

Columbia University
School of Professional Studies
MS in Sustainability Management
Office Hours: Tues. 4-6 pm and by Appt.
Office: 1406 IAB

Dr. Adela J. Gondek
ajg2@columbia.edu
CA: Danae Paulina Flores
danae.flores@columbia.edu
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SUMA PS5700

ETHICS AND VALUES OF SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT IN THE BUSINESS AND CIVIC SECTORS

Course Overview

In the spring of 2017, the World Bank estimated that businesses and individuals pay \$1.5 trillion in bribes annually, which does not account for additional billions of dollars of both humanitarian and development aid that pass clandestinely from public to private hands, in addition to further billions lost to tax evasion, and further billions funneled to and from illegal “trafficking”. It does not account for the billions enmeshed in conflicts of interest, ranging from campaign donations to regulatory loopholes and in general, “private gain from public office”. All such transactions occur in globally widespread arenas of corrupt practices. At the same time, “what is just” in the distribution of programmatic goods and services must be decided, and this itself entails decisions about whose participation will count in deciding any such distribution. Some voices are heard, and some are unheard, and the matter is often contingent upon the existing distribution of wealth, including the access wealth facilitates to core decision processes.

In this complex situation, which results significantly from unethical practices, the process and success of sustainability, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), depend upon the positive inroads and disruptions made by ethical practices. What are the features of these practices? What kinds of ethics are necessary and integral to the process and success of sustainability? Many new practical ethics, framed by scholars and practitioners since the 1980s, are promoted today by individuals and organizations, including national and international governmental organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs, also called NGOs), corporations and even loosely structured grassroots movements. In what forms and at what levels of sustainability management are the new ethics to be adopted and pursued? This course seeks to identify, explain and consider such “sustainability ethics” and the ways in which sustainability managers can activate them, largely through issue-framing, agenda-setting, and policy, program and project design, inspection and review.

The course material is divided into six primary sections centered on sustainability management at six levels: the global, territorial, regional, organizational, workplace and individual levels of management. In each section, two new ethics are sequentially addressed: first, earth justice and environmental justice; second, ecological integrity and the land ethic; third, regional equity and sectoral social justice (e.g. food, energy, consumer and place ethics); fourth, social responsibility and responsible leadership; fifth, transparency and inclusivity; and sixth, care and resilience.

These are explored in the context of specific cases in which the ethics have been either instated or neglected. The cases have been drawn from countries around the world, including Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Germany, India, the MENA area, Morocco, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa, Turkey, Uganda, the United States, and others. The topics are as widespread as sustainability is, including health, housing and education; farming, forestry, fracking, food and fashion; corporate reputation, impact bonds, ESG ratings and supply chains; natural parks, nationalism, conflict, migration and leadership; construction, extraction and vaccination; cocoa, coffee and digital culture; film, poetry, massive open online courses (MOOCs) and children's books; and others.

While sustainability management requires the understanding and application of complex environmental science, the efficacy of science in producing human and environmental goods depends upon ethical evaluations of need, use and harm, together with ethical practice at all levels of management. Knowledge of relevant ethical expectations to be met throughout decision processes promotes the possibility of achieving such goods. Doing so is especially urgent today, as ethical issues have attained global proportions, and demands for their resolution are voiced with increasing concern, volatility and insistence.

Course Objectives

Students are expected to learn how to evaluate and manage the competing ethical claims of stakeholders regarding social, economic and environmental benefits and harms. On completing the course, students should be able to:

- (1) identify and assess ethical claims concerning sustainability at various levels of sustainability management within a range of sectors;
- (2) perceive and map conflict and its resolution or remediation among competing sustainability practices, or between these and unsustainable practices;
- (3) discern and assess values within documents, organizations and standpoints;
- (4) design incentives or disincentives to alter or maintain values-based claims;
- (5) frame ethics provisions for sustainability project proposals;
- (6) identify mechanisms for ethics training and monitoring in the practice of management;
- (7) utilize corruption assessment tools and structure anti-corruption provisions;
- (8) engage in public discourse in terms of sustainability ethics;
- (9) apply sustainability ethics in the context of policy, program and project design, innovation and change; and
- (10) utilize cases and case histories to inform, improve and ground decision making.

Course Topics and Readings

In advance of each class, students should become familiar with the relevant materials posted in the Files section of our Canvas site, and complete the following:

- (1) select and read at least three of the four scholarly articles;
- (2) read the news article;
- (3) become familiar with the website indicated.

During each class session, the six items listed for it (4 scholarly articles, 1 news article, and 1 website) will be discussed. Students will have the opportunity to introduce pre-designated items, providing relevant highlights and considerations.

Week 1. Introduction: Sustainability Ethics – The 2nd Generation of Environmental Ethics

Finding Common Ground in Ethics

September 7

Web Link: Sustainable Development Goals 2015 – United Nations

Section I. Ethics at the Global Level of Sustainability Management

Global or National?

Week 2. Earth Justice: Biocentric, Ecocentric, Anthropocentric

September 14

Anaf, Julia, Frances E. Baum, Matt Fisher, Elizabeth Harris and Sharon Friel. 2017. Assessing the Health Impact of Transnational Corporations: A Case Study of McDonald's Australia. *Globalization and Health* (2017) 13:7.

Howe, Helena R. 2017. Making Wild Law Work: The Role of 'Connection with Nature' and Education in Developing an Ecocentric Property Law. *Journal of Environmental Law* (2017) 29:19-45.

Pescarini, Julia Moreira, Laura Cunha Rodrigues, M. Gabriela M. Gomes, and Eliseu Alves Waldman. 2017. Migration to Middle-Income Countries and Tuberculosis: Global Policies for Global Economies. *Globalization and Health* (2017) 13:15.

Rühs, Nathalie, and Aled Jones. 2016. The Implementation of Earth Jurisprudence through Substantive Constitutional Rights of Nature. *Sustainability* (2016) 8:174.

Social Media News: Portugal Dominated Angola for Centuries. Now the Roles Are Reversed.

Web Link: Earth Justice – Because the Earth Needs a Good Lawyer

Week 3. Environmental Justice: Vulnerable, Impoverished, Oppressed, Marginalized

September 21

Bustos, Beatriz, Mauricio Folchi, and Maria Fragkou. 2017. Coal Mining on Pastureland in Southern Chile: Challenging Recognition and Participation as Guarantees for Environmental Justice. *Geoforum* (2017) 84:292-304.

McKeil, Aaron C. 2017. Global Societies Are Social Things: A Conceptual Reassessment *Global Society* (2017) 31:4, 551-566.

Morrens, Bert, Elly Den Hond, Greet Schoeters, Dries Coertjens, Ann Colles, Tim S. Nawrot, Willy Baeyens, Stefaan De Henauw, Vera Nelen, and Ilse Loots. 2017. Human Biomonitoring from an Environmental Justice Perspective: Supporting Study of Participation of Women of Turkish and Moroccan Descent. *Environmental Health* (2017) 16:48.

O'Neill, John. 2017. The Price of an Apology: Justice, Compensation and Rectification. *Cambridge Journal of Economics* (2017) 41:1043-1059.

Social Media News: What France Knows About Robert E. Lee

Web Link: Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 – United Nations

Section II. Ethics at the Territorial Level of Sustainability Management *Indigenous or Settler?*

Week 4. Ecological Integrity: Preservation, Conservation, Restoration, Hybridization *September 28*

Kim, Seonghoon. 2016. Writing “Mother Earth”: Red Power Newspapers, Environmental Justice, and Simon J. Ortiz’s Poetry. *MELUS (Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.)* (2016) 41.2:147-175.

Kopnina, Helen. 2017. Forest Ecosystem Services Commodification of Natural Resources and Forest Ecosystem Services: Examining Implications for Forest Protection. *Environmental Conservation* (2017) 44.1:24-33.

Mangone, Giancarlo. 2016. Constructing Hybrid Infrastructure: Exploring the Potential Ecological, Social and Economic Benefits of Integrating Municipal Infrastructure into Constructed Environments. *Cities* (2016) 55, 165-179.

Petursson, Jon Geir, and Paul Vedeld. 2017. Rhetoric and Reality in Protected Area Governance: Institutional Change under Different Conservation Discourses in Mount Elgon National Park, Uganda. *Ecological Economics* (2017) 131:166-177.

Social Media News: Big Non-native Mammal Invaders Not a Problem But a Solution

Web Link: The Earth Charter Initiative – The Earth Charter 2000

Week 5. The Land Ethic: Conflict, Hegemony, Ownership, Stewardship

October 5

Boone, Catherine. 2017. Sons of the Soil Conflict in Africa: Institutional Determinants of Ethnic Conflict Over Land. *World Development* (2017) 96:276-293.

Schurman, Rachel. 2017. Building an Alliance for Biotechnology in Africa. *Journal of Agrarian Change* (2017) 17.3:441-458.

Shamshad, Rizwana. 2017. Bengaliness, Hindu Nationalism and Bangladeshi Migrants in West Bengal, India. *Asian Ethnicity* (2017) 18.4:433-451.

Zhao, Pengjun. 2017. An “Unceasing War” on Land Development on the Urban Fringe of Beijing: A Case Study of Gated Informal Housing Communities. *Cities* (2017) 60:487-494.

Web Link: The Global Land Outlook 2017 – UN Convention to Combat Desertification

Section III. Ethics at the Regional Level of Sustainability Management

Intra-national or Transnational?

Week 6. Regional Equity: Home Equity, Sweat Equity, Private Equity

October 12

Andersen, Hans Skifter. 2017. Selective Moving Behavior in Ethnic Neighborhoods: White Flight, White Avoidance, Ethnic Attraction or Ethnic Retention? *Housing Studies* (2017) 32.3:296-318.

Donaldson, Ronnie Donaldson, Sanette Ferreira, Sophie Didier, Estienne Rodary, Janie Swanepoel. 2016. Access to the Urban National Park in Cape Town: Where Urban and Natural Environment Meet. *Habitat International* (2016) 57:132-142.

Lang, Thilo, and Ibolya Torok. 2017. Metropolitan Region Policies in the European Union: Following National, European or Neoliberal Agendas? *International Planning Studies* (2017) 22.1:1-13.

Talani, Leila Simona. 2017. Women, Globalization and Civil Society in the MENA Area: Between Marginalization and Radicalization. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* (2017) 19.5:499-523.

Social Media News: Rural Schools Turn to High-Tech Teacher Training Solutions

Web Link: Demographia – World Urban Areas 2017

Week 7. Sectoral Social Justice: Food, Fuel, Clothing, Shelter

October 19

Armstrong, Cosette M. Joyner, Kim Y. Hiller Connell, Chunmin Lang, Mary Ruppert-Stroescu, and Melody L. A. LeHew. 2016. Educating for Sustainable Fashion: Using Clothing Acquisition Abstinence to Explore Sustainable Consumption and Life Beyond Growth. *Journal of Consumer Policy* (2016) 39:417-439.

Chiles, Robert M. 2016. Food System Fragility and Resilience in the Aftermath of Disruption and Controversy. *Journal of Agricultural Environmental Ethics* (2016) 29:1021-1042.

Mantey, Dorota. 2017. The 'Publicness' of Suburban Gathering Places: The Example of Podkowa Leśna (Warsaw urban region, Poland). *Cities* (2017) 60:1-12.

Sovacool, Benjamin K., Matthew Burkec, Lucy Bakerb, Chaitanya Kumar Kotikalapudib, and Holle Wlokasd. 2017. New Frontiers and Conceptual Frameworks for Energy Justice. *Energy Policy* (2017) 105:677-691.

Social Media News: The US, China and Russia are Working on a Fusion Project which Could Transform Energy

Web Link: American Society for Public Administration – Code of Ethics

Section IV: Ethics at the Organizational Level of Sustainability Management *Authentic or Pseudo?*

Week 8. Social Responsibility: Credit-line, Supply-line, Production-line, Product-line *October 26*

Admati, Anat R. 2017. A Skeptical View of Financialized Corporate Governance. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (2017) 31.3:131-150.

Avetisyan, Emma, and Kai Hockerts. 2017. The Consolidation of the ESG Rating Industry as an Enactment of Institutional Retrogression. *Business Strategy and the Environment* (2017) 26:316-330.

Belt, John, Andrey Kuleshov, and Eline Minneboo. 2017. Development Impact Bonds: Learning from the Asháninka Cocoa and Coffee Case in Peru. *Enterprise Development and Microfinance* (2017) 28.1-2:130-144.

Stindt, Dennis. 2017. A Generic Planning Approach for Sustainable Supply Chain Management: How to Integrate Concepts and Methods to Address the Issues of Sustainability? *Journal of Cleaner Production* (2017) 153:146-163.

Social Media News: On Social Media, Privacy is No Longer a Personal Choice

Web Link: Ethisphere Institute – The World's Most Ethical Companies 2017

Week 9. Responsible Leadership: Moral Capital, Mindful Service, Positive Deviance

November 2

Burton, Laura J., Jon Welty Peachey, Janelle E. Wells. 2017. The Role of Servant Leadership in Developing an Ethical Climate in Sport Organizations. *Journal of Sport Management* (2017) 31:229-240.

Coldwell, David. 2017. Leadership, Ethics and Economics in Sustainable Development: An Exploratory Model. *Proceedings of the European Conference on Management, Leadership & Governance*, January 1, 2017.

Sroufe, Robert. 2017. Integration and Organizational Change towards Sustainability. *Journal of Cleaner Production* (2017) 162:315-329.

Williamson, Brian, MaryJo Buchard, W. David Winner, and Bruce E. Winston. 2017. Internal Factors that Enable Positive Deviance to Occur in Leaders: A Phenomenological Description. *International Leadership Journal* (2017) 9.1:30-55.

Social Media News: The CEOs Won't Save Us

Web Link: Ethical Systems – Ethical Culture Survey and Measurement

Section V: Ethics at the Workplace Level of Sustainability Management *Capacity or Capability?*

Week 10. Transparency: Invisibility, Obscurity, Denial, Falsification

November 9

Curtin, Deirdre. 2017. 'Accountable Independence' of the European Central Bank: Seeing the Logics of Transparency. *European Law Journal* (2017) 23.1-2:28-44.

Loomis, John, and Michelle Haefele. 2017. Quantifying Market and Non-market Benefits and Costs of Hydraulic Fracturing in the United States: A Summary of the Literature. *Ecological Economics* (2017) 138:160-167.

Mihailidis, Paul, and Samantha Viotty. 2017. Spreadable Spectacle in Digital Culture: Civic Expression, Fake News, and the Role of Media Literacies in "Post-Fact" Society. *American Behavioral Scientist* (2017) 61.4:441-454.

Velan, Baruch, and Yaacov Yadgar. 2017. On the Implications of Desexualizing Vaccines against Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Health Policy Challenges in a Multicultural Society. *Israel Journal of Health Policy Research* (2017) 6:30.

Social Media News: Cambridge University Press Re-posts Censored Articles

Web Link: Transparency International – Corruption Perceptions Index 2016

Week 11. Inclusivity: Recognition, Voice, Capacity, Identity

November 16

Bockstael, Erika. 2017. Critical Capacity Development: An Action Research Approach in Coastal Brazil. *World Development* (2017) 94:336-345.

Chandra, Alvin, Paul Dargusch, Karen E. McNamara, Ana Maria Caspe, and Dante Dalabajan. 2017. A Study of Climate-Smart Farming Practices and Climate Resiliency Field Schools in Mindanao, the Philippines. *World Development* (2017) 98:214-230.

Chung, Hye Seungm, and David Scott Diffrient. 2017. The Omnibus Film as Message Picture: Cold War Politics and the Myth of National Unity in It's a Big Country (1951). *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* (2017) 37.3:499-516.

Kaelberer, Matthias. 2017. From Bern to Rio: Soccer and National Identity Discourses in Germany. *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* (2017) 30:275-294.

Social Media News: Ex-Google Engineer Hires Harmeet Dhillon As Lawyer, Seeks Possible Class Action

Web Link: Papal Encyclical Laudato Si – On Care for Our Common Home 2015

Week 12. Thanksgiving Holiday

November 23

Section VI: Ethics at the Individual Level of Sustainability Management *Engagement or Indifference?*

Week 13. Care: Risk, Threat, Captivity, Illness

November 30

Buse, Kent, Sonja Tanaka, and Sarah Hawkes. 2017. Healthy People and Healthy Profits? Elaborating a Conceptual Framework for Governing the Commercial Determinants of Non-communicable Diseases and Identifying Options for Reducing Risk Exposure. *Globalization and Health* (2017) 13:34.

Giubilini, Alberto, Patrick Birk, Thomas Douglas, Julian Savulescu, and Hannah Maslen. 2017. Taxing Meat: Taking Responsibility for One's Contribution to Antibiotic Resistance. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* (2017) 30:179-198.

Hsiao, Timothy. 2017. Industrial Farming is Not Cruel to Animals. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* (2017) 30:37-54.

Kangas, Maiju, Joonas Muotka, Mari Huhtala, Anne Ma'Kikangas, Taru Feldt. 2017. Is the Ethical Culture of the Organization Associated with Sickness Absence? A Multilevel

Analysis in a Public Sector Organization. *Journal of Business Ethics* (2017) 140:131-145.

Social Media News: Shoddy Translation in the Western Media is Increasing Nuclear Tensions – Again

Web Link: World Happiness Report 2017 – United Nations

Week 14. Resilience: Awareness, Knowledge, Motivation, Action
December 7

Bissonnette, Jean-Francois, Jerome Dupras, Frederik Doyon, Clement Chion, Jonathan Tardif. 2017. Perceptions of Small Private Forest Owner’s Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity to Environmental Disturbances and Climate Change: Views from a Heterogeneous Population in Southern Quebec, Canada. *Small-Scale Forestry* (2017) 16:367-393.

Garry, Tony, and Tracey Harwood. 2017. Exploring Consumer Associations Between Corporate Reputation, Corporate Sustainability, and Product Attributes Within Utilitarian Market Contexts. *International Studies of Management & Organization* (2017) 47.3: 258-275.

Karnouskos, Stamatis. 2017. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as an Enabler for Competent Employees and Innovation in Industry. *Computers in Industry* (2017) 91:1-10.

Muthukrishnan, Rani, and Jane E. Kelley. 2017. Depictions of Sustainability in Children’s Books. *Environment, Development and Sustainability* (2017) 19:955-970.

Social Media News: Your High School Friendships Are Still Affecting Your Mental Health

Web Link: World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2016

Week 15: Student Presentations
December 14

Course Materials

Required reading materials are indicated under weekly topics in the Files section of our Canvas site, typically as PDFs. They have been selected from a broad range of highly contemporary relevant literature. To access a reading, simply click on the title in the Files section. It typically takes significantly under a minute for the article to appear fully, depending upon the strength of internet connectivity.

Method of Instruction and Evaluation

Course requirements are listed below, together with their grade point values.

1. **Class Attendance:** Attendance will be given a weight of **13%**. One grade point will be given for each attended class session. Attendance should be timely and regular. An absence is excused only with (a) prior e-mail notification for a critical documented purpose, or (b) emergency verification. Attendance should be professionally “attentive”, or without distractive use of electronic or other equipment.

2. **Class Participation:** Participation will be given a maximum weight of **26%**. Two grade points will be given for active participation in each class session. Active participation includes both (a) raising questions and offering comments connected meaningfully to ongoing discussion; and (b) introducing predesignated readings by sharing highlights and considerations prepared in advance of the class session. Details pertaining to (b) are provided below and also at the start of the syllabus section titled *Course Topics and Readings*:

In advance of each class, students should become familiar with the relevant materials posted in the Files section of our Canvas site, and complete the following:

- (1) select and read at least three of the four scholarly articles;*
- (2) read the news article;*
- (3) become familiar with the website indicated.*

During each class session, the six items listed for it (4 scholarly articles, 1 news article, and 1 website) will be discussed. Students will have the opportunity to introduce predesignated items, providing relevant highlights and considerations.

3. **Discussion Entries:** Discussion entries posted on our Canvas website in the Discussion section will be given a maximum weight of **26%**. A maximum of two grade points will be given for the timely preparation and posting of an informative, perceptive, coherent and cogent essay-style statement pertinent to the reading material assigned for a class session. One such statement should be prepared in advance of each class session and should differ in focus from the material a student intends to offer in class (as indicated above, at #2, on class participation).

Each statement should be approximately 300 words long, which is equivalent to approximately ½ page of single-spaced text. The statement is due by 10 a.m. before the class to which it pertains. (A lateness penalty will pertain, and no credit will be given if the statement is not posted by the start of the class for which it is written.) Students should consider the possibility of accomplishing their readings and posting their statements over the weekend prior to any class.

4. **A Report:** A report focusing on a clearly framed, specific case of innovation in or deviation from sustainability management in a public, civic or private organization will be given a maximum weight of **35%**. The report should explain why the relevant conduct or policy is ethical or unethical, with reference to one of the twelve ethics of sustainability management addressed in the course. The report should explain how the conduct or policy demonstrates “best practices” or “corrupt practices”.

Formatting details include the following:

- (1) the text should be a minimum of 2400 words in length, which is equivalent to approximately 8 pages of double-spaced text;
- (2) the font size should be 11 or 12 (check overall word length accordingly);
- (3) the left, right, top and bottom sides of a page should all have 1-inch margins;
- (4) endnotes should be used (not footnotes or parenthetical notes) and should be situated on pages following the text;
- (5) textual citations to endnotes should appear in Arabic, not Roman superscript;
- (6) a bibliography should be situated on pages following the endnotes;
- (7) neither the endnotes nor the bibliography should be included in the word count;
- (8) citations, endnotes and bibliography should be prepared in Chicago Style, using the guidelines provided at the following link:
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
- (9) any images, photos, diagrams, models, graphs, tables, charts, diagrams, etc., should be situated on pages titled Appendix, following the text;
- (10) all pages should be numbered.

The report should be submitted both online and in paper copy by Tuesday, December 12, at 11:59 p.m.

Informal presentations on student reports will be scheduled for Thursday, December 14, during the usual class time framework.

Each student's points for all requirements (class attendance, class participation, discussion entries and the report) will be totaled, and a class curve will be established. Final grades will be provided on a letter grade scale.

Statements of University Policy

Academic Integrity Statement

The School of Professional Studies does not tolerate cheating and/or plagiarism in any form. Those students who violate the Academic Integrity and Community Standards will be subject to the Dean's Disciplinary Procedures. The standards can be viewed online at:

<http://ce.columbia.edu/node/217>

Please familiarize yourself with the proper methods of citation and attribution. Columbia provides some useful resources online; we strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with these various styles before conducting your research:

http://corp.credoreference.com/images/literati_tutorials/il_tutorials/columbia_university/columbia_a_citation_and_plagiarism/columbia_citation_and_plagiarism.htm

<http://library.columbia.edu/research/citation-management.html>

Violations of the Academic Integrity and Community Standards will be reported to the Associate Dean for Student and Alumni Affairs.

Facilities 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 at:

<http://www.health.columbia.edu/disability-services>