GEOG 1116 / NR 1116: SEEKING SUSTAINABILITY 2
Stuff to Understand, Examine, Change and Create, if you’re going to Save the World

COURSE INFORMATION
Credit Hours: 3
Primary Audience: All students
Prerequisites: NR/GEOG 1115 (Seeking Sustainability I) is required for this course
Location: New Classroom Building 120
Meeting Times: 9:30pm – 10:45pm / T, Th

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION
Name: Dr. Timothy Baird
Office Location: Major Williams Hall, Room 127
Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 3pm–4pm, or by appointment
Email address: tbaird@vt.edu (THIS IS THE BEST WAY TO GET IN TOUCH WITH ME – please put “GEOG 1116” in the subject line of your email – this way it won’t get lost)

TEACHING ASSISTANT CONTACT INFORMATION
Name: Mark Villarreal
Office Location: Major Williams, Room 112
Office Hours: ???, or by appointment
Email address: villarmd@vt.edu (CONTACT MARK WITH YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT READING AND READING NOTES)

COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS
Sustaining the world’s interconnected environmental, social, and economic systems is arguably the most pressing concern that humans now face. All sectors of our economies and all aspects of our lives are engaged in a grand struggle with the environment and yet “Sustainability” is still quite a mysterious enterprise. In the second semester or this two-semester course we will critically and constructively examine “Sustainability.” We begin by examining foundational perspectives on how humans view the world and how the human mind operates. Next, we will discuss the dawn of the sustainability movement the role that education (broadly conceived) has played and can play in the future. In the three sections that follow, we explore contemporary sustainability concerns from each of the major system spheres (i.e., environmental, social, and economic). Finally, we discuss green strategies and pathways forward. Lastly, this course seeks to broaden our conceptualizations of what sustainability is (and more importantly, what it could be) within the context the most relevant issues facing humans today. We will discuss the relevance of philosophy, psychology, marketing, ecosystems and their services, cities, population, health, conservation, development, football, immigration, and business. Examples will be drawn from Europe, Africa, East Asia, Central America, and North America (with several examples from Appalachia). Finally, space has been created within the course for students to determine their own content for themselves based on their own sustainability related interests.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:
(1) identify key concepts of the social sciences (e.g. human nature, decision-making, demography, poverty, and public health;
(2) identify interconnections among and differences between components and interactions within and across systems, including interconnections between social institutions, groups, and individuals (nineteenth century Londoners, conservation refugees, football enthusiasts, Mexican immigrants, Chinese urbanites, early agriculturalists, Virginia conservation planners, college students and their families);
(3) analyze the ways in which values and beliefs relate to human behavior;
(4) interpret an intercultural experience both from one’s own and another’s worldview;
(5) create and support arguments related to pressing sustainability challenges; and
(6) learn about and experiment with self-regulated learning.

And, once again, I also think becoming a peace-loving troublemaker would be a positive outcome.

COURSE MATERIALS
No Required Text

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS
Class periods will involve discussion of readings, small in-class group projects, videos, music, self-driven activities, and interactive lecture.

READING & CLASS PARTICIPATION
For this course, reading and class participation are inextricably related.

One of the primary forms of participation will be discussion. To reinforce this course objective, guiding questions will be provided for each reading (and in some cases, students will be asked to provide the questions!). These questions will form the basis of our in-class discussion. Students are expected to do the required reading and answer the reading questions before the appropriate class period. Questions should be uploaded to Canvas in advance of class and are evaluated on a 100-point scale. Students are expected to make an earnest effort to respond thoughtfully to each question. Evaluation is not based on correct answers. Answers do not need to be long – a few sentences will suffice for full credit. 13 points will be deducted for each day that questions are handed in late. Exceptions will be made only in extreme circumstances. This is not intended to be punitive, but to encourage timely completion of the reading and quality preparation for class discussion.

In order to create a good climate for everyone to participate, please follow these discussion guidelines:

- Be ready to share and explain your opinions. Feel free to disagree with others, but be specific in your own assertions and back them up with evidence.
- Listen carefully and respond to other members of the group. Be willing to change your mind when someone demonstrates an error in your logic or use of facts.
- Do not hesitate to ask for clarification of any point or term that you do not understand.
- Make your point succinctly, avoid repetition, and stick to the subject.

The reading for this course will include newspaper, magazine, and journal articles, selections from books, and textbooks. It is important that you do the readings before the appropriate class periods. Plan ahead so that you will not get behind. PDFs of readings or links to sources on the internet can be found at canvas.vt.edu. Also links to internet readings are provided on the syllabus.
PINK TIME
Based on research compiled by Daniel Pink (see Drive, 2011) we will be conducting a bit of an experiment in this course. For a portion of the course (essentially 3 weeks including personal time and class time) I will be giving you the authority and the freedom to pursue anything that interests you; that you want to learn about; that you want to develop – with the only caveat being that you will need to share what you’ve done with the class. My goal here is to encourage you to become more of an active leader in your own education. This is how it will work: skip class, do anything you want, and give yourself a grade. Let me explain. On three days that we would normally have class and discuss readings, we won’t. Instead, you will have free days to pursue your own learning. My expectation is that you take the class time (1.25 hours) and homework time (1.75 hours) totaling approximately 3 hours and do something – either by yourself or in groups (with classmates or others). It’s totally you’re call. On the day following each of the “PINK TIME” days we will return to class to share what we did. These 6 days (i.e., 3+3) will constitute 15% of your final grade and you will be given the authority to grade yourselves. If you are unable to attend the “share” days for whatever reason, you will need to submit a video or written description of your activities to the class which we will watch or read in your absence.

COURSE EVALUATION
The best evaluation is personal. “Did I learn anything in this class? Did I get better at learning? At thinking?! Was it worth the effort?” An inquiring attitude and an active imagination will help you to recognize the relevance of the course topics to your life and will enhance your enjoyment of, and success in, this class.

Instructor evaluation will reflect performance on:
Reading Questions: 45%
Pink Time: 15%
Midterm Exam 18%
Final Exam 22%
Final Grade 100%

Reading Notes: please see READING & CLASS PARTICIPATION section above.

Exams: Exams will aim to evaluate critical thinking skills. Questions for the midterm and final will be drawn from the class discussions and reading notes. Exams will be open book and open notes. This does not mean that the exams will be easier – it means that I will be looking for thoughtful application of examples and ideas from the course to address broad sustainability issues and challenges in an organized and convincing manner.

GENERAL EDUCATION - PATHWAYS ASSESSMENT GOALS & PLAN (work in progress)
And another thing: This course is part of the incoming general education (GenEd) curriculum at Virginia Tech. GenEd programs are meant to promote broad learning across disciplines. This is meant to compliment deep disciplinary learning (e.g., majors). At Virginia Tech, this new curriculum, which is called Pathways, will replace the existing GenEd model, called the Curriculum for Liberal Education (CLE). In an effort to track the efficacy of the Pathways curriculum, all approved GenEd courses will focus on specific learning outcomes (e.g., scientific reasoning, critique and practice in arts and design, etc.) and indicators of those outcomes. Instructors will report on measures of student learning according to these outcomes and indicators. A full list of these outcomes and indicators can be found here. THIS COURSE addresses two
specific learning outcomes: (1) Reasoning in the Social Sciences, and (2) Intercultural and Global Awareness. Here are the indicators associated with those outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning in the Social Sciences</td>
<td>1. Identify fundamental concepts in social sciences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Identify interconnections among and differences between social institutions, groups, and individuals</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Analyze the ways in which values and beliefs relate to human behavior and social relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intercultural and Global Awareness</td>
<td>1. Interpret an intercultural experience from one’s own and another’s world view.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Address significant global challenges and opportunities in the natural and human world.</td>
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The instructor and teaching assistant will assess students’ competencies (e.g., below competent, competent, above competent) for these indicators based on students’ completed work on reading notes and exams, specifically work related to these specific indicators. This assessment will be relayed to the VT Office of Assessment & Evaluation, which will compile data for all courses contributing to each learning outcome. Student identities will not be known by anyone besides the instructor and teaching assistant.

HONOR CODE
The Undergraduate Honor Code pledge that each member of the university community agrees to abide by states: “As a Hokie, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.”

Students enrolled in this course are responsible for abiding by the Honor Code. A student who has doubts about how the Honor Code applies to any assignment is responsible for obtaining specific guidance from the course instructor before submitting the assignment for evaluation. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the University community from the requirements and expectations of the Honor Code. For additional information about the Honor Code, please visit: www.honorsystem.vt.edu

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE
- Attend class and participate in discussion.
- Keep up with the readings.
- If something is not clear, ask a question.
- Clarify expectations with the Professor.
SECTION 1: BUILDING KNOWLEDGE; CREATING PERSPECTIVE

1. JAN 22 (T): PINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK
   • Daniel Pink, Drive (2011).
   • Pink TED Talk: [http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation.html)
   • Pink RSA Talk: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6XAPnuFjJc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6XAPnuFjJc)

2. JAN 24 (Th): HUMAN NATURE: HALF EMPTY OR HALF FULL?
   Readings:

3. JAN 29 (T): TO[R]ward MENTORS
   Readings:

4. JAN 31 (Th): HEAD CASES
   Readings:

SECTION 2: SELLING OUT OR BUYING IN: EDUCATION AND MARKETING

5. FEB 5 (T): YOU SAY YOU WANT A REVOLUTION. WELL, YOU KNOW…
   Reading:

6. FEB 7 (Th): WE DON’T NEED NO EDUCATION
   Reading:

7. FEB 12 (T): WHY YOU LOVE VT FOOTBALL (and why we should talk about it)
   Reading:

8. FEB 14 (Th): PINK TIME (No. 1)
   Reading/Discussion/Activities:
   • You tell me

9. FEB 19 (T): PINK PARTY (No. 1)
   Reading/Discussion/Activities:
   • You tell us / You grade yourself

SECTION 3: ECOSYSTEMS, SERVICES & BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION

10. FEB 21 (Th): UP-ERS & DOWN-ERS
    Reading:

11. FEB 26 (T): TROPHIC CASCADES: NEVER FORGET
Reading:

12. FEB 28 (Th): BOARDWALKS AND PARK PLACES
Reading:

13. MAR 5 (T): REVIEW DAY
14. MAR 7 (TH): WORK DAY FOR EXAM

SECTION 4: POPULATION GROWTH, PUBLIC HEALTH & CITIES
15. MAR 19 (T): CITIES: LET’S GO BACK and then TO THE FUTURE
Reading:

16. MAR 21 (Th): URBAN PLANET
Reading:

17. MAR 26 (T): PINK TIME (No. 2)
Reading/Discussion/Activities:
- You tell me

18. MAR 28 (Th): PINK PARTY (No. 2)
Reading/Discussion/Activities:
- You tell us / You grade yourself

SECTION 5: POVERTY, AFFLUENCE & TECHNOLOGY
19. APR 2 (T): MIDTERM REVIEW & THE GRASS IS GREENER (so is the green)
Reading:

**April 4 (Th): Baird out sick**

20. APR 9 (T): TO FEED, OR NOT TO FEED (that is the question)
   Reading:
   - Hans Rosling, TED (2010). Global population growth, box by box. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTznEIZRkLg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTznEIZRkLg)

21. APR 11 (Th): MOVIE: THE END OF POVERTY
   Reading:
   - See reading notes

**SECTION 6: BUSINESS, GREEN BUSINESS & DESIGN**

22. APR 16 (T): A “SPEAR IN THE CHEST”
   Reading:

23. APR 18 (TH): THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE…
   Reading:
   - [http://www.ted.com/talks/william_mcdonough_on_cradle_to_cradle_design.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/william_mcdonough_on_cradle_to_cradle_design.html) (this is freakin’ awesome!)

24. APR 23 (T): MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO
   Reading:

25. APR 25 (Th): PINK ON YOUR OWN (No. 3)
   Reading/Discussion/Activities:
   - You tell me

26. APR 30 (T): PINK PARTY (No. 3)
   Reading/Discussion/Activities:
   - You tell us / You grade yourself

27. MAY 2 (Th): WHAT YOU NEED IS LOVE, LOVE (love is all you need?)
   Reading:

• [http://www.ted.com/talks/ray_anderson_on_the_business_logic_of_sustainability.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/ray_anderson_on_the_business_logic_of_sustainability.html)

28: MAY 7 (T): FINAL CLASS & FINAL EXAM DISTRIBUTED