

CSUS 200- Section 1
Introduction to Sustainability

Spring 2019
Tuesday and Thursday, 1:00-2:20PM
019 Natural Resources Bldg

INSTRUCTOR: Doug Bessette, Assistant Professor
Department of Community Sustainability
Office: Natural Resources Building, Room 327
Office Phone: 517-353-0803
Email: bessett6@msu.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday 1pm – 3pm in Natural Resources Building, Room 327
**Email if you plan on attending office hours*

CLASS MATERIALS: Choices for Sustainable Living (**2018 Edition**) – Northwest Earth Institute (available for purchase as a PDF or paperback). Available at: www.nwei.org/store

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

3 Credits; Introduction to sustainability and personal role in sustainability initiatives. Implications for individual actions for key sustainability challenges. Application of sustainability principles and leadership skills in community.

COURSE OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify key themes and principles in *sustainability development*.
2. Apply a variety of critical thinking, analysis, and research skills to evaluate the *credibility* of sustainability policy positions and scientific arguments.
3. Identify the concept of an *ecological footprint* and recognize their ecological footprint.
4. Improve *decision-making* capabilities within the context of sustainability.
5. Assess whether a societal issue is a *wicked* or *tame* problem.
6. Develop team *leadership skills* within groups to advance change within communities.
7. Use *information technologies* in formal and non-formal learning.
8. Consider the importance of *the commons* in developing community sustainability strategies.
9. Identify *individual worldviews* as they relate to sustainability and implications for individual actions.
10. Examine the interaction between agriculture, food, natural resources, and Michigan communities using a *systems approach*.
11. Use *Life Cycle Analysis* to consider the true cost of products and services.

CLASS SCHEDULE

	Class	Topic	Readings/Assignments
Week 1	Tu Jan 8	Course Introduction	
	Th Jan 10	Team-based Sustainability	Before class: Review D2L Website
Week 2	Tu Jan 15	Wicked Problems	
	Th Jan 17	A Call To Sustainability	Before class: Read CSL Ch. 1/Discuss #1; Due Jan 18th: R3 Blog 1
Week 3	Tu Jan 22	The credibility of information	Due Jan 23: Book Review Proposal
	Th Jan 24	Ecological Principles	Before class: Read CSL Ch. 2/Discuss #2; Due Jan 25th: R3 Blog 2
Week 4	Tu Jan 29	Information Resources	
	Th Jan 31	Evaluating R3 Resources	Due Feb 1st: R3 Blog 3
Week 5	Tu Feb 5	The Real Cost of Food	
	Th Feb 7	Food	Before class: Read CSL Ch. 3/Discuss #3; Due Feb 8th: R3 Blog 4
Week 6	Tu Feb 12	Classifying Ecosystem services	
	Th Feb 14	Water	Before class: Read CSL Ch. 4/Discuss #4 Due Feb 15th: R3 Literature Review
Week 7	Tu Feb 19	Governing the Commons	
	Th Feb 21	Solving the tragedy	Due Feb 22: R3 Blog 5
Week 8	Tu Feb 26	Community	Before class: Read CSL Ch. 5/Discuss #5
	Th Feb 28	Energy Sustainability/Climate Change	Due Mar 1: R3 Blog 6
<i>Spring Break- NO CLASS on March 5th or March 7th!</i>			
Week 9	Tu Mar 12	T.B. Simon Power Plant Tours (Half of class meets at Power Plant each day)	
	Th Mar 14		Due Mar 15: R3 Blog 7 & Book Review
Week 10	Tu Mar 19	Transportation	Before class: Read CSL Ch. 6/Discuss #6
	Th Mar 21	Life-cycle analysis	Due Mar 22: R3 Blog 8
Week 11	Tu Mar 26	Waste Sort!	
	Th Mar 28	Minimizing ecological footprint	Due Mar 29: R3 Blog 9
Week 12	Tu Apr 2	Environmental Justice	
	Th Apr 4	Consumption & Economy	Before class: Read CSL Ch. 7/CSL Discuss #7; Due Apr 5: R3 Blog 10
Week 13	Tu Apr 9	Evaluating Policy Positions	
	Th Apr 11	Diffusing Innovations	Due Apr 12: R3 Final Report
Week 14	Tu Apr 16	Visions of Sustainability	Before class: Read CSL Ch. 8/CSL Discuss #8
	Th Apr 18	Policy Position Presentations I	Due Apr 19: Policy Position Paper
Week 15	Tu Apr 23	Policy Position Presentations II	
	Th Apr 25	Policy Position Presentations III / Review Period	
Finals	Wd May 1	Final Exam: 10 am - 12pm in Natural Resources Bldg, Rm 019	

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments will be turned in electronically via D2L. The Final will be administered during the scheduled time. More than one application (e.g. a Web browser, Microsoft Word, Prezi, Excel, etc.) may be needed for a given assignment.

Attendance (50 points). The number of unexcused absences during the semester directly impacts this grade. If you attend all classes your attendance grade will be 50. For each unexcused absence, 2 points will be deducted (i.e., 1 unexcused absence will be an attendance grade of 48, 2 unexcused absences = 46, etc.) If you are absent more than 6 times (i.e., 25% of class), your attendance grade will automatically become zero. Excused absences include required fieldtrips for other classes with a note, participation in university athletics with a note, and illnesses for which you have a doctor's note.

Participation & Quizzes (50 points). Active participation in class is expected, including the assigned readings and in-class activities. If you are texting, on Facebook, Twitter or Snapchat or other forms of social media, you are not participating in class. Be prepared to discuss your thoughts and share your ideas with your fellow classmates in a constructive and respectful manner. You will be called on to present your comments on the readings and discuss current events throughout the term. *There may also be pop quizzes to ensure that students are actively engaging the readings.* Quiz results will be incorporated into your participation grade. Remember also that active listening is a form of participation.

R3 – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (150 total points). This assignment spans the semester. The task the first two weeks of class is for you to identify a *daily* personal behavior that you can change that results in your reducing, reusing or recycling a resource or product, or advocating for a group or cause. Some examples would be decreasing the number of miles you drive your car, decreasing your water usage, decreasing your use of plastic, eliminating your use of bottled water, volunteering at a homeless shelter, or advertising for or engaging with a civil rights group.

- You will write a short blog each week of the semester. The first blog due January 18th will focus on the selection of your behavior (subject to the instructor's approval) to modify (as well as baseline data for what you are currently doing) and the following 9 blogs will summarize your successes (and failures) to change your behavior (10 blogs total). The blogs are worth 5 points each for a total of **50 points**. Each weekly blog is due **by midnight on Friday** (e.g., Blog 1 is due Friday, January 18th by midnight. *You will lose 2 points for each day that your blog is late, even if you miss the deadline by only a few seconds!!*
- You will also need to keep a daily spreadsheet to track your changes (e.g., how many miles you commuted via bike, how many plastic bottles of water you used). The spreadsheet is due with the final report on **April 12th by Midnight**. *You will lose 5 points for each day that your final report is late, even if you miss the deadline by only a few seconds!!*
- You will need to do a 750-word (~1.5-page, single-spaced) literature review on your selected behavior change (place all references on a separate page). What does the literature (this can include websites, online, documents, papers, journal articles, so long as they are peer reviewed/refereed articles) say about your intended behavior change. The Lit Review is worth **50 points**. This paper is due Friday, **February 15th by Midnight**. *You will lose 5 points for each day that your literature review is late, even if you miss the*

deadline by only a few seconds!!

- You will also prepare a *600-word* (~1-page, single-spaced) report that summarizes your change over the semester and analyses the environmental (or social) impact (both primary and secondary) of your behavioral change at the individual level, as well as the impact the change would have if every student at MSU had changed the same behavior (assuming they were not already doing it). The report should include summaries from your spreadsheet. You are required to submit your spreadsheet with daily tracked behavior change along with your report. The report should be a Microsoft Word File or a PDF and the spreadsheet an Excel file. The report and spreadsheet are worth **50 points**. The final report and spreadsheet are due on **April 12th by Midnight**. *You will lose 5 points for each day that the final report is late, even if you miss the deadline by only a few seconds!!*

Book Review (50 points). You will write a *600-word* (~1 page, single-spaced) book review on one of the books listed below (do not pick a book that you have read before). Other books will be considered with prior approval from the instructor. Resources on how to write a book review will be available in D2L in the Assignment folder. You must submit a **Book Review Proposal** before class on **January 23rd**. The Book Review is due on Friday **March 15th by Midnight**. *You will lose 5 points for each day that your Book Review is late, even if you miss the deadline by only a few seconds!!*

<i>Holistic Management</i>	Allan Savory and Jody Butterfield
<i>Omnivore's Dilemma</i>	Michael Pollan
<i>Collapse</i>	Jared Diamond
<i>The Story of Stuff</i>	Annie Leonard
<i>An Agricultural Testament</i>	Sir Albert Howard
<i>Last Child in the Woods</i>	Richard Louv
<i>The Watchman's Rattle</i>	Rebecca Costa
<i>Storms of My Grandchildren</i>	James Hansen
<i>The One Straw Revolution</i>	Masanobu Fukuoka
<i>A Sand County Almanac</i>	Aldo Leopold
<i>Eaarth</i>	Bill McKibben
<i>Pleasant Valley</i>	Louis Bromfield
<i>The Myth of Progress: Toward a Sustainable Future</i>	Tom Wessels
<i>Farmacology</i>	Daphne Miller, MD
<i>The Unsettling of America</i>	Wendell Berry
<i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i>	Robin Wall Kimmerer
<i>The Third Plate</i>	Dan Barber
<i>The Joy of Less: A Minimalists Living Guide</i>	Francine Jay
<i>Animal, Vegetable, Mineral</i>	Barbara Kingsolver
<i>Thirst for Power: Energy, Water & Human Survival</i>	Michael Webber
<i>The Grid</i>	Gretchen Bakke
<i>The Chalice and the Blade</i>	Riane Eisler

Policy Position Paper and Presentation (150 points). You are to identify a position on an issue that you care about that is relevant to this class and develop a *750-word* (~1.5 page, single-spaced) policy paper. A policy paper is a persuasive document that outlines your views on a

policy or issue you have studied (and is of interest to you). The policy paper is a way to apply what you have learned in a format that communicates ideas or recommendations, or persuades people to consider your views. The audience for the paper may be other students, citizens, members of a public commission, elected representatives, or anyone else with a stake in the issue. There is a resource to help you with writing a policy position paper in the Assignments Folder on D2L. The paper is worth **100 points** and the presentation **50 points**. The paper is due **Friday, April 20th by Midnight**. The presentations will be in class on **April 18th, 23rd and 25th**.

Final Exam (50 total points). The final exam will be a combination of multiple choice, true-false and short answer questions. It will be comprehensive and open-note (*written notes only*). The final exam is on May 1st at 10am in 019 NRB.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Assignment	Points	Due Date
Class Attendance & Participation (20%)	100	Each class session
Book Review (10%)	50	Proposal Jan 23 ; Review: Mar 15 by Midnight
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (R3) Project (30%)		
(10) Blogs (10%)	50	Weekly (Fridays by Midnight)
Literature Review (10%)	50	Fri. Feb 16th by Midnight
Final Report (10%)	50	Fri. Apr 13th by Midnight
Policy Position Project (30%)		
Position Paper (20%)	100	Fri. Apr 20th by Midnight
Class Presentation (10%)	50	April 18th, 23rd, or 25th
Final Exam (10%)	50	May 1 @ 10AM in Rm 019 NRB
Total Points	500	

GRADING SCALE

Points	> 465	435-464	400-434	385-399	365-384	335-364	300-334	< 300
Grade	4.0	3.50	3.00	2.50	2.00	1.50	1.00	0

COURSE POLICIES

I. Submission Guidelines

Assignments will be turned in electronically in D2L. Written assignments should be single-spaced, in Times New Roman (12 point) font. Do not put your name on your paper, D2L will provide identification of the document.

Assignments are due at 11:59:59PM on the posted date. Late assignments will be accepted, but with a *5-pt deduction per day*.

II. Communication Policy

Email is the best method for sharing information with me. I will do my best to respond within

24-48 hours of your email. Please include “CSUS 200” in all email subject lines. See “E-Learning Policies” for additional information.

III. Technology Policy

Unless specifically stated or in an emergency, cell phones are not to be used in class. If you must contact someone, step outside to text/call. Computers are acceptable, if used for class purposes (e.g., note taking, searching for information, reviewing presentation slides).

IV. Attendance Policy

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.

V. 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 disk 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/>.
- 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.

Excessive emails make an unreasonable time demand on both sender and recipient. Please ensure you have a legitimate need before you write. The instructor will answer emails 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.

The instructor will NOT answer emails which:

- Pose questions answered in the course information sections of the course D2L site.
- Pose questions answered in the course syllabus.
- Lack a subject line clearly stating the purpose of the email and the course number (CSUS259).
- Raises an inappropriate subject.

VI. Academic Honesty:

[Article 2.III.B.2](#) of the Academic Freedom Report states: “The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” In addition, the Department of Sustainability adheres to the policies on academic honesty specified in General Student Regulation 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 this course. Students who violate MSU regulations on Protection of Scholarship and Grades will receive a failing grade in the course or on the assignment.

Faculty are required to report all instances in which a penalty grade is given for academic dishonesty. Students reported for academic dishonesty are required to take an online course about the integrity of scholarship and grades. A hold will be placed on the student's account until such time as the student completes the course. This course is overseen by the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.

(See also <https://www.msu.edu/~ombud/academic-integrity/index.html>). **There will be no warnings – the maximum sanction allowed under University policy will occur on the first offense.**

VII. Inclusion and Diversity:

Inclusion and diversity are core values of MSU and the College of Natural Science. As Spartans, we are dedicated to respecting people of all backgrounds, beliefs, identity status, and political beliefs. The college is committed to creating a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment where all students, faculty, and staff can pursue academic and professional success. All members of the MSU community deserve each other’s respect, support, recognition, and protection. It is essential that we all work together to foster an inclusive community where Spartans of all backgrounds can study, work, and thrive.

VIII. 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.’

IX. Disruptive Behavior:

Article 2.III.B.4 of the [Student Rights and Responsibilities \(SRR\)](#) 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 [SRR](#) states that "The student and the faculty share the responsibility for maintaining professional relationships 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 Judicial Affairs office.

X. Social Media

As members of a learning community, students are expected to respect the intellectual property of course instructors. All course materials presented to students are the copyrighted property of the course instructor and are subject to the following conditions of use:

1. Students may record lectures or any other classroom activities and use the recordings **only** for their own course-related purposes.
2. Students may share the recordings with other students enrolled in the class. Sharing is limited to using the recordings **only** for their own course-related purposes.
3. Students **may not** post the recordings or other course materials online or distribute them to anyone not enrolled in the class without the advance written permission of the course instructor and, if applicable, any students whose voice or image is included in the recordings.

Any student violating the conditions described above may face academic disciplinary sanctions.

XI. Commercialized Lecture Notes:

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

XII. Understand When You May Drop This Course:

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider un-enrolling from a course. Refer to the [Michigan State University Office of the Registrar](#) for important dates and deadlines. You should immediately make a copy of your amended schedule to verify you have added or dropped this course.

XIII. Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed

Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities](#) (RCPD), and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of disability to RCPD and meet with an RCPD specialist to request special accommodation before classes start.

Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a verified individual services accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to the instructor at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc). Requests received after this date will be honored whenever possible. RCPD is located in 120 Bessey Hall, near the center of the Michigan State University campus, on the southwest corner of Farm Lane and Auditorium Road. RCPD may be contacted by phone at (517) 884-7273 (884-RCPD), or [via their website \(http://www.rcpd.msu.edu\)](http://www.rcpd.msu.edu).

XIV. Handling Emergency Situations

In the event of an emergency arising within the classroom, 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.

XV. Syllabus Disclaimer

All syllabi are subject to minor changes to meet the needs of the instructor, school, or class. Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as deemed necessary. Students will be notified in a timely manner of any syllabus changes through the course site announcements. Please remember to check your MSU email and the course site announcements often.