

**CSUS 800**  
**Foundations of Community Sustainability I**

Fall 2020  
Thursdays 1:50-4:40 PM

Instructor : Laura Schmitt Olabisi, Associate Professor  
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**MSU Course Catalog Description:**

Theoretical and conceptual foundations of community sustainability. Sustainability practice. Introduction to ethics and community engagement for sustainability. Field trips required.

**Number of credits:** 3

**Semester offered:** Fall semester, every year

**Purpose and target audience**

Introductory course designed for all CSUS graduate students focusing broadly on elements of community sustainability including ethics, systems thinking, sustainability, and community engagement. First in a two-course sequence.

**Overview**

This course introduces the conceptual foundations of community sustainability, focusing primarily on sustainability theory and practice with a foundation in ethics and community engagement. It begins with an introduction to wicked problems, a framework for thinking about ethical problems, and some principles of community engagement before examining theories of sustainability from diverse perspectives.

This course coordinates closely with CSUS 802, which is also required of all first-year CSUS graduate students. Assignments in CSUS 800 will contribute to intended learning outcomes in CSUS 802 and vice versa. For example, in a short paper in CSUS 800 students can review literature relevant to their research interests that they will also be exploring in CSUS 802. Similarly, ideas related to interdisciplinary thinking introduced in CSUS 802 are very relevant to CSUS 800.

**Learning outcomes**

1. Explain the role of values in different views about how to address sustainability and other wicked problems
2. Describe central ethics and justice frameworks and apply them to evaluate community sustainability challenges
3. Explain the relationships among power, equity and justice in the context of community sustainability.
4. Recognize different, evolving definitions and interpretations of sustainability, and synthesize the sustainability literature to inform the student's own research or professional interests
5. Apply systems thinking to sustainability problems, with the ability to represent systems thinking through various forms.
6. Articulate a personal philosophy regarding one's role in community engagement for sustainability.
7. Define and explain the concepts of social-ecological systems and social-ecological resilience
8. Explain the role of formal and informal social institutions of governance in shaping community sustainability outcomes
9. Explain the need for interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary frameworks for studying sustainability and social-ecological systems
10. Use evidence-based reasoning to support key assertions/points
11. Integrate best practices of professional writing style, such as conciseness, clarity, accuracy, readability, coherence, transition, and grammar.
12. Recognize, develop and deliver effective oral communication, giving consideration to audience, context and format.

### **Required readings for purchase or download**

Matson, Pamela, William Clark, and Krister Andersson. 2016. [\*Pursuing Sustainability: A Guide to the Science and Practice\*](#). Princeton University Press

Meadows, Donella. 2008. *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*. Earthscan.

Walker, Brian, and David Salt. 2006. *Resilience Thinking: Sustaining ecosystems and people in a changing world*. Washington, DC: Island Press.

*NOTE: any edition of these books is fine, paper or print. You might be able to find them online.*

### **Weekly schedule at a glance**

1. Introduction: wicked problems and the role of values in science
2. Systems thinking 1 - introduction
3. Systems thinking 2 - applications
4. Ethical frameworks introduction
5. Field trip to MSU pig farm (application of ethics)

6. Initial synthesis of ideas introduced to date
7. Introduction to community engagement
8. Reflection and reflexivity in community engagement; participatory virtues
9. Sustainability introduction
10. Sustainable development
11. Social ecological systems
12. Social sustainability: equity, environmental justice
13. Governance of social-ecological systems.
14. Governance, actors and practitioners in change processes
15. Finals week – three-minute public presentation

### **Course Philosophy of Engaged Learning**

The organization of this course is predicated on the assumption that learning takes place best in a dynamic, interactive and critical atmosphere. Accordingly, the course relies heavily on student initiative and active participation. The format emphasizes structured opportunities for students to share and reflect upon their individual experiences. Students are invited and challenged to shape and share the intellectual workspace of the course whenever possible. As mentioned, the instructor is actually a facilitator and student input into the approach we take in class encouraged.

### **Unexpected Events**

Unexpected events take place and factors out of our control can obstruct our plans. This is especially true in 2020. I will be highly sensitive to such things, and students with personal circumstances that hamper their ability to carry out certain tasks on time are encouraged to contact me in advance. I will do everything I can to help you. By contrast, it is much more difficult to be flexible if students do not make the effort to contact me in advance.

### **Disability Accommodations**

Any student who feels that she or he may need accommodations based on a disability should discuss this with me as early as possible in the semester. It can either be after class or we can make an appointment to meet in my office.

### **Other MSU Required Syllabus Components**

Please see the end of the syllabus for detailed language regarding MSU's policies regarding academic integrity, sexual harassment and sexual violence, and mental health.

### **Writing assistance**

If you have trouble writing, especially if it is because English is not your native language, please just do your best to get your point across, in your own words. I have a lot of experience both working overseas with people whose first language is not English, and working in the US with people who just want to work on their writing, and I will be very patient as long as you try your best. If you have trouble with writing, I strongly suggest that you visit the MSU Writing Center

([www.writing.msu.edu](http://www.writing.msu.edu)) for assistance. You will find that the Writing Center is an amazing resource for helping you learn an important skill. If you visit the Writing Center every week, by the time you are ready to write your dissertation or thesis or Plan B paper you will be ready. If not, you are likely to really suffer when it comes time to write your dissertation or thesis or Plan B paper. (I have seen several students turn from very poor writers into reasonably good writers simply by working with the Writing Center every week.). Another way to improve your writing is to read extensively, particularly scientific articles written for popular audiences (e.g. in the Atlantic, the New Yorker, National Geographic, etc.)

### **Summary of Assignments**

All the graded assignments are described in more detail on D2L, including the grading criteria.

#### **Graded Assignments**

##### Introductory literature review

In a short paper early in the semester, students will write a literature review broadly related to their area of research or professional interest. This serves several main purposes. First, it provides an opportunity to think very broadly about research or professional interests in preparation for focusing more sharply in the literature review assignment in CSUS 802. Second, it can give students a focus for thinking about how ideas about sustainability relate to their research interests. Third, it provides immediate practice in academic writing early in their graduate program, with instructor feedback intended to help with subsequent writing assignments throughout the program. The grade for this assignment will be divided between a first draft and a second draft that can be turned in after receiving the instructor's comments. The paper must also have a short abstract, which will be graded separately.

##### Sustainability case study

Early in the semester, students will select a case study that they will consider over the course of the semester for application of concepts from the course. (The case study can be a very specific case or a very general one – for example, management of a particular forest in a particular place in the world, or management of forests in general. Also, what constitutes “the case” is likely to evolve over the course of the semester for most students.) In informal writing over the course of the semester, students will have drafted their ideas in relation to the case regarding values and ethical aspects, systemic dimensions, potential approaches to community engagement, diverse frameworks and dimensions of sustainability, governance issues, and some possible ways to promote change related to the sustainability challenges within the case. Ideas regarding interdisciplinary thinking developed concurrently in CSUS 802 can also be incorporated into this assignment. By the end of the semester, they will compile their draft ideas into a comprehensive paper about how the ideas about community sustainability presented in the course apply to their selected case study. This paper will also include a graded abstract.

##### Small written assignments (reflection papers)

During certain weeks of the semester, students will write and turn in a short reflection about the week's topic and how they understand it in relation to their area of interest. Students are strongly

advised to do such writing every week, even if it does not need to be turned in, because this will be helpful for preparing the final sustainability case study at the end of the semester.

### Systems diagramming

The focus is to represent and analyze natural and social phenomena as systems of interactive parts. The purpose of this assignment is to improve students' ability to think in terms of systemic aspects of situations related to community sustainability problems.

### 7-minute presentation

Knowing how to give a short, clear, well-organized and informative presentation is an important skill regardless of what kind of work you go into. The purpose of this assignment is to gain experience and improve your skill in doing that. This is very easy if you prepare and practice but very difficult if you do not. We will devote time early in the semester to understanding how to give a good presentation. Each student will give one of these presentations during the semester.

### Helping lead a class session

Each student will select a week during the semester in which they take responsibility for leading part of the class session. They will work with the instructor to develop their ideas and integrate them with other activities in the class that day. The student will give a short presentation on their topic of choice (related to the day's theme of course) and lead a discussion session.

### Final presentation

During finals week, students will give a short presentation of their sustainability case study. The exact duration of the presentation is to be determined.

### Class attendance and participation

Participation refers to attending class, contributing to class discussion, completing all the ungraded assignments, and generally being a good citizen of the class. Attendance in class is part of participation; if you cannot make it to class please alert me.

## **Ungraded assignments**

### Peer review of other students' papers

After everyone has turned in their first paper, each student will be assigned to review one other students' paper to give them constructive feedback within two weeks. One of the purposes of this assignment is for students to be helpful to each other. Another purpose is that by looking very carefully at how someone else's paper is organized you can also generate insights about your own writing.

### Elevator speech

An elevator speech is when you make a pitch during the amount of time it takes to ride in an elevator. It is useful to be able to do this in case you ever find yourself with a brief and unexpected opportunity to speak with someone with whom you would like to make a good professional impression. Each of us will do this once during the semester.

### Draft program plan

At the end of the semester, along with the exit statement please prepare a draft program plan, which lists all the courses you plan to take during your time in CSUS, to share with your advisor. Of course you may make changes later but it is good to get this started. These forms are available on the CSUS web site: <http://www.canr.msu.edu/fw/graduate/graduate-forms/>.

Various other small assignments

These will be described in each week’s reading guide where applicable, or we will just pursue them in class.

**Assignment due dates and correspondence with course learning outcomes**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Associated learning outcome(s)</b>
2-minute presentation in class to introduce yourself	Sept 3	Presentation skills, cohort-building
Systems diagramming	Sep 8-11, Oct 1, Nov 5	Systems thinking
Reading reflection on ethics	Sep 24	Ethics
First draft of introductory literature review	Oct 1	Writing skills, evidence-based reasoning
Elevator speech	Oct 1	Presentation skills
Peer review of another student’s paper	Oct 8	Writing skills, cohort-building
Reading reflection on community engagement	Oct 15	Personal philosophy of community engagement
Reading reflection on environmental justice	Nov 12	Power and justice
Second draft of introductory literature review (optional)	October 22	Writing skills; evidence-based reasoning
Graded presentation	To be determined (everyone will do them on different days; we will set the schedule early in the semester)	Presentation skills as well as learning outcome(s) related to the week’s topic.
Run a class activity	To be done on the same day as your graded presentation	
Short presentation of sustainability case study	December 10	Presentation skills, cohort-building
Sustainability case study paper	December 15	All course learning outcomes
Draft program plan (required for CSUS students only)	December 15	
Each week see the reading guide for additional things to prepare for any given class session.	Ongoing	

### Components of the course grade

1. Introductory literature review	20%
First draft: 13 points; second draft: 7 points	
2. Reflection papers and systems diagramming	10%
3. Class presentation	10%
4. Leading a class discussion	10%
5. Final paper (sustainability case study)	35%
6. Abstracts for the two papers	5%
a. First paper abstract: 2 points; second paper: 3 points	
7. Presentation of sustainability case study	5%
8. Participation	5%

### Grading Scale

Each assignment will be assigned a score as described in the assignment descriptions and grading criteria on D2L. Then each assignment is weighted according to the above percent. So the reflections are worth a total of 30 points, the presentation a total of 10 points, etc.

Grades for the course are determined as follows:

<u>MSU grade points</u>	<u>Composite class points</u>
4.0	95.0 - 100.0
3.5	90.0 - 94.9
3.0	80.0 - 89.9
2.5	75.0 - 79.9
2.0	68.0 - 74.9

## Detailed Course Outline

### **Week 1      September 3** **Introductions, wicked problems, values**

Required reading (due for the first session):

Rittel, H. W., & Webber, M. M. (1973). Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. *Policy sciences*, 4(2), 155-169.

Elliott, Kevin. 2017. *A Tapestry of Values*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 1, An Introduction to Values in Science, pp 1-18.

### **Week 2      September 10** **Systems thinking 1 - introduction**

Required reading:

Meadows, Donella. 2008. *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*. Earthscan.

- Chapters 1-5 (pp 1-141).

### **Week 3      September 17** **Systems thinking 2 - applications**

Required reading:

Meadows, Donella. 2008. *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*. Earthscan.

- Chapters 6-7 (pp 145-185).

Also: please reread earlier parts of Meadows to help solidify your initial understanding.

### **Week 4      Sept 24** **Ethics overview**

Required readings:

Thompson, Paul. 2008. The Ethics of Sustainable Agricultural Intensification. Chapter 1, pp 19-41 in *The Ethics of Intensification*. The International Library of Environmental, Agricultural and Food Ethics, Volume 16. Springer Science and Business Media. (*Note: required up to pg 38. pp 38-41 optional.*)

Goralnik, L., Vucetich, J.A, and Nelson, M.P. 2014. “Sustainability Ethics.” In *Achieving Sustainability: Visions, Principles, and Practices*, Ed. Deborah Rowe (pp. 319-327), Detroit: Macmillan Reference. *Encyclopedia essay*.

Gardiner, S. M. & Hartzell-Nichols, L. (2012) Ethics and Global Climate Change. *Nature Education Knowledge* 3(10):5 (8 pages)

Carbone, Maurizio. 2005. Sustainable tourism in developing countries: Poverty alleviation, participatory planning, and ethical issues. *The European Journal of Development Research* 17(3): 559-565.

**Week 5      October 1**

**Field visit to the MSU pig farms (*note: may be virtual field trip; TBD*)**

Required readings:

Goralnik, Lissy, Laurie Thorp, Dale Rozeboom, and Paul B. Thompson. 2014. Storytelling morality: ecofeminism, agrarianism, and pigs in the field. *Trumpeter* 30(1): 15-32.

Rozeboom, D. W., Thorp, L. G., & Nagel, J. E. (2014). Pork Production: Ethical Issues. *Encyclopedia of Food and Agricultural Ethics*, 1521-1529.

Thompson, Paul. 2015. Livestock welfare and the ethics of producing meat. Chpt 5, pp 130-158 in *From Fork to Field: Food Ethics for Everyone*. Oxford.

Clark, Melissa. 2019. The vegetarians who turned into butchers. *New York Times*, August 6, 2019.

**Week 6      October 8**

**Interlude and review**

First short literature review due today.

No other required reading or homework. Review of themes to date and how they are related to your areas of interest.

**Week 7      October 15**

**Community Engagement for Sustainability: Introduction**

Required readings:

Bridger, J.C., T.R. Alter, P.Z. Frumento, T.M. Howard, and L.B. Adams. 2019. Community engagement theory for a new natural resources paradigm. Chapter 5 in P Martin, TR Alter, DW Hine, TM Howard, eds. *Community-Based Control of Invasive Species*. 10 pages.

McDavitt, B., Bogart, L. M., Mutchler, M. G., Wagner, G. J., Green Jr, H. D., Lawrence, S. J., ... & Nogg, K. A. (2016). Dissemination as Dialogue: Building Trust and Sharing Research Findings Through Community Engagement. *Preventing Chronic Disease*, 13.

Saltmarsh, J., & Hartley, M. (Eds.). (2011). Temple University Press. Chapter 1: Democratic engagement. Pp. 14-26.

Cornwall, Andrea. 2008. Unpacking 'participation': models, meanings and practices. *Community Development Journal* 43(3): 269-283.

## **Week 8      October 22**

### **Critical Reflection and Participatory Virtues in Community Engagement**

#### Required readings:

Boyd, E. M., & Fales, A. W. (1983). Reflective learning: Key to learning from experience. *Journal of humanistic psychology*, 23(2), 99-117.

Darling, Brianna, John Kerr, Laurie Thorp, and Kimberly Chung. 2014. Engaged learning and Peace Corps service in Tanzania: an autoethnography. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 18(4):17-38.

Ferkany, M. and Whyte, K. 2012. The importance of participatory virtues for environmental education. *J. Ag. Environ. Ethics* 25(3); 419-434.

Cunliffe, A. L. (2009). The philosopher leader: On relationalism, ethics and reflexivity—A critical perspective to teaching leadership. *Management learning*, 40(1), 87-101.

## **Week 9      October 29**

### **Sustainability 1: overview**

#### Required readings:

Matson, Pamela, William Clark, and Krister Andersson. 2016. *Pursuing sustainability: a guide to the science and practice*. Princeton University Press.

- Chpt 1: Pursuing sustainability: an introduction (pp 1-6) (*skip the case study summaries and read the detailed case studies in the appendix*)
- Appendix A: Case studies in sustainability (pp 143-186)

Miller, T. (2013). Constructing sustainability science: emerging perspectives and research trajectories Volume 8, Issue 2, pp 279–293.

Melinda Harm Benson & Robin Kundis Craig (2014). The End of Sustainability. *Society & Natural Resources*, 27:7, 777-782, DOI: 10.1080/08941920.2014.901467

Thompson, Paul. 2016. The many meanings of sustainability. Chpt 1, pp 16-28 in Moore, Steven A., Editor. *Pragmatic Sustainability*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Routledge.

## **Week 10      November 5**

### **Sustainable development**

### Required readings

Adams, William. 2009. *Green Development: Environment and Sustainability in a Developing World*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Routledge. (Note that this entire book is available on the web in PDF form if you are interested.)

- Chapter 1, Dilemmas of Sustainability. Only pp 1-7 and 19-21 are required; pp 7-19 is optional, and recommended if you are interested in international development. Pp 21-25 is also optional).

Matson, et al. 2016. *Pursuing sustainability: a guide to the science and practice*.

- Chpt 2: A framework for sustainability analysis: linking ultimate goals with their underlying determinants (pp 14-51)

Page, Edward A. 2018. Environmental justice and sustainability. Chpt 14, pp 179-192, in Brown, Chris, and Robyn Eckersley. *The Oxford Handbook of International Political Theory*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Raworth, Kate. 2017. *Doughnut Economics: Seven ways to think like a 21<sup>st</sup> century economist*. Chelsea Green Publishing.

- Chpt 1, Changing the Goal. pp 27-51

### **Week 11      November 12**

#### **Social-ecological systems (theory)/ Dynamics of SES**

### Required readings:

Matson, Pamela, William Clark, and Krister Andersson. 2016.

- Chapter 3, Dynamics of social ecological systems. pp 52-82.

Walker, Brian, and David Salt. 2006. *Resilience Thinking: Sustaining ecosystems and people in a changing world*.

- Case studies 1-2 and chapters 2 -3 (pp 15-63)
- Chpt 4, pp 74-95

### **Week 12      November 19**

#### **Social sustainability: equity, environmental justice**

### Required readings:

Gottschlich, Daniela, and Leonie Bellina. "Environmental justice and care: critical emancipatory contributions to sustainability discourse." *Agriculture and human values* 34.4 (2017): 941-953.

Sze, J., et al. (2018). Introduction. Pp 1-28 in Julie Sze, ed. *Sustainability: Approaches to Environmental Justice and Social Power*. NYU Press.

Dillon, L., & Sze, J. (2018). Equality in the Air We Breathe. *Sustainability: Approaches to Environmental Justice and Social Power*, Chpt 10, pp 246-270, in Julie Sze, ed. *Sustainability: Approaches to Environmental Justice and Social Power*. NYU Press.

Whyte, K. P., Brewer, J. P., & Johnson, J. T. (2016). Weaving Indigenous science, protocols and sustainability science. *Sustainability Science*, 11(1), 25-32.

**Nov 28      Thanksgiving**

No class

**Week 14      December 3**  
**Governance and institutions for sustainability**

Required readings:

Matson, Pamela, William Clark, and Krister Andersson. 2016. "Governance in social-environmental systems." Chpt 4, pp 83-104 in *Pursuing sustainability: a guide to the science and practice*. Princeton University Press.

Ostrom, E., & Cox, M. (2010). Moving beyond panaceas: a multi-tiered diagnostic approach for social-ecological analysis. *Environmental conservation*, 37(4), 451-463

Hanna, Susan S. 2008. Institutions for managing resilient salmon (*Oncorhynchus* spp.) ecosystems: the role of incentives and transaction costs. *Ecology and Society* 13(2): 35. 11 pages.

Tentative – I might change the following to something else:

Berman, R., Quinn, C., & Paavola, J. (2012). The role of institutions in the transformation of coping capacity to sustainable adaptive capacity. *Environmental Development*, 2, 86-100.

**Week 15      December 10**  
**Governance, actions and practitioners in change processes**

Required readings:

Matson et al., *Pursuing Sustainability*, Chapters 5 and 6

- Chpt 5, Linking knowledge to action. pp 105-128.
- Chpt 6, Next steps: contributing to a sustainability transition. pp 129-144.

Di Chiro, G., & Rigell, L. (2018). Situating sustainability against displacement: building campus-community collaboratives from the ground up. Chapter 3, pp 76-101, in Julie Sze, ed. *Sustainability: Approaches to Environmental Justice and Social Power*. NYU Press.

Boas, I., Biermann, F., & Kanie, N. (2016). Cross-sectoral strategies in global sustainability governance: towards a nexus approach. *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 16(3), 449-464.

Tentative – I might change the following to something else:

Senecah, S. L. (2004). The trinity of voice: The role of practical theory in planning and evaluating the effectiveness of environmental participatory processes. Chapter 1, pp 13-33 in S.P. Depoe, J.W. Delicath, and M-F.A. Elsenbeer, eds. *Communication and public participation in environmental decision making*, 13-33.

## **Week 16      Finals Week**

Presentation of sustainability case study. (*See assignment descriptions*).

## Other Syllabus Components Required by MSU

### MSU Guidelines for Handling Emergencies

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

### Responsible Conduct of Research

MSU requires that all graduate students undergo training in the responsible conduct of research (RCR). During the first year they must undergo five hours of training and then three hours each year thereafter. Each department designs its own approach for RCR training.

In the Department of Community Sustainability the current system involves two hours of on-line training and three hours as part of CSUS 802. We will also have a brief discussion about crediting the works of others and plagiarism.

Academic integrity is a fundamental value of higher education at any institution of higher education; therefore, we cannot tolerate acts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification or attempts to cheat, plagiarize or falsify. Should we determine that an academic integrity violation has taken place, we reserve the right either to assign a grade sanction or to refer the case to appropriate campus authority. **Ignorance (not knowing the rules) is NOT an excuse for an academic integrity violation.** Therefore, if you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please do not hesitate to speak with us before you turn in a test or assignment.

MSU recommends including the following language in all course syllabi:

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, (insert name of unit offering course) 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.

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](http://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.

**Spartan Code of Honor:** Student leaders have recognized the challenging task of discouraging plagiarism from the academic community. The Associated Students of Michigan State University (ASMSU) is proud to be continuing awareness of the Spartan Code of Honor academic pledge, focused on valuing academic integrity and honest work ethics at Michigan State University. The pledge reads as follows:

*“As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do.”*

You can learn more about the Spartan Code of Honor at [honorcode.msu.edu](http://honorcode.msu.edu).

### **Sexual harassment and sexual violence**

*"Michigan State University is committed to fostering a culture of caring and respect that is free of relationship violence and sexual misconduct, and to ensuring that all affected individuals have access to services. For information on reporting options, confidential advocacy and support resources, university policies and procedures, or how to make a difference on campus, visit the Title IX website at [www.titleix.msu.edu](http://www.titleix.msu.edu)."*

Unless identified as a confidential source, all university employees are obligated to promptly report incidents of sexual harassment, sexual violence, sexual misconduct, stalking, and relationship violence that:

- Are observed or learned about in their professional capacity
- Involve a member of the university community or
- Occurred at a university-sponsored event or on university property

Employees are only required to report relationship violence and sexual misconduct of which they become aware in their capacity as a university employee, not in a personal capacity.

#### *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 based on

external legal obligations or that relate to the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices 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.