Environmental Sustainability

Course Description:
Humanity is confronting a number of significant environmental sustainability and economic challenges that require not only individual, community, and government action, but also the full attention of business leaders. These include resource scarcity, population growth, water and air pollution, ecosystem degradation, and climate change. Recent economic events highlight corporate preoccupation with short-term profitability and underestimation of corporate risk. However, business as usual may prove untenable in the 21st century. Many companies are taking steps to adopt alternative energy sources, track and reduce GHG emissions, more effectively reduce toxic pollution, and contribute to biodiversity protection. Firms of all sizes are responding to various external demands for environmentally sustainable products and services. However, surveys show that many companies don’t have a common understanding of sustainability, its importance, or its value to their businesses. In addition, the concept of sustainability has its own challenges. Advocates often use ethical arguments, and argue that valuation of sustainable outcomes is either impossible, inappropriate, or both. But in the absence of explicit valuation, there is an implicit valuation that the benefits of sustainability exceed the costs. In order for the study of sustainability to advance, there is a need for explicit valuation. This course is designed to enhance your knowledge and skills regarding environmental sustainability.

Course Goals:

1) To facilitate understanding of the drivers of sustainability and the causes of environmental degradation.
2) To facilitate understanding of the concept of sustainability.
3) To facilitate understanding of economic and ecological approaches to sustainable development.
4) To facilitate understanding of the role of sustainability in functional areas of management such as strategy, operations, supply chains, and marketing.
5) To facilitate understanding of how sustainability contributes to and conflicts with the traditional economic objectives of efficient use of scarce resources.

Required Readings:
David Pearce and Edward Barbier, Blueprint for a Sustainable Economy (Earthscan Publications, Ltd, London 2000). Make sure to get the (2000) edition; this is the 6th edition and there are five previous editions that will not be acceptable substitutes. In addition a series of articles and cases are available on Moodle and from Harvard Business School Publishing (HBSP).
Course Requirements:

(1) Regular, on-time attendance is a requirement. Students are allowed one absence without penalty. All other absences, including missed absences for work and minor illnesses, will result in a lower attendance score. A student whose religion requires that they miss class for a religious observance must fill out a “Request for Religious Observances” form and submit it to me prior to the census date for that semester to receive an excused absence for that event. The University’s inclement weather number is 704-786-2877.

(2) There will be midterm examination and a final examination. Details will be distributed.

(3) During the semester you will be required to present a ten-minute presentation (no more than 3 slides) on some aspect of environmental sustainability at your employer. If you are not currently working you may choose to focus on any organization with operations in NC or SC. The goal of your presentation should be to educate us about a practice that needs improvement and possible solutions or about a model environmental practice at your organization that you think others would benefit from learning about.

(4) There will be one team-project. Teams will be required to submit a written version of the project and present their project to class. Detailed instructions will be distributed separately.

Grading:

Attendance, participation, and the short in-class assignment are worth 15%; the midterm is worth 25% of your final grade; the written team project is worth 25%; the oral Power Point presentation for your team presentation is worth 10%; the final examination is worth 25%. Failure to complete the written team project or either exam will result in the student failing the class. The grading scale is as follows:

A = 90 -100
B = 80 - 89.99
C = 70 - 79.99
D = 60 - 69.99
F = < 60

Professors:

Dr. Denis Arnold
Dept. of Management
Main Campus Office: 244A Friday Building
Office Hours: Before class; also available on the main campus MW 9:30-11:30
Office Telephone: 687-7703
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Moodle Environment:

This course includes a significant and required use of the Moodle on-line environment. You must be able to access course materials and announcements on-line. You can login to Moodle here: http://moodle.uncc.edu

Email:

You must be reachable via your UNC Charlotte email account. All course communication will be directed to you at your UNC Charlotte email address. If you primarily use a different email account, then you should forward your email to your primary account.

Diversity:

The Belk College of Business strives to create an inclusive academic climate in which the dignity of all individuals is respected and maintained. Therefore, we celebrate diversity that includes, but is not limited to ability/disability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

Academic Honesty:

You are required to complete 100% of your own work in this class (including making a full contribution to the team project). Cheating violates the UNCC Code of Academic Integrity and may result in course failure, suspension, and/or expulsion. For more information see the following: http://integrity.uncc.edu/

Disability and Impairment Accommodation:

If you require course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you have emergency medical information about which I should be informed, please speak with me as soon as possible. Students are responsible for notifying me of any conditions that may impair their academic performance for which reasonable accommodation can be made. Without advance warning, such difficulties cannot be used later as a basis for requesting deadline extensions or reconsideration of grades. Students who require such accommodations must work with the Office of Disability Services (704-687-4355).

Course Outline and Reading Schedule:
Week 1  1/9  Introductions


Pezzey and Toman, “The Economics of Sustainability: A Review of Journal Articles”

http://www.rff.org/documents/RFF-DP-02-03.pdf

Week 2  1/16  Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

Week 3  1/23  The Meaning of Sustainability 1

Goodland, “The Concept of Environmental Sustainability,” pp. 1-24 (Moodle)

Dylick and Hockerts, “Beyond the Business Case for Corporate Sustainability,” pp. 130-141 (Moodle)

Week 4  1/30  The Meaning of Sustainability 2

Pearce and Barbier, Blueprint for a Sustainable Economy, Ch’s 1 and 2

Week 5  2/6  Valuing the Environment

Pearce and Barbier, Blueprint for a Sustainable Economy, Ch. 3

Week 6  2/13  Climate Change

Case Study: “The Political Economy of Carbon Trading” (HBSP)

Recommended: L. Hunter Lovins, “The Business Case for Climate Protection”

Week 7  2/20  Measuring Sustainable Development: Economic and Ecological Approaches

Pearce and Barbier, *Blueprint for a Sustainable Economy*, Ch’s. 4-5

Week 8  2/27  Midterm Exam

Student team project proposals due by 2/30.

Week 9  3/5  Spring Break

Week 10  3/12  Sustainable Operations

Case: “What Does it Mean to be Truly Green? Environmental Sustainability at Frito Lay North America,” (Moodle)

Week 11  3/19  Green Strategy

Orsato, “Competitive Environmental Strategies: When Does It Pay to be Green?,” pp. 127-143 (Moodle)
Case Study: “Wal-Mart’s Sustainability Strategy” (HBSP)

Week 12  3/26  Greenwashing

Delmas and Burbano, “The Drivers of Greenwashing,” pp. 64-87 (Moodle)
Case Study: “FIJI Water and Corporate Social Responsibility - Green Makeover or "Greenwashing" (HBSP)

Week 13  4/2  The Causes of Environmental Degradation

Pearce and Barbier, *Blueprint for a Sustainable Economy*, Ch. 6
Week 14  4/9  Solving Environmental Problems: Property Rights, Policy Instruments

Pearce and Barbier, *Blueprint for a Sustainable Economy*, Ch’s. 7-8

Week 15  4/16  Business & the Environment; Ecological Economics: A New Paradigm?

Pearce and Barbier, *Blueprint for a Sustainable Economy*, Ch’s. 9-10

Week 16  4/23  TBA

Week 17  4/30  Team Presentations

Week 18  5/7  Final Exam

ALL PARTS OF THIS SYLLABUS ARE SUBJECT TO REVISION
ANY REVISIONS WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS OR VIA MOODLE