

UGS101: Sustainability Leadership Spring 2015

Time: 10:20 - 11:10 Tuesday
Location: B100 Wells Hall
Instructor: Dr Annick Anctil
Assistant Professor, Civil & Environmental Engineering
1449 Engineering Research Complex - A132
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Phone: (517) 432-4692
Office hours: Monday 11:30- 12:30 Engineering Building 3575 or by appointment

Seminar Description:

Participants will learn and apply critical thinking skills to understand economic, social, and environmental sustainability in the context of personal lifestyle choices, the structure of the built environment, and the operation of institutions. Students will work across disciplinary lines to strengthen their critical thinking skills and develop other skills to become agents of change in the University and the broader community. Students will explore fundamental issues with defining sustainability and analyze multi-dimensional problems by analyzing how their values, actions and major choice relate to sustainability issues. They will synthesize alternative solutions to complex challenges by critiquing various proposals related to sustainability projects. Finally they will communicate complex ideas effectively by developing a plan to address sustainability challenges through engagement at MSU and beyond.

Academic Work:

Involvement will be evaluated based on

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| 1. Writing Assignments/ Reflection Statements /Online Quiz | 50% |
| 2. Class Participation | 20% |
| 3. Sustainability Project Proposal | 30% |

Course Materials:

Readings: Reading materials will be placed on MSU Desire2Learn website <https://d2l.msu.edu/>

Course Approach and Format:

This course requires active involvement of students in all facets of the learning experience. The course is based on the idea that students should take responsibility for their own learning, just as citizens can and should take responsibility for advocating for themselves and others. Lectures will build on, rather than just summarize assigned readings. We will engage in intensive reflection and discussion of your experiences, with the goal of connecting to the broader themes of sustainability and leadership for positive change.

Course Assignments and Grading: Your grade will be evaluated on the basis of your performance on the following:

Writing Assignments/ Reflection Statements/ Online Quiz (50%): This portion of the class consists of the various reflections written in response to the readings and class activities.

A new assignment is due prior to each seminar and need to be submitted before the beginning of class <https://d2l.msu.edu/>

Sustainability Project Proposal (30%): Students in group of 4-5 will write and present to the class an idea that could benefit MSU following the guidelines for the Student Project Fund <http://www.bespartangreen.msu.edu/student-fund.html>

Class Participation (20%): Just as successful social change depends on regular, active participation, so, too, does your success in this class. To that end, we hope to create a strong sense of community among this cohort of “sustainability-scholars” and your active participation will be an important ingredient in that mix.

Participation is defined as a sincere effort to be involved in class discussions and activities. Participation includes but is not limited to: building on others’ ideas; helping other class members to clarify their thoughts; supporting each other by sharing resources; and bringing contradictory and supported views to the discussion. While the ultimate goal of a seminar is to have a good discussion, you are expected to say something substantive during as many classes as possible, *without dominating the discussion*. And, of course, active, respectful listening is a component of any participation grade.

This course has been designed to bring out some important and controversial topics and thus will provide an opportunity to develop and strengthen your critical thinking skills. Take advantage of this opportunity to contribute to your and the other students’ learning experiences. Differences of opinion are inevitable. However, in order to be meaningful and constructive, it is important you respect others’ opinions.

Course Assessment:

The course is graded on a Pass/No Pass system No Pass with correspond a grade below 60% Late assignments will be down-graded by 10% for each day that the assignment is late (starting when class start).

Classroom Etiquette:

- Class will begin and end on time. Please arrive to class on time, prepared to participate. Late arrivals are disruptive and will impact your participation grade. If you are late to class, the instructors reserve the right to disallow you from participation in class activities, including any in-class assignments.
- If the instructor is late, students are free to leave after waiting 15 minutes.

Attendance Policy: Because of the experiential nature of this course, your full participation is essential. Regular class attendance and participation in class discussion and activities are expected. Since this is a discussion-based seminar class which meets only once weekly, attendance at the regular seminar meetings is required. Also, attendance means that you are **both physically and mentally present throughout the class period**. You will be counted as absent if you are participating in non-class related activities (e.g., studying for another class, text messaging, carrying on side conversations, etc.) during class time.

Academic Integrity Policy.

- Attendance at regular scheduled class meetings is expected as well as participation in class discussions.

- In the event of an unplanned absence by the professor, class will be cancelled after 15 minutes
- Academic honesty is expected. Any violation of Michigan State University policy as described in the Student Handbook will not be tolerated and may result in a failing grade. For additional information visit the web page of the office of the ombudsman at MSU: <http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/>

Students with Disabilities: Appropriate accommodations will be made for those of you who have with disabilities that are documented by Disabilities Services. It is expected you will follow the policies and procedures of Disabilities Services (see <https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/>) You must present a letter stating the disability has been documented and requesting the specific accommodations during the first week of classes. Additionally, it is your responsibility to give the professor one-week's notice prior to each instance where an accommodation will be needed.

Preparation for Class:

Reading for the class will be posted one week in advance and a writing assignment / reflection statement / short quiz will have to be completed before the beginning of start of the class.

Course Schedule: The class will meet once a week, according to the schedule that will be regularly updated on the website. The schedule will be adapted based on the interests and comments of the students as well as availability of speakers and scheduled facilities visit.