SUST5310 – SPRING 2016
Business Sustainability Consulting

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Class meeting hours: Th 6:00 – 8:40 pm, Pigott 100
Office hours: Th before and after class and by appointment

Class website: Our course space is on Canvas this quarter. www.seattleu.instructure.com is the address; your login and password are your SU e-mail login and password. We will use Canvas for communication, materials, and, if you choose, team workspace.

Required text:
In addition, you will need to consult various texts, articles, and references to be informed about your unique project.

Purpose and Objectives:
Sustainability is a challenge and opportunity that has been called the biggest consideration for business for the coming century. The focus on “meeting our needs while not compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs” (Brundtland Commission) has been identified as the defining element of the next few decades, at least, and those businesses who identify strategies to avoid the risks presented by sustainability challenges and to capitalize on the opportunities presented will be the ones best positioned for long-term survival and success in the future.

The goal of this course is to help you achieve an understanding of the sustainability considerations facing organizations in today’s business environment. You will be involved in analyzing sustainability elements of all relevant aspects of a specific business; these may include: sustainability as strategy, leading sustainability efforts within an organization, sustainability considerations of specific industry sectors, sustainability considerations related to organizational functions, including purchasing, facilities, human resources, manufacturing, service provision, information technology, and marketing.

This course is designed to offer students the chance to apply the principles, concepts, and skills learned in prior classes and the material we’ll cover in this class to actual business situations. Students will be expected to conduct the necessary interviews and research to gather needed information, and then to use that information and their knowledge and judgment to make decisions and recommendations for the client organizations.
**Class Procedures and Activities:**
To a great extent, this will be a self-directed class where student responsibilities will be of a different scope and nature than in the normal classroom environment. The teamwork that is required will also differ from previous team project experiences: team projects here are actual situations requiring decisions, recommendations, and action. Considerable interaction will be required between the student teams and participating client companies. As much as possible, students will be given a choice as to the company with which they will consult.

The class will be organized into teams of about 2 students each. These teams will each work together with a participating client company/organization in order to accomplish a project of the type described in the ‘project description’ section below. Material covered in class during the quarter will be directly and systematically linked to the projects. Explanation and rationale for the techniques and skills that will be required to complete the projects successfully will be developed sequentially. Lectures, if they happen, will focus on subjects directly relevant to the objectives of student projects and will mostly use these projects as “live” case studies for class discussion.

Schedules permitting, executives of participating organizations will be invited to class to describe their companies’ products/services and industry and to discuss, informally, their sustainability plans, objectives, activities, and experiences, as well as the issues that affect the choices and decisions they face. In addition, again, schedules permitting, there may be a weekend field trip to visit client organizations. The final project presentations will, to the extent possible, take place at the clients’ office or meeting space, including those projects taking place in an out-of-town location.

**Project Description:**
Student teams will perform the interviews, research, analysis, and evaluation required to advise management in questions relating to the direction and extent of sustainability-related opportunities and risks facing the organization. Students will employ relevant parts of the assigned text’s SCORE (Sustainability Competency & Opportunity Rating & Evaluation) framework as appropriate to guide their data collection and analysis. The outcome is expected to be a tailored assessment and prioritized list of recommended sustainability actions and strategies for the client. These recommendations may span several or all of the following categories:

* benefits and risks of pursuing sustainability-related actions
* managing sustainability-related change within the organization
* sustainability-related considerations in service provision
* sustainability-related considerations in product design
* manufacturing and operations activities
* facilities-, purchasing-, and information technology-related sustainability activities, benefits, and risks
* marketing- and accounting/finance-related considerations in sustainability-related decisions

Exact areas of project focus will depend on the needs of the clients, as the projects will be tailored to their situations and information needs.
Team Reports:
The results of each team’s efforts will be formalized in a written report to the client organization. It is expected that these reports will be prepared carefully, thoroughly, and in a manner consistent with high academic and professional standards. Teams should have the confidence that their work is sound enough to withstand scrutiny by organization decision-makers and complete enough for these executives to utilize the information productively in their sustainability-related decisions. Reports will likely be 18 – 25 pages in length, plus appropriate appendices, supporting data and resources, and bibliography of sources used. The objectives of each team’s efforts will be to provide the company with a report that is practical, useful, and a source of information that the firm does not already know.

Teams will also make practice oral presentations to the class and final presentations to company executives summarizing the results of their efforts, explaining the prioritized recommendations, and providing the rationale underlying those recommendations. Oral reports will be presented at the client’s offices, when time and distance permit; otherwise, they may be presented via conferencing software.

Grading:

Grades will be based on the following components:

- oral report to the class: **sustainability issues** specific to your client’s needs 15%
- oral report, practice presentation 10%
- final oral report to the client 25%
- written final report, draft 20%
- written report, final version 15%
- attitude, class participation, peer review, midterm project briefing to class, responsiveness, etc. 15%

NOTE: Because these projects have such a high profile and are so important to both our client firms and to Seattle University, it is imperative that teams make all efforts to work effectively together. In an effort to minimize ‘free-rider’ problems and to encourage teams to seek help in team organization and processes sooner rather than later in the quarter, your team-based project scores will be adjusted based on assessments of your individual performance, based on peer evaluations. That is, individual scores may be adjusted up or down, based on performance input from your team members. Of course, it is hoped that these types of problems will not materialize this quarter. 😊 If there is any problem, at any time during the quarter, with or between team members, please let your professor know and we’ll work together to guide the team to its highest-functioning level.

Here’s to a fun and fascinating quarter of learning!!
**SPR16—SUST5310-01 – Class Schedule:** (note: any updates will be provided in class and posted on Canvas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| 1: Th 3/31 | course orientation  
project descriptions  
class member introduction  
team formation, project choice  
topic: introduction to sustainability: read Ch.1 (Hitchcock & Willard)  
***begin work on team charter assignment |
| 2: Th 4/7 | topic: sustainability assessments  
***team charter assignment due by today  
***asap after class this week: meet with client organization  
   establish/confirm project objectives  
   begin prep of: statement of work, engagement letter |
| 3: Th 4/14 | topic: sustainability -- research and resources  
complete statements of work and engagement letters  
schedule team meetings with professor |
| 4: Th 4/21 | ***before class this week: statement of work, engagement letter  
   should be completed and signed off  
team explanations to class: overview of project  
   work, topic, resources, and task allocations  
team meetings with professor |
| 5: Th 4/28 | some teams present **sustainability issues**  
team meetings with professor (all teams) |
| 6: Th 5/5 | remaining teams present **sustainability issues**  
team meetings with professor (all teams) |
| 7: Th 5/12 | all teams:  
**turn in preliminary outline** of final paper (expanded outline format)  
midterm **briefing to class** (~10 minutes + Q&A) |
| 8: Th 5/19 | all teams:  
team meetings, scheduled with professor -- no formal class meeting  
feedback on preliminary rough outlines |
9: Th 5/26 for teams presenting tonight:
  turn in draft of written final report (will be graded)
  oral report, practice presentation (will be graded)

10: Th 6/2 for remaining teams presenting tonight:
  turn in draft of written final report (will be graded)
  oral report, practice presentation (will be graded)

11: Th 6/9 in-class meeting: dinner and recap/debrief of quarter’s learning & activities

written report, final version due – to be delivered to client and instructor, ideally a minimum of one working day prior to oral presentation, but no later than the final day of class

****oral report to the company (sometime in last 2 weeks, to be scheduled to include client company and professor)****