

<b>Course Code &amp; No. - Section:</b>	SUST 301/380
<b>Course Title (Credits):</b>	Sustainability in Action(3) [AS]
<b>Term &amp; Year:</b>	Fall 2019
<b>Course Ref. No. (CRN):</b>	80140/80141
<b>Instructor:</b>	Brennan Lagasse
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<b>Office:</b>	Library Second Floor
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Monday 1-3pm, Thursday 3-4pm, or by appointment
<b>Class Meeting Time:</b>	Monday and Wednesday 3-445pm
<b>Location:</b>	TCES 115
<b>Prerequisites</b>	none
<b>Corequisites</b>	none

## Course Description

This course examines the potential and reality of sustainability solutions offered through lenses of individual and systemic change, with a focus on the creative, often conflicting, and hopeful spaces found within both positions. Core sustainability theories will be discussed alongside methodological orientations grounded in action research. Students will engage through a curriculum of active learning with discussions centered around how to go about changing the world in ways that are sustainable, just, and regenerative.

While there is no absolute blueprint for how to go about changing the world, for the sustainability practitioner, it is clear that in the age of the Anthropocene the world cannot continue to sustain itself on its current path. Climate change, inequitable economic policies, and political powers continue to threaten the well-being of biocultural resources globally. Is it better to foster change on an individual level, doing all that one can to be better stewards? Or is it better to reform the current systems that govern the world that have led to the ecological and social issues of today? Is it some combination of the two? Or is there another way? Throughout this course we will develop robust frameworks for better understanding of these deeply entrenched issues, collaborate as a collective to explore these essential questions, and ultimately arrive at various action plans as a result.

## Student Outcomes

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

1. Define the basic principles of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political sustainability.
2. Demonstrate interdisciplinary work through in-depth analysis of the major tenets associated with holistic sustainability.
3. Assess the state of the sustainability field today and illuminate examples of individuals, groups, and organizations that both encompass the greater field, as well as foster change.
4. Be able to address and articulate problems/issues that have led to the need for social change in society, recognize the barriers to implement policy changes, and locate opportunities/constraints with strategies for achieving justice in sustainability issues across the planet.

5. Apply critical examination and analyses to complex problems, case studies, and social situations with the ability to formulate sustainable solutions to diverse multifaceted conflicts.
6. Understand their role and ability to be vehicles for positive social change in society.
7. Understand the various ways change is enacted on individual and community based levels.

## Methods of Assessing Student Outcomes

Student outcomes will be assessed using the following:

1. Class Participation/Attendance
2. Weekly Journal Reflections
3. Midterm Evaluation
4. Group Project(s)
5. Individual Action Project
6. Community Based Action Project
7. Final Project and Presentation

## 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.

## Required Texts and Materials

1. Kaufman, Cynthia. (2016). Ideas for action: Relevant theory for radical change. South End Press, Second Edition.
2. Research Reader Packet. [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 6<sup>th</sup>); 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 301/380. 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**

A major requirement to your successful engagement and completion in Sustainability 301/380 will be completing weekly reading reflections based on our course reading material.

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

In addition to each weekly writing reflection you will be required to bring in one of the following to stimulate class discussion- a particular quote from the reading that stood out to you, why you chose it and why it's profound to you, something you liked or didn't like in the reading, and/or a question. These thoughts can and should be included in your reflection as well.

## **Field Trip**

This semester, we will take an overnight field trip to the Solar Living Center as well as the Teacher's for Social Justice Conference in San Francisco, CA exploring issues of energy and equity among other topics. The field trip is scheduled for Friday, October 11th, and we will return on Saturday, October 12th. Logistics will be discussed in class along with times and other plans associated with our trip. Our approximate time frame for the trip will be 6am Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> until 10pm Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup>.

## **Individual, Group, and Community Projects**

In this course we explore sustainability problems, solutions, and how to take action. Throughout the semester, in addition to your culminating project, you will be asked to work individually, in a group setting, and in partnership with a community based group. Each project will ask you to look at a sustainability issue, and offer an actionable way to address and/or help solve the problem.

## **Midterm**

Your midterm will take the form of a check-in presentation on individual and systemic change. Details will be discussed in class.

## **Final Project**

In addition to group work, and individual and community based projects with presentations, you will create and present a final culminating project during the last week of class. The work you do throughout the semester, including in class group work, your chosen individual action project, and your community based action project can all support this culminating piece. Your assignment is to provide answers to the questions we will discuss during the

first week of class, and make your argument for why individual or system change is the method of choice for putting sustainability into action, and changing the world. Throughout the semester we will take time to explore your personal passions and align a topic of study for this experience to your project. During our last week of class you will be required to present your project to the class along with a visual and written component.

## **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 must be turned off during class-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.

1<sup>st</sup> 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.

2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Student is expelled.

## **Grading Policy**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Number of assignments</b>	<b>Points</b>
Class/Field Trip Participation and Attendance	Weekly; October 12-13	20%
Weekly Journal Reflections	Weekly	10%
Group Project	1	10%

Midterm Evaluation	1	15%
Individual Project	1	10%
Community Based Project	1	10%
Final Project and Presentation	1	25%
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 1/3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto: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.

Week	Date	Topics	Activity
1	9/16, 18	Introduction: Review course syllabus and semester outline, introduce ourselves, research questions inquiry  Individual Action Project	Reading Assignment-Chapter 1  Journal Reflection
2	9/23, 25	Individual Action	Reading Assignment-Chapter 2  Journal Reflection  Do Good Guest Lecture
3	9/30, 10/2	Individual Action	Reading Assignment-Chapter 3  Journal Reflection
4	10/7, 9	Collective Action Group Work Project	Reading Assignment-Chapter 4  Journal Reflection  Field Trip Preparation
5	10/14 , 16	Wednesday Midterm Review	Water Quality/Health Guest Lecture/Activity  Midterm Preparation
6	10/21 , 23	Individual and Group Action	Midterms  TH Arctic Refuge Night @ Alpenglow Sports, Tahoe City, CA
7	10/28 , 30	Systems Change and Community Based Action	Reading Assignment-Chapter 5  Journal Reflection  Introduce Community Project
8	11/4, 11/6	Systems Change and Global Action	Reading Assignment-Chapter 6  Journal Reflection
9	11/11 , 13	Systems Change and Positionality	Reading Assignment Chapter 7  Journal Reflection  Community Project  No Class Monday-Veterans Day
10	11/18 , 20	Explore Final Project Potential	Reading Assignment-Chapter 8, 9, 10 with discussions into Week 12 and 13

			Journal Reflection
11	11/25 , 27	Thanksgiving Break	No Class
12	12/2, 4	Where do we go from here? Action Research in the Anthropocene	Final Project Presentation Preparation
13	12/9, 11	Course Wrap-Up	Final Project Presentations