

Syllabus for MSMGT 700 Cultural and Historical Foundations of Sustainability

NOTE: This syllabus document contains the basic information about this course. The most current syllabus is available in the course.

Course Description

In recent centuries, humans have changed their relationship with the natural world and experimented with social arrangements. We will review the history of ideas and actions that can provide a foundation for sustainable management. Because sustainability ideas are often posed as alternatives requiring change, we will discuss the context of dominant ideas and organizational structures that have historical and cultural precedent. We will also discuss ideas about individual sustainability as a way of understanding sustainable systems.

Prerequisite(s)

None

Course Outcomes

Learning outcomes are provided in each lesson of the course.

Course Requirements/Components

Homework Assignments: Fifteen homework assignments will correspond with 13 lessons and 2 Reviews. The highest 13 homework grades will be averaged. Homework responses will be standardized as one-page essays that demonstrate an ability to extend understanding of assigned readings and lectures. The Lesson-based assignments may include research beyond the course materials, but the Review week assignments will be limited to course materials. Writings must be submitted online by the end of the lesson week (see Calendar). Homework will be accepted late, with the grade reduced 10% for each working day. No homework will be accepted after the due date of the end-of-term exam because of deadlines for submitting grades. Page format is 12-point font, 1-inch margins, double-spaced.

Discussions: Discussions are critical to your successful understanding and completion of the course. There is a week-long Discussion for each Lesson and each Review. The instructor provides starter questions for the discussion in each lesson, but threads can be started on any topic that addresses the course materials for that lesson. For Review discussion weeks, any topic from that half of the course is open. Your engagement should be professional, courteous, respectful, insightful, and open-minded to contrasting viewpoints.

Half of your discussion grade will be based on your ability to take **a leadership role in at least 6 of the 15 discussion sessions**. This means that you need to make an early (first 4 days of the week) initial post on a topic that encourages others to post responses and continue the

conversation. Your effort to engage should include **multiple, substantial replies to others** within the discussion thread you started. Your leadership posts should encourage, clarify, question, debate, etc. with the aim to extend the discussion. While you may start more than one discussion per week, leadership credit is limited to one case per week per student.

The other half of your discussion grade will be based on your weekly participation demonstrated through **multiple, substantial replies within a discussion thread started by another discussion leader**. As for the discussion leader, a good respondent will provide substantial replies that encourage, clarify, question, and debate. You may engage in more than one discussion thread, but participation credit requires multiple replies within a single thread.

A substantial contribution (initial post or response) will be defined by clearly articulating an explanation of your understanding, be it agreement, disagreement, extension, or synthesis. (Note: One-word or one-sentence responses do not meet the criterion of "substantial contribution.") Entries must be posted by the end of the lesson week to count for a grade.

Format of Discussion Posts: Be concise and focused with your discussion entries. Consider the examples provided as starter questions by the instructor – they are under 150 words long. Postings that are too long, complex, or multi-faceted tend to get ignored, misunderstood, or generate many tangents instead of a common discussion. A long, exhaustive initial entry may also draw little discussion if it appears to completely cover the issue, whereas a briefer singular point will leave “room” for further discussion and new viewpoints. As you will see, the best and most involved discussion threads will occur when the group is able to focus. If you have multiple ideas or want to focus on a tangent developing in a thread, start a new, concise, and focused discussion topic.

Grading Policy

Assignments (13 x 20 points)	260
Discussion Participation (15 x 8 points)	120
Discussion Leadership (6 x 20 points)	120
Total	500 Points

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