Syllabus for Introduction to Sustainable Development

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Objective
The objective of the introduction, beyond providing a basic introduction to sustainable development concepts, is to recognize the challenges of sustainable development; the opportunities and limits for the private sector in meeting these challenges; and prepare you for the application of these concepts in functional business topics.

The introduction is organized around two themes:

What is sustainable development,” where does it come from, and why it has moved from a marginal to central position in today’s world.

What are the roles and techniques used by the private sector (firms) and public sector (governments, international organizations, etc.) to further sustainable development efforts in the developed and developing worlds?

Course Materials
In the spirit of sustainability, class lecture slides (found on http://www.bendickegan.com) and readings are available on the web to support in class lectures. For guidance to additional sources, please notice the link to various bibliographies at the end of the syllabus.

Grading
There will be two brief written quizzes in class that will be included in the 60% of the course total grade.

Class Sessions

Session 1: Social Responsibility, Firms and Sustainable Development

Learning objectives: Able to answer the following questions:

What are the definitions of the basic concepts of sustainability?
What are the landmark events that have contributed to today’s notion of sustainability?
How does sustainable development affect your likely career path in management?

Part 1. Introduction to course

Part 2. What is sustainability?

Additional information:

For definitions and criteria
http://www.sustainability.com/developing-value/definitions.asp


Read pages 1-13 in Panayotou’s “Globalization and Environment.” This site gives you access to the full paper in pdf. http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidwp/053.htm


Session 2: Is it possible to combine sustainability and business success?

Learning objectives: Able to answer the following questions:

Why do firms adopt a sustainable strategy?
What tools do firms use to implement their SD strategies?
How do stakeholders evaluate a firm’s commitment to sustainable strategies?

Part 1. Quiz
Lecture
Part 2. Case studies and presentations

Additional information:


“PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP 2002 Sustainability Survey Report” executive summary and key findings (pp. 1-3 and 6-12) On line http://www.pwcglobal.com/eas

Read pp. 30-41 in Panayotou’s section “Globalization and Environment”. http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidwp/056.htm

Note: In-class information on business strategies (e.g. tools and cases) is based on materials from Business and Sustainable Development: A Global Guide, found at: http://wwwbsdglobal.com/tools/bt_dfe.asp; and “The Sustainable Development Journey,” found at: http://wwwbsdglobal.com/sd_journey.asp

Make Session 3: Firm Level: Environmental Management Systems: Using Standards, Certification and other Systems to further SD goals

Learning objectives: Able to answer the following questions:

What global management systems exist to guide firms in establishing and implementing a strategy?

How do these various approaches, including certification, encourage sustainable business practices?

Part 1. Environmental Management Systems
ISO 14001
EMAS
Presentation of case studies: Do firms benefit from adopting practices such as ISO?

Part 2. The Social Side of SD
SA8000
Cases
Film

Additional information:


Standards and systems, read http://wwwbsdglobal.com/tools/systems_iso.asp

Read and understand the definitions of empowerment http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/empowerment/whatis/index.htm
And social capital http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/scapital/SChowmeas1.htm
Class 4: The Boundaries of Sustainable Development

Learning objectives: Able to answer the following questions:

1. How do stakeholders cause policies – and boundaries -- to change?
2. What role do reporting systems play in this process?
3. What has the NRE offered that other reporting systems have not?
4. What does the law (national & international) cover and not cover in this process of defining boundaries?

Quiz
Part 1: Institutions/stakeholders & SD
   A. Markets, NGOs, & Governments
   B. Transparency & Reporting Systems
      1. GRI
      2. NRE
Part 2: International
   A. Evolution of SD law
   B. International trade: GM Food

Contest

Additional information:


References


International Institute for Sustainable Development. Various articles. Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. At http://www.iisd.org/about/


Where are the Poor: Experiences with the Development and Use of Poverty Mapping, http://pubs.wri.org/pubs_pdf.cfm?PubID=3758


**Links to Links**
http://www.sdgateway.net/introsd/bibliography.htm
http://www.susdev.org/links/

Websites with case examples
http://www.wbcsd.ch/casestud/index.htm
http://www.sdgateway.net
http://www.sustainable.doe.gov/business/sbarttoc.shtml
http://www.virtualexhibit.net/new/globalShowcase.php