SYLLABUS

SUMA K4310: Practicum in Innovative Sustainability Leadership

Wed. 6:10 – 8 PM

Instructor Information
Instructor: George Sarrinikolaou
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Course Grading Assistants
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Course Description

This course deals with a fundamental question of sustainability management: how to change organizations and more complex systems, such as communities, industries, and markets, by integrating environmental concerns in the way that they operate. The course poses this question to thirteen leading sustainability practitioners, who answer it by discussing strategies that they use in their own work. Through guest lectures, extensive class discussion, and readings, students identify practical management strategies for transforming the way organizations and complex systems work. The practitioners, who work in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors and in a wide variety of organizations, lecture in the first hour of the course. The second hour is devoted to a class discussion, which is geared toward identifying these management strategies, better understanding their application, and considering their effectiveness. A 10-minute break between the first and second hour of class time provides an opportunity to students to speak informally with the guest practitioners. By the end of the course, the students gain an understanding of management tools and strategies that they, themselves, can use to integrate sustainability in organizations.

The course complements the M.S. in Sustainability Management program's required course, Sustainability Management (SUMA K4100). In that course, students study management and organization theory. In the Practicum, students learn directly from leading practitioners, who confront sustainability management issues daily.

The course is open to both graduate and undergraduate students.

- Students in the M.S. in Sustainability Management program who wish to take this class must register for it as a 3-credit course. For these students, the course satisfies any of the following three areas of study in the Sustainability Management program: “Integrative Courses in Sustainability Management”; “Public Policy Environment of Sustainability Management”; and “General and Financial Management.”

- Students of the School of International and Public Affairs and undergraduates have the option of registering for this course as a 3-credit or a 1-credit course. Assignments vary accordingly.
Course Objectives
By the end of this course, students will:

- explain how managers develop sustainability strategy; how they gain support for sustainability initiatives; and how they evaluate sustainability performance in their organizations;
- analyze work processes and operations in order to understand how to improve resource efficiency and limit environmental impact;
- identify models for financing and evaluating the economic performance of sustainability initiatives;
- discover the importance of varied stakeholder interests, inside and outside of organizations, in the formulation of sustainability initiatives; and
- synthesize, apply and communicate sustainability knowledge to solve environmental problems.

Course Topics

- Week 1: Introduction to the Course and to the Profession of Sustainability Management
- Week 2: The Path to the New Climate Economy
- Week 3: Trailblazing in Green Building
- Week 4: Changing a Company from the Inside #1
- Week 5: Changing a Company from the Inside #2
- Week 6: Banking as a Sustainability Driver
- Week 7: Community-based Social Marketing for Sustainability
- Week 8: Using Metrics to Change Communities
- Week 9: SPRING BREAK
- Week 10: Protecting New York's Water
- Week 11: Creating a Market for Renewable Energy
- Week 12: Innovation in Building Energy Efficiency
- Week 13: Making Cities Healthier, Resilient and Sustainable
- Week 14: Procurement as a Sustainability Strategy
- Week 15: Conclusion: Innovative Strategies for Sustainability Management

Required Reading
There are weekly required readings. All readings or links to the readings are posted on Courseworks/Canvas. There are no readings that require purchase.

Resources
The instructor and the course grading assistants will use Courseworks/Canvas to make announcements, distribute readings, presentations, and assignments. Students will submit completed assignments via Courseworks/Canvas only.
Students in the M.S. in Sustainability Management program may only take the course for three credits. Students in other schools may take the class for either 3 credits or one credit.

Attendance and Class Participation (20%)

Attendance is mandatory for each class session. If a student must miss class for any reason, the student must notify the instructor before the start of the class session. One point from the student’s participation grade will be deducted for each unexcused absence. The second hour of each class will be entirely devoted to a discussion. All students are expected to participate in the discussion and to ask questions of the speakers, the instructor, and each other.

Responses to Weekly Discussion Questions on Courseworks/Canvas (30%)

Students must answer all of the eight (8) discussion questions that will be posted on Courseworks/Canvas. The responses – no longer than 250 words in length – should be analytical and should reflect understanding of the preceding guest lectures, as well as knowledge of the pertinent readings for that week. All 8 postings are required to receive full points. Each entry will be graded individually on a letter grade scale from A+ to F. Discussion questions are posted on Thursdays. Responses are due by Sunday at midnight. No late assignments are accepted unless the instructor grants an extension.

Action Memos (20%)

Two one-page action memos account for 20% of the course grade. Please upload these memos as MS Word documents to Courseworks/Canvas. In each memo, you will report to the manager of your own fictitious organization, or any other organization you have worked for, at least one key strategy discussed by a speaker that should be implemented by the organization. The memo should:

1. Describe the sustainability problem that the organization confronts and the strategy or strategies that you propose for solving the problem.
2. Explain why the organization should implement the strategy or strategies. Account for the internal (e.g. colleagues, board of directors) and external environments (e.g. public, elected officials, customers) that inform the decision to take this action.
3. Describe the impact that you expect the implementation of the strategy to have.
4. Account for alternative actions that could be taken in place of the one suggested by the speaker.
5. The immediate steps you would take to implement the proposed action in your own organization.

- Memo #1: Due by start of class #5.
  Please choose a strategy covered by one of the speaker lectures between Classes #1 - #4. There is no Courseworks/Canvas discussion assignment after the week # 4 lecture.

- Memo #2: Due by start of class #10.
  Please choose a strategy covered by one of the speaker lectures between Classes #5 - #8. There is no Courseworks/Canvas discussion assignment after the week # 8 lecture.
Final Exam: A 1,200 Word Blog Post on the Current State of the Field of Sustainability Management (30%)

In this post, identify three management strategies for integrating environmental concerns in the operations of organizations or in the working of larger, more complex systems. Drawing from the lectures and the readings, discuss how managers implement these strategies, and assess the effectiveness of the strategies. If you deem that the strategies apply to a specific area of sustainability, then explain why the strategies would be effective in this one area but not in others. Please upload the assignment as an MS Word document to Courseworks/Canvas.

The best three blog posts will be published on the Earth Institute’s State of the Planet blog. The final exam is due, via Courseworks/Canvas, by 6:00 PM on April 27, 2016.

1-CREDIT OPTION
Course Requirements

The requirements for SIPA students and undergraduate students in the Sustainable Development major who take the course for 1 credit are as follows.

Attendance and Participation (20%)

Attendance is mandatory for each class session. If a student must miss class for any reason, the student must notify the instructor by email before the start of the class session. One point from the student’s participation grade will be deducted for each unexcused absence. The second hour of each class will be entirely devoted to a discussion. All students are expected to participate in the discussion and to ask questions of the speakers, the instructor, and each other.

Courseworks Discussion Assignments (30%)

Students must answer four (4) of eight discussion questions that will be posted on Courseworks/Canvas. The responses – no longer than 250 words in length – should be analytical and should reflect understanding of the preceding guest lectures, as well as knowledge of the pertinent readings for that week. All 8 postings are required to receive full points. Each entry will be graded individually on a letter grade scale from A+ to F. Discussion questions are posted on Thursdays. Responses are due by Sunday at midnight. No late assignments are accepted unless the instructor grants an extension.

Final Exam: A 1,200 Word Blog Post on the Current State of the Field of Sustainability Management (50%)

In this post, identify three management strategies for integrating environmental concerns in the operations of organizations or in the working of larger, more complex systems. Drawing from the lectures and the readings, discuss how managers implement these strategies, and assess the effectiveness of the strategies. If you deem that the strategies apply to a specific area of sustainability, then explain why the strategies would be effective in this one area but not in others. Please upload the assignment as an MS Word document to Courseworks/Canvas.
The best three blog posts will be published on the Earth Institute’s State of the Planet blog. The final exam is due, via Courseworks/Canvas, by **6:00 PM on April 27, 2016**.

**Evaluation & Grading**

**Grading Criteria for All Written Assignments:**

Students will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

- Identifying and explaining sustainability management strategies and demonstrating conceptual understanding and critical thinking in class discussions and in the written assignments.

- Content and Sources: Students are expected to draw from insights in the weekly lectures and the assigned readings. All reference sources must be properly cited in the text and provide a bibliography using MLA format. Please use only primary or secondary resources. For more information about primary and secondary resources, see: [http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/primarysources.html](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/primarysources.html).

- Quality of written assignments: students are expected to produce concise, well-organized, and persuasive memos, **in the correct format**, that display their facility with the concepts of the weekly lectures and reading assignments.

- Memos should be one (1) page in length. They will be graded on a scale of 100 points using the following rubric: demonstrating conceptual understanding of the management strategies (50 points); persuasiveness, clarity, and the overall quality of the answers to the assigned questions (50 points).

- Final exam should be 1,200 words in length. It will be graded on a scale of 100 points using the following rubric: demonstration of conceptual understanding and critical thinking of management strategies that can be used to integrate environmental concerns in the way organizations and complex systems operate (70 points); the quality of the writing as demonstrated by its clarity, conciseness, spelling, and grammar (30 points).

**Grading Policies**
The following identifies how points awarded to individual assignments translate into letter grades for the course: A= 94-100, A-= 90-93, B+=87-89, B= 84-86, B-=80-83, C+=77-79, C=74-76, C=70-73, D=66-69, F= 65 or lower.

**Policies and Expectations: Attendance, Late Papers, Class Behaviors and Civility, Academic Integrity, Disability Access, Safety, Cancellation Policies**

**Attendance**

Students are expected to arrive on time, attend all classes, and to stay until the end of class unless they have notified the instructor at the beginning of the session that they will be leaving early. One point from the student’s participation grade will be deducted for each unexcused absence.

**Late Assignment Policy**
Assignments are due on the dates/times identified. No late assignment will be accepted unless the instructor grants an extension.

Incompletes
As outlined in the School’s grading and academic starts policy, “A grade of ‘I’ (incomplete) is a temporary grade indicating failure to complete assigned work. The mark is given only upon the request of the student and at the discretion of the instructor. The student and faculty member must sign a completed ‘Request for Grade of Incomplete Form’ before the final class session. The ‘I’ must be removed within one year after the end of the semester in which the student received the grade. Students seeking an extension of this time limit must have the approval of the instruction and successfully petition of the director of their program. If no petition is made, or if the petition is unsuccessful, the grade is changed to an N-Permanent Incomplete- which remains on the student’s permanent record.

Academic Integrity
The School of Professional Studies does not tolerate cheating and/or plagiarism in any form. Those students who violate the Code of Academic and Professional Conduct will be subject to the Dean’s Disciplinary Procedures. The Code of Academic and Professional Conduct can be viewed online: http://ce.columbia.edu/node/217

Please familiarize yourself with the proper methods of citation and attribution. The School provides some useful resources online; we strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with these various styles before conducting your research: http://library.columbia.edu/help/howto/endnote.html

Violations of the Code of Academic and Professional Conduct will be reported to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

Accessibility Statement
Columbia is committed to providing equal access to qualified students with documented disabilities. A student’s disability status and reasonable accommodations are individually determined based upon disability documentation and related information gathered through the intake process. For more information regarding this service, please visit the University’s Health Services website: http://health.columbia.edu/services/ods/support

Course Schedule / Calendar
Please note that the schedule of speakers is subject to change during the course of the semester in order to accommodate speakers’ schedules. All of the speakers included in this syllabus have confirmed their attendance.

Week #1 – 1/20/16: Introduction to the Course and to the Profession of Sustainability Management.

- **Introduction:** Overview of the course, speaker schedule, assignments, and course policies. A guest lecture on the profession of sustainability management from a veteran sustainability manager will focus attention on the challenges that practitioners face, and the skills that they most need to meet those challenges.

- **Speaker:** Steve Nicholas, Vice President, Urban Programs, Institute for Sustainable Communities, and former Director of the City of Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment.
• **Bio:** Steve Nicholas is ISC’s Vice President of Urban Programs. Steve launched ISC's US program and created the Sustainable Communities Leadership Academy (SCLA), which is one of the premier vehicles for capacity-building and technical assistance focused on sustainability in the US. Prior to that, he was Director of the City of Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment for eight years.


• **Assignment:** No written assignment.

**Week #2 – 1/27/16: The New Climate Economy**

• **Introduction:** This lecture and discussion will center on the management strategies for advancing sustainable economic growth.

• **Speaker:** Stefan Knupfer, Senior Partner, McKinsey & Company, Inc.

• **Bio:** Stefan Knupfer leads McKinsey’s Sustainability & Resource Productivity Practice, and has global responsibility for helping McKinsey consultants develop sustainability expertise. As a former leader of the Automotive & Assembly Practice—and lead partner in the firm’s Detroit office—Stefan's client work centers on the automotive, aerospace and advanced electronics sectors.

• **Readings:**

  2. “The Race is On” by Fraser Thompson. Inside Track. (2 pages)

• **Assignment:** Courseworks discussion #1 due by 1/31/15.

**Week #3 – 2/3/16: Trailblazing in Green Building**

• **Introduction:** The lecture and discussion will touch on the factors that lead to investment in green building, obstacles to such investments, and strategies for overcoming them.

• **Speaker:** Douglas Durst, Chairman, The Durst Organization

• **Bio:** Douglas Durst is the chairman and a member of the third generation to lead The Durst Organization. Under his leadership, the organization built the nation’s first sustainable skyscraper, 4 Times Square, and the first LEED Platinum hi-rise office tower, The Bank of America Tower at One Bryant Park. He is also a director of the Real Estate Board of New York,
The New School, and The Trust for Public Land.

- **Readings:**
  

  

- **Assignment:** Courseworks discussion #2 due by 2/7/16.

**Week #4 – 2/10/16: Changing a Company from the Inside #1**

- **Introduction:** This class session will focus on the business strategies that a longtime publishing executive uses to change how his company does business.

- **Speaker:** Bill Barry, Macmillan ([www.macmillansustainability.com](http://www.macmillansustainability.com))

- **Bio:** Bill Barry has over thirty years of experience in all aspects of book publishing as a senior executive in editorial, production, sales, distribution, and finance and, most recently, as the leader of Macmillan’s sustainability program.


- **Assignment:** Courseworks discussion #3 due by 2/14/16.

**Week #5 – 2/17/16: Changing a Company from the Inside #2**

- **Introduction:** This talk will emphasize strategies for understanding organizational culture and using it to advance sustainability.

- **Speaker:** Raghushimha Sudhakara, Manager of Strategy, Con Edison

- **Bio:** Raghushimha started at Con Edison as a policy advisory in 2012, and transitioned to Manager of Strategy in 2012. Prior to that, he worked as a senior consultant at GP Strategies Corporation and has done consultant work for AES, L’Institut Francilien Recherche Innovation Société, and Consultant Co-op.

• **Assignment:** Memo #1 is due by 2/21/16.

**Week #6 – 2/24/16: Banking as a Sustainability Driver**

• **Introduction:** This class session will focus on the integration of sustainability in financial institutions, including the formulation of a sustainability strategy, managing environmental and social risk, and identifying environmentally sound investment opportunities.

• **Speaker:** Camilla Seth, Executive Director, Sustainable Finance, JPMorgan Chase & Co.

• **Speaker Bio:** Camilla joined JPMorgan Chase in 2012 and is focused on conservation and climate finance, stakeholder engagement, and policy development. She has over 15 years of experience working on sustainable finance issues for financial institutions, corporations, and nonprofit organizations. Prior to JPMorgan Chase, Camilla served as the founding Director of Programs and Operations at the Global Impact Investing Network, and was also Vice President of Environmental Affairs at Citigroup.


**Assignment:** Courseworks discussion #4 due by 2/28/16.

**Week #7 – 3/2/16: Community-based Social Marketing for Sustainability**

• **Introduction:** This lecture will offer an introduction to community-based social marketing as a technique for changing people’s behaviors and cultivating sustainability in communities.

• **Speaker:** Michelle Vigen, Senior Energy Planner, Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection.

• **Bio:** Michelle Vigen leads the planning, development, and implementation of a wide variety of energy initiatives within the County, including the implementation of the county's energy benchmarking law, and advising the development of the county's Property-Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing program and Green Bank legislation. Prior to this, she spent time working in the Administration of Loudoun County Government and the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE).


• **Assignment:** Courseworks discussion #5 due by 3/6/16.
Week #8 - 3/9/16: Using Metrics to Change Communities

- **Introduction:** The session will be devoted to understanding how the use of sustainability standards and metrics can advance the integration of sustainability in communities. The talk will center on the STAR Community Rating System, a national certification program that promotes health, inclusion, and prosperity.

- **Speaker:** Hilari Varnadore, Executive Director, STAR Communities.

- **Speaker Bio:** Hilari is focused on advancing a national framework and rating system for sustainable communities. Previously, Varnadore was sustainability director for Frederick County, MD, where she established the Office of Sustainability. Hilari has worked extensively in the nonprofit sector including positions with the Grand Canyon Trust, Nature Conservancy, and River Network and state and federal agencies in Maine and Maryland.

- **Readings:**

- **Assignment:** No written assignment.

Week #9 – 3/16/16 - Spring Break – No class

Week #10 – 3/23/16: Protecting New York’s Water

- **Introduction:** This class session will consider the use of advocacy, science, the law, and sustainable infrastructure design in safeguarding or restoring watersheds and estuaries.

- **Speaker:** Paul Gallay, President and Hudson Riverkeeper, Riverkeeper

- **Speaker Bio:** Paul and the Riverkeeper team work to protect the Hudson River and the drinking water supplies for nine million New Yorkers. An attorney and educator, Paul has dedicated himself to the environmental movement since 1987, when he left the private practice of law and went to work for the New York State Attorney General. In 1990, Paul began a ten-year stint at New York’s Department of Environmental Conservation, where he brought hundreds of corporate and government polluters to justice.

- **Readings:**
• **Assignment:** Memo #2 is due by 3/20/16.

**Week #11 – 3/30/16: Creating a Market for Renewable Energy**

- **Introduction:** This talk will center on strategies for overcoming obstacles to the financing of large scale renewable energy projects.

- **Speaker:** Curtis Probst, Managing Director, Rocky Mountain Institute

- **Speaker Bio:** Curtis Probst is a managing director at Rocky Mountain Institute, where he leads the sustainable finance practice. He brings 24 years of financial market expertise to a broad range of energy and sustainability issues. Prior to joining RMI, Curtis worked at Goldman, Sachs & Co. for over 15 years in New York, most recently as a managing director in their investment banking division. He is an accredited LEED Green Associate, a Chartered Financial Analyst, and a member of the CFA Institute and the CFA Society of Stamford.

- **Reading:** “Clean Energy Financing Through the Bond Market: A New Option for Progress” by Lewis Milford, Devashree Saha, Mark Muro, Robert Sanders, Toby Rittner. Brookings Rockefeller: Project on State and Metropolitan Innovation. [17 pages.]
  
  http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Research/Files/Reports/2014/04/clean%20energy%20bon ds/CleanEnergyFunds.pdf

**Assignments:** Courseworks discussion #6 due by 4/3/16.

**Week #12 – 4/6/16: Innovation in Building Energy Efficiency**

- **Introduction:** In this talk, we will learn from a successful attempt to innovate the financing of building energy retrofitting.

- **Speaker:** Dorian Dale, Director of Sustainability and Chief Recovery Officer, Suffolk County

- **Bio:** Dorian Dale works in Suffolk County’s newly reconstituted economic development department, promulgating initiatives that are sustainable and self-sustaining economically. He oversees extended recovery and mitigation in the wake of Superstorm Sandy and the face of sea-level rise. He gained national attention as the Energy Director & Sustainability Officer of the Town of Babylon, where he led the Long Island Green Homes program, an innovative, municipally-financed formula for one-stop energy efficiency retrofits.


- **Assignment:** Courseworks discussion #7 due by 4/10/16.

**Week #13 – 4/13/16: Making Cities Healthier, Resilient and Sustainable**

- **Introduction:** This guest lecture will delve into strategies for improving the management of
natural resources in New York City.

- **Speaker:** Emily Maxwell, New York City Program Director, The Nature Conservancy

- **Bio:** Emily leads the Nature Conservancy’s initiatives in New York City and other New York urban areas. She previously served as the Associate Director for the Northeast Region and Diversity and Inclusion for the National Wildlife Federation, and also worked with Gateway National Recreation Area in Queens, New York, to create a series of volunteer days aimed at restoring the Jamaica Bay area following Hurricane Sandy.


- **Assignment:** Courseworks discussion #8 due by 4/17/16.

**Week #14 – 4/20/16: Procurement as a Sustainability Strategy**

- **Introduction:** In this talk, we will learn about using the purchasing power and market reach of a large corporation to advance sustainability.

- **Speaker:** John Cheetham, Global Senior Procurement Manager, Tea & RTD, Unilever

- **Bio:** At Unilever, John is responsible for procurement (all markets globally) of tea extract & aroma for tea Ready-To-Drink products and leaf tea ex Latin America. John has been a Procurement Professional for 16 years with experience working in Europe, Asia, Sri Lanka and the Americas. He is also Vice-Chairman of the Tea Association of the U.S.A.


- **Assignment:** No written assignment.

**Week #15 – 4/27/16: Innovative Strategies for Sustainability Management**

- **Introduction:** In this final class, we will consider the major themes that have emerged throughout the semester, and we will consider the future of sustainability management practice. We will especially focus on the importance of leadership in integrating sustainability in organizations.

- **Speakers:** Professor George Sarrinikolaou
• **Assignment:** Final blog post due by 6 PM on 6/27/16.

**APPENDIX A**

**School Policies**

*Copyright Policy*

Please note – because of copyright restrictions, online access to this material is limited to instructors and students currently registered for this course. Please be advised that by clicking the link to the electronic materials in this course, you have read and accept the following:

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be "used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research." If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

*Academic Integrity*

Columbia University expects its students to act with honesty and propriety at all times and to respect the rights of others. It is fundamental University policy that academic dishonesty in any guise or personal conduct of any sort that disrupts the life of the University or denigrates or endangers members of the University community is unacceptable and will be dealt with severely. It is essential to the academic integrity and vitality of this community that individuals do their own work and properly acknowledge the circumstances, ideas, sources, and assistance upon which that work is based. Academic honesty in class assignments and exams is expected of all students at all times.

SPS holds each member of its community responsible for understanding and abiding by the SPS Academic Integrity and Community Standards posted at [http://ce.columbia.edu/node/217](http://ce.columbia.edu/node/217). You are required to read these standards within the first few days of class. Ignorance of the School's policy concerning academic dishonesty shall not be a defense in any disciplinary proceedings.

*Accessibility*

Columbia is committed to providing equal access to qualified students with documented disabilities. A student’s disability status and reasonable accommodations are individually determined based upon disability documentation and related information gathered through the intake process. For more information regarding this service, please visit the University's Health Services website: [http://health.columbia.edu/services/ods/support](http://health.columbia.edu/services/ods/support).