POL/EVST3031: Sustainable Development
Spring 2013

<div align="center">SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ASSIGNMENTS</div>

Overview
This document describes the main assignments in POL/EVST3031 and how your performance in these assignments will be evaluated.

Exams
A study guide for each of the three non-cumulative, in-class, closed-book exams will be provided one week prior to the exam date. Any indication of cheating will earn you a zero for the exam.

Exam answers will be posted on Blackboard within 24 hours of the exam's administration. Your exam grade will be posted on Blackboard by the end of the week following the week in which the exam was administered. Your exam will not be returned in class, but you can pick it up from the instructor's office during office hours.

Participation
Each missed class in a given week entails a loss of 0.45 participation points. (If your absence is excused, you will earn full participation points for the missed class.)

Failure to contribute to class discussions in at least two of the week's class periods also entails a loss of 0.45 participation points. (These values are 0.4 in the first week.)

Reading responses
You will write one reading response per week except in the first week.* The reading responses, which you will submit via Blackboard, should be a maximum of 4 pages in length (DS, 12-point conventional font, 1 inch margins). The responses should:

1) Summarize the main ideas of each reading;
2) Compare and contrast the readings if you are addressing two or more;
3) Connect the readings to the week's topic and to sustainable development generally; and
4) Provide your opinions about the readings. In presenting your opinions, you might consider (among other issues) whether the arguments in the readings are well developed, whether they appear backed by evidence, and whether you have read other materials that appear to support or contradict arguments in the readings.

You will be randomly assigned to one of three reading response groups, with deadlines as follows:

Reading response group	Blackboard submission deadlines
Group A*	Sunday 5 p.m.: Weeks 2, 4, 5, 6 Tuesday 5 p.m.: Weeks 7, 8, 9, 10 Thursday 5 p.m.: Weeks 8, 11, 12
Group B	Sunday 5 p.m.: Weeks 11, 12, 13 Tuesday 5 p.m.: Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Thursday 5 p.m.: Weeks 7, 8, 9
Group C	Sunday 5 p.m.: Weeks 7, 8, 9, 10 Tuesday 5 p.m.: Weeks 11, 12, 13 Thursday 5 p.m.: Weeks 2, 3, 4, 5

*In Week 8, members of Group A will write two reading responses, one due on Tuesday and one due on Thursday. This doubling up is necessary to ensure that members of all three groups write an equal number of responses.

Each reading response can earn up to 2.2 points and will be evaluated using the rubric below. Partial points will be awarded in situations wherein a response does not completely fulfill requirements.

Reading response grading rubric	Points
Response summarizes the assigned reading(s).	0.5
Response compares and contrasts reading(s) when two or more are assigned. (If only one reading is assigned, the student automatically receives full points for this element.)	0.2
Response connects the reading(s) to the week's topic and to sustainable development generally.	0.5
Response describes the student's opinions about the readings(s).	0.4
The arguments and opinions in the response are coherent, thoughtful, and well justified.	0.4
The response is well written (i.e., is free of typos, uses correct grammar and spelling, and uses words and phrases appropriately).	0.2
Total	2.2

Your reading response will be graded by the end of the week in which it was written. Your response will not be returned in class, but you can pick it up from the instructor's office during office hours.

You will write 11 reading responses throughout the semester; 11 multiplied by 2.2 is 24.2. The final 0.8 of the 25-point reading response allotment will be assigned at the end of the semester based on the overall quality of your reading responses throughout the semester.

Group project
In the second week of the course, you will be randomly assigned to a 4–5 person group that will profile a sustainable development effort at the local, state, national, or international scale (e.g., a community garden or the Global Environment Facility). You will primarily meet with your group outside of class, though we may have a some (yet to be scheduled) in-class work sessions. The online profile you develop for the effort will have nine elements:

1) An abstract that succinctly describes the *who, what, when, where, why* and *how* of the effort;

2) A concise written description of the effort's goals and/or mission statement;

3) An organizational chart that visually depicts the individuals involved in the effort and their roles and responsibilities;

4) A visual depiction of the individuals, institutions, or entities affected by the effort (e.g., a collage of your own original photos or photos collected from secondary sources and cited appropriately).

5) A visual depiction of the effort's service area and the services it delivers (e.g., a map of the area in which the effort operates, a video of volunteers planting a community garden, or a clip from a video developed by an organization to promote its efforts and solicit donations).

6) A flowchart of tasks associated with the effort and the order in which they are performed;

7) A tape-recorded and/or video-taped* interview with one person who either is involved in the effort or who has received benefits from or services associated with the effort.

8) A description of the effort's successes and failures, both as measured by the effort's leaders/organizers and per your own evaluation of the effort's contributions to environmental stewardship, economic betterment, and equity.

9) A strategic assessment of the effort's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), all evaluated with reference to the environment, economy, and equity.

*With interviewee permission; otherwise, you will have to take notes and write a narrative.

All of these elements will be described in greater detail in separate handouts available within the first few weeks of the semester. Rather than having one final project deadline, your group will be required to complete each element (and post it on Blogger) by deadlines staged throughout the semester. You will receive feedback on each element. Your group will have the opportunity to revise your final project before submitting it at the end of the semester, thereby earning back a portion of any points you may have lost during earlier phases of the project. Your group will also be required to schedule a check-in meeting with me (the instructor) at least once during the semester.

While each element will have a separate, detailed rubric, the rubric below shows generally how your project will be evaluated:

Group project grading rubric	Points
Blog for group project established by deadline and per specified standards	0.5
Completion and quality of abstract and mission statement/goal summary	1
Completion, quality, and accuracy of organizational chart	1
Visual depiction of the individuals, institutions, and/or entities affected by the effort	1
Visual depiction of the effort's service area and the services it delivers	1
Flowchart of tasks associated with the effort and their order of execution	1
Interview with individual associated with the effort	3
Description of the effort's successes and failures	2
Strategic assessment of the effort's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats	4
Overall quality of writing performed for the project	2
Peer assessments of each student's contributions to the project	3
Completion of mid-semester check-in with instructor	0.5
Total	20

The calendar below indicates the schedule of deadlines for the group project:

Group project task	Deadline
Topic selection and blog setup	Friday, Jan. 18
Task 1: Abstract	Friday, Jan. 25
Task 2: Mission statement/goal summary	Friday, Feb. 1
Task 3: Organizational chart	Friday, Feb. 8
Task 4: Individuals, institutions, and/or entities affected	Friday, Feb. 15
Task 5: Service area and services	Friday, Feb. 22
Task 6: Tasks and order of execution	Friday, March 1
Task 7: Interview	Friday, March 15
Task 8: Successes and failures	Friday, March 29
Task 9: SWOT assessment	Friday, April 5

Group presentation	Week of April 15–19 (day randomly assigned)
Final project revisions and final project due	Friday, April 19

The assignment/task must be posted on the group's blog by midnight on the Friday it is due and will be evaluated in the subsequent week. Technical difficulties (e.g., problems posting to Blogger) are NOT an acceptable excuse for failing to submit an assignment or doing so late. Complete your work early so that technical issues can be addressed. You will receive instructions concerning how to set up your group's blog when receive your group assignment in the second week of class.