

# **PSC 394: Sustainability (Topics in IR)**

## **HNR 308: Sustainability & Fair Trade**

Spring 2017

Mondays, 2:00-4:45, GH 250

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### **Introduction**

The objective of this course is gain a better understanding of sustainability issues, with a special focus on how fair trade can help to achieve global sustainability. Attaining sustainability begins with raising the awareness of everyone involved, from individuals to global organizations, about the impact consumption habits and policies have on the planet and its inhabitants. Sustainability requires adopting an agenda of reducing, reusing, and recycling that promotes sustainable production and consumption practices. Fair trade has the potential to contribute to sustainable practices by providing more people access to a living wage.

Sustainability and fair trade are complex issues that require an examination that moves beyond the news and social media hype frequently surrounding ethical and environmental issues. In order to assess the value of fair trade as a means to promote global sustainability, we will consider how fair trade works, as well as the benefits and drawbacks of fair trade by discussing the political, economic, environmental, and sociocultural issues. Course assignments develop writing, critical thinking, and analytical skills by considering the foundations of these concepts, the impact of sustainability and fair trade, and connections between local consumers and global producers.

To increase your personal awareness of where you fit in the global scheme of sustainability, we will visit a fair trade businesses that has direct connections with the growers and artisans where they buy the goods they sell as well as a recycling plant.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

In taking this course, you will

- Learn key international politics concepts necessary for understanding sustainability and fair trade, and apply them to current world problems.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how sustainability and fair trade apply to the principles and standards relating to the study of individuals and/or groups.
- Examine the ethical issues relevant to research and applications in international politics through analyzing sustainability and fair trade.
- Examine the impact of diversity issues within international politics through sustainability and fair trade.
- Communicate an understanding of sustainability and fair trade using methodological formats appropriate to international politics.

## Readings

The majority of the course readings are linked to your course webpage, but the following books are required for this course:

- **Plastic: A Toxic Love Story**, Susan Freinkel, ISBN-13: 978-0547152400
- **The No-Nonsense Guide to Degrowth and Sustainability**, Wayne Ellwood, ISBN-13: 978-1780261232

## Course Requirements

- Assignments (WAs, responses, analysis paper)= 75% of overall grade
- Participation= 25% of overall grade

## Assignments

### *Weekly Assignments (WAs)*

- WAs should demonstrate that you've not only reviewed all of the readings/media, but identified and connected together the key information.
- Each WA is worth 6 points.
- You have a 307 word limit for each WA.
  - You will lose 1 point for exceeding the total word count. by 1- 50 words; 2 points for 51-100 words; 3 points for +101 words.
  - There is no need to put your name or other information at the top of the paper.
- List the question number—and only the question number—at the start of your answer, like this:
  1. Fair trade demonstrates globalization...
  2. The pros of fair trade are...
  3. The cons of fair trade are...
- You will lose one point for each failure to:
  - Save file as Last name, WA# (such as Weir WA 3)
  - Double-space your paper
  - Use 12 point font-size equivalent to Times New Roman
  - Proof-read/edit your paper

### *Tips on completing the WAs*

- Which question you're answering should be obvious from the first sentence.
- Avoid opinion-based answers. The point of this assignment is to use information from the readings/media to answer the questions.
- Don't quote or paraphrase. Summarize the information from the readings/media.
- Avoid including things like "the author says..." "in the first section..." "then / next in the video...", etc.
- Think in terms of the big picture:
  - Connect key points of the readings/media to answer the questions
  - Avoid details--things like percentages, examples, and so forth are minor supporting points

### *Submitting WAs*

- Weekly Assignments must be submitted to Blackboard by Monday at 1:30 pm
- You will receive a grade of 0 if you do not save your file as a .doc or .docx extension that can be opened in Blackboard. Do not save as a zip file.

- You can check after you've submitted your file to ensure it can be opened.
- Forgot to do the assignment or weren't able to load it onto Blackboard by the deadline? You have until Friday at noon to submit that week's late assignment, with a starting grade of 75%.
- No WAs will be accepted by email

### **Responses**

The responses include questions about your habits as well as your reactions to site visits. The purpose is threefold. First, you'll write about your current sustainability habits. Second, for each site visit, you will answer questions connecting the local to the global by writing about the business and your experience. Third, your reflections will offer a basis for comparison in the critical thought paper.

Follow above instructions for submitting WAs to submit responses. The same rules apply to the exercises.

There is no word limit for the responses.

### **Analysis Paper**

The objective of this assignment is for you to make connections between the course topic concepts, your site visits, and your awareness, attitudes, and habits regarding sustainability and fair trade. The assignment will be posted on your course web page, reviewed during the last class, due at the end of final exam time.

### **Standard Format for Written Work and Additional Assignment Information**

In addition to the content criteria laid out in the assignment, the following criteria also applies. You will be penalized for failing to follow the standard format. Note that if your paper is poorly written, plagued by excessive grammatical errors, you will receive a grade of zero. I highly encourage you to take advantage of the [University Writing Center](#) that offers online assistance to students enrolled in online classes.

#### **Basic grammatical mechanics**

- You should have an introduction and conclusion for your paper
  - Intro should introduce the points of the posted paper questions and how you intend to organize/ discuss these points
  - Conclusion should be a summary of your points and a reiteration of their collective relevance.
- Page numbers
- Double-spaced
  - The exception is for the Qs & As assignment, which should be single-spaced
- Prescribed margins: 1" all around
- Times New Roman 12 pt. font (or Mac comparable)
- Write in the third person
- Edited and proof-read so that paper is well-written.
  - For each spelling, grammar, or punctuation error, you will lose one point from your paper grade. You will get two freebies because even the best proof-reader can miss a couple of typos.
    - Common errors include
      - Misspelled words/ typos
      - Using in the incorrect homonym- for instance, using 'too' instead of 'to'

- Not including punctuation where punctuation should be included
  - For lists of more than two things, there should always be a comma between all items before the final and- for example, the film's main topics are drugs, violence, and civil war.
- Misplaced or missing apostrophes for possessive v. non-possessive words.
  - Clarity in writing
  - Well-organized
  - Appropriate length paragraphs
- Don't type the last word on the page and submit the document (you should reread your paper at least once, aloud, so you can determine the placement of breaks—where commas go—as well as catch any typos, incomplete or run-on thoughts, etc.

### Referencing readings

- Focus on discussing the significance of the information in the readings to the course concepts rather than giving summaries of them.
- When you discuss readings, it is not necessary to use the full name of the article, book, etc.; just explain your point. As such, you do not need to reference the sources of the articles that I have provided for you in your critical thought papers.
  - Do not directly quote or paraphrase any of the articles; all information should be in your own words. For this reason, you do not need citations for the cases.
  - Avoid saying 'the article says,' 'according to the Frisbee chapter,' etc. Just relate the significance of the information presented in the reading.

### Class Participation

- Centered on critically examining the issues and concepts
- Class participation is based on a number of aspects including being on time, participation in discussions, respect towards others, quality of contributions
- Note that work or family obligations are not legitimate excuses for missing class.
- Attend every class, never say a word, don't take advantage of e-mail responses= a **failing grade** for class participation
  - This means your course grade starts at a 75%
- *E-mail Responses*
  - Provides a way to enhance your participation grade
  - Note: e-mail responses **are not** a substitute for in-class participation, though they can help your participation grade
  - Points not lost for not doing e-mail responses
  - Responses must be in formal writing style and appear in body of the message
  - 2 options:
    1. Before the start of class, email responses to the day's readings
    2. Send relevant news items—link story, give comments, criticisms, relevance to class topics, and/or insights
      - Limit of one news item per week during regular semester
      - The last one submitted no later than April 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Course Schedule** – see course webpage at <http://www.sallymundo.com/kimberly/courses.html>

### Additional Information

## Technology Policy

- Use of laptops, tablets, phones, or any other tech gadget is **not** permitted during class time for any reason. If you want to refer to assigned readings, you'll need paper copies.
- If I see you using a cell phone or laptop in class (and I don't care if the device is on or not - if it's in your hand, it qualifies as 'in-use' to me) I will deduct **20% off of the next assignment grade**.
- If you have what you believe to be a legitimate reason for keeping your cell phone on during a class, you must clear it with me before that class.

## Grading Scale

<b>A</b> = 93-100	<b>A-</b> = 90-92	
<b>B+</b> = 87-89	<b>B</b> = 83-86	<b>B-</b> = 80-82
<b>C+</b> = 77-79	<b>C</b> = 73-76	<b>C-</b> = 70-72
<b>D+</b> = 67-69	<b>D</b> = 66-60	
<b>F</b> = 59-0		

**Extra credit projects are not an option.**

**Regular online access is a course requirement.** Course schedule is online and regularly updated.

## Contact Information

- For quicker responses, email me with your questions, as I generally check my email at least once a day Monday through Friday.
- Feel free to visit me during my office hours with any questions, clarifications, or concerns you have about this course. If you cannot come during scheduled office hours, you can arrange to meet me by appointment.
- If you encounter any problems throughout the semester regarding this class or your ability to attend and participate, let me know **ASAP**. Work is not a legitimate excuse for missing class, assignments, or exams. It is not advisable to wait until the end of the semester to inform me of difficulties you are having; that is after the fact.

## All University policies apply, including the honor code.

- Plagiarism is any instance of attempting to pass off the work of others as your own. This is not limited solely to directly quoting the work of others- it also includes paraphrasing the work of others without giving appropriate credit. This applies to all papers, exams, quizzes, and exercises. Plagiarizing from other students, or even from your own previous work, is not acceptable.
- The penalty for the first instance of lying, cheating, or plagiarizing is an automatic zero for the assignment in question and a 20 percent deduction in your final course grade. The penalty for a second instance of lying, cheating, or plagiarizing is a grade of 'F' for the class and dismissal from class. All instances of lying, cheating, or plagiarizing will be reported to the Dean of Students.

## **Department of Political Science, Criminal Justice, & Organizational Leadership**

### **Common Course Policies Updated June 2015**

The following policies apply to all courses taught by faculty in the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice. Please note that individual faculty may have specific applications of these policies in their syllabi.

#### **A. Classroom and Electronic Participation**

Classroom participation is essential to the educational process. It is vital to your understanding of the course material, and to your overall performance. It is also a student responsibility. Class participation is generally defined as regular class attendance, proper class preparation, completing assignments and activities in a timely manner, completing assignments in the format requested, and participating in discussions both during and outside of class (e.g. Black Board discussions). Participation also refers to regular monitoring of and responding to electronic contact by professors via email, Black Board or other means. Participation may have a specific grade percentage in your class; see your course syllabi for specifics.

#### **B. Class Professionalism**

1. Out of respect to your fellow learners, electronic devices should be turned off during class time unless you are required to be on-call by your employer. In that case, please set your beeper / phone to a non-audible signal. If you are required to leave a beeper or cell phone on during class, inform the professor of this prior to class.
2. Disruptive behavior or conduct (whether in-class or electronic) that demeans fellow class members or the instructor will not be tolerated. Please see the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities Section V: Academic Policies & Processes <http://deanofstudents.nku.edu/policies/student-rights.html#policies>
3. It is important that work with your name attached is, in fact, solely your work unless properly referenced or cited. In these days of increased access to information, it is critical that you understand the meaning, seriousness and consequences of plagiarism. If you ever have a question about giving proper credit for academic work, please consult your instructor well in advance of an assignment due date. It is expected that students will write their research papers to meet the learning objectives and educational requirements specific to this class. While a general topic area may be suitable for research that may potentially be utilized in more than one paper, submission of the same paper in two or more courses is not acceptable and will result in a failing grade. Students must notify the professor if their paper on this topic had been previously submitted in another course or will be submitted in another course.
4. The work you will do in this course and your behavior in this course are subject to the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code is a commitment to the highest degree of ethical integrity in academic conduct. By being a student at NKU you make a commitment that individually and collectively, you will not lie, cheat, or plagiarize to gain an academic advantage over fellow students or avoid academic requirements. You also make a commitment to behavior in a professional manner, especially when involved in academic activities off campus such as travel courses or CCSA Study Abroad. For specifics concerning the honor code, see the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities Section V, subsection G: Student Honor Code: Cheating & Plagiarism. <http://deanofstudents.nku.edu/policies/student-rights.html#policies>

#### **C. Student Honor Code**

This Student Honor Code (the “Honor Code”) is a commitment by students of Northern Kentucky University, through their matriculation or continued enrolment at the University to adhere to the highest degree of ethical integrity in academic conduct. It is a commitment individually and collectively that the students of Northern Kentucky University will not lie, cheat, or plagiarize to gain an academic advantage over fellow students or avoid academic requirements.

The purpose of the Honor Code is to establish standards of academic conduct for students at Northern Kentucky University and to provide a procedure that offers basic assurances of fundamental fairness to any person accused of violations of these rules. Each Northern Kentucky student is bound by the provisions of the Honor Code and is presumed to be familiar with all of its provisions. Students also should aspire to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the highest degree of ethical integrity in all matters, whether covered in the Honor Code or not. The success of this commitment begins in the diligence with which students uphold the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code.

Students may view the complete honor code at

<http://www.nku.edu/content/dam/nkuhome/docs/HonorCode.pdf>

#### **D. Right to Revise a Syllabus**

A syllabus is required for every class and will be distributed at the beginning of each semester. Faculty reserve the right to revise the course syllabus as needed. Changes in the specific course schedule may happen frequently, so you need to keep abreast of these changes regularly. Should a major change or update occur in the syllabus (e.g. moving a specified test date, specifying the requirements of an assignment, etc.) the specific change will be announced at least a week in advance of any activity due date (e.g. assignment, paper, test). These changes should be communicated in the manner other course updates are (paper distribution, email, or posting to Blackboard).

#### **E. Accommodations Due to Disability**

The University is committed to making reasonable efforts to assist individuals with disabilities in their efforts to avail themselves of services and programs offered by the University. To this end, Northern Kentucky University will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with documented qualifying disabilities. If you have a disability and feel you need accommodations in this course, you must present a letter to me from the Disability Programs & Services Office (SU 303), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations. More information can be found at <http://disability.nku.edu>

#### **F. Student Responsibilities to Meet Course Obligations**

You are responsible for all course assignments including class preparation, class attendance, class activities, tests, papers, labs, projects, group work or other course assignments. By reviewing the syllabus at the beginning of a course, you are responsible for meeting all specific course obligations. Additionally, some faculty may even require that each student initial a document to recognize their course obligations. Failure to attend classes, or meet course obligations is a serious matter and it is your responsibility to communicate with the instructor should you have difficulty with meeting any course obligation. Faculty may, at their discretion, reduce grades or even fail you for not meeting specified course obligations, including but not limited to, class attendance, taking tests at a specified time, turning in papers on time and in the format required and other assignments. It is the faculty’s discretion to determine the consequences of not meeting a course obligation, and many times the specific provisions and penalties are specified in the syllabus. Faculty may also require written documentation verifying your inability to meet a course obligation.

#### **G. Student Evaluation of Instructor and Course**

Northern Kentucky University takes Instructor and Course Evaluations very seriously as an important means of gathering information for the enhancement of learning opportunities for its students. It is an important responsibility of NKU students as citizens of the University to participate in the instructor and course evaluation process. During the two weeks’ prior to the end of each semester classes, you will be asked to reflect upon what you have learned in this course, the extent to which you have invested the necessary effort to

maximize your learning, and the role your instructor has played in the learning process. It is very important that you complete the online evaluations with thoughtfully written comments.

Student evaluations of courses and instructors are regarded as strictly confidential. They are not available to the instructor until after final grades are submitted, and extensive precautions are taken to prevent your comments from being identified as coming from you. Students who complete an evaluation for a particular course (or opt out of doing so in the evaluation) will be rewarded for their participation by having access to their course grade as soon as that grade is submitted by the instructor. On the other hand, any student who does not complete the course evaluation (or opt out of doing so in the evaluation) should expect to incur a two week delay in access to his or her course grade beyond the university's official date for grade availability. To complete online evaluations go to <http://eval.nku.edu>. Click on "student login" and use the same USERNAME and PASSWORD as used on campus.

In addition, you should be aware of:

- Evaluations can affect changes in courses. Evaluations without comments are less valuable and less credible than those filled out thoughtfully. Comments that are expressed well are more effective than those that are not.
- Positive feedback is just as important as criticism. Moreover, negative evaluations without any explanation and specifics are not especially useful.
- Once grades are submitted, all evaluations are read not only by the instructor, but also by the instructor's department chairperson.
- Evaluations not only provide feedback to your instructor, but also provide information to the department chair for use in performance evaluations. This information affects reappointments, promotions, salaries, and teaching assignments.

#### **H. Diversity Statement**

Diversity describes an inclusive community of people with varied human characteristics, ideas, and world views related, but not limited, to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, color, creed, national origin, age, disability, socio-economic status, geographical region, or ancestry. Institutions that value diversity provide a supportive and safe environment that respects those human differences.

#### **H. Grade Appeal**

The following link explains the grade appeal process and policy. Any grade appeal needs to follow the process and the time frame listed on the policy.

<http://scra.nku.edu/policies/student-rights.html#policies>

#### **I. Midterm Grades (for Undergraduate Courses)**

Mid-term grades will be posted in myNKU by the deadline established in the Academic Calendar.

<http://registrar.nku.edu/academiccalendar.html>

Midterm grades will be provided to all students in 100 - 400 level courses, except in cases where the Department Chair and Dean of Arts & Sciences have waived midterm grade reporting for pedagogical reasons. Midterm grades are only an estimate of performance as of the middle of the semester, and are not an absolute predictor of final performance.

#### **J. Non-Attendance Policy**

NKU students are expected to attend the first day of each course for which they are enrolled.

For classes meeting more than once per week: If a student does not attend the first class meeting and has not contacted the instructor in advance to declare this absence, the instructor may drop the student for non-attendance. If the student also misses the second class meeting and still has not contacted the instructor about the absences beforehand, the instructor is compelled to drop this student for non-attendance.



For classes meeting only once per week: If the student misses the first class meeting and has not contacted the instructor about this absence beforehand, the instructor is compelled to drop this student for non-attendance.

For online classes: If the student does not log onto Blackboard and access course materials or contact the instructor during the first week of classes, the instructor is compelled to drop this student for non-participation (i.e., non-attendance).

### **K. Credit-Hour Policy Statement**

In accordance with federal policy, NKU defines a credit hour as the amount of work represented in the achievement of student learning outcomes (verified by evidence of student achievement) that reasonably approximates one hour (50 minutes) of classroom instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work. For every course credit hour, a typical student should expect to spend at least three hours per week of concentrated attention on course-related work including, but not limited to, class meeting time, reading, reviewing, organizing notes, studying and completing assignments. At least an equivalent amount of time is expected for other academic activities such as online courses, laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.

Estimates of the time required for a typical student to complete course expectations are as follows:

Class meeting time (14 meetings)	42 Hours
Reading preparation	50 Hours
Assignment preparation	45 Hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>137 Hours</b>