



COURSE SYLLABUS

Course: **WCOB 3023 Sustainability in Business**

Prerequisite: Junior standing

Course Description:

The course focuses on theoretical and practical bases for pursuing sustainability in business and society. Students learn four definitions of sustainability, measured on four axes expressed by: 1987 UN Brundtland Report (intergenerational equity), Triple-play (people, planet, profits), resource sustainability, and economic justice (fair global system of rules, fairly enforced).

Definition of Sustainability:

Sustainability is a new field in business and as old as the hills at the same time. Since this is a new topic in business, there is no textbook. I invite experts in a variety of fields that relate to sustainability. We must be respectful of the expertise of the guest lecturers while they are here: if they invite dialog, please engage; if they want to lecture, we will discuss the topic and place it into the context of the class later.

The concept of the class is quite simple: sustainability must be cultural, financial, and environmental in character, AKA **triple-play sustainability**, or it is not truly sustainable. Culture is the ocean in which we swim; we are no more aware of it than fish are aware of water. We are not aware of it but it forms the basis of our decisions. Businesses must be financially profitable to exist; they must increase profits to expand the value they offer. The environment is finite and our actions frequently affect others. Engineers optimize, scientists observe and extrapolate, businesses create wealth, governments organize, and artists capture an idea and convey it; each of these can be beneficial or can be distorted to damage our common world.

Class topics start with principles and progress to applications of the principles to real world companies and organizations.

Class Participation:

My ideal for this class is to lead a discussion: an exchange between you (all y'all) and me. So, class participation is essential. The class schedule may change from what is printed here; I will inform you of changes as soon as I can. Readings may be assigned one week before the relevant discussion period. There may be a need to purchase case studies (for example, at the Harvard Business Reviews website) on line, using a credit card or debit card.

If everyone participates, I will be in a better mood than if I find that I am talking to myself for 3 hours every Thursday night. Please come prepared to address the topic selected for the day. I will provide you with current sources to explore via in-class announcements and postings on Blackboard. If you find pertinent outside sources, please bring them along or bring them up. This kind of discussion is

collective, but I must assign grades to individuals. A successful series of discussions will benefit us all, including in the grade assignments.

Quizzes:

Each week, I will administer two quizzes. At the beginning of class, the quiz will cover material from the readings. At the end of each class, the quiz will cover the material during that class session. Attendance is expected. Since each session is three hours, missing one session is missing one week. If you must be absent once, please let me know in advance. The quizzes will serve as a measure of your understanding and as attendance. **One absence will be discounted from attendance and quiz grades. Any further absence will affect your grade. There are no excused absences.**

Personal Sustainability Plan

Sustainability is personal as well as corporate. As your mid-term, you will write a personal sustainability plan. None of us can avoid impact on the world. We can consciously limit our impact and increase the utility we create for the impact we leave. Economists like to say that morals are an expression of what we think should be; economics is the analysis of what is. The principles that come out during the early part of the semester will include aspects of culture, economics, and resource utilization. Your assignment is to analyze your impact on the world and consider how you can maximize your utility, or return on that impact. Measures can be as simple as turning lights off when you leave a room empty, replacing incandescent bulbs with fluorescent or LED lights, or your ideas may provide value to a larger portion of the world. Make the connections to the material presented in class as well as you are able and write a brief, (5 to 10 page) personal sustainability plan.

Community Action:

Optional volunteer involvement in a community or university organization related to sustainability can replace up to 10 points of the Major Project Report. As always, the definition of sustainability includes cultural, financial, or environmental activities. So, if you want to choose this option, write a brief description of your volunteer activity, for which you are not receiving other university credit. Examples of eligible activities might be Sierra Club, Junior Achievement, volunteer tutoring, or an artistic or cultural group for which you are not receiving other university credit. The number of eligible points equals the number of hours **per month** spent on the activity.

Major Project Report:

The major project report is your opportunity to demonstrate comprehension and integration of the material in the class. There will be suggested project ideas from which to choose or you may choose to propose your own topic. The 5 to 10 page report should demonstrate an understanding of the economic, cultural, and environmental bases for sustainability as well as a specific application of the principles to a particular problem or area. Always report sources for any data, information or analysis. If your analysis is original, claim responsibility; if borrowed, give attribution.

The report should be an individual effort. Submit your unique proposal before the class period on 11 February. No two individuals may cover the same topic. I will get back to you with comments on the proposal via Blackboard and email. Your major project proposal must be finalized before class on 18 February. The final report is due in the assignment section on Blackboard on or before 30 April 2010.

Please see the next section concerning minimum standards for papers and reports.

Expectations for Content of Papers Submitted for Class:

Attribution and Plagiarism

In the U of A Catalog of Studies for 2007-2008 Academic Year, the tenth definition and the one that guides your preparation of class papers, says, "Plagiarizing, that is, the offering as one's own work the words, ideas, or arguments of another person without appropriate attribution by quotation, reference or footnote. Plagiarism occurs both when the words of another (in print, electronic, or any other medium) are reproduced without acknowledgement or when the ideas or arguments of another are paraphrased in such a way as to lead the reader to believe that they originated with the writer. It is the responsibility of all University students to understand the methods of proper attribution and to apply those principles in all materials submitted."

This means that any time you write something in a paper without attribution, you are claiming that work as your own. You must quote the work of anyone else, using quotation marks or other indication and give attribution. Sanctions for failure to acknowledge attribution may involve grade penalties and referral to the judicial coordinator in Student Affairs.

The Importance of Understanding Levels of Reliability of Sources:

One critical aspect of becoming an educated person is the ability to differentiate the relative reliability of sources. For the purposes of this class, I will require that Major Project Papers include references from reliable sources, included in endnotes. For interest, it is often good to include references from popular sources, too. I will apply a scale of relative reliability of sources and the standard for Major Project Papers must include sources that reach a total of at least 15 points, using my reliability scale:

- 1 point- Articles and material in popular sources like newspapers, popular magazines, websites with no review, blogs, etc. shall gain 1 point for your source scale. The purpose of referencing these sources is to demonstrate interest in a topic, not to lend credence to the quotation.
- 3 points- Articles and material subject to extensive review by an editor or review board and under a bi-weekly or longer publishing cycle will earn 3 points on my reference scale (this excludes material considered editorial or opinion-based in character, which will receive 1 point on this scale). Materials that qualify for 3 points will generally be in professional journals or intended for a professional audience, one that has professional interest in the information presented.
- 5 points- Articles subjected to an academic review process shall earn 5 points on my reliability scale. Examples include academic journals with extensive peer review processes. The point here is not that all academic articles present absolute facts, but rather that extensive review increases the scrutiny and raises the expectations of the academic community that the material should be reliable and the material is expected to follow the scientific method.

Major Project Papers should include at least one reference that earns 5 points on my reliability scale and at least one reference that earns 3 points on my reliability scale. So, you must include one source from each of these two categories, which earns your sources 8 points so far. You must find other sources that add up to 7 points or more. These may be 7 references that earn 1 point each or any combination of references on the reliability scale that earn 7 additional points, for a total of 15 points or more.

Grading:

Your grade will be based on the following, with no rounding:

Assignment	Weight Percent
Class Participation/Attendance	10
Quizzes	10
Personal Sustainability Plan	30
Community Action	Up to 10
Major Project Report	50 or less

Score	Grade
90+	A
80 to 89.9999	B
70 to 79.9999	C
60 to 69.9999	D
Below 60	F

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

University of Arkansas Academic Policy Series 1520.10 requires that students with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact me privately at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through the Center for Educational Access contact (479) 575-3104 or visit <http://cea.uark.edu> for more information on registration procedures.

Academic Integrity:

As a core part of its mission, the University of Arkansas provides students with the opportunity to further their educational goals through programs of study and research in an environment that promotes freedom of inquiry and academic responsibility. Accomplishing this mission is only possible when intellectual honesty and individual integrity prevail.

Each University of Arkansas student is required to be familiar with and abide by the University's "Academic Integrity Policy" which may be found at <http://provost.uark.edu> Students with questions about how these policies apply to a particular course or assignment should immediately contact their instructor.

Inclement Weather Policy:

In cases where the weather has caused hazardous driving conditions, the University may be closed and if such conditions prevail at 5:00 A.M., the closure will be for the day. Announcements of the University's closing are given to the University's radio station (KUAF, 91.3) and other local radio and TV stations for broadcast. Closing information is also available through the University's website, voicemail, or by dialing 479-575-7000.

Changes to the Syllabus:

A syllabus is a tool to help you plan your time. Every effort is made to make the syllabus as complete as possible, but there may be occasions when changes are required, including changes in the grading components. The instructor will announce any deviations from this syllabus in class.

Tentative Schedule:

14 January: Definition of Sustainability: cultural, financial or business, and environmental. From the UN's Brundtland Report (1987), "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Dr Tremwel Prosocial Behavior (using slides of **Dr David Schroeder**)

21 January: The Markets game — **Dr David Gay**; Faith, Spirituality, and Sustainability **Dr Judith Neal**

28 January: University closed due to Ice and Snow

4 Feb: Sustainability and Internal Audit **Dr Gary Peters (Andi Romi subst)** Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

11 Feb: Beyond Greening: cost reduction and image **Dr Jon Johnson** (major project proposal due)

18 February: Externalities: costs, motivation, risks, responsibilities, & solutions **Dr Jennie Popp**

The misunderstood exponential demand function & endless growth of resource consumption—**Bartlett** DVD (firm major project plan due—with a thesis statement underlined)

25 Feb: Purchasing power parity: what does GDP miss? What will the poor buy? **Dr Andy Horowitz**

Grameen Bank/Phone and micro-credit or How an economist can win a Nobel Peace Prize

4 March: World Population Implications for Food Sustainability **Dr. Marty Matlock** Energy & Mass

Balance; B24B: Expanding views of markets; who is a potential customer? Disruptive technology, creative destruction & creative creation: Ford

11 March: Utility-scale energy storage and Renewable Portfolio Standards—**Dr. Juan Carlos Balda** (Personal Sustainability Plan Due)

18 March: Creating and trading environmental credits in Transportation— **Gary Whicker**, Sr VP Engr

Spring Break (22 March to 26 March)

1 April: Wal-Mart and Sustainability **Rand Waddoups** Sr. Director of Sustainability

8 April: University of Arkansas Sustainability Facilities, **Dr. Nick Brown**, Director of Sustainability

15 April: Wal-Mart and Energy and Green Tag Trading **Greg Pool**, Director

22 April: Tyson and sustainability in food protein. Water and sustainability. **Kevin Igli**, VP; General Mills Sustainability Efforts **Gene Kahn**, VP Global Sustainability

29 April: Conclusion: More Sustainable Wal-Mart Stores: **Charles Zimmerman**, VP Intl Design & Const

Final Project Due before 6 pm on 30 April

