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

SUMA PS5700

ETHICS OF SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE



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 three sections: challenges, pathways and practices. Challenges include the worldwide dimensionality of ethical problems today; and the three particular problems of corruption, conflict and climate, which undercut economy, society and ecology, the three pillars characteristically understood to support sustainability. Pathways, including common pools, regional equity, social responsibility and impact investment, are human dynamics that can lead us to remediating these problems. Practices include particularly those of production, transaction, distribution and development, the primary objects of sustainability management. Throughout the course, specific environmental ethics, including earth justice, environmental justice, and sectoral sustainability ethics, are discussed; and emphasis is placed on ethical issues of finance, including commodification, privatization, and financialization itself. This emphasis is reflected in the increasing concern for financing sustainability, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

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, since 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, reading at least 3 of the 6 scholarly articles listed. Each week, a relevant web page is also provided as a source of additional information and potential research.

During each class session, the various items listed will be discussed, and students will have the opportunity to express their thoughts on them.

Introduction

Week 1. Ethical Capital – Common Ground and Shaky Ground *September 6*

Kopnina, Helen. 2017. Working with Human Nature to Achieve Sustainability: Exploring Constraints and Opportunities. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 148 (2017) 751-759.

Kakoty, Sanjeeb. 2018. Ecology, Sustainability and Traditional Wisdom. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 172 (2018) 3215-3224.

Phillips, Mary. 2017. "Daring to Care": Challenging Corporate Environmentalism. *Journal of Business Ethics*. doi:10.1007/s10551-017-3589-0.

Miller, Lantz. 2018. How Ecology Can Edify Ethics: The Scope of Morality. *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics*. doi:10.1007/s10806-018-9738-3.

Aldohni, Abdul. 2018. Is Ethical Finance the Answer to the Ills of the UK Financial Market? A Post-Crisis Analysis. *Journal of Business Ethics* 151 (2018) 265-278.

Fassin, Yves, and Will Drover. 2017. Ethics in Entrepreneurial Finance: Exploring Problems in Venture Partner Entry and Exit. *Journal of Business Ethics* 140 (2017) 649-672.

Web Page: United Nations Sustainable Development Goals https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300

Section I. Challenges

Week 2. "World Problematics" – Corruption, Conflict, and Climate *September 13*

Olesen, Thomas. 2018. Adaptation and Self-Celebration: the Formation of Injustice Icons in a North-South Perspective. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 31 (2018) 313-328.

Silvestre, Bruno S., et al. 2018. Challenges for Sustainable Supply Chain Management: When Stakeholder Collaboration becomes Conducive to Corruption. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 194 (2018) 766-776.

Garcia-Frapolli, Eduardo, et al. 2018. Different Approaches towards the Understanding of Socio-Environmental Conflicts in Protected Areas. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2240.

Wood, Benjamin T., *et al.* 2018. Socially Just Triple-Wins? A Framework for Evaluating the Social Justice Implications of Climate Compatible Development. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 211.

Schoen, Edward J. 2017. The 2007–2009 Financial Crisis: An Erosion of Ethics: A Case Study. *Journal of Business Ethics* 146 (2017) 805-830.

Schaltegger, Stefan, and Roger Burritt. 2018. Business Cases and Corporate Engagement with Sustainability: Differentiating Ethical Motivations. *Journal of Business Ethics* 147 (2018) 241-259.

Web Page: Earth Charter Initiative – The Earth Charter http://earthcharter.org/discover/the-earth-charter/

Week 3. "Utilities" – Commodification, Corruption, and Earth Justice *September 20*

Biswas, Debashish, *et al.* 2018. The Drivers and Impacts of Selling Soil for Brick Making in Bangladesh. *Environmental Management*. doi:10.1007/s00267-018-1072-z.

Garau, Chiara, and Valentina Maria Pavan. 2018. Evaluating Urban Quality: Indicators and Assessment Tools for Smart Sustainable Cities. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 575.

Kaltenborn, Bjorn P., *et al.* 2017. Ecosystem Services and Cultural Values as Building Blocks for 'The Good life'. A Case Study in the Community of Røst, Lofoten Islands, Norway. *Ecological Economics* 140 (2017) 166-176.

Gunderson, Ryan. 2018. Degrowth and Other Quiescent Futures: Pioneering Proponents of an Idler Society. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 198 (2018) 1574-1582.

Norberg, Peter. 2018. Bankers Bashing Back: Amoral CSR Justifications. *Journal of Business Ethics* 147 (2018) 401-418.

Mata, Carlos, et al. 2018. A Decade of Environmental Accounting Reporting: What We Know. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 198 (2018) 1198-1209.

Web Page: Ethical Systems – Corruption https://www.ethicalsystems.org/content/corruption

Week 4. "Rights" – Privatization, Conflict, and Environmental Justice September 27

van der Ploeg, Lidewij, and Frank Vanclay. 2018. A Tool for Improving the Management of Social and Human Rights Risks at Project Sites: The Human Rights Sphere. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 142 (2017) 4072-4084.

Hancock, L., et al. 2018. Bolivia's Lithium Frontier: Can Public Private Partnerships Deliver a Minerals Boom for Sustainable Development? *Journal of Cleaner Production* 178 (2018) 551-560.

Evans, Alice. 2018. Politicising Inequality: The Power of Ideas. *World Development* 110 (2018) 360-372.

Beck, Teresa Koloma, and Tobias Werron. 2018. Violent Confliction: Armed Conflicts and Global Competition for Attention and Legitimacy. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 31 (2018) 275-296.

Vatn, Arild. 2018. Environmental Governance – From Public to Private? *Ecological Economics* 148 (2018) 170-177.

Motherway, David, et al. 2018. Failures in Regulator-Led Deinstitutionalization of Questionable Business Practices. *Journal of Business Ethics* 149 (2018) 627-641.

Web Page: The World Justice Project – Rule of Law Index 2017-2018 https://worldjusticeproject.org/our-work/wjp-rule-law-index/wjp-rule-law-index-2017%E2%80%932018

Week 5. "Values" – Financialization, Climate, and Sustainability Ethics *October 4*

Han, Geurim, et al. 2018. Extrinsic Value Orientation and Decreased Sustainability of Shared Resources: The Moderating Role of Situational Characteristics. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2199.

Choy, Yee Keong. 2018. Cost-benefit Analysis, Values, Wellbeing and Ethics: An Indigenous Worldview Analysis. *Ecological Economics* 145 (2018) 1-9.

Milchram, Christine, et al. 2018. Moral Values as Factors for Social Acceptance of Smart Grid Technologies. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2703.

Perlaviciute, Goda, *et al.* 2018. Emotional Responses to Energy Projects: Insights for Responsible Decision Making in a Sustainable Energy Transition. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2526.

Bosch-Badia, Maria Teresa, et al. 2018. Sustainability and Ethics in the Process of Price Determination in Financial Markets: A Conceptual Analysis. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 1638.

Belfrage, Claes, and Markus Kallifatides. 2018. Financialisation and the New Swedish Model. *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 42 (2018) 875-899.

Web Page: The World Happiness Report 2018 http://worldhappiness.report/ed/2018/

Section II. Pathways

Week 6. Common Pools – Community Stakeholder Dynamics October 11

Derkzen, Marthe L., *et al.* 2017. Shifts in Ecosystem Services in Deprived Urban Areas: Understanding People's Responses and Consequences for Well-being. *Ecology and Society* 22(1):51.

Flomenhoft, Gary. 2018. Historical and Empirical Basis for Communal Title in Minerals at the National Level: Does Ownership Matter for Human Development? *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 1958.

Fernández-Huerga, Eduardo. 2018. The Labour Demand of Firms: An Alternative Conception Based on the Capabilities Approach. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*. doi:10.1093/cje/bey013.

Xu, Keshuai, *et al.* 2017. Community Leadership in Rural Tourism Development: A Tale of Two Ancient Chinese Villages. *Sustainability* 2017, 9, 2344.

Bresnihan, Patrick. 2017. The (Slow) Tragedy of Improvement: Neoliberalism, Fisheries Management and the Institutional Commons. *World Development*. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2017.09.017.

Stoeckl, Natalie, *et al.* 2018. The Crowding Out of Complex Social Goods. *Ecological Economics* 144 (2018) 65–72.

Web Page: Our Common Home – Encyclical http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

Week 7. Regional Equity – Metropolitan Stakeholder Dynamics October 18

Beumer, Carijn. 2017. Sustopia or Cosmopolis? A Critical Reflection on the Sustainable City. *Sustainability* 2017, 9, 845.

Blay-Palmer, Alison, *et al.* 2018. Validating the City Region Food System Approach: Enacting Inclusive, Transformational City Region Food Systems. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 1680.

Bailey, David, *et al.* 2018. A Place-based Developmental Regional Industrial Strategy for Sustainable Capture of Co-created Value. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*. doi:10.1093/cje/bey019.

Lecuyer, Lou, *et al.* 2018. The Construction of Feelings of Justice in Environmental Management: An Empirical Study of Multiple Biodiversity Conflicts in Calakmul, Mexico. *Environmental Management* 213 (2018) 363-373.

Cherry, C. E., and N. F. Pidgeon. 2018. Is Sharing the Solution? Exploring Public Acceptability of the Sharing Economy. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 195 (2018) 939-948.

Dominic, Tara. 2018. A New Statelessness? The Truman Doctrine, the Modern Latin American Mercenary, and the Economic Entrenchment of the Third World. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 31 (2018) 1-14.

Web Page – United Nations Global Land Outlook 2017 https://www.unccd.int/actions/global-land-outlook-glo

Week 8. Social Responsibility – Organizational Stakeholder Dynamics *October 25*

Bergman, Manfred, *et al.* 2017. An Empirical Exploration, Typology, and Definition of Corporate Sustainability. *Sustainability* 2017, 9, 753.

Garst, Jilde, et al. 2017. Responsibility versus Profit: The Motives of Food Firms for Healthy Product Innovation. *Sustainability* 2017, 9, 2286.

Blanco-Romero, Asuncion, *et al.* 2018. Barcelona, Housing Rent Bubble in a Tourist City. Social Responses and Local Policies. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2043.

Singh, Shyam, et al. 2018. Bridging Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility: Culture of Monitoring and Evaluation of CSR Initiatives in India. Sustainability 2018, 10, 2353.

Ahen, Frederick, and Joseph Amankwah-Amoah. 2018. Institutional Voids and the Philanthropization of CSR Practices: Insights from Developing Economies. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2400.

Tafere, Maereg. 2018. Forced Displacements and the Environment: Its Place in National and International Climate Agenda. *Environmental Management* 224 (2018) 191-201.

Web Page: Ethisphere – The World's Most Ethical Companies 2018 https://www.worldsmostethicalcompanies.com/

Week 9. Impact Investment – Vanguard Stakeholder Dynamics *November 1*

Rizzi, Francesco, *et al.* 2018. The Structuring of Social Finance: Emerging Approaches for Supporting Environmentally and Socially Impactful Projects. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 170 (2018) 805-817.

Dembek, Krzysztof, *et al.* 2018. Creating Value for Multiple Stakeholders: Sustainable Business Models at the Base of the Pyramid. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 196 (2018) 1600-1612.

Pueyo, Ana. 2018. What Constrains Renewable Energy Investment in Sub-Saharan Africa? A Comparison of Kenya and Ghana. *World Development* 109 (2018) 85–100.

Bergman, Noam. 2018. Impacts of the Fossil Fuel Divestment Movement: Effects on Finance, Policy and Public Discourse. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2529.

Climent, Francisco. 2018. Ethical versus Conventional Banking: A Case Study. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2152.

Ng, Artie W. 2018. From Sustainability Accounting to a Green Financing System: Institutional Legitimacy and Market Heterogeneity in a Global Financial Centre. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 195 (2018) 585-592.

Web Page: The World Bank – Annual Report 2017 https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/27986/9781464811197.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y

Section III: Practices

Week 10. Ethical Issues in Production Processes: Economic Resources *November 8*

Alzola, Miguel. 2018. Decent Work: The Moral Status of Labor in Human Resource Management. *Journal of Business Ethics* 147 (2018) 835-853.

Powell, Benjamin. 2018. Sweatshop Regulation: Tradeoffs and Welfare Judgements. *Journal of Business Ethics* 151 (2018) 29-36.

Vaccaro, Guilherme Luís Roehe, *et al.* 2018. Interrelationship among Actors in Ethanol Production Chain as a Competitive and Sustainable Factor: The Case of Associative Production and Family-farming in Southern Brazil. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 196 (2018) 1239-1255.

Wartman, Paul, *et al.* 2018. Temperate Agroforestry: How Forest Garden Systems Combined with People-Based Ethics Can Transform Culture. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2246.

Zhou, Qi, et al. 2018. Innovative Financial Approach for Agricultural Sustainability: A Case Study of Alibaba. Sustainability 2018, 10, 891.

Comyns, Breeda, and Elizabeth Franklin-Johnson. 2018. Corporate Reputation and Collective Crises: A Theoretical Development Using the Case of Rana Plaza. *Journal of Business Ethics* 150 (2018) 159–183.

Web Page: United Nations – UNESCO World Heritage List http://whc.unesco.org/en/list

Week 11. Ethical Issues in Transaction Processes: Economic Regulation *November 15*

Hilson, Gavin, et al. 2018. Towards Sustainable Pro-Poor Development? A Critical Assessment of Fair Trade Gold. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 186 (2018) 894-904.

MacGregor, Finlay, *et al.* 2017. Problems with Firm-Led Voluntary Sustainability Schemes: The Case of Direct Trade Coffee. *Sustainability* 2017, 9, 651.

Hughes, Sara, and Jaqueline Peterson. 2018. Transforming Municipal Services to Transform Cities: Understanding the Role and Influence of the Private Sector. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 108.

Santos, Luan, *et al.* 2018. Impacts of Carbon Pricing on Brazilian Industry: Domestic Vulnerability and International Trade Exposure. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 2390.

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

Payne, Dinah M., and Cecily M. Raiborn. 2018. Aggressive Tax Avoidance: A Conundrum for Stakeholders, Governments, and Morality. *Journal of Business Ethics* 147 (2018) 469-487.

Web Page: Transparency International – Corruption Perceptions Index 2017 https://www.transparency.org/country

Week 12. Thanksgiving Holiday

November 22

Week 13. Ethical Issues in Distribution Processes: Economic Opportunity November 29

Wood, Benjamin T., *et al.* 2017. Investigating Climate Compatible Development Outcomes and their Implications for Distributive Justice: Evidence from Malawi. *Environmental Management* 60 (2017) 436-453.

Mosse, David. 2018. Caste and Development: Contemporary Perspectives on a Structure of Discrimination and Advantage. *World Development* 60 (2018) 422-436.

Eger, Claudia, *et al.* 2018. Gender and Capacity Building: A Multi-layered Study of Empowerment. *World Development* 106 (2018) 207-219.

Sovacool, Benjamin K., *et al.* 2018 Bloated Bodies and Broken Bricks: Power, Ecology, and Inequality in the Political Economy of Natural Disaster Recovery. *World Development* 110 (2018) 243-255.

Shichor, David. 2018. Thinking About Punishment (or the Lack of it): The Case of the Economic Meltdown. *Journal of Business Ethics* 147 (2018) 185-195.

Thompson, Benjamin S. 2018. Can Financial Technology Innovate Benefit Distribution in Payments for Ecosystem Services and REDD+? *Ecological Economics* 139 (2017) 150-157.

Web Page: International Union for Conservation of Nature – Species https://www.iucn.org/theme/species

Week 14. Ethical Issues in Development Processes: Economic Growth *December 6*

Caiado, Rodrigo Goyannes Gusmao, *et al.* 2018. A Literature-based Review on Potentials and Constraints in the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 198 (2018) 1276-1288.

Bennett, Nathan J., *et al.* 2018. Environmental Stewardship: A Conceptual Review and Analytical Framework. *Environmental Management* 198 (2018) 1276-1288.

Oliveira, Rita Vasconcellos. 2018. Back to the Future: The Potential of Intergenerational Justice for the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. *Sustainability* 2018, 10, 427.

Gautier, Lara, *et al.* 2018. How Do Diffusion Entrepreneurs Spread Policies? Insights from Performance-based Financing in Sub-Saharan Africa. *World Development* 110 (2018) 160–175

Ha-Brookshire, Jung. 2017. Toward Moral Responsibility Theories of Corporate Sustainability and Sustainable Supply Chain. *Journal of Business Ethics* 145 (2017) 227-237.

Strunz, Sebastian, and Bartosz Bartkowski. 2018. Degrowth, the Project of Modernity, and Liberal Democracy. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 196 (2018) 1158-1168.

Web Page: The International Monetary Fund – Blog Topics

https://blogs.imf.org/topics/

Week 15: Student Presentations

December 13

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 usually takes significantly under a minute for the article to appear fully, depending upon the strength of internet connectivity and the type of browser used.

In addition, for the purpose of review, PPTs used in class will be posted weekly in the Files section of our Canvas site.

Course Requirements

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

- 1. *Class Attendance:* Attendance will be given a maximum 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 readings by sharing highlights and considerations pertaining to them.
- 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 essaystyle statement pertinent to the reading material assigned for a class session. One such statement should be prepared in advance of each class session. The statement is due by Wednesday, 2 p.m. before the Thursday class to which it pertains. 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 the sustainability ethics addressed in the course. The report should explain how the conduct or policy demonstrates "best practices" or "corrupt practices". The report should be submitted both online and in paper copy by Tuesday, December

11, at 11:59 p.m. Informal presentations on student reports will be scheduled for Thursday, December 13, during the usual class time framework.

Additional details regarding course requirements will be posted, as needed, in the Assignments section of our Canvas site.

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://studentconduct.columbia.edu/

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://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

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