

# MANAGING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

## Management 460

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### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

*The Triple Bottom Line*, Savitz, Jossey-Bass, 2008

*The Business Guide to Sustainability: Practical Strategies and Tools for Organizations*, Hitchcock and Willard, Earthscan Publications, 2007

### **INTRODUCTION**

Organizations throughout the world are engaging in sustainable practices as tools to achieve competitive advantage, to save money, and to prepare for energy shortages and anticipation of more stringent legislation regarding environmentally-friendly practices. As organizations increasingly include sustainability as part of their missions, values and strategies, new demands on managers and employees emerge. Today's manager is expected not only to ensure business practices are environmentally sustainable, but is also expected to pass down sustainable values so that subordinates embody environmentally sustainable behavior in the conduct of their jobs. Reducing energy costs, recycling and/or reusing components of production, innovating processes that reduce waste, and creating a culture that values sustainability are all crucial for maintaining market position and continued profitability.

I am so excited to teach this course and equally excited that there is so much student interest in the area of sustainable business. I am a Full Professor and teach management courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels. I received my Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Ohio State University with a minor in International Business. The areas I most like teaching are managing for sustainability, ethics and social responsibility, managing diversity, and developing management skills. My current research areas include designing training programs to foster sustainable behavior in organizations and integrating sustainable management into the business school curriculum.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course examines the ways in which organizations can be managed to meet the triple bottom line: profit, ethical treatment of workers, and environmental sustainability. The course explores what specific actions managers and organizations can take to address ecological problems and climate change. Our major focus will be on how organizations can be the solution to current environmental problems while at the same time remaining economically viable.

As the actions of organizations have been a major contributors to climate change, so too can their future actions be the solution. These are times of great opportunity. The types of creativity and innovation that are demanded to solve this crisis are unequalled to those at any other point in history. Those businesses that move to sustainable practices today will be the leaders of tomorrow.

You are our future leaders. As such, the overall objective of this course is to provide you with the knowledge and skill set to manage in a sustainable and socially responsible way while maintaining a profitable enterprise. Organizations are already beginning to look for managers with skills in the area. In a recent survey conducted by the Department of Management, recruiters of Chico State business students rated “managing sustainably” among the most important areas expected of new grads.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The bulk of this course will cover organizational strategies and practices to becoming sustainable. The following are the learning objectives I have determined for this course:

### **General Objectives**

1. You will learn about the vast array of sustainable practices organizations can and are engaging in as a response to environmental problems and as a means of maintaining competitive advantage.
2. You will examine your own values and explore what the term “common good” means for you and use your understanding in the context of ethical organizational decision-making and socially responsible behavior.
3. You will become familiar with the multitude of stakeholders any organization has and how these stakeholder influence sustainability related practices.

### **Applications**

1. You will learn to design and conduct sustainability audits to analyze an organizational practices that impact the environment

2. You will learn how to report audit results back to organizations so that they can become more sustainable,
3. You will learn about change management.

## **COURSE STRUCTURE**

This course has a more applied focus compared to many of the other management course you have taken. You will be presented with material and skills in class and take what you learn to a real-life setting (e.g., a small business, a department at the University) with the goal of helping the organization improve on sustainable practices. Thus, we will be using a variety of teaching and learning methods. I believe that students can learn more effectively the more they are involved in the learning process. Because of this philosophy, I will encourage high levels of interaction and dedication to the hands-on learning project. I will expect high levels of participation from students. Participation includes preparing for class, contributing to class discussions, asking questions, and fully contributing to individual and team activities.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Environmentally Responsible Activity**

You will choose one way to become more environmentally responsible in your own life and make that change over the semester. This activity is important for your future as a manager for several reasons. First, a manager that demands that employees act in a sustainably responsible manner must “walk the talk.” You cannot expect more out of your employees than you are willing to do yourself. Second, engaging in this practice gives you a deeper understanding of change management. Having experienced changing your own behavior, you will be more prepared to lead others to change theirs. Finally, based on my own experience in several classes, I have found that this exercise leads to a stronger commitment to sustainable practice. In the past, many of my students have become more aware of the impact of their behavior on the environment and have voluntarily adopted other sustainable practices. Other students have gone on to convince their roommates and families to make the change. These results are just the sorts of skills that will make you a better manager.

Detailed instructions on this activity are posted on WebCT.

### **Exams**

We will have two exams during the semester. These exams will focus mostly on the assigned readings and will precede the audit project portion of the course.

The goal of the exams is to ensure you have an understanding of the material before you go out into the field to apply your skills.

**No make-up exams are given without a documented illness or death in the family. You must contact me prior to missing an exam by phone or by email. You will not be allowed to make up the exam without proper documentation.**

### **Speakers**

I will be scheduling speakers for our class throughout the semester. Speakers will be individuals in the business community who run sustainable businesses, experts in fields related to sustainability, and perhaps city officials as the City of Chico is deeply committed to sustainability.

### **Sustainability Audit Project**

This project is the “guts” of the course and will provide you with the skills employers seek when hiring for a job that is sustainability related. As part of a team, you will evaluate the sustainability practices of a small business, a non-profit, or a department/unit on campus. I will help you identify your audit sites. You will carry out all steps of a sustainability audit including evaluating current practices, designing an instrument to measure such practices, determining a course of action for improvement, and writing a report detailing your recommendations. You will present your report to your client and work with them in identifying which recommendations are feasible.

Instructions for the project are on our WebCT site.

### **Group Presentations**

You will also be required to participate in an informal group presentation at the end of the semester presenting the method and results of your audit project.

Instructions for the project are on our WebCT site.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Your final grade will be weighted as indicated:

Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%

Sustainability Audit Project	55% (total as follows)
Method	15%
Audit Instrument	15%
Final Report	20%
Group presentation	5%
Env. Res. Activity	15

Your final grade will be based on the grades you earn during the semester. Consistent with Chico State standards:

A=excellent work  
 B=very good work  
 C=standard or adequate work  
 D=minimally acceptable work  
 F=unacceptable work

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **1. Disenrollment**

Students who miss the first class meeting without prior notification of their planned absence will be disenrolled.

### **2. Academic Rigor and High Expectations**

You may sometimes wonder why a professor is demanding. There are three major reasons. First, in order to grow intellectually and professionally, we need to stretch. Second, university policy demands rigor on the part of faculty and students. In part, university policy states: "Academic rigor consists of dedication on the part of students and faculty to the pursuit of academic excellence, including discipline of mind and disciplined behavior, intellectual honesty, decorum and civility." The third reason is very practical: employers demand it.

### **3. Academic Honesty**

You should be aware of the University's policy on academic integrity. You should also be aware of my beliefs. Absolute academic honesty is expected in this class. As a reminder, plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional presentation of another person's ideas as your own. Plagiarism will result in a zero on the assignment. **In any instance of cheating, whether intentional or unintentional, you will be referred to the student disciplinary office and risk expulsion from the University.**

### **4. Class Attendance**

Your attendance and active participation in class is necessary and expected. As stated previously in this syllabus, true learning requires that you be an active participant in the learning process. Throughout the semester, you will be completing exams as well as exercises in class. **Quizzes cannot be made up if missed without documented evidence of illness or death in the family. If you must miss an exam because of one of the above reasons, you must contact me by phone or email prior to the exam.**

## **5. Grade Disputes**

If you believe that any graded assignment deserves a grade other than the one I think you earned, please feel free to come in and discuss your concerns. Please follow these guidelines in order to facilitate our discussion. The discussion must take place within **one week** from the day I return the assignment to the class. I will not haggle over points with you. If you believe that you have been graded unfairly you must demonstrate **in writing**, referring back to the text (using page numbers), lecture notes or any other relevant class material why you believe you deserve a grade other than the one you received. **Your argument must be typed.** If you have a legitimate argument, I will regrade your test or assignment.

## **6. Copies of Work**

Always (1) keep copies of all the work you turn in and (2) retain the work you receive back. I may lose a paper, my fish might eat an assignment, or some other crisis may occur. A copy of your work solves the problem.

## **7. If You Are Having Trouble with This Course**

It is imperative that you come in and talk to me if you are having problems. The sooner I am aware of your problems, the sooner a solution can be developed and the more likely you are to succeed in this course. If you have any special needs that might affect your performance in this course, please discuss those with me as soon as possible.

## **9. Change**

Because it is impossible to predict precisely how a semester will progress before it begins, changes to the content, weighting, and/or sequencing of assignments may occur at any time.

## **10. If You Miss Class**

If you miss any classes, it is imperative that you call a classmate to find out what you missed. You are responsible for anything that goes on in class, including turning in assignments on their due date if you miss a class.

## 12. Classroom Etiquette

Over the past few years, I have noticed more and more disruptive behavior occurring in class. Such behavior disturbs the learning process for other students and shows lack of respect for me, your fellow students, and the topic of the course. I ask that you please refrain from the following behaviors:

1. Coming to class late. I realize there are sometimes legitimate reasons for coming in late. If you have such an excuse, please let me know. The same applies to leaving class early.
2. Leaving class and coming back. Please take care of personal business before class.
3. Failure to turn off your cell phone before class.
4. Reading the paper or textbooks from other classes.
5. Surfing the internet or working on assignments from other classes.
6. Engaging in discussion with others during class.

<u>Course Schedule</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Week 1	The Sustainability Sweet Spot: Balancing Profit and Sust.	TBL*, CH 2
	Organizational Accountability	TBL, CH 2-3
Week 2	How accountable is business?	TBL, CH 4, 5
	Dealing with business backlash	TBL, CH 6
<b>INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY PROJECT</b>		
Week 3	Shaping sustainability strategy	BG*, Ch 1
	Managing stakeholders <b>EXAM 1 (TBL/BG)</b>	TBL 11, 12
Week 4	Creating a culture of sust	TBL 14
	You as an agent of change	BG, CH 2

## Assessing your practices

Week 5	Selection of audit site due Monday	
	The SCORE audit tool	BG, CH 3
	General sust. auditing	
Week 6	Auditing facilities	BG, CH 7
	The role of the HR department	BG, CH 8
Week 7	The role of top management	BG, CH 6
	Environmental affairs	BG, CH 10
Week 8	Cost accounting	BG, CH 12

## EXAM 2 (TBL/BG)

## INTRODUCTION TO AUDIT PROJECT

For the rest of the semester, we will be using material and assignments I have posted on WebCT (You are expected to use your books as resources throughout the projects)

See overview of audit process (WebCT)

Week 9	Preparing for initial walk-through What to look for Developing an initial checklist	
Week 10	<b>Initial walkthrough of your audit sites take place</b> Groups meet to discuss results Conduct any research you need regarding your type of industry	
Week 11	Design formal audit instrument Meet with me for guidance	
Week 12	<b>Rough draft of audit tool due</b> Interviewing as part of audit process Rough drafts returned	
Week 13	Finalize audit tool Conduct formal audit of your site	

Week 14	Report writing-how to write a clear sustainability report Final Environmental Responsibility Project Report due
Week 15	Final Sustainability Audit Reports due Begin group presentations of results
Finals week	Student presentations

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TBL=*Triple Bottom Line*, Savitz, 2008

BG=*Business Guide to Sustainability*, Hitchcock and Willard, 2007