

Roger Williams University Example Semester Outline: SUST 101- Introduction to Sustainability Studies

Week	Topic	Readings
1	<p>Introductions and expectations</p> <p>Part 1: Introducing SUST – A Summary</p> <p>How do beliefs, norms, & worldviews relate to SUST?</p>	Two “This I Believe” essays
2	<p>What is our dominant socioeconomic paradigm?</p> <p>What is unsustainable?</p> <p>How is sustainability defined?</p>	<p>Wessels: Prologue & Introduction</p> <p>MEA synthesis report</p>
3	<p>What are sustainable communities?</p> <p>How do we work together toward progress?</p> <p>Part 2: The Science of SUST for Decision Making</p> <p>Why bother with scientific thinking?</p>	N. Angier: from “The Canon”
4	<p>What is the value of data & quantitative analyses?</p> <p>Complexity vs. Linearity</p> <p>Systems Thinking</p>	<p>Wessels: Ch 1</p> <p>F. Capra: “Web of Life</p>
5	<p>What is life? What is needed to stay alive?</p> <p>What are ecological limits?</p>	<p>F. Capra: “Hidden Connections”</p> <p>Wessels: Ch 2</p>
6	<p>Populations & Abiota</p> <p>Ecological Webs & Ecosystem Dynamics</p> <p>Energy, Electricity & Thermodynamics</p>	<p>Capra: “Ecological literacy”</p> <p>Wessels: Ch 3, pp. 40-52</p>
7	<p>Energy Use & Human Footprints</p> <p>Is global climate change happening & caused by humans?</p> <p>Part 3: Sociocultural Contexts & Challenges</p> <p>The social complexity of climate change</p>	<p>IPCC news articles</p> <p>Wessels: Ch 3, pp. 52-62</p>
8	<p>Societal Collapse throughout History</p> <p>Markets & Economies</p> <p>Industrialization, Globalization & “Stuff”</p>	<p>E. Moran: “The Great Forgetting”</p> <p>Wessels: Ch 4 & “GDP R.I.P.”</p>
9	<p>The Resource Curse & Global Tensions</p> <p>Democracy, Corp. Power & Corruption</p> <p>Marketing, Consumerism & The Media</p>	Speth: “The Market”
10	<p>Nature vs. Culture or Nature <i>and</i> Culture?</p> <p>The Creative Spirit: Human/Nature Relations in the Arts</p> <p>Part 4: Working Toward Solutions</p> <p>Prioritizing Problems, Defining Progress</p>	<p>Indigenous Peoples readings</p> <p>D. Orr: “What is Education For?”</p>
11	<p>Cultural Change: Personal vs. Public Choices</p> <p>How can we manage our landscapes more sustainably?</p> <p>What are green buildings and LEED?</p>	<p>Wessels: Ch 5 & Epilogue</p> <p>Sustainable Sites website</p> <p>LEED website</p>
12	<p>Student solutions research presentations</p> <p>Student solutions research presentations</p> <p>Sustainable food production</p>	Organic food articles
13	<p>Conserving biodiversity & ecosystems</p> <p>Sustainable aquaculture and the aquarium trade</p> <p>Environmental Ethics & Justice</p>	<p>McCauley’s “Selling out on Nature”</p> <p>Selected newspaper and blog articles</p> <p>Environmental Justice Packet</p>
14	<p>The Great Energy Debate: Possibilities & Limits</p> <p>The Spirits & Souls of Nature: Greening Religion</p> <p>The Creative Spirit Revisited: Personal expressions</p>	<p>Energy debate preparation</p> <p>Gardner, “Invoking the Spirit”</p> <p><i>Creative Assignment Due in class</i></p>
15	<p>Creative arts presentations continued</p> <p>Synthesis: Toward Sustainable Lifestyles & Societies</p>	Readings TBD

FINAL EXAM PERIOD: Required final discussion session