



Sustainability in Business

WCOB 3023 | WCOB 5023 Summer 2015

Instructor:

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Class: Monday-Friday 11:00am—12:30pm

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Course Logistics: A majority of course materials, activities, communications, and instruction will be delivered using the course management software, [Blackboard](#). Assistance can be found at [Blackboard Assistance](#).

Course Textbooks:

- The Thinking Executive's Guide to Sustainability, 2014. Kassel, Kerul. [Business Expert Press](#)
- Course Pack on Xanadu.com comprised of additional required readings and cases

Required Hardware and Software: Access to a computer.

Special Requirements: None

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What are the prerequisites for WCOB 3023 | 5023?

Junior Status for WCOB 3012. Masters status for 5023. This class has been designed such that no previous business course or experience is required. ([TOC](#))

What is the purpose of this course?

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with a variety of concepts related to sustainability at three levels—individual, organizational, and societal, with particular emphasis on business and the evolving role of business in society. Using cases, simulations, guest speakers, a group project and reflections, students will sharpen their ability to critically analyze and debate complex and systemic issues from an informed position. Students will also learn tools to help organizational managers address many of the challenging issues facing our society. Students will emerge from this course understanding both the business challenges and opportunities inherent in sustainability. In particular, we hope to:

- Bring together students from varied backgrounds and disciplines to appreciate the interactions between economic and social activity, and the natural world,
- Show how the evolution and role of institutions and complex systems influence corporate environmental and social strategy,
- Build a working knowledge of systems thinking,
- Learn how an organization can manage its way to better environmental and social performance, and
- To better understand our individual impact on the world. ([TOC](#))

What is the description and value of this course?

The role of sustainability in business has evolved over the past couple of decades from a fringe issue to one of central concern to managers. A recent survey conducted by McKinsey found that for close to 75% of CEO's, sustainability was a priority item and for 25% it was a top three agenda item. Where in the past, environmental and social issues were seen as peripheral and constraints on business—unwelcome interruptions on the path towards increased profitability. Increasingly this is no longer the case, especially for small enterprises and large firms.

Today firms of all stripes, from mining and forestry, to food and beverage, and even banking are adopting strategies and practices that take into account a broader set of stakeholders including the environment, society, governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It was inevitable that firms would adopt these strategies and practices. To quote Ray Anderson, a self-described “radical industrialist,” in a speech to the World Business Academy,

"The only institution on earth that is large enough, powerful enough, wealthy enough, pervasive enough, and influential to lead humankind out of the mess it's making for itself is the same institution that is doing the most damage -- the institution of business and industry, my institution." - Ray Anderson, CEO Interface Carpets ([Full text of speech.](#))

The issues we raise and discuss in class are among the most critical and exciting challenges confronting business today. Sustainability is the quintessential international systems problem. In our time together we will explore innovative business models used across the globe in developed and developing countries. In this class, our joint task is to learn how we can think globally and act strategically in ways that also add the most sustainable value to the societies and businesses

within which we operate as individuals and organizational leaders. But what makes a business sustainable? What actions are companies taking to become more so? How do we know when they are? How much is enough? Are there tradeoffs or is it really a “win-win” scenario? Taking into account these concepts, I believe the value of this course to you, the student, is:

- Sustainability has moved from a fringe activity to become a critical dimension of many companies’ strategies through the alignment of economic, social and environmental interests. This shift has happened in your lifetime, and
- Companies now use sustainability strategies as a competitive advantage to grow market share, eliminate harmful ingredients, reduce waste and obsolescence, and reduce packaging, energy and transportation costs. Companies are also growing markets through social strategies, and
- You and your generation, as future organizational managers and leaders, will find the sustainability agenda increasingly relevant in light of emerging natural resource, food and water scarcities, so
- This course can help you prepare to work in that world of increasing turbulence, which will include a *different* perspective on the role of business in society. Being an active participant in generating this new perspective may inspire new views on the role that you will play in effecting organizational and social change for a better world. ([TOC](#))

What will I get out of the class?

By the end of this course you will:

- Gain awareness and literacy with a variety of concepts related to sustainability in business including global environmental and social change, systems thinking, triple bottom line, resilience, stakeholder engagement, the tragedy of the commons, sustainability and technology, and sustainable business models;
- Develop an understanding of sustainable development as an important element of practices and a value driver for businesses and other organizations;
- See how economic, environmental and social issues are an integral, interrelated (and complex) part of the landscape in which institutions operate;
- Understand both the challenges and opportunities inherent in social and environmental issues facing organizations, and apply key concepts, tools, and solutions to those issues;
- Sharpen critical analysis and communication abilities, especially in the context of complex and systemic issues, and apply systems thinking to real-world business problems;
- Be challenged to clarify your own values and opinions on issues related to business in society, and develop a personal sustainability plan;
- Apply your understanding of sustainability at three levels: societal, organizational, and individual. Identify next steps to better leverage sustainable development.

See a detailed list of very specific class objectives at the end of this syllabus. ([TOC](#))

What will we do in this class and how will I be graded?

During class we will analyze and discuss readings and case studies related to sustainability and the global commons. We will have an extended discussion of Walmart’s sustainability strategy through a series of case studies developed by the professor. These discussions will be supplemented by short faculty lectures as well as short student presentations.

The major graded deliverables in the class besides the Final Exam and Class Participation are Reflection Papers, Case Briefs, a Personal Sustainability Plan, and a Case Study Group Project. Note that the detailed assignments and their submission deadlines will be posted at the appropriate spot on blackboard. Each of these is outlined below.

I will assign grades based on your performance in the following areas:

Assignment/Exam	Undergraduate Points Possible	Graduate Points Possible
Participation and Citizenship	250	250
Personal Sustainability Plan	100	100
Case Briefs	150	100
Detailed Case Analysis (Masters)	---NA---	50
Reflection Memos	150	150
Research Project (Group)	300	150
Case Study Writing (Masters Group)	---NA---	150
Final Exam	50	50
TOTAL COURSE POINTS POSSIBLE	1000	1000

I will assign grades that you have earned on the following scale (I do not round up; you must earn 900 points to make an “A.”)

- **A Excellent quality** (greater than or equal to 900 points). The student clearly exceeds all the standards set for this course and she/he actively and very frequently participates in and adds significant value to in-class activities.
- **B High quality** (greater than or equal to 800 and less than 900 points). The student exceeds some of the standards set for this course and she/he qualitatively participates in many in-class activities.
- **C Average quality** (greater than or equal to 700 and less than 800 points). The student meets most of the standards set for this course and she/he participates in most in-class activities.
- **D Poor quality** (greater than or equal to 600 and less than 700 points). The student meets few of the standards set for this course and she/he rarely participates in in-class activities.
- **F Fail** (Less than 600 points). The student does not meet any of the standards set for this course. ([TOC](#))

Participation

“A bird doesn’t sing because he has an answer, he sings because he has a song.”
—Joan Walsh Anglund

This course will be quite heavily discussion-based, as is inevitable given the nature of the topic. Of course, my goal is to get you all involved in an active way in the classroom and to think critically about the readings. As a result, you should be well prepared to participate in these discussions. This means reading the materials for that session, thinking about them and being creative and entrepreneurial in finding and digesting other relevant material from whatever sources you like to use. The daily classroom discussion represents a unique opportunity for you to develop and enhance your confidence and skill in articulating a personal position, reacting "on

the spot" to new ideas, and receiving and providing critical feedback from a group of assertive and demanding colleagues. Much of your learning will come from these classroom experiences. You are expected to come to each class with the case and readings prepared and with a readiness and willingness to contribute to the class discussion. Our discussions will be guided by specific questions designed for each class session. You are expected to have reviewed those questions in advance of each class and be prepared to discuss your responses. Your contribution to the learning of others, through the experience and insights you share is a key part of this learning process. Your contribution will be graded based on quality, quantity and consistency. Some of the things that will determine a contribution include:

- Are you listening, not just for a few minutes, but the duration of the class?
- Are your contributions relevant to the discussion? Do your comments relate to the comments of others and to the themes that the class is exploring together? Do you build on the class discussion?
- Do your comments add to our understanding of the situation? Are you incisive? Do you cut to the core of the problem?
- Are you willing to challenge, with due respect for persons and process, the ideas that are being expressed in the classroom?
- Are you willing to test new ideas or are all comments "safe"?
- Do you bring in your own experience, personal or professional, in order to add value to the class discussion

Daily participation grades will be assessed at the end of each class. Each day you can earn a maximum of 4 participation points based on the following breakdown (with reference to contributions, above):

0. Non-attendance or disruptive behavior (texting during class, etc. See section on how not to act in class.)
1. Attended without contributing, or contribution was useless.
2. Attended with minimal contribution
3. Attended with substantial contribution
4. Offered exceptional insights to the class

Attendance is mandatory. One absence is permissible for good cause; additional absences will adversely affect your grade regardless of the cause for those absences. Repeated absences will lead to a failing grade. If for any reason you will miss class or will be late for class, send an e-mail to me (dhyatt@uark.edu) before class explaining the absence or tardiness. If you know in advance that you will miss a class, I will consider a full written analysis of the missed day's case when assigning the final course class participation grade, if it is submitted to me before the missed class. Such written work will mitigate, but not eliminate the adverse effects on your classroom performance grade of missing class. If the absence is unanticipated, send me an e-mail explaining the absence within 72 hours of the absence.

At the end of the course, I sum the daily points and rank the class by these totals. From this I will assign grades based on my judgment of the relative extremes of participation and individual strengths, weaknesses, missed classes and trends. Poor attendance will be penalized heavily;

missing 25% or more of the classes will result in a contribution grade of 0. Disruptions, such as the persistent use of electronics in class, will have a negative impact on your participation.

Classroom contribution will be evaluated on the following scale:

- 90-100
 - Applies, analyzes, synthesizes course material
 - Is willing to take risks in attempting to answer difficult questions
 - Offers relevant, succinct input to class that advances the discussion.
- 80-89
 - Provides constructive feedback to group discussion
 - Demonstrates ability to analyze/apply course material.
- 70-79
 - Offers clear, concise information relevant to class assignments.
- 60-69
 - Occasionally offers topical information of limited relevance.
- 0-59
 - Is not regularly in class (misses 25% or more classes)
 - Provides little or no contribution to discussions
 - Is disruptive or distracting to class
 - Fails to follow flow of conversation
 - Is unwilling to take a stand or make a contribution
 - Input is irrelevant, unrelated to topic or non-existent. ([TOC](#))

Sustainability “Audit” and Personal Sustainability Plan

The theme to this assignment is “accountability.” It is really easy for most of us to see the problems, flaws and mistakes of others; in turn, this makes it easy to criticize, to look down upon, and to get mad about the behavior of others. At the same time, it’s also easy for most of us to justify our own behavior to ourselves; it can be really difficult to look inward and face up to our own perceived shortcomings.

So, what changes could you personally make to lead a more sustainable life? For this assignment, you should complete the following:

1. The Inventory: Take an inventory of your life for one week, and consider everything that you do as it relates to sustainability. This should include what you buy and the services that you use, the food that you eat, what you throw away, the decisions that you make or choose not to make (is passive acceptance as bad as doing it yourself?), anything and everything. The level of detail is up to you, but what you should be considering is how your decisions relate or could relate to Sustainability. Capture this information in some sort of journal that allows you to tally this up at the end of the week.
 - a. Be sure to calculate your carbon footprint as part of the inventory. Go to the [Carbon Footprint Calculator](#) webpage, create an account, and calculate your carbon footprint. You will be looking at the flows of energy and materials that you use on average. You may also ask people who are living with you to engage in this assessment. What is your global footprint? How many earths does it take to sustain your lifestyle? Capture a digital image of the results page and post to Blackboard.

- b. Don't forget your social impact. (For instance, do you volunteer your time or give money to a particular cause? On the negative, is your residence a constant source of noise or odor for your neighbors?)
2. The Changes: Then, what are the implications of this finding? What are some of the things that you could change to lessen your impact? Consider at least 10 changes that you could make to lead a more sustainable life and rank them 1-10 from the most practical to the least. Some categories to consider regarding environmental impacts include energy use, consumer choices, food choices, personal action, waste disposal and recycling, transportation. Again, be sure to include some changes to improve your social impacts.
3. The Upshot: Look carefully at each proposal for yourself, being critical, practical and honest. Consider the pros and cons. Consider your time, money and life situation. What is the likelihood that you actually will make these changes in your life to live more sustainably? If not now, then when? In systems language, discuss the factors that might enable or constrain you from getting the improvement in sustainability. (Consider also your own mental model of the world.) Draw a simple systems map that shows feedback loops.

Importantly, your grade has nothing to do with the choices that you make. If you really analyze your daily decisions and figure out that you've been making some poor choices for no good reasons, then that's an excellent revelation. If you feel like you should be making changes, but you can't afford it or you're just not ready to, then that's an excellent acknowledgement. Don't be embarrassed or ashamed because of your choices. Please do not try to paint yourself as an angel either because we can all benefit by taking an honest look at ourselves. Just be analytical.

You should present the results of your investigation in the form of a brief memo to yourself (1000-1500 words). The memo will be assessed based on clarity of thought, organization, communication skills, and quality of the context (a full rubric will be provided on Blackboard). While not required, feel free to use photos, graphics, sketches, diagrams, charts, etc., to explain your ideas. A key point of the audit is that it should be supported with analysis; you cannot do an "armchair" audit and expect to pass.

The carbon footprint analysis is due Tuesday June 2.

The full report is due Tuesday June 16.

Case Briefs

In this class you will be working with case studies that present real-world scenarios. You will be assessed on your preparation and your participation. For each of the cases you are expected to read the case thoroughly and provide a short case issue brief using a template provided by the instructor. This summary should be done on your own; although, your work will be supplemented in later group activities. You will submit the case brief on Blackboard. Grades are basically pass/fail; however, I reserve the right to lower points for substandard work. I may provide feedback on the first ones that you submit. If you don't do well on this, you won't do well in class participation. The case analyses assignments are due the evening before the day that we discuss them in class.

Additional Effort for Students Seeking Graduate Credit

The managers in the cases confront basic questions about the key issues facing the company, understanding why the issues emerge and finally what should be done about them. For each case, I have prepared some specific questions that are part of the detailed course schedule.

You are required to complete two graded case analyses memos. The memos must be written using a memo format, Times New Roman 1.5 spacing 1-inch margins, with a maximum of four pages. In analyzing these cases, your general focus should be on the organization's strategic response to nonmarket or other challenges in the case. In each case, unless otherwise noted, assume that you are advising top management about how to deal effectively with the pressing social issue. (If that does not seem to fit—contact me before writing). Use astute and creative reasoning in developing recommendations. You should also justify your analysis and recommendations by integrating material from the class.

You do not normally need to use outside sources to complete these case analyses. In analyzing the cases, you can rely on the text, readings, class notes and the text of the assigned cases. If you quote or merely restate materials from the readings or cases, then you should cite the material and include a bibliography. If you do not do this, I will not accept the case. I also will not accept the case, if different students turn in similar memos. This work must be done independently.

Reflection Memos

A key aim of this course is to provide the opportunity for students to think critically about issues pertaining to sustainability. Thus, following each class students are encouraged to actively reflect on what they have learned. For three of the classes, students must submit their reflections for grading. This means that you need to select one particular class and drill into the topic of that class—so you need to be specific. If I can't tell what class exactly you are writing about, then I have to assess the effort at zero points. Each reflection will constitute 10% of your final grade.

These reflections can take one of three forms.

1. **Executive Memo:** The first form is an executive brief targeted at either a specific executive or a class of executives (i.e. Sustainability Director or CEO). It is meant to inform these executives about a particular issue or class of issues and offer concise, relevant and actionable advice. Your memo should first briefly present the issue of interest and engage the reader. Then, in 2-3 paragraphs the memo should describe 2-3 critical action items. A brief summary and call to action would follow. Please see writing resources in the Links and Resources tab on Blackboard.
2. **Editorial:** Alternatively, the memo can take the form of an editorial. Hard-hitting and possibly controversial, it drives at making a point to a broader audience. For a good example, read this [editorial by Andy Hoffman](#).
3. **Diary:** A third form of reflection is that of a diary. In this diary you are expected to get personal and reflect on what a particular class meant to you. How did it alter your way of thinking about particular issues? Be specific.

Students must submit a reflection according to the following schedule. Remember, you are writing about just one class or topic (sometimes 2 full class periods are devoted to one topic).

- 1 reflection for classes 1 through 6
- 1 reflection for classes 7 through 12
- 1 reflection for classes 13 through 17

Reflections are due by midnight 6 days following the class being reflected upon. Reflections must be no more than 2 pages, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1.5 line spacing, 1 inch margins.

What you write in your reflections is confidential. However, with your permission I may share some of these reflections with others in the class.

Group Project—Research Project and Case Study

Given the proliferation of social and environmental issues and their constantly changing nature, it is difficult for any one person to be aware of all that is going on. Yet, understanding these issues is important for effective decision making. I also believe the wide relevance of these issues provides an opportunity for you to contribute to your learning, your classmates', and to the wider community. It is this philosophy that has guided the development of this project.

On the last day of class, you must submit and discuss a final research project. Working in groups of 3 or 4 you must identify an environmental or social issue and describe innovative business approaches to addressing the issue. The project must comprise two major parts.

1. Issue definition. Define and describe the issue, including its scope and negative impacts on either society or on the planet.
2. Innovative practices taken by business to address the issue. You can focus on just one case study, or list a number of approaches that firms take or could take.

In selecting a topic, you could either first identify an issue that you find most troubling and want to see what businesses are doing, or find a company that you find innovative and then work backwards to say how it is addressing the issue. So, the ordering of these sections is up to you.

Timeline:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| May 28 | Select team members (in-class). |
| June 4 | Provide description of the issue or company that you will be researching (no more than 1 page). I will provide feedback by midnight June 5. A detailed template will be provided on Blackboard. |
| June 25 | Submit written report. |

The written report should not exceed 3000 words, excluding references, title page, and appendices. It will be graded on substance, organization, support, style and grammar. In terms of substance, the paper should be researched well, and yet focus only on the most salient facts. The message should be credible and accurate with supporting facts and evidence. In terms of style, the paper should be easy to read and free of errors. It should be impactful and engaging. A grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard. Important things to consider:

- Better projects focus on a narrowly well-defined issue with a foreseeable impact on business. If you can't define the issue easily and well, the audience will never really understand what it is that you are talking about. (A good starting place is to imagine that you are describing your project to a grade school student.)
- Better projects also tend to avoid well-worn issues (such as deforestation, climate change), and focus on issues that are relatively new to your audience. or take a new angle on well-known issues (e.g., greenhouse gas emissions associated with air travel). You should be clear about what your contribution is—what is your value-add? Why would anyone want to read this work?
- A good report is not an information dump, but a careful culling of the material, providing only the best, most credible and reliable data and images. There are significant space and time restrictions, so be selective in the information you choose. Again, what is the valued added from this work you are doing?

Additional Effort for Students Seeking Graduate Credit

Students seeking graduate credit prepare a 3-page case (may be longer if you include images) additional for classroom discussion that outlines the issue at the center of your research project. In this case you will lay out the issue of concern in your project and create a protagonist – a central figure and organization that is tasked with resolving in some way your central issue. (See my Links and Resources tab in Blackboard for more background on what makes a good case.) Examples of protagonists are readily found in most cases under discussion throughout the course. For example, suppose your group project pertained to the issue of shark fin soup and the practice of shark finning. You may choose a number of protagonists including the manager of a Chinese banquet center that caters to Chinese weddings and is placed in a difficult decision as to how to satisfy customers while addressing this harmful practice. Or you could be a manager of a food processing plant who is presented with an opportunity to incorporate new synthetic shark fin soup technologies. The choice of protagonist should be one that helps you explore the key findings of your report. The protagonist can be a real person in a real scenario or an imagined protagonist in an imagined scenario.

On the last day of class, the group (does not have to be all members) will facilitate a case discussion among fellow students (graduate and undergraduate) focusing on resolving the central issue on the case. Thus each group should come prepared to stimulate and advance classroom discussion (e.g., “work the case”). The cases will be submitted four days before the presentation to give fellow students the time to prepare each case. You should at this time also submit your teaching note for the case. The teaching note should outline:

- A synopsis of the case and the problem to be solved.
- A list of 3 or 4 questions that students who read your case will answer.
- Your own analysis of the case, including answers to your own questions
- An outline of how you will “run the case,” including drawings of any boards you will create, any videos you might show, or any supplemental readings that should accompany the case.

Each group will be allocated approximately 30 minutes for the case discussion. The best of these studies may be included in future classes. This is a major effort and should not be underestimated. The length of the study will be not your main challenge—the main challenge is to deliver a thoughtful, insightful, and interesting case study.

The case study is 15 percent of the overall course grade broken down in this manner:

- Case Study—7 percent
- Teaching Note—5 percent
- Presentation—3 percent

I will provide a separate assignment for the case study on Blackboard with detailed instructions. ([TOC](#))

Final Exam

There is a final exam. The final exam will be comprehensive, covering the entire course, including readings, discussions, and lectures. Areas of emphasis on the exam will have been discussed in class during the course of the semester. The structure of the exam will be short answer/essay and analysis of case-based situations. The exam will be held Saturday June 27. ([TOC](#))

Contact Information and Professionalism

When and where can you contact me?

You can find me Monday-Friday 9-11am and by appointment. I am in my office (WCOB 354) most of the time, and you should feel free to come and see me. Regarding these office hours, I have reserved them exclusively for helping students, and will not ordinarily make other appointments during these hours. I also recommend e-mail as a good way to get in touch with me. I am fast to respond although that response may be spotty on weekends when I might be tending to my wife, granddaughter and grandson!

Also, regarding what topics are appropriate for you to email me about, such as 1) questions about what was covered in a given class session, 2) questions about course content, and 3) administrative questions (including grades, due dates, exam dates, etc.):

1. I do not answer emails from students who missed a class (for whatever reason). Don't send emails such as "what did we do in class today?" or "were there any handouts?" (...). It is each student's responsibility to get lecture notes and handouts from a classmate and review any relevant information posted on BlackBoard. While I will not respond to such emails, I will be happy to meet with the student after she/he has reviewed the relevant course material(s) and lecture notes. You should collect the phone or emails for two students that you can contact if you miss a class.
2. I generally answer content-related questions if I can answer them in two to three sentences. Your first course of action, however, should be to raise the question in class or after class (or to schedule a meeting in my office). Some students are more comfortable asking me after class or talking to me in my office. That's fine, too. Usually, having actual conversations is much more beneficial than exchanging emails.
3. As to administrative questions, detailed information about grading policies, due dates, exam dates, etc. is provided in this syllabus (which is available on BB also). As such, I do not respond to these kinds of emails unless some clarification is warranted. Also, and as a matter of policy, I do not (never ever!) discuss individual grades via email or over the phone. You should schedule an in-person meeting if you have any grade-related questions or concerns. I will gladly sit down with you and answer any such questions.

If you email me, follow the guidelines of professionalism below. Your emails should be carefully crafted and look like good business communication. Be specific about the subject of the email in the mail subject heading and use proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation. ([TOC](#))

How should I act in class?

Professionalism is an important characteristic of successful students (and managers, too!). All members of the campus community should behave professionally at all times. This includes interactions inside and outside the classroom.

- **Be on time.** *Please arrive early so classes can start without delays and interruptions. Likewise, and as a matter of courtesy and respect, please be on time for meetings with fellow students, faculty or corporate representatives.*
- **Be engaged and attentive.** *You will get the most out of classes and meetings if you give the instructor or the person you are meeting with your undivided attention. Please do not let cell phones and laptops distract you and those around you.*
- **Be polite and friendly.** *Saying “hello” and “thank you” shows respect and appreciation for the person you are communicating with – be it in person or via email. Please also be sure to address people by their proper (and correctly spelled) names and titles.*
- **Be prepared and proactive.** *Being prepared for classes maximizes the value of attending classes. Likewise, you should prepare for meetings with faculty or corporate recruiters (e.g., by preparing a list of questions, researching the company, etc.) to make the most of your (and their) time. ([TOC](#))*

How should I not act in class?

Students and instructors each have an important role in maintaining a classroom environment optimal for learning, and are expected to treat each other with respect during class, using thoughtful dialogue, and keeping disruptive behaviors to a minimum. Behaviors that can be disruptive include the use of abusive language, chatting and whispering during class, the use of electronic equipment, reading the paper during class, preparing to leave before class is over, and consistently arriving late to class. Please keep these disruptions to a minimum. Repeated disruptive and/or inappropriate behavior in the classroom may result in a request to leave the class and/or a referral to the [Office of Community Standards and Student Ethics](#) and/or severe class participation grade penalties. ([TOC](#))

What are the policies on academic honesty?

Academic honesty is expected of all students in my class. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students are expected to read the [University’s Academic Integrity Policy](#).

According to the University of Arkansas Undergraduate Catalog, academic dishonesty involves acts that may subvert or compromise the integrity of the educational or research process at the University of Arkansas, when such acts have been performed by a UA student. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, any act by which a student gains or attempts to gain an academic advantage for him/herself or another by misrepresenting his/her or another’s work or by interfering with the independent completion, submission, or evaluation of academic work.

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.

As a University of Arkansas student, you are required to be familiar with and abide by the [University's Academic Integrity Policy](#). If you have questions about how these policies apply to this course or an assignment, then please see me.

Please note that I have no discretion in the administration of this policy. That is, if I observe behavior that appears questionable under the policy, I am required to file a report. I cannot deal with it on my own. So, don't ask me to do that. ([TOC](#))

What are the guidelines for testing accommodations for students with disabilities?

University of Arkansas Academic Policy Series 1520.10 requires that students with disabilities be 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 that you must first verify your eligibility for these through the [Center for Educational Access](#) (contact (479) 575-3104). ([TOC](#))

Special Situations, Key Dates, and Schedule

What if the weather is bad?

We will not hold class if the University is closed. You are responsible for verifying at 575-7000, 575-2000, or at the University website regarding weather conditions. Please consider signing up for notifications from [RazALERT](#). In the very unlikely situation when it might be dangerous to attend class even if the University is open, class may be cancelled. If class is cancelled, I will update the Blackboard site and e-mail all students, hopefully at least 2 hours before class. If you still are unable to make it to class because you are concerned with your safety, I will provide you an opportunity to make up the work missed. Please see the University policies at this link on [Inclement Weather](#).

What if there is an emergency on campus?

Many types of emergencies can occur on campus; instructions for specific emergencies such as severe weather, active shooter, or fire can be found at the UA website for [Emergency Preparedness](#).

Severe Weather (Tornado Warning):

- Follow the directions of the instructor or emergency personnel
- Seek shelter in the basement or interior room or hallway on the lowest floor, putting as many walls as possible between you and the outside
- If you are in a multi-story building, and you cannot get to the lowest floor, pick a hallway in the center of the building
- Stay in the center of the room, away from exterior walls, windows, and doors

Violence / Active Shooter (CADD):

- CALL- 9-1-1

- AVOID- If possible, self-evacuate to a safe area outside the building. Follow directions of police officers.
- DENY- Barricade the door with desk, chairs, bookcases or any items. Move to a place inside the room where you are not visible. Turn off the lights and remain quiet. Remain there until told by police it is safe.
- DEFEND- Use chairs, desks, cell phones or whatever is immediately available to distract and/or defend yourself and others from attack. ([TOC](#))

Key University Dates from the Registrar

May 26	Classes Begin
May 25	Last day to: register or add a full semester class; receive a 100% cancellation of fees for dropping a full term class while continuing to be enrolled
May 28	Last day to: change from credit to audit; drop a full semester class <u>without</u> having the grade of a "W" shown on the official record
June 17	Last day to: drop a full semester class or classes <u>with</u> a mark of "W" shown on the official record. No full semester class or classes may be dropped after this date unless the student Officially Withdraws from all classes
June 26	Last day to Officially Withdraw from all full semester classes for the Spring 2013 semester
June 26	Last Class

([TOC](#))

Frequently Asked Questions

Is this a difficult class?

This class is rigorous and fairly demanding. I have high expectations for and of you. I have carefully designed your experience in this class to be interesting and engaging, and we will cover a lot of material. It is critical that you not get behind on the material. You should come to see me the moment you feel behind in this class. ([TOC](#))

What if my team has dysfunctional membership?

I may collect peer feedback on team members' relative performance. Warning: In extreme cases where I determine that a team member did very little, I reserve the right to assign an "F" on the project to that person ([TOC](#))

Do I have to go to class?

Your attendance in class is important to me. (And it should be to you.) Not coming to class will have a significant effect on your participation grade. If you miss class, please contact a classmate to catch up. (Don't contact me to ask if you missed anything—chances are that you did! 😊)
([TOC](#))

Will we have quizzes?

We will have quizzes only if I determine that students are not keeping up in the class. If I do give a quiz, it becomes part of the class participation grade. ([TOC](#))

Will I have to do homework not mentioned in this syllabus?

Probably not. If I do assign and collect the homework, it will become part of the case brief grade. You may also be asked to speak on the topic in the homework assignment. There will be readings most nights and also some videos to watch. ([TOC](#))

Are you curving the grades for the class?

No, I am not curving the grades because I believe that could cause you to compete against one another. I believe in collaborative learning, not competitive. Everyone in this class has the opportunity to make an “A.” If that happens, no one will be happier than me. Earning an “A” will require significant effort and focus. ([TOC](#))

Are there opportunities for bonus points in this class?

We may have bonus opportunities in the class, for instance to hear a guest speaker. If we do have a bonus opportunity, it will not exceed 25 points. ([TOC](#))

Weekly Schedule

Disclaimer: This is a draft schedule. I will provide a separate, detailed class schedule. I may deviate from this schedule as deemed necessary. The coverage listed below is intended to give you a fairly good idea of where we will be in the material at various times during the semester. I will provide a detailed schedule.

Always check Blackboard for specific assignments. ([TOC](#))

Week	Topic
1 5-26	Introduction-Core Course Concepts Sustainability, the Commons, and Systems Framing Sustainable Development The Economy, Civil Society, and Public Policy
2 6-1	Tradeoffs in Sustainable Development Understanding Limits to Growth Public Responses to Environmental Issues Activists, NGOs, and Business Innovation
3 6-8	Activists, NGOs, and Business Innovation Social Responsiveness and Shared Value Cross-Sector Partnerships for Poverty Alleviation
4 6-15	Social Entrepreneurship and Business Design Mission and Vision Strategy, Systems and Structures
5 6-22	Choosing Initiatives Measurement and Learning Consumer Expectations Final Exam

Detailed Learning Objectives (draft only)

There is some overlap in the below as some objectives are addressed over multiple class periods.

- Understand how individuals, whole communities or populations may pursue self-benefiting actions in a commons that eventually diminish the overall benefits.
- See interrelationships rather than linear cause-effect chains, and see processes of change rather than snapshots.
- Use and understand Systems Thinking tools, processes and principles in order to focus on the relationships among the parts, not just the parts.
- Understand how actions can reinforce or balance each other (feedback) and how these interactions or other mechanisms create delays.
- Use Systems Thinking language in order to understand more deeply how organizations and complex systems really operate.
- Understand how mental models influence how we understand the world, our work, our families, and so on and how we take actions.
- Understand and develop causal loop diagrams to describe system phenomena, including reinforcing and balancing loops, delay mechanisms.
- Describe sustainability from a systems thinking perspective.
- Achieve an understanding of sustainability that is “actionable”
- Reframe discussions and shift mental models toward sustainability
- Explore sustainable envisioning
- Make ethical “triple bottom line” decisions
- Analyze problems using the “systems - thinking iceberg” model
- Analyze challenges using “systems diagrams”
- Identify system archetypes
- Identify leverage points in the system
- Apply systems thinking to organizational challenges
- Describe the properties that define pure public goods, pure private goods, club goods and common pool resources. Discuss the key interrelationships among human, earth, and natural systems and why these are important for sustainable businesses.
- Explain the main ways that businesses and individuals affect ecosystems and the environment.
- Understand the energy use by businesses in modern society and why this is relevant for sustainable businesses.
- Discuss two common views of limits to growth and be able to describe the key features of both views.
- Understand how both views of limits to growth are relevant for sustainable businesses.
- Explain how public policies and government influence markets for sustainable businesses.
- Explain how private businesses can influence government and public policies to serve their interests.
- Discuss the key influencers of public policy and why public policy making does not always serve the public interest.
- Understand why public policy is important to sustainable business and business more generally

- Explain some of the factors that can influence public policy, including public opinion, economic conditions, technological change, and interest groups.
- Identify ways that different stakeholders can influence the operating context of sustainable business.
- Understand the different types of interactions of businesses with government.
- Explain how businesses try to influence government and the types of responses by businesses to their legal, social, and political environment.
- Define market failures.
- Discuss how government efforts to address market failures can be justified to achieve desired social outcomes, such as sustainability.
- Understand the general process and difficulties of policy making.
- Describe how policy levers can help shape business sustainability.
- Discuss effective policy design features.
- Describe specific policy instruments and their features.
- Explain the history of US federal government engagement on environmental issues and how it has changed over time.
- Understand the most important U.S. government environmental policies.
- Understand the connections between environmental and energy policies.
- Compare US policies to address climate change with those in other nations and discuss the implications for sustainable businesses in the different nations.
- Appreciate the scope and complexity of the challenges that have recently spurred sustainability innovation with respect to energy and materials.
- Gain insight into the fundamental drivers creating opportunities for entrepreneurs and new ventures in the sustainability innovation arena.
- Understand how sustainability innovation has been defined.
- Begin to apply the basic ideas and concepts of sustainability design.
- Provide an overview of the basic stages of corporate engagement.
- Explore the evolutionary character of private sector adaptation.
- Explain how paradigms and innovation affect our perception of the possibilities for sustainable business.
- Understand why new ideas, often introduced through innovative thinking and action, can meet with initial resistance.
- Identify the roles of carrying capacity and equity in the four key metaconcepts of sustainability.
- Compare and contrast four key metaconcepts (sustainable development, environmental justice, earth systems engineering and management, and sustainability science), including their assumptions, emphases, and implications.
- Apply the metaconcepts to identify sustainable business practices.
- Understand the core premises of environmental frameworks, e.g., the natural step, industrial ecology, natural capitalism, ecological economics, cradle-to-cradle, ecosystem services, biomimicry, green engineering, life cycle analysis, design for environment, carbon footprint analysis, green supply chain, etc.
- Compare and contrast the frameworks and tools to evaluate the contributions of each to sustainability thinking.
- Apply the frameworks and tools to improve existing products and services or to create new ones

- Identify the three pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental, and socio-cultural), and analyze the objectives of each component and how they interact and sometimes conflict.
- Identify the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural benefits and harms that can accrue due to ecotourism development, and the methods for maximizing potential benefits while mitigating against potential harms.
- Make complex decisions in which social, environmental, and economic aspects of sustainability are in conflict with each other using different ethical models of decision making, an analysis of tourism destination lifecycles, and a systems perspective.
- Work toward integrative solutions to problems when stakeholder goals and/or the means to achieving goals conflict.
- Understand what ecotourism is, determine whether Tortuguero qualifies as an ecotourism destination, and identify the potential negative effects of the lack of a universally agreed upon definition of ecotourism.
- Examine the role of MNCs in poverty alleviation in developing countries and its implications for corporate social responsibility (CSR) asking, specifically: how much is enough? What are the limits of CSR?
- Explore stakeholder engagement in the form of corporate-NGO cooperation and, more specifically, the scope and mechanisms for effective collaboration between corporations and NGOs.
- Consider the implications of CSR for corporate strategy and marketing practices in the particular context of corporations operating in developing countries.
- Examine corporate strategy of NGOs, specifically the implications of cooperating with, as opposed to campaigning against, business.
- Assess the business challenge posed by activist NGOs whose missions are to promote global sustainability.
- Assess activist groups' advocacy strategies for their mission achievement.
- Assess the role and efficacy of industry-sponsored groups to monitor sustainability.
- Assess the tradeoffs at the interplay of commercial and sustainability interests.
- Identify the expectations and roles of various stakeholders who are affected by a specific issue.
- Assess challenges to organizational legitimacy posed by strategic decisions.
- Evaluate a firm's performance from a triple bottom line perspective
- Determine how firms create and capture economic value in highly commoditized, low value, environments (such as the food industry).
- Understand the relationship between strategies to create and capture value in the food and beverage industry, and the health consequences this has on society.
- Assess the level of congruence of between conventional conceptualizations of value creation with societal and environmental value creation in different industry settings.
- Evaluate how a firm can, or should, respond strategically to the growing criticism of outcomes associated with its own or industry activities.
- Evaluate the centrality of CSR and sustainability to a firm's core business.
- Assess the extent to which a firm should pursue constructive role(s) to address social problems.
- Understand the microfinance industry and its innovations.
- Understand the concept and tools of business model design.

- Understand two different modes of venture launch (emergent vs. analytical)
- Assess why established firms often fail to innovate, and how new business models are designed by entrepreneurs.
- Assess the scalability and sustainability of business models.
- Compare and contrast two business model designs for a similar value proposition-peer-to-peer social lending-one being built on goodwill and the other on market-based mechanisms.
- Understand sustainability trends from a value-creation perspective.
- Apply widely used management frameworks and tools such as those of Porter, Christensen, Sathe, Blue Ocean Strategy, Scenario Planning, and Appreciative Inquiry to develop successful sustainability strategies for value and profit.
- Recognize key distinctions such as: (1) bolt on vs. embedded sustainability, (2) incremental change vs. heretical innovation, (3) doing less harm vs. providing solutions, and (4) legacy 'red oceans' vs. 'blue oceans' in the Base of the Pyramid.
- Analyze an organization's current situation and diagnose stakeholder-related business risks and opportunities, creatively envision new business solutions and make the business case for them using a variety of tools.