Exploring Environmental and Sustainability Issues and Policy Using Film - Course Handbook (CSUS265, Section 001)

M.W. Everett

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<u>Overview of the Course</u>

Welcome to CSUS265, Exploring Environmental and Sustainability Issues and Policy Using Film! This course is designed to provide students with an understanding environmental and sustainability issues and policy through the lens of film. Seeking a different lens to think about and reflect on the environment and concepts of sustainability provides one way understand the complex and complicated planet that we inhabit. This course will be subdivided into two thematic sections as follows: 1) The Environment, and 2) Sustainable Systems. Note that both will have significant interconnectedness.

This course is broken into five assessed components. They include: 1) participation in class sessions; 2) weekly D2L movie mental models; 3) an exam; 4) a final mental model, and 5) your very own environmental/sustainability movie.
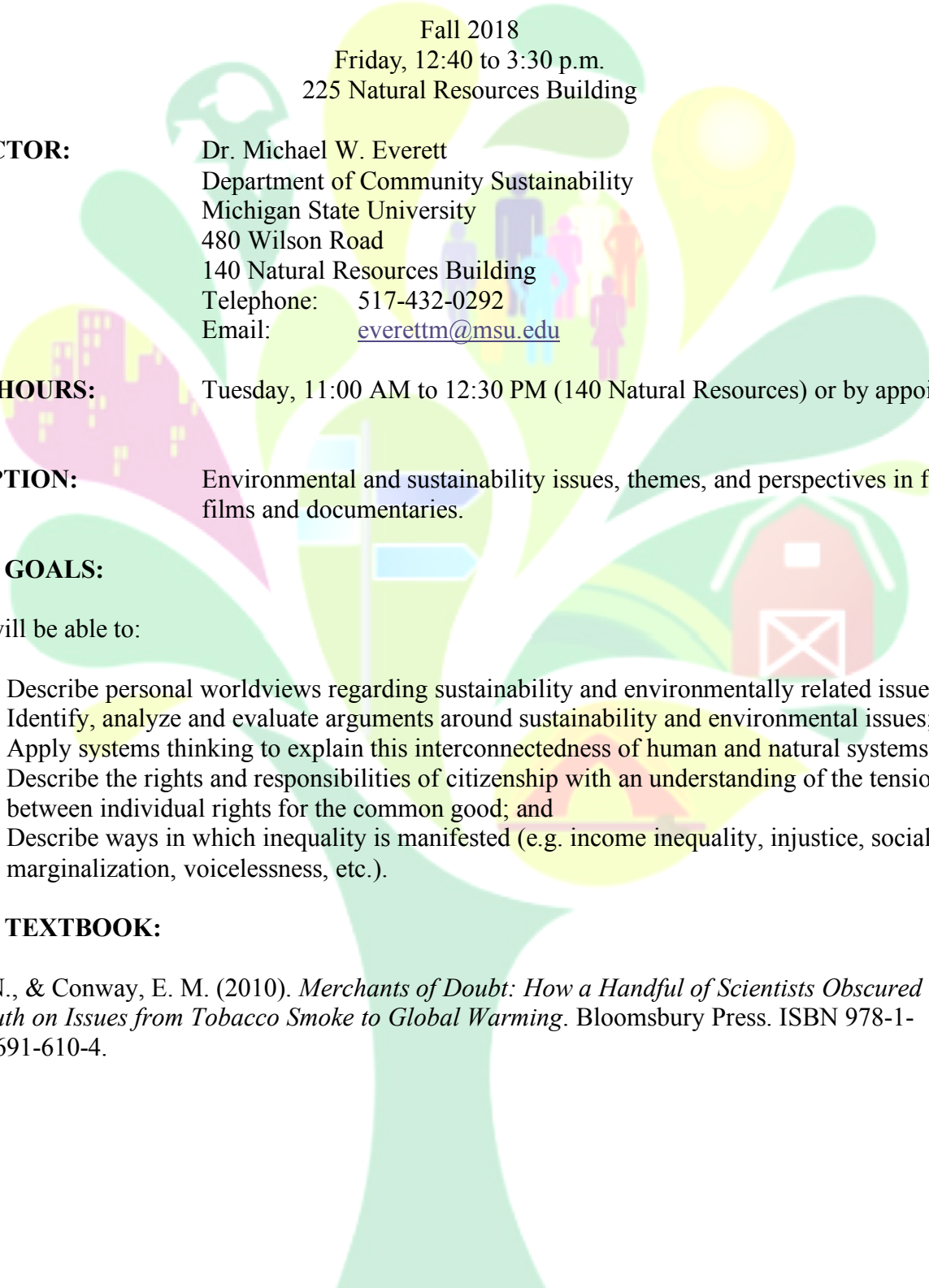
This semester course meets once a week when we will view a movie that has been selected based on thematic aspects of the environment and sustainability.

A timeline of the important dates includes:

August 29 – Class Begins
December 7 – Exam
December 7 – Video Due
December 11 – Final Mental Model
December 11 – Final Exam Day (12:45 to 2:45 pm)

COPYRIGHT, FAIR USE, AND DIGITAL MILLENNIUM ACT:

Copyright is a form of protection provided by the laws of the United States (title 17, U.S. Code) to the authors of "original works of authorship," including literary, dramatic, musical, artistic, and certain other intellectual works. Civil and criminal remedies may be imposed for violations of an author's copyright interests. Michigan State University is committed to obeying copyright law. The TEACH Act (Title 17, Section 110(2) of the US Code) gives faculty the ability to use materials in a classroom for face-to-face teaching. The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) is a United States copyright law that implements two 1996 treaties of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The films, documentaries, and other teaching materials will be part of mediated instruction. The films, etc. are to be used in educational settings by the university professor/students and in compliance with U.S. copyright law.

Fall 2018
Friday, 12:40 to 3:30 p.m.
225 Natural Resources Building

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Michael W. Everett
Department of Community Sustainability
Michigan State University
480 Wilson Road
140 Natural Resources Building
Telephone: 517-432-0292
Email: everettm@msu.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday, 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM (140 Natural Resources) or by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Environmental and sustainability issues, themes, and perspectives in feature films and documentaries.

COURSE GOALS:

Students will be able to:

1. Describe personal worldviews regarding sustainability and environmentally related issues;
2. Identify, analyze and evaluate arguments around sustainability and environmental issues;
3. Apply systems thinking to explain this interconnectedness of human and natural systems;
4. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizenship with an understanding of the tensions between individual rights for the common good; and
5. Describe ways in which inequality is manifested (e.g. income inequality, injustice, social marginalization, voicelessness, etc.).

COURSE TEXTBOOK:

Oreskes, N., & Conway, E. M. (2010). *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming*. Bloomsbury Press. ISBN 978-1-59691-610-4.

CSUS265 COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. Define their personal worldviews regarding sustainability;

2. Identify, analyze and evaluate arguments around sustainability and environmentally related issues;

3. Apply systems thinking to explain this interconnectedness of human and natural systems;

4. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizenship with an understanding of the tensions between individual rights for the common good; and

5. Describe ways in which inequality is manifested.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LEARNING GOALS
CSUS265 – Exploring Environmental and Sustainability Issues and Policy Using Film

Analytical Thinking: You will learn to critically analyze complex information and problems through courses and experiences at MSU and by applying what you learn both in and out of class.

Cultural Understanding: You will learn to deepen your understanding of global and cultural diversity by interacting with others in and outside our diverse campus community and reflecting on your own culture and that of others.

Effective Citizenship: You will learn to be an effective citizen by engaging in opportunities for involvement both inside and outside the classroom.

Effective Communication: Spartans communicate to diverse audiences using speech, writing, debate, art, music, and other media. You will learn how to communicate effectively through your interactions with peers, faculty, staff, and community members at MSU, your coursework, and your reflection on how you've changed as you progress toward graduation.

Integrated Reasoning: You will learn to make decisions through integrated reasoning by observing the example set by your fellow Spartans—faculty, professional staff, your peers and student leaders, and our 500,000 Spartan alumni— who are advancing knowledge and transforming lives in innumerable ways. MSU provides you with the space and support to make decisions learn from them and use them to inform your values.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY COMPETENCIES
CSUS265 – Exploring Environmental and Sustainability Issues and Policy Using Film

Critical Thinking: Students will interpret, analyze and evaluate information generated by observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, and communication as a guide to formulate and defend responses to complex sustainability problems.

Systems Thinking: Students will demonstrate their knowledge of the interconnectedness of human and natural systems with the ability to anticipate and explain changes in complex systems.

Economic Literacy: Students will demonstrate knowledge of and ability to use economic theories and methods to recognize and evaluate tradeoffs inherent in decision-making for sustainability.

Ecological Literacy: Students will demonstrate knowledge, skills and ability to apply the tools and concepts of ecological science to explain the interdependence between humans and ecosystems and the consequences of actions at various spatial and temporal scales.

Boundary Crossing: Students will identify their own assumptions and biases, recognize new perspectives, and demonstrate the ability to collaborate with individuals and groups whose norms, assumptions and biases are different from their own.

Community: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the various interpretations of community as it relates to the study and practice of sustainability.

Equity: Students will demonstrate knowledge of the dynamics of social equality and inequality (equity) and how they affect sustainability.

Civic engagement: Students will develop the knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to participate in civic life.

Initiative and Practical Skills: Students will demonstrate initiative, including the ability to self-direct and solve problems individually and as participants in larger group efforts.

Ethics: Students will evaluate and analyze diverse ethical positions on practical sustainability challenges.

CLASS SCHEDULE[1]

Week 1 – The Environment – Food
1 – August 31 – Course Syllabus and Assignments – **Food, Inc. (1 hr 34 min)**

Week 2 – The Environment – Food
2 – September 7 – **More Than Honey (1 hr 35 min)**

Week 3 – The Environment – Energy
3 – September 14 – **Gasland Part II (2 hr 5 min)**

Week 4 – The Environment – Energy
4 – September 21 – **The Last Mountain (1 hr 35 min)**

Week 5 – The Environment – Climate
5 – September 28 – **The Island President (1 hr 41 min)**

Week 6 – The Environment – Climate
6 – October 5 – **The Day After Tomorrow (2 hrs 4 min)**

Week 7 – The Environment – Policy
7 – October 12 – **Erin Brockovich (2 hrs 11 min)**

Week 8 – The Environment – Policy
8 – October 19 – **The Cove (1 hr 32 min)**

Week 9 – Sustainable Systems
9 – October 26 – **Carbon Nation (1 hr 26 min)**

Week 10 – Sustainable Systems
10 – November 3 – **Garbage Warrior (1 hr 26 min)**

Week 11 – Sustainable Systems
11 – November 9 – **The True Cost (1 hr 32 min)**

Week 12 – Sustainable Systems
12 – November 16 – **Minimalism (1 hr 18 min)**

Week 13 – Thanksgiving Break (No Class)
13 – November 23 –**Family Movie Night at Home**

Week 14 – Sustainable Systems
14 – November 30 – **Downsizing (2 hrs 15 min)**

Week 15 – Sustainable Systems
15 – December 7 – **Sustainable (1 hr 32 min) and Exam**

Week 16 – Finals Week
16 – December 11 (12:45 to 2:45) – **Top 5 Student Movies**

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1 Topics or dates may change due to availability of resources

Assignment Format

Weekly **Mental Model** and the **Final Mental Model** assignments will be turned in electronically via D2L by Friday the same week (due at midnight). The **Exam** will take place in class. **Movies** will be developed using the application of your choice. Uploaded to a private YouTube account with a link to the video being uploaded to the Movie Dropbox in D2L.

More than one application (e.g. a Web browser, Microsoft Word, Excel, etc.) may be needed for a given assignment. You may want to bring an electronic device with you to class to assist in research for specific in-class activities.

Assignments

1. Class Attendance and Participation (CAP). Your active participation in class is expected (including prior assigned readings/movies) and worth 3 ish points per class (15) for a total of **50 points**. *(You must be in class in order to earn the points). A class sign-in sheet will be provided at the beginning of class. You will NOT be allowed to sign-in late.* (**Effective Citizenship**/**Civic Engagement**)

2. Mental Models (MM). Each student will develop a Mental Model for each movie shown in class. The Mental Models will highlight the key points made within the movie shown in class and may be theme specific (instructor will provide the theme). Mental Models are worth **450 points** (15 movies @ 30 points per Mental Model) and must be electronically completed (not hand-written) and uploaded to D2L the following Friday (due at midnight). Watch the following YouTube video to better understand how to use mental modeler: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1A_ZGO6fWk. You can upload a screenshot of just the mental model or recreate the model in another package. See Appendix B for grading criteria. (**Cultural Understanding, Effective Communication**/**Systems Thinking, Community**)

3. Exam. There will be one exam for this course that takes place the week prior to final exams**.** This exam will be cumulative and will includes all aspects of the course including movies watches, reading and any discussions from class. The exam will be worth **100 points**. (**Analytical Thinking, Integrated Reasoning**/**Critical Thinking, Systems Thinking**)

4. Final Mental Model (FMM). Using the above protocol (#2), students will create a mental model that uses a central issue or policy related to the course and models how the various movies and concepts from the course relate to the highlighted issue or policy. The mental model will include 20 items along with appropriate relationships. The FMM will be worth **100 points**. (**Analytical Thinking, Integrated Reasoning**/**Critical Thinking, Systems Thinking**)

5. Environmental/Sustainability Movie (ESM). This assignment is your opportunity to create a movie of your own that is framed around one of the themes of the course (The Environment, Food, Energy, Climate, Policy, and Sustainable Systems). You will create the entirety of the movie and may use any tools at your disposal (Phone, iMovie, Camtasia, etc.). *Once completed, name the ESM file FirstnameLastnameESM.**. You will then upload the file to D2L or create a private YouTube account and upload the link to D2L. The ESM is worth **300 points** and should be *3-5 minutes in length*. Due December 7. See Appendix C for grading criteria. (**Analytical Thinking, Integrated Reasoning**/**Critical Thinking, Systems Thinking**)

Student Evaluation

Assignments[2]	Points	Due Date
1. Class Attendance and Participation	50	Weekly
2. Mental Models (MM)	450	Weekly
3. Exam	100	December 7
4. Final Mental Model	100	December 11
5. Environmental/Sustainability Movie (ESM)	300	December 7
Total	**1000**	

Grading Scale

Grade	Points
4.0	1000 – 920
3.5	919 – 860
3.0	859 – 820
2.5	819 – 750
2.0	749 – 700
1.5	699 – 650
1.0	649 – 600
0	< 600

Important Dates

September 24	Last Day to Drop w/ Refund (8:00 PM)
October 17	Last Day to Drop w/ No Grade (8:00 PM)
November 23-24	Thanksgiving Break
December 11	Final Exam (12:45 to 2:45 pm)

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[2] Late assignments will **NOT** be accepted (Dropboxes will close at midnight on due dates)

Academic Misconduct

Article 2.III.B.2 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the Department of Community Sustainability adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.)

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in **CSUS265**. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/dishonestyFAQ.html). **There will be no warnings – the maximum sanction allowed under University policy will occur on the first offense**. Turnitin.com will be used for all written assignments.

Limits to confidentiality

Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the MSU Police Department) if you share it with me:

--Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
--Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
--Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

Accommodations
Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation ("RISA") form. Please present this form to Dr. Everett at the start of the semester and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible.

Bereavement:
Students seeking a grief absence should be directed to the Grief Absence Request Form found on the RO home page (https://reg.msu.edu/) under 'Student Services – Grief Absence Request Form' OR to StuInfo (https://stuinfo.msu.edu/) under 'Academics - Enrollment Information and Services – Grief Absence Request Form.' Per policy, graduate students who should see their major professor and notify course instructors are directed to do so when they access the form.

Drops and Adds
The last day to add this course is the end of the first week of classes. The last day to drop this course with a 100 percent refund and no grade reported is **September 24**. The last day to drop this course with no refund and no grade reported is **October 17**. You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

Commercialized Lecture Notes
Commercialization of lecture notes and university-provided course materials is not permitted in this course.

Attendance
Students whose names do not appear on the official class list for this course may not attend this class. Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course. This course follows the General University Attendance Policy. If you miss a class due to a Special Consideration Absence as defined by University Policy, your class participation grade for those excused absences days will be the average of your earned participation grades.

Internet
Some professional journals will not consider a submission for publication if the article has appeared on the Internet. Please notify your instructor in writing if you do not want your course papers posted to the course Web site

Disruptive Behavior
Article 2.III.B.4 of the Academic Freedom Report (AFR) for students at Michigan State University states: "The student's behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned." Article 2.III.B.10 of the AFR states that "The student

has a right to scholarly relationships with faculty based on mutual trust and civility." General Student Regulation 5.02 states: "No student shall . . . interfere with the functions and services of the University (for example, but not limited to, classes . . .) such that the function or service is obstructed or disrupted. Students whose conduct adversely affects the learning environment in this classroom may be subject to disciplinary action through the Student Faculty Judiciary process.

Campus Emergencies

In the event of an emergency arising within the class, the Professor will notify you of what actions that may be required to ensure your safety. It is the responsibility of each student to understand the evacuation, "shelter-in-place," and "secure-in-place" guidelines posted in each facility and to act in a safe manner. You are allowed to maintain cellular devices in a silent mode during this course, in order to receive emergency SMS text, phone or email messages distributed by the university. When anyone receives such a notification or observes an emergency situation, they should immediately bring it to the attention of the Professor in a way that causes the least disruption. If an evacuation is ordered, please ensure that you do it in a safe manner and facilitate those around you that may not otherwise be able to safely leave. When these orders are given, you do have the right as a member of this community to follow that order. Also, if a shelter-in-place or secure-in- place is ordered, please seek areas of refuge that are safe depending on the emergency encountered and provide assistance if it is advisable to do so.

E-Learning Policies

Information technologies such as D2L and email are widely used in this class. As a result, there are some additional policies that need to be understood.

- Students should visit the course's D2L site on a regular basis.
- Students should check their email frequently (all class email is sent to the student's official MSU email account).
- All assignments submitted electronically, either on disk or via email, should be free of any viruses and/or worms. Any infected file or media that is submitted will receive a zero (0) for that assignment.
- This course recognizes the students' right to privacy and adheres to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- Students need to review the university policy "Acceptable Use of Computing Systems, Software, and the University Digital Network" at http://lct.msu.edu/guidelines-policies/aup/.
- Excessive emails make an unreasonable time demands on both sender and recipient. Please ensure you have a legitimate need before you write.
- **Dr. Everett** will answer email about:
  - Questions arising from difficulty in understanding course content.
  - Requests for feedback about graded assignments.
  - Private issues appropriate for discussion within the teacher-student relationship.

- **Dr. Everett** will NOT answer email which:
    - Poses questions answered in the course information sections of the course D2L site
    - Poses questions answered in the course syllabus.
    - Lacks a subject line clearly stating the purpose of the email and the course number **(CSUS265)**.
    - Raises an inappropriate subject.
- **Dr. Everett** will make every effort to answer email received on a given day no later than close of work on the next workday.
- The Web site tech.msu.edu provides a number of information technology resources for students.
- You are responsible for the operation of any personally owned computers you use on or off campus. A malfunctioning computer system is NOT a valid excuse for submitting late work.
- Students are expected to have a high degree of self-motivation and self-direction in this class and develop the needed technology skills to excel in this class and in life.

APPENDIX A – Mental Model Grading Criteria

Mental Model Grading Criteria

Criteria	Possible	Comments/Score
Mental Model features that are central to the film Was thoroughly addressed Mostly addressed Some what addressed Not addressed	15.0 12.8 7.5 0.0	**Features central to your Mental Model**. Includes at least 15 central features and appropriate associations of the film as related to the themes of the course. See the following link to get started. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1A_ZGO6fWk
Writing and Mechanics Well written and few to no errors Lacks direction/some errors Serious weaknesses Exceeding instructor threshold	15.0 12.7 7.5 0.0	**Writing and Mechanics of the Mental Model.** Appropriate grammar, writing and ease of the reader to understand. 0 errors (15.0), 1-2 errors (12.7), 3-4 errors (7.5), and more than 5 errors (0). An error includes spelling, grammar, inappropriate word usage, misunderstanding of the film, lack of ability to understand the mental model and structural considerations of the document.
Total per Mind Map	**30**	

APPENDIX B – Final Mental Model Grading Criteria

Final Mental Model Grading Criteria

Criteria	Possible	Comments/Score
Mental Model features that are central to your selected issue or policy Was thoroughly addressed Mostly addressed Some what addressed Not addressed	80.0 68.0 40.0 0.0	**Features central to your Mental Model**. Includes at least 20 features and appropriate associations of the issue or policy as relates to the reading and course films. See the following link to get started. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1A_ZGO6fWk
Writing and Mechanics Well written and few to no errors Lacks direction/some errors Serious weaknesses Exceeding instructor threshold	20.0 17.0 10.0 0.0	**Writing and Mechanics of the Mental Model.** Appropriate grammar, writing and ease of the reader to understand. 0 errors (20.0), 1-2 errors (17.0), 3-4 errors (10.0), and more than 5 errors (0). An error includes spelling, grammar, inappropriate word usage, misunderstanding of the film or concept, lack of ability to understand the mental model and structural considerations of the document.
Total per Mind Map	**100.0**	

APPENDIX C – Environmental/Sustainability Movie Grading Criteria

Objective/Criteria	Not Acceptable	Passing Grade	Inspiring	Out of
Video that has a clear focus, not distracting, and **creative**	0	30	50	/50
Spoke clearly, no disruptions in videographic dialogue (25 Points) *Dialogue and videography is all original and has been created by the student (25 Points).*	0	30	50	/50
Provided a solid conceptual foundation of one of the selected thematic aspects of the course. **ESM** *aspects include: 1) Overview of the theme (50 Points); and 2) message that conveys the theme (50 Points).*	0	60	100	/100
Provided a solid conceptual foundation of the selected theme. **ESM** *aspects include: 1) well developed storyline relating to the theme (50 Points); and 2) unique and creative aspects that underscore the important points of the movie (50 Points).*	0	60	100	/100
Time should be between 3 and 5 minutes (-10 points under 3 minutes and -10 points over 5 minutes and 30 seconds)				
Total				/300