chapter 2</p> <p>Sarah van Gelder, "A Brief History of Happiness: How America Lost Track of the Good Life—and Where to Find It Now." <i>Yes! Magazine</i> (2015)</p> <p>Pope Francis, "Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home" (2015), Short Guide</p>