

IDS 385/SOC 389: Fostering Behavior Change (Fall 2017)

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Sustainability Minor
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The purpose of this course is to introduce students to theories of human behavior and utilize this knowledge to promote sustainability. This course was originally rooted in environmental psychology/sociology; however, I wanted to include additional material to demonstrate the necessity of interdisciplinary dialogues. Since this course attracts students from a variety of majors, expanding my curriculum would allow more students to create connections between sustainability and their discipline as well as to collaborate with others. Participation in the Piedmont project thus provided an excellent opportunity to have conversations with faculty representing other disciplines; their thoughts about how to incorporate sustainability into their own courses became my guide for creating an interdisciplinary course about sustainability.

After the Piedmont project, I added new/highlighted existing interdisciplinary material (lectures, readings, exercises). The original syllabus focused on internal variables (values, motivation, identity) with an additional unit discussing context (social norms, incentives etc.). My new syllabus now balances these two sections. The “individual” part of this course still focuses on internal variables and leads to a group project of promoting sustainability on campus. I highlighted interdisciplinary material in this section; for instance, we will discuss epistemology of science vs. local knowledge in the Knowledge/Communication unit, the role of art in the Emotions unit, and history of sustainable values in the Values unit. The “context” part of this course is now enriched to include what sustainability should look like in the future; specifically, we will discuss the economics of sustainability, governance, urban environments, social movements, and others. At the end of this part, students will write an analytical paper looking at the successes and lessons learned from places that utilize larger-scale approaches to sustainability.

Last, I included an exercise we completed during the Piedmont workshop that facilitated interdisciplinary discussion. The class will be asked to brainstorm and discuss "the Big Ideas" of their disciplines and outline its connections with sustainability and human behavior. Together, we will then create a map of human behavior, highlighting successes and acknowledging shortcomings and tensions in different approaches. This exercise will be repeated at the end of the semester to illustrate student learning over the course of the semester.

Of course, it is difficult for a semester long course to include all disciplines and all issues - this course could easily take over two semesters (at least!). Deciding between which disciplines to include, whether to focus on the past, present or future, and whether to use domestic or global case studies is always difficult. Ultimately, this course serves to provide students with basic literacy around sustainability and human behavior with the hope that they will continue on to learn more in the future and that they will now bring sustainability into their own discipline and future career. I would like this course to eventually become a year-long course with a semester of theory and semester of research as well as to collaborate with faculty on showcasing different expertise.

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Fall 2017
T/Th 10 – 11:15 AM
Callaway S103

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Course Description

At the beginning of the 21st century, we find ourselves in the Anthropocene, a (sometimes disputed) geological age that emphasizes the gravity of human impact on our planet. This can be intimidating - especially since the lifestyles some of us know and enjoy often do not guarantee sustainable future. Some scholars believe that this “affluenza”, or our consumerist tendencies, might eventually lead to our demise. At the same time, the majority of humans on this planet live in poverty, unable to afford basic human necessities. How can we then promote sustainable livelihoods for all?

In this course, we will address strategies to promote sustainability and reduce inequality through individual behaviors as well as larger scale policy changes. This course is interdisciplinary and connects thoughts and theories from psychology, sociology, anthropology, economics, consumer science, and others. We will survey research directions in human behavior and sustainability across disciplines through an overview of theories, practices, interventions and policy implications. You will leave with understanding of the complexity of human behavior and a set of tools to support a sustainable future through your careers and lives in general.

Course Objectives

- Name the different sustainability discourses (status quo, reform, transformation; weak/hard sustainability etc.) and explain their implications for human behaviors
- Know how individual/societal factors facilitate/prevent sustainable behaviors; become familiar with leading behavior theories and sustainable behaviors research
- Connect sustainability to your own discipline and participate in an interdisciplinary dialogue to create solutions
- Practice communication strategies by presenting sustainability related issues to the public
- Create a behavior change portfolio that illustrates various strategies for behavior change with practical applications
- Utilize this new understanding to propose behavioral interventions on campus or in your own community; this includes writing a proposal, conducting your own research, and presenting results

Course Outline

This class will meet twice a week for a 75-minute session. Both sessions will have a mixed format; sometimes they will be lecture based, more often based on discussion and collaborative learning. While no grades are assigned for participation, your attendance and active participation is expected. In my personal experience, active listening and discussion participation help you both understand the material better, thus strengthening your work in this class. I also encourage you to

work together with your classmates as much as possible; discussions outside of class will help you better articulate your thoughts.

Please note that this course defines sustainability very broadly in terms of both topics and disciplines. Since it is impossible to be an expert on every single topic, I would like to encourage you to consult your own disciplines and explore topics of interest and share these with class either through discussion or through your class work. Given the often sensitive/political nature of some of the topics, it is absolutely essential that we work together to create a space that is challenging but collaborative and respectful.

Please note that there will be no class on Tuesday October 10 (Fall break), and Thursday November 23 (Thanksgiving) (in bold). We will have a whole week of student presentations right after Thanksgiving. This is a major assignment so please plan accordingly.

The course is structured as follows: in the beginning of the semester, we will discuss the history of sustainability and define sustainable behaviors. After this, we will focus on the individual and discuss various strategies of promoting individual behavior changes through targeting knowledge, values, motivation and other internal variables. Towards the end of the semester, we will focus on the various definitions of sustainability and their implications for behaviors on the societal level.

Assessment

You will complete two types of assignments: (1) you will build a *portfolio* of smaller assignments and (2) you will complete three small *research projects*, two in groups and one individually. For more information, refer to the specific assignment handouts on Canvas.

Your *portfolio* is a collection of your own thoughts and analysis of different topics this semester. All portfolio work is individual. You will complete eight short (300-500 words) pieces: TWO compulsory in-class exercises (Behavior, Identity), FOUR memos on different variables discussed this semester (choose four out of six possible assignments) and TWO news piece analyses (choose one out of seven submission dates). The purpose of this portfolio is for me to learn about how you understand the material/what you find important and relevant and for you to underline the most important information for your own projects and practice. Each piece is worth 5%; together your portfolio counts for 40% of your grade. Each piece is due at 8 AM on the day indicated in the syllabus.

The three *projects* for this class are cumulative and will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of all the material this semester. I strongly encourage you to use your portfolio for this work. The three projects are as follows:

1. Communication project (10% of your grade) – groups of 2
This project will help you utilize the strategies you have learned in the first part of the semester to communicate problem/solutions to the public via an infographic.
2. Intervention project (30% of your grade) – groups of 3-4
You will design a behavioral intervention for the campus community based on the Community Based Social Marketing Approach; this project will consist of a research design proposal, a research update, and a final presentation.
3. Final paper (20% of your grade) – individual work
The final paper will be the result of your cumulative knowledge from the second part of the semester; it will focus on cultures, social movements, policies, etc. and analyze their strategies for reaching sustainable futures.

Expectations for Attendance/Participation

Respect for one another is a guiding principle in this class: as I prepare to teach every class, you should be prepared to attend (and be on time) and actively participate in every class. While I do not forbid use of technology, I would like to ask you to use it only when you absolutely must. When technology use gets out of hand or when technology is not required (during presentations, discussions etc.), I might ask you to put your computers/phones away.

Because life can sometimes surprise us, you have two free passes for the semester to either be late or to not attend class. After the two free passes, 2% will be subtracted from your final grade for each unexcused absence and 0.5% for each class you come late to (late is defined as more than 5 minutes).

Communication

Please, do not hesitate to contact me – my primary role is to help you learn and learn from you. I am excited to work with you all this semester! I usually (NOT guaranteed) respond to e-mails within 24 hours; I do not respond after 6 PM and only sparsely during the weekend/holidays. If I do not respond within 24 hours, please email me again to remind me. I hold regular office hours, but feel free to schedule additional meetings or simply drop-by. If you have any questions about an assignment or a reading, it is your responsibility to contact me at least two days before the assignment is due.

The class will use CANVAS for the syllabus, schedule, more detailed versions of all assignments, and all course readings (except the required books – see details below). You will also use it to upload your assignments. I will post grades there and share any course-relevant messages usually 2-3 times a week. It is up to you to check CANVAS often and keep up with all the deadlines.

Special Accommodations

If you need specific accommodations, please contact me early in the semester.

Academic Integrity

Please, do not engage in any behavior that violates the University Honor Code; if you have any questions, contact me. All work must be completed individually and on your own unless otherwise specified (in this class, the only group work allowed is for the communication and intervention projects) and all sources must be properly cited. You should refresh your knowledge the Emory Honor Code here: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>.

Due Dates and Late Assignments

All participation assignments are due online as specified in the schedule. Please, let me know if there are any circumstances preventing you from finishing your work prior to the deadline. If we are not in communication about it, late assignments will be marked down by half a letter grade (e.g. A to A-, A- to B+ etc.) every 24 hours after due date and not accepted after 72 hours.

Academic Help

Emory College has numerous programs to support students academically, including academic coaching and the writing center (which also offers ESL support). More information can be found here: <http://college.emory.edu/oue/student-support/>.

Assigned readings

The following text book is the primary book for the course; you can purchase it at the University book store:

- Scott, B.A., Amel, E.L., Koger, S.M., & Manning, C.M. (2016). *Psychology for Sustainability 4th edition*. Routledge: New York, NY.

In addition, the following books are available online either via a link provided here or via the Woodruff library website - simply search for the book, it will offer you access to an online copy. You do NOT need to purchase them.

- Clayton, S. (ed.) (2012). *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental and Conservation Psychology*. Oxford University Press. Available through Emory libraries.
- Harre, N. (2011). *Psychology for a Better World*. University of Auckland – Department of Psychology. <https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/psych/about/our-people/documents/Psychology%20for%20a%20Better%20World.pdf>
- McKenzie-Mohr, D. (2011). *Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing*. Third Edition. New Society Publishers: Gabriola Island, BC, Canada. <http://www.cbsm.com/pages/guide/preface/>.

Here are some additional resources you might want to visit for inspiration or just to learn:

- Community-Based Social Marketing: <http://www.cbsm.com/public/world.lasso>
- Teaching Psychology for Sustainability: <http://www.teachgreenpsych.com/overview.php>

In the following course schedule, readings denoted by a * are available on course reserves; you will be provided with a link for other online sources via Canvas announcements.

Course schedule:

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment
Aug 22	Still summer break		
Aug 24	Introductions, course content, expectations	Clayton, S. (2009): Can psychology help save the world? Psychology for a Better World: Introduction	
Introduction Aug 29	Sustainability: History and Definitions	Psychology for Sustainability: Chapters 1 & 2 Recommended: Watch Story of Stuff by A. Leonard	
Aug 31	Sustainability: Human behavior	*Kollmuss & Agyeman (2002): Mind the gap	In class Portfolio: Behaviors
Individual Sep 5	Knowledge & Awareness	*Nisbet, M.C. (2009): Communicating climate change: Why frames matter for public engagement	Portfolio: Limits of Knowledge
Sep 7	Cognition; Personal differences	Psychology for Sustainability: Chapter 6	
Sep 12	Communications Lab	Visit from Jennifer Young (LITS)	Portfolio: Values
Sep 14	Beliefs, Attitudes, Values	Psychology for Sustainability: 180-194 Recommended: Oxford Handbook: Environmental Values	Portfolio: Cognition
Sep 19	Emotions	Psychology for a Better World: Chapter 2 Watch a documentary of choice for portfolio	Portfolio: Emotional messages
Sep 21	Ecopsychology	*Carter, D.M. (2011): Recognizing the role of positive emotions in fostering environmentally responsible behaviors Psychology for Sustainability: Chapter 10	
Group Sep 26	Identity & Status	Psychology for a Better World: Chapter 4 *Grskevicius et al. (2010): Going green to be seen Recommended: Oxford Handbook - Identity	In class Portfolio: Identity
Sep 28	Situations: Social norms & Context	Psychology for Sustainability: Chapter 5 Recommended: Psychology for a Better World: Chapter 3	Portfolio: Situations
Oct 3	Motivation	Psychology for Sustainability: Chapter 8	Portfolio: Motivation

Oct 5	Communication Poster Session	No reading	Communication exercise due Friday Oct 6 @ 5 PM
Oct 10	FALL BREAK		
Practice Oct 12	Community Social Marketing I: Introduction and Ethics	Read Mackenzie-Mohr: all sections up to (and including) Section 2	
Oct 17	Community Social Marketing II: Project design & practice	Finish Mackenzie Mohr (Section 3 through the end)	
Oct 19	Intervention study design lab	Bring a proposal for your intervention/study of an intervention	Proposal due Friday Oct 20 @ 5 PM
Society Oct 24	Mapping sustainability movements	*Hopwood et al. (2005): Approaches to sustainable development	
Oct 26	Neoliberalism & Treadmill of Production	Monbiot, G. (2016): Neoliberalism (in the Guardian) Bell (2014): Treadmill of Production	Two news items for portfolio due before break
Oct 31	Poverty	Watch: Inequality for All	
Nov 2	Status Quo: Green economy/ Individualization	Alkon, A.H. (2012): Chapter 2 from Black, White and Green (available online via Woodruff library) *Maniates, M.F. (2011): Individualization	
Nov 7	Reform(?): Ecological Modernization	TBD	
Nov 9	Reform(?): Sharing, Localism, Degrowth	Cohen, M. (2016). Futures of Consumer Society: Localism	Class group meeting – Project Updates due
Nov 14	Transformation: Environmental Justice & Indigenous Movements	Watch: Huicholes: Los Ultimos Guardianes del Peyote	
Nov 16	Transformation: Projects around the world	*Bennett, E. et al. (2016). Bright Spots: Seeds of a Good Anthropocene – article + review the website	
Nov 21	Project & Final Paper Lab	Come prepared with questions/presentation drafts	
Nov 23	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS		

Nov 28	Presentations		
Nov 30	Presentations		
Dec 5	LAST DAY OF CLASSES: Summary & Review	Bring your portfolio	
FINAL	Final paper		Due during final period

Disclaimer: This is a course map with recommended readings. Based on class interests/new research and new publications/documentaries, I may make changes to the syllabus. I will either confirm readings or announce new readings via announcements in Canvas one week before each class (so Thursday August 22 I will post readings for Thursday August 29 and so on). You are responsible for keeping up with these announcements.