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BGEN 160S.50: Issues in Sustainability

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Issues in Sustainability
CCS160S BGEN160S
Spring 2015 Online
Missoula College of the University of Montana

Credit Hours: 3
On-line Class: Yes
Prerequisites: None
Professor: Lisa Swallow
Office Hours: MW 11-12 and by appointment
Office Phone: (406) 243-7810
Email: lisa.swallow@umontana.edu
Universal Design Syllabus

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This literature-intensive course is intended to expose the student to a variety of essays addressing the balance of economic development with the principles of sustainability and social equity. The student is offered an introduction to sustainability concepts, natural systems/cycles and environmental economics. Natural capitalism and triple bottom line maximization is explored, along with the role of corporations and small businesses in sustainable development. A survey of issues surrounding corporate social responsibility and sustainability-driven innovation will be conducted.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

- Define sustainability; identify facets of conventional vs. natural capitalism
- Delineate natural cycles and ecosystem services and discuss human impact on environment
- Using metrics to calculate Ecological Footprint and carbon footprint; identify ways to mitigate impact
- Identify key issues surrounding climate change and discuss adaptation vs. abatement policies
- Identify characteristics of sustainable corporations and critically examine alignment of sustainability and economic development objectives; examine biomimicry as an innovative method of adapting nature's best ideas for human use
- Outline principles of triple bottom line [3E] and the Natural Step framework
- Identify objectives and key indicators of corporate social responsibility
- Discuss social responsibility investing
- Identify trends shaping global markets; discuss product/process design considerations in a sustainable environment
- Articulate how the trend towards business sustainability is impacting markets, management and product innovation
- Critically analyze sustainability as a social vision and enumerate/discuss facets of a sustainable lifestyle

Course Platform & Materials

- You will need to access UM's online platform (Moodle). All of your unit readings and assignments are posted in Moodle.
- Each unit on Moodle has a file called "Reading & Outcomes". You will see that some of the readings are online and some are on Moodle shell.
- Online readings and powerpoints are also found in the list of weekly readings. Online readings are accessible by clicking on the link.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Missoula College relies upon and cherishes a community of trust. I firmly endorse, uphold, and embrace the University's Student Conduct Code. Even one misconduct infraction can destroy an exemplary reputation that has taken years for the University to build. Acting in a manner consistent with the University's policies will benefit every member of the community, not only while you attend the University, but also in your future business endeavors. All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the professor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. [Click here to review the Student Conduct Code.](#)

STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. UM assures equal access to instruction. You must provide a letter from your DSS coordinator as outlined on their website so we can discuss your needs and provide accommodations throughout the course, including exams.

TOPICAL OUTLINE

Unit 1 – What is Environmentally Neutral or Sustainable Development?

[3 weeks]

Definition of sustainability; natural cycles; economic systems and ecosystem services; natural capitalism; The Natural Step framework

Unit 2 – Ecological Footprint & Other Metrics

[2 weeks]

Ecological Footprint analysis at different scales [individual, corporation, region, nation, world]; identify business impact on carrying capacity, GDP vs. GP; calculate carbon footprint and identify greenhouse gas inventory process

Unit 3 – Introduction to Sustainable Business and Innovation

[2 weeks]

Triple bottom line; biomimicry; sustainability-driven innovation

Unit 4 – Corporate Social Responsibility [CSR]: Stakeholders, Value and Reporting

[2 weeks]

Defining CSR; Social responsibility reporting and investing, global and market reporting indices

Unit 5 – Markets & Products in a Sustainable Paradigm

[2 weeks]

Emerging market growth sectors; green consumers and products; cradle-to-cradle design; design for the environment {dFe}

Unit 6 – Climate Change

[2 weeks]

What is climate change, alternative policies to address climate change, climate change impact on businesses

Unit 7 – Sustainability as a Social Vision and Lifestyle

[2 weeks]

Envisioning change; the new economy and lifestyle impact

GRADING SCALE

Plus/minus grades will not be given in this course.

Letter grades will be allocated as follows:

90 - 100%	A
80 - 89%	B
70 - 79%	C
60 - 69%	D
59%-	F

EVALUATION and CALENDAR

Projects, paper(s) and discussion forums will be given point values. The total points earned will be divided by the total points available. Approximate calendar follows. Points available are as follows:

Description	Unit	Points	Assignments	Spring 2015 Due Dates
Bio in Discussion Forum	Intro	5	See individual units for unit assignment requirements (in Moodle)	1/29
Unit #1 Discussion Forum	1	15		2/5
Unit #1 Assignment [2 page paper]	1	50		2/12
Unit #2 Discussion Forum	2	25		2/19
[Ecological Footprint]				
Unit #2 Assignment [GHG]	2	20		2/26
Company Outline	3	15		3/12
Sustainability Paper				
Unit #4 Assignment [7 th Gen]	4	24		3/26
Unit #5 Discussion Forum	5	30		4/16
Unit #6 Discussion Forum	6	30		4/30
Unit #7 Discussion Forum	7	30		5/7
Company Sustainability Paper	All semester	85		5/10*
Total points available:		329		

No late papers, projects or discussion forum participation will be accepted for points.

All papers should be 10 point font and double spaced with a footer indicating student name and which paper is being submitted.

*Note - this is due Sunday night by 5p.m. All other assignments are due on Thursdays by 5:00 p.m.