

Course Code & No. - Section:	SUST 201-1
Course Title (Credits):	Social Sustainability: The Political Science of Social Justice (3) [AS]
Term & Year:	Spring 2014
Course Ref. No. (CRN):	10025
Instructor:	Brennan Lagasse
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Office:	
Office Hours:	Tuesday's after class and by appointment
Class Meeting Time:	Tuesday's from 1600-1845
Location:	TCES 215
Prerequisites	none
Corequisites	none

Course Description

This course examines the basic elements and structures of political science through the lens of a social and environmental change in order to create basic fluency with analytical concepts, research methods, and theories of interactions between society and nature. Fundamental theory and concepts linking social and environmental change will be discussed, critiqued, and employed as the basic building blocks of environmental and political theory.

There remains no universally accepted definition for sustainability or sustainability focused disciplines like social sustainability. However, in the spirit of creating a common framework for reference, and by drawing on general themes inherent to respected definitions for sustainability, this class will use the following working definition that will evolve during the semester through collective class collaboration:

Social Sustainability seeks the stability and well-being of human cultures and the global biosphere through the elimination of socially constructed forms of oppression, environmental degradation, and through the application of social justice.

Student Outcomes

The primary objective of Sustainability 201 is to introduce students to the social side of sustainability studies. This interdisciplinary course will use core concepts and strategies drawn from sociology, political science, and environmental studies to investigate the meaning, goals, and application of social sustainability. Through readings, class discussion, case studies, and reflective writing assignments this course will use a cross disciplinary strategy that will challenge students to examine how social sustainability is influenced by social norms, ecosystem health, politics, and economic justice. Emphasis will be placed on the interaction between society and nature with the importance of social and environmental change playing a paramount role in this intersectional analysis.

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:

1. Define the basic principles of social sustainability, demonstrate interdisciplinary work, and articulate what makes social sustainability a unique interdisciplinary field of study
2. Assess the state of the field today and illuminate examples of individuals, groups, and organization that encompass the field of social sustainability
3. Convey problems and issues that have led to the need for social change in society, recognize the barriers to implement progressive policy changes, and locate opportunities/constraints with strategies for achieving justice in sustainability

4. Apply critical examination and analyses to complex problems, case studies, and social situations with the ability to formulate sustainable solutions to diverse multifaceted social conflicts
5. Understand their role and ability to be vehicles for positive social change in society.

Methods of Assessing Student Outcomes

Student outcomes will be assessed using the following:

1. Class participation/attendance
2. Blog reflections
3. Individual presentation
4. Field Trip Attendance and Reflection
5. Group presentation
6. Letters to the editor project
7. Socratic Seminars (debate)
8. Final paper
9. Student self assessments

Instructional Strategies

This class will utilize the internet, movie clips, lectures, texts, class discussions, Socratic seminars, current news, group work, case studies, and field trips. The course may make use of the *Moodle* course management system.

Required Texts and Materials

1. Cole, L. & Foster, S. (2001). *From the ground up: Environmental racism and the rise of the environmental justice movement*. New York: NYU Press.
2. Lagasse, Brennan (2009). *Waiting for the Snow to Fall: First Nations, Federal Policy, and Environmental Justice*. VDM-Verlag Publishing House Ltd. [Note: Purchase is not required. Photocopies will be made and passed out in class]
3. Laptop computer (one that meets the published SNC Laptop Requirements)

Recommended Texts and Materials

1. *Little, Brown Compact Handbook*, seventh edition (or 6th); Jane Aaron; Pearson/Longman.

Keep any class handouts. A binder to organize readings and handouts will be helpful to your success. Course readings will be made available online and it is highly encourage you print out readings and underline or highlight passages and sections of text you find important. This will allow you to easily write your blog post for each class as well as have already formulated points to add to class discussion. Please try and print double sided to avoid unnecessary waste of paper resources.

Prim Library Resources

Using the library's resources effectively (not just Internet resources) contributes to developing each of SNC's core themes by exposing students to high quality academic resources, diverse opinions, new ideas, and a future that includes building on a liberal arts education. In this course, you will be expected to utilize the library's resources (either on-site or remotely) as you complete your assignments.

Prim Library Resources:

1. Materials on reserve (when applicable):
2. Reference materials
3. Books (can be checked out)
4. Electronic databases (for peer-reviewed research articles, reviews, newspaper and magazine articles)
5. Hardcopy periodicals: Prim Library has current subscriptions for Science, New Scientist, Science News, and National Geographic Magazine. Full-text articles from many more periodicals are available through the electronic databases.

6. Lib Guides: <http://Libguides.sierranevada.edu> These web pages contain instructions about how to use resources available at Prim Library, how to evaluate the appropriateness of information from the Internet for a research paper, how to cite sources, and other topics related to finding and using information.

Attendance/Participation

These are the two cornerstones to being successful in Sustainability 201. If you are not in class regularly, and if you are not contributing to our collective learning space by participating in class then you will not receive a satisfactory grade. Readings and other course assignments are meant to be stimulating. You should come to class after having finished a particular reading and be able to articulate your thoughts with your classmates. I understand issues and conflicts arise each semester, so if you do have something that will cause you to miss one of our classes contact me. You will not be docked for attendance points if I know you will not be in class, AND your reason for missing class is *appropriate*.

Reading Reflections/Blog

A major requirement to your successful engagement and completion in Sustainability 201 will be completing weekly reading assignments and submitting short written reflections on your blog.

You will be creating your own blog using the Google tool "Blogger"

https://www.google.com/accounts/NewAccount?service=blogger&continue=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.blogger.com%2Flogin%3Fd%3D%252Fcreate-blog.g%26a%3DADD_SERVICE_FLAG&hl=en&sendemail=true&followup=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.blogger.com%2Flogin%3Fd%3D%252Fhome%26a%3DSERVICE_ONLY&naui=8

To receive full credit for each week, your requirement will be to post a short reflection of what you read in preparation for each week we met. Reflection pieces have no word limit or length requirement, but each post should clearly show that you read the assigned piece(s). Your blog posts are due the day before our next class meets (by midnight). For example, if we're meeting on Wednesday afternoon, your blog post will be due by midnight on Tuesday.

Field Trip

This semester, we will take a trip as a class to visit a center for social justice. Currently the field trip is scheduled for Saturday, March 1st. That date is subject to change and will be discussed in class along with travel/departure times and further logistics. The field trip will take place in Nevada City, CA at the Peace Center of Nevada County.

Guest Lecturer

In the second half of the semester, local educator Jillian Raymond will be facilitating our space for a few classes. Jillian is a teacher with the Lake Tahoe Unified School District and is a scholar regarding social justice studies. Her dynamic pedagogy will provide an invaluable asset to our learning experience this semester.

Research Paper

There will be no final exam for Sustainability 201. In absence of a final exam, your requirement will be to produce a 5-10 page paper (with works cited) and present your research to the class during our final exam period.

Your midterm will be a one page formal proposal discussing your research topic. In addition, you will orally address the class explaining your topic, why you chose it and how it relates to our class.

Class Requirements

The following is a list of course requirements

- All students are required to bring a laptop computer to each class meeting
- Cell phones and pagers must be turned off-no texting!
- All Students must arrive on time to class

Sanctions for Cheating and/or Plagiarism

The Honor Code

The faculty of SNC believes students must be held to high standards of integrity in all aspects of college life in order to promote the educational mission of the College and to encourage respect for the rights of others. Each student brings to the SNC community unique skills, talents, values and experiences which, when expressed within the community, contribute to the quality of the educational environment and the growth and development of the individual. Students share with members of the faculty, administration and staff the responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning and personal development, where actions are guided by mutual respect, integrity, responsibility and trust. The faculty and students alike must make diligent efforts to ensure high standards are upheld by their colleagues and peers as well as themselves. Therefore faculty and students accept responsibility for maintaining these standards at Sierra Nevada College and are obligated to comply with its regulations and procedures, which they are expected to read and understand.

Consequences of Violating the Student Honor Code

SNC students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic honesty. Thus, all are responsible for knowing and abiding by the SNC Faculty/Student Honor Code published in the current SNC Catalog. Faculty are responsible for presenting the Honor Code and the consequences of violating it to students at the start of their classes AND for reporting all incidences of academic dishonesty to the Provost. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes CHEATING, PLAGIARISM and FABRICATION and for refraining from these and other forms of academic dishonesty. Violations of the Honor Code become part of a student's academic record.

- 1st Offense: Student receives a zero for assignment/exam and counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.
- 2nd Offense: Student fails course and receives counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.
- 3rd Offense: Student is expelled.

Grading Policy

Assignment	Number of assignments	Points
Class Participation/Attendance	Weekly	40%
Blog Reflections	Weekly	20%
Individual Presentation	1	5%
Group Presentation	1	5%
Letter to the Editor Project	1	10%
Final Paper	1	20%
Student Self Assessment	1	Mandatory
Total		100%

Grading scale:

A+ 100-98 A 97-93 A- 92-90 B+ 89-87 B 86-83 B- 82-80 C+ 79-77 C 76-73 C- 72-70 D+ 69-67 D 66-63 D- 62-60 F 59 and below

Assignments are due on the announced date unless alternate arrangements have been made with me in advance of the due date. Otherwise, late assignments will have a 1/3rd of a grade deducted for every day they are late. For

example, if you submit your Blog entry for a given week 3 days late and receive a grade of 10/10, the grade entered will be 7/10. It's best to contact me prior to missing any class deadlines. Assignments are meant to add to our collective learning experience and should not be an impediment to your successful completion and academic achievement in the course.

ADA Accommodations

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with a documented disability are eligible for support services and accommodations. If a student wishes to request an accommodation, please contact the Director of Academic Support Services, Henry Conover, at (775) 831-1314 x7534, hconover@sierranevada.edu or go to the OASIS offices on the third floor of Prim Library within the first week of the semester.

The SNC Email System

The SNC email system is the official communication vehicle among students, faculty members and administrative staff and is designed to protect the confidentiality of student information as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 Act (FERPA). Students should check their college email accounts daily during the school year.

Students have a right to forward their SNC e-mail to another e-mail account (for example, @hotmail or @gmail). However, confidentiality of student information protected by FERPA cannot be guaranteed for SNC e-mail forwarded to an outside vendor. Having email redirected does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to his or her SNC email account.

The Mission Statement:

Sierra Nevada College graduates will be educated to be scholars of and contributors to a sustainable world. Sierra Nevada College combines the liberal arts and professional preparedness through an interdisciplinary curriculum that emphasizes entrepreneurial thinking and environmental, social, economic and educational sustainability.

The Core Themes:

Liberal Arts

Sustainability

Professional Preparedness

Entrepreneurial Thinking

Class Schedule

Below is a tentative itinerary for the semester, which is subject to change based on notice you'll receive either in class or through email. In addition to what is listed below students can expect that we will review headlines from the socially just centered new site, www.democracynow.org, at the beginning of each meeting to stimulate class discussion.

Week	Date	Topics	Activity
1	1/21	Introduction: Review course syllabus and semester outline, affirm our interdisciplinary focus, cover individual presentations, assignment given to create individual blogs, covering the "themes and terms" section of our course outline, note card exercise (each student will write their name,	In class Assignment: Create Blog Reading for next week: <i>From the Ground Up</i> , pg. 1-18

		three words that describe them, two things they loved to do, and share it with the class)	
2	1/28	<p>Basic Elements and Structures of Political Science Relevant to Social Sustainability: Theory and practice of politics, political systems and behavior</p> <p>Themes and terms that will guide this week's lesson: democracy (direct and representative), socialism, communism, environmentalism, institutionalism, Court(s), war and peace</p>	<p>In class</p> <p>Class lecture/discussion</p> <p>You Tube Clip: Noam Chomsky</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p> <p>Reading for next week</p> <p><i>From the Ground Up</i>, Chapter 2</p>
3	2/4	<p>Historical Traditions and Theoretical Roots: Political theory of society and nature, the human centered core, theories of interaction between environment and community</p> <p>Themes and terms that will guide this week's lesson: power, system, stability, justice, social structures, social stratification, social class, society, nature</p>	<p>In class</p> <p>Class lecture/discussion</p> <p>You Tube Clip: Howard Zinn, Rush Limbaugh (History and the media)</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p> <p>Reading for next week:</p> <p><i>From the Ground Up</i>, Chapter 3</p>
4	2/11	<p>Dissent and Activism: Social theory and the "interlocking systems of oppression"</p> <p>Themes and terms that will guide this week's lesson: social change, environmental movement(s), dissent, activism, "guilt", social ills, social construction</p>	<p>In class</p> <p>Class lecture/discussion (introduce issues related to <i>The Snowbowl Effect</i>)</p> <p>Individual Presentations</p> <p>Movie Clip: <i>Oil on Ice</i></p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post/Introduce Research Paper</p> <p>Readings for next week: Selected articles related to "the Occupy" Movement and Middle East Uprisings of 2011</p>
5	2/18	<p>Movements of social and environmental change</p> <p>Themes and terms that will guide this week's lesson: mainstream/traditional</p>	<p>In class</p> <p>Class lecture/discussion (introduce service learning concept)</p> <p>Individual Presentation</p>

		environmentalism, climate change, economic equality, consumption, ecofootprint/carbon footprint, systemic harmony	<p>Assignment: Blog Post</p> <p>Readings for next week:</p> <p>Continued from the previous week</p>
6	2/25	<p>Prim Library Research</p> <p>The intersection of sustainability and justice studies</p> <p>Themes and terms that will guide this week's lesson: critical examination, precautionary principle</p>	<p>A portion of this class will take place in the Prim Library. This time will be allocated towards research for your final paper.</p> <p>In class</p> <p>Class lecture/discussion</p> <p>Case Study look: <i>Save the Peaks</i></p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p> <p>Readings for next week (a selection): Bryant, B. & Hockman, E. (2005) A brief comparison of the civil rights movement and the environmental justice movement. <i>Power, justice, and the environment: A critical appraisal of the environmental justice movement</i>. Pellow, D.N. & Brulle, R.J. (eds.). Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press.</p> <p>Harding, Sandra. (2006). <i>Science and Social Inequality: Feminist and Postcolonial Issues</i>. University of Illinois Press.</p> <p>Manus, P. M. (1996). The owl, the Indian, the feminist, and the brother: Environmentalism encounters the social justice movements." <i>Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review</i>, 01907034, Win96, Vol. 23, Issue 2.</p>
7	3/1	Field Trip	<p>Peace Center of Nevada City, CA;</p> <p>Midterm Presentations Next Week</p>
7 cont'd	3/4	<p>Midterm Presentations</p> <p>Movements of Social Justice: Jim Crow America and systemic change</p> <p>Themes and terms/ that will guide this week's lesson: labor, race, standpoint theory, human rights, equality, class stratification, the missing link for environmentalism</p>	<p>Ideas for final paper due/Individual Presentations</p> <p>In class</p> <p>Class lecture/discussion</p> <p>You Tube Clip: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Glenn Beck</p> <p>Assignment: Blog Post</p> <p>For next week: Midterm Blog Compilation Due 3/11</p> <p>Reading for next week (after spring break): Pulido L. (1996). <i>Environmentalism and economic justice: Two Chicano struggles in the Southwest</i>. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.</p>

8/9	3/11; 3/18	Field Trip Makeup Class; Spring Break	In class individual appointments regarding midterm presentation/final paper topics; No Class
10	3/25	Environmental Justice: the intersection of justice, sustainability, holistic and interdisciplinary studies Themes and terms that will guide this week's lesson: food politics	In class Class lecture/discussion Case Studies: <i>From the Ground Up</i> ; <i>Waiting for the Snow to Fall</i> Assignment: Blog Post and Group Project for Next Week
11	4/1	Group Work: The privatization of water, water rights, and the high cost of bottled water	In class group work and group presentations. Note, you will have this week to work on your group projects that will be assigned the previous week Assignment: Blog Post/Group Project
12	4/8	Letters to the Editor Project	In the first half of class we'll brainstorm and craft letters to local, regional, national, or global news sources regarding an issue of social sustainability. In the second half of class we'll discuss our letters as a class and reflect on the process as a whole through a lens of global and civic engagement. Finally we'll submit our letters to our chosen source. Assignment: Letters posted to blog, sent to news sources
13	4/15	Economic Justice Themes and terms that will guide this week's lesson: Marxism, Capitalism, Globalization, free market, neoliberalism, Adam Smith's <i>The Wealth of Nations</i>	In Class lecture/discussion Assignment: Blog Post Reading for next week; Selections from the following: Bullard, R. (1993) <i>Anatomy of Environmental Racism and the Environmental Justice Movement. Confronting environmental racism: Voices from the grassroots</i> . Bullard, R. (ed.). South End Press. Di Chiro, Giovanna. 1998. "Nature as Community: The Convergence of Environment and Social Justice," in Goldman, Michael (ed.), <i>Privatizing Nature: Political Struggles for the Global Commons</i> . New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. LaDuke, W. (1999) <i>Akwesasne: Mohawk mothers' milk and PCBs. All our relations: Native struggles for land and life</i> . South End Press.
14	4/22	Service Learning Project	Brainstorming and group discussion of potential direct local applications of social sustainability in the Tahoe Basin. Opportunities for implementation during finals week. Assignment: Blog Post (your choice for direct application)
15	4/29	Climate Change and Climate Justice Themes and terms that will guide this week's lesson: global warming, climate change, intersectional	In class reading: <i>Shellenberger, Michael and Ted Nordhaus (2004). The death of environmentalism: Global warming politics in a post-environmental world.</i> www.thebreakthrough.org Special Case Study: http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/tipping-point-climate-poverty_tajikistan.pdf

		analysis	Class lecture/discussion; Final Blogs Due 5/6
16	5/6	Semester Recap, Student Self-Assessments	Assignment: Final papers due next week
17	5/10	Final Exam Period: 3-6pm	Final research papers and presentations due