

ENVS 291 – Environment and Sustainable Development

Condensed Syllabus

Description

With growing concerns about climate change and increasing pressure on environmental resources, the need for sustainable resource management has never been more urgent. At the same time, communities around the world continue to grapple with poverty, malnutrition, and disease, which are pressing challenges that demand immediate resources and investments. Using examples from both international and U.S. contexts, we will explore the frameworks for sustainable development, focusing on the trade-offs involved in balancing long-term environmental sustainability with urgent human needs. Students will apply these concepts by developing their own sustainable development plans for a location of their choice, using data and cost-benefit assessments to support their plans.

Logistics

- Lecture: Two ~1.5 hours session per week

Materials

- Jeffrey D. Sachs. *The Age of Sustainable Development*. Columbia University Press. 2015
- Bjorn Lomborg. *Best Things First*. Copenhagen Consensus Center. 2023

Schedule

- Week 1) State of the World
- Week 2) Framework for Sustainable Development
- Week 3) Growth and Environment
- Week 4) Poverty
- Week 5) Workshop: Excel Analysis
- Week 6) Planetary Boundaries
- Week 7) Cost Benefit Analysis
- Week 8) Agriculture
- Week 9) Global Health
- Week 10) Cities and International Trade
- Week 11) Climate Change
- Week 12) Workshop: Story Maps
- Week 13) Ecosystem Services
- Week 14) Course Presentations

Evaluation

- Participation and Attendance (10%)
- Three Homework Assignments (35%)
- Case Study Report (55%)