

NRES 200: Introduction to Sustainable Communities

Fall 2023

Syllabus

Profesor: Chamomile Nusz
Class: Monday and Wednesday, 2 pm to 3:15 pm
Office: TNR Room 271
Office Hours: by appointment
Office phone number: 715-281-4776
E-mail: cnusz@uwsp.edu (preferred method of contact)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Credits: 3

What is community sustainability? How do we envision, create, and maintain sustainable communities? NRES 200 will explore these important questions. We will critically examine how sustainability's social, economic, institutional, and environmental dimensions interconnect with asset-based community development. Key concepts covered in the course include systems thinking, complexity, and resilience; sustainable infrastructure and green building; food, energy, and economics; and collaborative approaches to community planning and design.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH

I aim to help you develop the knowledge, skills, and creativity required to address humanity's sustainability challenges and create and capitalize on new opportunities. My teaching style is to create an engaging, interactive, participatory, and hands-on space for you to learn. Knowledge has to be built by every individual. No one can give you knowledge. With this class, like most other situations, you will get out of the class what you put into it. That is, your learning will be proportional to your effort and engagement. Every student will be responsible for a significant amount of the learning inside and outside the classroom.

COMMUNICATION

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let me know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing me when difficulties arise during the semester so that I can help you find a solution

I. COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the completion of this course, students will be able to critically evaluate the social, economic, institutional, and environmental dimensions of sustainability challenges facing communities and formulate clear, effective solutions to those challenges. More specifically, students will be able to:

1. Define “sustainability” in terms of social, economic, institutional, and environmental dimensions;
2. Use systems thinking to explore how these dimensions interact in coupled social-ecological systems;
3. Examine the core concepts, processes, and methods of the planning field and explore relevant community plans;
4. Explore and apply key concepts, strategies, and tools for sustainable community development;
5. Conduct self-directed sustainability research, including creating a research question, analyzing relevant literature, collecting and analyzing data, and reporting results and conclusions;
6. Communicate ideas formally and informally through speaking and writing.

These course learning outcomes are closely aligned with the UW-Stevens Point General Education Program (GEP) outcomes for both Social Science and Environmental Responsibility, as detailed below.

GEP Social Science Outcomes:

1. Explain or apply major concepts, methods, or theories used in the social sciences to investigate, analyze, or predict human behavior.
2. Examine and explain how social, cultural, or political institutions influence individuals or groups.

GEP Environmental Responsibility Outcomes:

1. Identify interactions between human society and the natural environment.
2. Analyze the individual, social, cultural, and ecological factors influencing environmental sustainability.
3. Evaluate competing claims that inform environmental debates.

II. COURSE DETAILS

A. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

This course will use the online learning management software CANVAS. All assignments, discussions, instructor updates, non-textbook readings, and other course materials will be posted on CANVAS. We will use class time for interactive lectures, field trips, discussions, exams, peer reviews, and other activities. Our classroom will be an inclusive environment. We will have a great opportunity to learn from each other and to appreciate and understand our

differences through a respectful exchange of ideas and opinions. Disrespect or disparagement will not be tolerated.

Inclusivity Statement

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

If you have experienced a bias incident (an act of conduct, speech, or expression to which a bias motive is evident as a contributing factor regardless of whether the act is criminal) at UWSP, you have the right to report it, please visit the Dean of Students – Bias/Hate Incident Reporting website. You may also contact the Dean of Students office directly at dos@uwsp.edu.

B. READINGS AND LECTURES

The required textbooks for this course are (a) Asset Building and Community Development by Green and Haines. Other weekly readings will be posted on CANVAS. The reading assignments are required and will structure our class discussions. I expect you to be able to explain, interpret, apply, analyze, and evaluate the reading material. Please note that I may amend required readings during the semester.

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Participation (100 points, ~16.3% of grade)
 - a. Active participation is a crucial component of this course.
 - b. You will participate in field trips and other exploratory activities that provide experiential knowledge of community sustainability.
2. Weekly responses to questions and discussion with classmates in Canvas about field trips/readings (150 points, ~25% of grade)
 - a. You will be expected to answer the questions asked and respond to at least two classmates' questions.
3. Sustainability Research Report (100 points, ~16.3% of grade)
 - a. In this assignment, you will learn how to propose, research, write, and present a professional research report.
4. Final Presentation on Sustainability Research (75 points, ~12.5% of grade)
 - a. You will share a presentation on your sustainability research.
5. Community Involvement (100 points, ~16.3% of grade)
 - a. By midterm, you will be expected to be actively involved with one community or school organization/club. You will write a paper on why you chose that organization/club.

6. Final Presentation on Community Involvement (75 points, ~12.5% of grade)
 - a. You will share a presentation on your organization/club and how they positively impact the community's sustainability.
7. Total Points = 600 points

D. EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

1. Campus Event (30 points): You may attend up to 3 campus sustainability events and write a short report summarizing the experience (10 points for each event).
2. Intentional Shopping (30 points): You may write a short report summarizing your experience of intentionally shopping for one month (10 points for each month you do it up to 3 months).
3. You can conduct an energy audit of your dorm/apartment/home. This must include a write up on where your energy is coming from, how much energy you are using, and the environmental impact that it is having.

E. GRADING SCALE

93% or higher = A
90 – 92.99% = A-
87 – 89.99% = B+
83 – 86.99.5% = B
80 – 82.99% = B-
77 – 79.99% = C+
73 – 76.99% = C
70 – 72.99% = C-
67 – 69.99% = D+
63 – 66.99% = D
60 – 62.99% = D-
Less than 60% = F

III. COURSE POLICIES

A. ASSIGNMENTS

To receive full credit, assignments must be submitted by the stated deadline. Assignments turned in after the deadline will be considered late and subject to a 10% per day late penalty, including weekends. Deductions will be capped after one week; if the instructor opts to accept a very late assignment, it will be worth up to 30% of the total available points. We understand that extenuating circumstances may come up, and those will need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the professor.

B. ATTENDANCE

A student will be marked absent if they do not (a) attend a scheduled synchronous lecture or (b) follow instructions for asynchronous participation as detailed above. Absences due to illness, family emergency, etc., may be excused if a written explanation is provided beforehand (except for emergencies, in which case an explanation should be provided as soon as practical). If absences occur on days when assignments are due, it is the student's responsibility to submit their work before the due date to receive full credit. If you need to miss a scheduled presentation or assignment, you must inform me beforehand and explain why you are unable to be present at the scheduled time. Unexcused absences from presentations and exams will result in a grade of zero points.

C. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

At UW-Stevens Point and, in all courses, we place great emphasis on academic integrity and honesty. Plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, helping others commit these acts, and any form of dishonesty compromise the educational process and devalue the achievements of all students. All work you submit must be original and completed individually unless collaboration is explicitly allowed. Always acknowledge your sources, cite appropriately, and give credit where it's due. If instances of alleged academic dishonesty are identified, appropriate actions will be taken in accordance with the institution's policies (UWSP Chapter 14). These actions could include revising the assignment, receiving a lower grade or no credit for the assignment, receiving a lower grade for the entire course, or facing more serious academic consequences.

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

If you are unsure if something might be considered academic misconduct, you are struggling to understand the content or an assignment, or you have fallen behind for whatever reason, please contact me as soon as possible. By nurturing a community of support, honesty, and respect, we ensure that academic pursuits and your experiences at UW-Stevens Point are both meaningful and genuine.

D. OTHER COURSE POLICIES

- All written work must be grammatically correct, neat, and well-organized. Work that is sloppy, hard to read, does not follow the prescribed format, and/or contains many spelling and/or grammatical errors will receive a deduction.
- Cell phones will be put into pockets/backpacks/bags or otherwise stored during lectures and discussions. The appearance of your cell phone during class will indicate your disinterest in the topic and will thus count as an absence, and you will lose attendance points when this occurs.

E. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- See the UW-Stevens Point Emergency Management Plan at www.uwsp.edu/rmgt for details on all emergency response issues at UWSP.

F. STUDENT SUPPORT RESOURCES

Academic and Career Advising Center (ACAC)

209 Collins Classroom Center (CCC)

1801 4th Ave.

Stevens Point, WI 54481

715-346-3226 acac@uwsp.edu

Counseling Center

Delzell Hall

910 Fremont Street

Stevens Point, WI 54481

715-346-3553 counsel@uwsp.edu

Mental Health Resources for Students

Mantra Health

Teletherapy & Telepsychiatry

- Diverse therapists
- After-hours availability
- Medication evaluations & prescriptions

You@UWSP

Self-help & Well-being Platform

Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services

24/7 Mental Health Support:

- Call or text: 888-531-2142 · Start a chat session
- Crisis care available

Dean of Students Office

2100 Main Street

Old Main, Room 212

Stevens Point, WI 54481-3897

Phone: 715-346-2611 DOS@uwsp.edu

Equal Access and Disability Accommodation

If you have a condition that may impact your learning and/or participation in course activities, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC will engage in an interactive process with students and identify appropriate academic accommodations and auxiliary services in accordance with the University's legal obligations. Instructors, students, and DRC staff work collaboratively to establish any necessary adjustments or supports. Accommodations are rarely applied retroactively so it is vital that students make timely requests.

Please let me know if you have questions. The DRC is located in 108 Collins Classroom Center and can be reached at 715/346-3365 and drc@uwsp.edu.

Student Health Service

Delzell Hall
910 Fremont St
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-346-4646

Tutoring-Learning Center (TLC)

The Tutoring-Learning Center (TLC) helps students in all disciplines become more effective, confident learners. We believe all learners benefit from sharing work with knowledgeable, attentive tutors. The TLC offers four tutoring services:

- Academic Coaching: Build skills in studying, time management, test-taking, online learning, and more.
- Course Content: Practice problems, deepen understanding, and prepare for exams in natural resources, STEM, World Languages, and more.
- Reading/Writing: Brainstorm and refine papers, essays, lab reports, citations, résumés, scholarship applications, personal writing, and more.
- Tech Essentials: Develop computer literacy and learn to use UWSP-related applications such as Canvas, Microsoft 365, and Zoom.

To make an appointment, students can self-schedule using Navigate, contact us at tlctutor@uwsp.edu or 715-346-3568, or stop into CCC 234.

Stevens Point Campus Tutoring-Learning Center

234 Collins Classroom Center (CCC)
1801 4th Ave.
Stevens Point, WI 54481
715-346-3568 tlctutor@uwsp.edu

Marshfield Campus Tutoring-Learning Center

Library
2000 W. 5th Street

Marshfield, WI 54449
715-898-6036 roleary@uwsp.edu

Wausau Campus Tutoring-Learning Center

Library
518 S. 7th Ave
Wausau, WI 54401
715-261-6148 lorandal@uwsp.edu

***** THE SYLLABUS, ASSIGNMENTS, GRADE WEIGHTS, AND COURSE SCHEDULE ARE ALL SUBJECT TO CHANGE. THE INSTRUCTOR WILL NOTIFY THE STUDENTS AS SOON AS ANY SUCH CHANGES ARE MADE AND WILL PROVIDE UPDATED COURSE MATERIALS AS APPROPRIATE. *****