Syllabus

Class Meets:
Tuesday
4:30 – 7:30 pm
October 30 – December 11
Room W2759
6 sessions

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“To be truly radical is to make hope possible, not despair convincing.”
Raymond Williams

Course Overview
Why are you here? What prompted you to join the Erb Institute? Why are you in this class? This Seminar explores these questions by asking you to consider your career path and how your time here at the University of Michigan can help you fulfill it. Through readings you will be exposed to:

(a) the nature of the global environmental problem through the most recent work of the Millenium Ecosystem Assessment, a four year study, completed in 2005, that brought together nearly 1,400 experts from 95 countries to conduct a global inventory of the state of our ecosystems, quantify the effect that human activities are having on them and make suggestions for the future,
(b) the thinking of many great writers on environmental and social issues,
(c) the approaches used by various University faculty and outside professionals to address the problems we face, and most importantly,
(d) the thinking of you and your classmates as you embark on your own paths to addressing these issues.

This course is designed to enable new and prospective Erb MBA/MS students to discover what each understands about sustainable development and enterprise, pinpoint what each wants to know and endeavor to learn while in the program; and facilitate careful reflection about each student's future path through life and work, after they graduate. In addition to its curricular objectives, the Seminar aims to collectively bond the entering Erb Institute class, both intellectually and socially.
Course Expectations

Because this class depends on our interactive dialogue, class participation is essential, both for your and your classmate's learning. If you have reservations about speaking in class, you may wish to carefully consider your taking this class. When you speak in class, your emphasis should be on quality as opposed to quantity. Your comments should be focused on one point and should be backed up with sound reasoning. Comments should transcend the “I feel” syndrome. This is too easy a topic to drift into easy platitudes and reactionary statements. You should build your comments on models, evidence or analysis of inherent tradeoffs. In other words, the comments should demonstrate some reflective thinking.

Generally a high participation grade is difficult to achieve if you are absent. Therefore, class attendance is critically important. If you must miss a class, please inform me in advance. In this course you will be expected to do a lot of reading. On such a topical and emergent issue, discussion without solid analysis and evocative case examples would likely digress into a fruitless exchange of unsupported opinions. You will be expected to read the assigned materials. You will also be expected to gather additional readings that are pertinent to the topic of the day. I strongly encourage you to research other related articles that can be used to enhance and elevate class discussion.

To aid you in the reflection process inherent in a class such as this, you are encouraged to keep a journal of your thoughts as we progress through the semester. This journal will help you sort out issues that the course raises. You will not be asked to actually hand in your journals but the contents would be ideal for our discussion in the final session and for your final paper.

Course Requirements

Requirement #1 – Contributions to Class Learning and Discussion 40%

Class participation is a very important part of the learning process (as well as an important part of your grade). It is critical not only for your personal learning, but also for the learning of your fellow classmates. Much of the value of the class comes from prepared, thoughtful, and informed dialogue between you and your classmates. You are expected to read all the materials and you should apply the material in those readings to your class discussion. You will be expected to participate in that class discussion in a thoughtful, productive and meaningful way. The following are some of the behaviors we look for as good contributions to class discussions: Raising relevant, insightful questions; Making comments that build on the ideas of others, moving the discussion and analysis forward; Helping other students contribute their ideas; Offering your own ideas to help analyze the case and to develop a sound course of action; Sharing your own personal experiences in a way that adds to our understanding of the topic being discussed; Talking with appropriate frequency (i.e., neither dominating the conversation nor being too quiet). **You will be required to write a one page statement of your thoughts and reactions to the day’s readings.**

Facilitation: As this class is a very large seminar, we will break into smaller groups to discuss the week’s readings. You will each be assigned the role of facilitator of your small group once during the semester. Prior to each class, I will meet with the facilitators to provide guidance on the readings, how they fit together and how you may direct the conversation. At the end of the break out group portion of the class, you will then be asked to present the key points brought up in your discussion.
Requirement #2 – Book Review (Individual) 30%
There are a wide range of books out today on sustainability, corporate social responsibility and the like. In fact, I imagine that many of you have such a list already developed and are wondering how you are going to tackle it while also keeping up with your course load. Well, this is your opportunity to both read one of those books and have your classmates teach you about the others. You are to select one of the perspectives on environmental/social sustainability as represented by the books listed at the end of this syllabus (or you may choose another). You will critically examine the book’s ideas in terms of its logical coherence, practicality, depth of vision, strengths and weaknesses. You should not use an existing book review as a way to choose your selection, nor should you read an existing review as background for developing your own. Your review should be completely independent and original. You must submit your book choice before class #2, your written review by session #4 (not to exceed five pages, double spaced.) Bring 4 copies, one with your name on it, three without. Reviews will be handed out randomly to the class. Each student will receive three book reviews to evaluate. Evaluation forms will be handed out in class and must be returned by session #6.

Requirement #3 – Career Mapping Exercise (Individual) 30%
You are at the beginning of your experience with the Erb Institute and we want to make sure that it is the best experience it can be. To begin, you must develop a vision of what you want to accomplish in your life and how the Erb Institute, Ross, SNRE and the whole of the University can help you accomplish it. Any good vision statement has three components.

- First, it has a clear statement of the present reality – what is the problem that you see as most pressing in today’s society?
- Second, it has a clear statement of a desired future – what kind of world would you like to create?
- Third, it has a roadmap to get from the first to the second – how are you going to map your career to affect this change?

Try to use this structure for your paper. But narrow the topic to the issue (or issues) that are most important to you. Do not simply describe what is wrong with the environment/economy/business. Write about the issue on which you might like to direct your career. It could be integrating sustainability into K-12 education, changing the hotel industry to make it more sustainable, changing religious institutions to make them more proactive on solving issues of sustainability or whatever your personal plan is. The final paper should be no more than 7 pages, double spaced and is submitted in session #6. On the first page, list between 5 and 10 keywords that represent your career plans. We will discuss the papers in the final class.

Required Course Materials
There is a course packet of cases and a required text for this course. This reading should be supplemented by steady reading of contemporary environmental issues as published in The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Business Week etc.

Required:
- Reading Packet
## BA525/NRE526: Class Schedule

### Session #1  
**October 30**

**MEA:**  
The Ecosystem and Human Well-Being  
*Ecosystems and Human Well-Being*, pp. v-x.

**READINGS:**  
- **Change Agency and Tempered Radicalism**

**DUE:**  
- Complete your footprint assessment and bring the results to class. Try to manipulate your results to see how you can best reduce the environmental impact of your lifestyle: [http://www.earthday.net/footprint/index.asp](http://www.earthday.net/footprint/index.asp)
- Book review choice will be due in session #2.

### Session #2  
**November 6**

**MEA:**  
Ecosystem Change in the Last 50 Years  
*Ecosystems and Human Well-Being*, Finding #1 pp. 1-5 and Key Questions #1 and #2, pp. 25-48.

**READINGS:**  
- **Identity and Literacy**

**GUEST:**  
- **Professor Tom Lyon**, Dow Chemical Professor of Sustainable Science, Technology and Commerce; Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise; [http://webuser.bus.umich.edu/tplyon/](http://webuser.bus.umich.edu/tplyon/) (4:30-5:30)

**DUE:**  
- Book review choice
### Session #3  November 13

(We need to reschedule this session due to the Wege Lecture by Bill Ford that runs from 4-6:30. We can reschedule for immediately after the lecture or for November 20 at the same time)

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<tr>
<th>MEA:</th>
<th>Gains and Losses from Ecosystem Change</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Ecosystems and Human Well-Being</em>, Finding #2 pp. 5-14 and Key Questions #3 and #4, pp. 49-70.</td>
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<th>READINGS:</th>
<th>Technology</th>
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| GUEST: | Erb Alumni Panel (6:30-7:30). Dinner to follow. |

### Session #4  November 27

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<th>MEA:</th>
<th>Ecosystem Prospects for the Next 50 Years</th>
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<td><em>Ecosystems and Human Well-Being</em>, Finding #3 pp. 14-18 and Key Questions #5, #6 and #7, pp. 71-91.</td>
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<th>READINGS:</th>
<th>Balance</th>
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| GUEST: | Professor Tom Gladwin, Max McGraw Professor of Sustainable Enterprise, Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise, [http://www.bus.umich.edu/FacultyBios/FacultyBio.asp?id=000154957](http://www.bus.umich.edu/FacultyBios/FacultyBio.asp?id=000154957) (4:30-5:30) |

| DUE: | Book reviews due (bring 4 copies) |
### Session #5
#### MEA:
**Reversing Ecosystem Degradation**
- *Ecosystems and Human Well-Being*, Finding #4 pp. 18-24 and Key Questions #8 and #9, pp. 92-102.

#### READINGS:
**Institutions**

#### GUEST:

### Session #6
#### MEA:
**Opportunities and Challenges for Business and Industry**

#### READINGS:
**Answers**

#### DUE:
- Individual assessments
- Completed book review forms
Book Suggestions (or you may add to the list)

• Snyder, G. (2004) *The Practice of the Wild* (Shoemaker and Hoard)
• Wendell, B. (1986) *The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture.* (San Francisco: Sierra Club).