

Facets of Sustainability**IDS 2935 Sec. 7493 (& POS 4931 sec 4890)****Fall 2009**

Friday 8-10 (3:00-6:00 PM)

Rinker 110

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 12:00-2:00 PM

www.clas.ufl.edu/users/thiele/

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Course Description:

Sustainability is most commonly defined as meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is characterized by three overarching concerns: maintaining ecological and environmental health; creating economic welfare; and ensuring social justice. This course introduces students to the theory, principles, and practices of sustainability as approached through a variety of topical concerns and academic fields. It features a series of guest lectures by some of UF's leading teachers and scholars whose research intersects with sustainability concerns.

Facets of Sustainability serves as the gateway course for students taking the Minor in Sustainability Studies. The schedule of lectures parallels the clusters from which students in the minor select their courses. For information about the Minor in Sustainability Studies, go to www.clas.ufl.edu/sustainability.

Course Objectives:

Is the earth headed for ecological collapse, and if so, what can be done to avert catastrophe? How can humanity's growing needs be met without mortgaging the future? Are there economically viable ways to ensure an equitable and prosperous life for the citizens of the planet? Is a sustainable world primarily to be achieved through green design and technology, or by changing consciousness and behavior? What are the characteristics of sustainable lives and businesses, and what practical means are at our disposal to achieve these goals? In this course, students will develop answers to such questions by critically and creatively engaging with texts and lecturers, through weekly written assignments, and by way of debate and discussion.

Required TextsLester Brown, *Plan B 3.0* (Norton, also available free online at www.earth-policy.org/Books/PB3/)Juliet Schor & Betsy Taylor, eds, *Sustainable Planet: Solutions for the Twenty-first Century* (Beacon)Daniel Quinn, *Ishmael* (Bantam)Frances Moore Lappe, *Getting a Grip* (Small Planet)

Reading the science section of the Tuesday *New York Times* is recommended, as are regular visits to online sources such as the Earth Portal (<http://www.earthportal.org/>), The Grist (<http://www.grist.org/>) and *Environmental News Network* (<http://www.enn.com>)

Course requirements and grading:

Students should always have read and be prepared critically assess the primary texts (approximately 70 pages per week). Regular class attendance and engaged attention and participation is crucial.

In-class essays (9): 18% of final grade

During every class in which there is no exam, students will write a one-page essay that critically responds to the lectures and discussion. Each essay will be graded pass/fail, with a "pass" worth 2% of the final grade. Students who pass all 8 essays will effectively receive 2 bonus points. There will be no re-takes of in-class essays unless medical documentation accounts for 2 or more absences.

Exams (3): 60% of final grade

There will be 3 exams, administered on September 25, October 30, and in the examination period at end of term. Each exam is worth 20% of the final grade. The exams will have multiple choice, short answer, and essay components. They will be largely based on the readings. Students missing an in-class exam who have medical documentation will retake that exam during the examination period at end of term.

Term paper: 22% of final grade

Students will write a ten-page (3000-3600 words) term paper. Papers under 3000 or over 3600 words will not be accepted. The paper is to have an additional page (not in word count) added as a bibliography. Paper topics will be provided in class. The paper will be graded on the quality of research, organization, persuasiveness of argument, and clarity of writing. Before writing your paper, spend 20-30 minutes working through the tutorial offered at www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/skills/grammar/grammar_tutorial/index.htm. You will be held responsible for this material. Plagiarism of any sort will not be tolerated and will result in failure of the course. The electronic copy of your paper must be submitted to Turnitin.com, a web-based plagiarism-checking program, by noon on November 19. Late papers, beginning at 12:01 P.M., will be penalized ½ letter grade for each 24-hour period they are late.

All students are required to abide by UF's Honor Code (www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php). Students requesting classroom accommodation for disabilities must provide documentation from the Dean of Students Office. For grade point information, see <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>.

Course Schedule

Unit 1: Introduction to Sustainability

August 28 – Introduction to the course

September 4 – Dr. Rosalie Koenig, Agronomy, UF

“Local Actions and Global Responsibilities at the 11th Hour”

Reading: *Plan B*, Preface & chapter 3, *Sustainable Planet*, pp. ix-11

September 11 – Dr. Stephen Humphrey, School of Natural Resources and Environment, UF

“The Sustainable Use and Depletion of Natural Resources”

Reading: *Plan B*, chapters 1, 2; *Sustainable Planet*, pp. 175-192

Unit 2 (Cluster D): Ecology & Environmental Stewardship

September 18 – Dr. Katie Sieving, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, UF

“Species Interactions and Ecological Sustainability”

Reading: *Ishmael*, chapters 1-5

September 25 – Dr. Ron Chandler, U. South Florida:

“Protecting Endangered Species through Community-based Conservation”

Reading: *Plan B*, chapter 5, 8; *Sustainable Planet*, pp. 223-231

Unit 3 (Cluster C) – Production Systems and the Built Environment

October 2 – Dr. Mark Brown, Environmental Engineering, UF

“Sustainable Production Systems: Integrating Energy, Ecology and Economics”

Reading: *Plan B*, chapters 9, 11, 12; *Sustainable Planet*, pp. 209-221

October 9– Dr. Wendell Porter, Agricultural and Biological Engineering

“Transformations in the Built Environment”

Reading: *Plan B*, chapter 10; *Sustainable Planet*, pp. 13-32, 109-127

October 16– Homecoming – No classes

Unit 4 (Cluster B) – Economics, Law, & Policy

October 23 – Dr. Joseph Delfino, UF Environmental Engineering

Industrial Ecology and the Greening of Corporations

Reading: *Getting a Grip*, chapters 1-3; *Sustainable Planet*, pp. 61-78, 141-153

October 30– Dr. Sammy Barkin, Department of Political Science, UF
“The Politics of Global Environmental Protection”
Reading: *Plan B*, chapters 4, 6; *Getting a Grip*, chapters 4-6

Unit 5 (Cluster A)- Ethics, Culture, & Human Behavior

November 6 – Dr. Sid Dobrin, Department of English, UF
“Sustainability: Writing, Rhetoric, and Image”
Reading: *Ishmael*, chapters 6-9

November 13– Dr. Susan Jacobson, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation
"Communicating about Conservation"
Reading: *Ishmael*, chapters 10-13

Unit 6: Greening Gators, Gainesville, and the Globe

November 20– Dr. Mickie Swisher, Family, Youth and Community Sciences, UF
“Think Global but Act Local: A Question of Perspective”
Reading: *Plan B*, chapter 7, 13; *Sustainable Planet*, pp. 33-44; *Getting a Grip*, chapter 7

November 27 – Thanksgiving break – no classes

December 4 – Town, Gown and Sustainable Renown
Panel Discussion with Randall Reid, Alachua County Manager; Anna Prizzia, Director of the UF Office of Sustainability; Trish Riley, Community activist, with a special Skype appearance by Frances Moore Lappe
Reading: *Sustainable Planet*, pp. 93-107, 129-140; *Getting a Grip*, chapters 8-9