**SUS 489 Sustainability Capstone**

**Synonym Number: 97029**

**Spring 2016**

**4 credits**



**I. Course Information:**

*Meeting Times and Days:* Tuesdays 8:00-11:50 AM *Class Location:* Academic Building 216

*Start Date:* 01/19/16 *End Date:* 05/06/16

*Refund Date:* 02/03/16 *Withdraw Date:* 04/10/16

# *Prerequisites:* SUS 300 and SUS 301, minimum grade of C-

**Instructor Information:**

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*Office: Bristol Hall 109 (enter through room 111)*

*Office Hours: Mon.: 10:00-12:00 AM and 1:00-4:00 PM; also by appointment.*

1. **Course Description:** The capstone course offers students an opportunity to reflect upon, refine, and synthesize their learning over time within the major. Students reflect upon their collegiate experience within the context of the three Es of sustainability and produce a portfolio and a significant research project. For the research project, one or more methodological approach is chosen, articulated, and applied. As part of the learning process with regard to research methodologies, students learn to effectively apply research ethics, with particular focus on ethical treatment of human subjects. Students weave together interdisciplinary thought, demonstrating that they have achieved the learning objectives of the major, and hone their scholarly and professional skills relevant to the study and practice of sustainability.

Topical Outline:

1. Exploration of prospective research subjects and approaches relevant to sustainability.
2. Synthesis of program learning.
3. Peer-review skills to promote scholarly excellence.
4. Portfolio creation and revision.
5. Professional/scholarly identity and leadership capacity within sustainability.
6. Research proficiency within sustainability studies.
7. **Student Learning Outcomes, Competencies, and Skills:** Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:
8. Articulate comprehension of the breadth and depth of interdisciplinary learning.
9. Synthesize knowledge and apply skills acquired through program coursework.
10. Demonstrate refined written and oral communication skills.
11. Demonstrate understanding of the three Es of sustainability.
12. Demonstrate a significant capacity for interdisciplinary and critical inquiry and thought.
13. Comprehend and implement appropriate research methodologies in a chosen research endeavor.
14. Reflect upon acquired knowledge and its meaning to one’s life and work.
15. Constructively critique the scholarly work of peers as part of the processes of portfolio and research project development.
16. Create a portfolio that is representative of one’s scholarly/professional/voluntary/civic work relevant to sustainability.
17. **IDEA Objectives:** In addition to the above learning outcomes, you can be expected to achieve the following

competencies, provided that you participate fully in the course and complete all requirements:

Objective #3: Learning to apply course material to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions.

Objective #8: Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing.

Objective #9: Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems.

1. **Evaluation Methods and Class Management:** Your grade in this course will be determined by class participation, participation in special speaker events, portfolio work, a research project, and participation in a research symposium. This is a highly experiential course that is heavily based on your active synthesis of work you have completed throughout your degree program. Because of the highly experiential nature of the course and because the class meets only weekly, missing classes is highly discouraged. Assigned readings should be completed **prior** to the class sessions for which they are assigned. Please try to avoid entering class late or leaving early because doing so disrupts the class. Following are some general guidelines to help you understand the structure of this course, the expectations I have of you, and what you can expect from me.
* We will be using Canvas as primary means of communication. Canvas (<https://coloradomtn.instructure.com/>) is CMC’s chosen e-learning tool that provides an online site for our course. You will find course announcements, assignments, and more posted in our Canvas course site. I will provide an overview of Canvas during the first week of class.
* All written assignments, unless otherwise specified, must be turned in via Canvas, which means they must be word processed!
* Your CMC e-mail address is considered to be an official means of contacting you about this course. Therefore, you are expected to check your CMC e-mail regularly.
* I may choose to modify or alter the course material as the semester progresses. These changes will be conveyed to you in class and reflected in Canvas. Any such changes will be finalized by the date they are assigned.
* Assignments may be submitted early if need be. Please notify me if such instances occur and ask for permission in advance of actually submitting an assignment early. I will accept late assignments for one week following the original due date. All late assignments will be docked one full grade (10%). No assignments will be accepted following our last class meeting.
* If you need to miss a class, please notify me as soon as you are aware of this to make arrangements to get the course material and make up any missed activities.
* And finally, a quick note on academic honesty: plagiarism is not acceptable in this class. Plagiarism occurs when you use someone else’s work, do not cite the source of the work, and claim such work as your own. Plagiarism is considered academic misconduct and will be treated as such as defined in the “Academic Policies and Requirements” section of the *Colorado Mountain College Student Handbook*.

Grade % Quality Points

A 93.5%-100% 4.0

A- 89.5%-93.4% 3.7

B+ 86.5%-89.4% 3.3

B 82.5%-86.4% 3.0

B- 79.5%-82.4% 2.7

C+ 76.5%-79.4% 2.3

C 72.5%-76.4% 2.0

C- 69.5%-72.4% 1.7

D+ 66.5%-69.4% 1.3

D 62.5%-66.4% 1.0

D- 59.5%-62.4% 0.7

F below 59.5% 0.0

Grades will be assessed as follows:

**Class Participation 15% of final grade**

**Sustainability Conference Participation 5% of final grade**

**Professional Portfolio 25% of final grade**

**Portfolio Presentation 10% of final grade**

**Research Project 30% of final grade**

**Research Symposium Poster Presentation 15% of final grade**

**Semester Total: 100%**

**Class participation: 15% of final grade:** The success of this course—for you and for your classmates—depends largely on your commitment to attending, preparing for, and participating in class. We’ll be synthesizing and discussing our understanding of sustainability as a concept/practice, and we’ll be doing some exciting experiential work together that will help you transition into work or graduate studies. In class work will also comprise a significant part of your grade for class participation. You’ll have a lot to offer and to learn from your classmates through our work together. Be prepared to take charge of your learning experience because much of what you do in this course will be up to you. Make this course a useful stepping stone toward a lifetime of engagement with sustainability.

* *Addresses learning outcomes 1-9 and IDEA objectives 3, 8, and 9.*

**Sustainability Conference Participation, 5% of final grade:** You will be required to attend CMC’s college-wide sustainability conference on Thursday and Friday, April 21-22. Friday, April 22 is Earth Day as well, so the conference will be the place to be! Details will be provided in class. Please make arrangements to attend all day on the 21st and from 8:45-2:30 on the 22nd. Do not wait until the last minute to make your plan so that you have more trouble doing so. If there is some very pressing reason that you cannot attend this event, you will have an opportunity to complete an optional paper to fulfill this course requirement.

* *Addresses learning outcomes 1-3 and 5-6 and IDEA objectives 8-9.*

**Professional Portfolio: 25% of final grade:** You will produce a professional quality portfolio as a major component of this course. Your portfolio will call upon you to present your best work in an appropriate format to demonstrate your knowledge and skills when applying for professional work or graduate school. Your portfolio will also include a professional resume and reflective writing that synthesizes your conceptual and practical knowledge of sustainability.

* *Addresses learning outcomes 1-5 and 7-9, and 10 and IDEA objective 8.*

**Professional Portfolio Presentation, 10% of final grade:** You will be required to present your portfolio to the class during one of the final class meetings of the term. Presentation dates and times will be scheduled during the term. Further details will also be provided in class.

* *Addresses learning outcomes 7 and 9 and IDEA objective 8.*

**Research Project: 30% of final grade:** Your research project may take the form of an academic paper or a practical project such as grant research and writing. All research projects must include articulation of student work within a consciously chosen approach to research. Details about the form and content of your project will be provided in class and in Canvas. All projects will be developed in stages over several weeks of the term.

* *Addresses learning outcomes 1-6 and 8 and IDEA objectives 3, 8 and 9.*

**Research Symposium: 15% of final grade:** You will also present your research work in class and to a public audience. The public presentation of your work will take the form of a poster presentation at the CMC Sustainability Conference. The poster sessions will take place during and after lunch on Friday, April 22, Earth Day! Details will be provided in class.

* *Addresses learning outcome 3 and IDEA objective 8.*

**Extra Credit:** I may identify in class and/or via Canvas opportunities for earning extra credit. All such opportunities will be open to all students.

**Notice:** A student judged to have engaged in academic misconduct as defined in the “Academic Policies and Requirements” section of the *Colorado Mountain College Student Handbook* will, at a minimum, receive a “zero” for the work in question. The student may also be removed from the class, resulting in a failing grade. All student course material may be submitted to turnitin.com (or another anti-plagiarism program) at the instructor’s discretion. “Academic Expectations,” the “Student Code of Conduct and Judicial Process” and more information about academic misconduct can be found in the student handbook.

Students are responsible for course materials from assigned text(s) and reading, lectures, labs, and other assignments as required. The instructor may alter any, or all, of this syllabus during the semester as the learning environment requires. Students will be notified in writing of changes.

1. Attendance and No-show Reporting: Attendance and early engagement are important elements for your success in this course. Students who do not attend the first class or meet early attendance requirements must be reported by the instructor to the Registrar’s Office. Financial aid students or students receiving veteran’s benefits who do not attend the first class or meet early attendance requirements will be dropped from the course and may not receive financial assistance (see: [**http://coloradomtn.edu/financial\_aid**](http://coloradomtn.edu/financial_aid)).
2. **Students with Disabilities:** If you have a disability protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and feel you may need classroom accommodations based on the impact of your disability, please contact the Disability Services Coordinator for our campus: Deb Farmer at 970-870-4450.
3. Withdrawal from this Course: Students wishing to withdraw from this course must initiate the course withdrawal/drop process at the site Registration Office. This class could be cancelled one week prior to the census date if a sufficient number of students are not enrolled by that date.
4. Grading System & Options**:**Information about grading is available in the Colorado Mountain College catalog. Grades will be posted to <https://webadvisor.coloradomtn.edu/> (WebAdvisor) by Thursday following the last day of classes at the end of each semester.
5. **Required Course Materials:** The following text is required for this course:

Bentz, V. M., and Shapiro, J. J. (1998). *Mindful Inquiry in Social Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Additional course materials will be made available via the Internet or Canvas. This material will be listed in the weekly modules within Canvas. As the course progresses, I may alter the readings to better address/explore a topic/area of interest/concern. Any such changes will be reflected in Canvas at least one class period prior to the originally assigned date, and students will be notified during class of any such changes.

**Colorado Mountain College has chosen to partner with Follett Virtual Bookstores to operate textbook services.**

The official textbook list for CMC will be available on Follett's site, [www.coloradomtn.bkstr.com](http://www.coloradomtn.bkstr.com).  You also can easily access this site by choosing "bookstore" from the quick links on [www.coloradomtn.edu](http://www.coloradomtn.edu).  Students and other members of the campus community may sign up for the Online Textbook Store's email mailing list online ([www.coloradomtn.bkstr.com/email](http://www.coloradomtn.bkstr.com/email)) to receive important messages from the CMC Online Textbook Store. Students can sell back books anytime online or in-person at Follett's CMC buyback events.  Sign up for the online store's email list at [www.coloradomtn.bkstr.com/email](http://www.coloradomtn.bkstr.com/email) for more info on future buyback dates and times. If you have any online bookstore questions, please email coloradomtn@fvb.follett.com or call 800-621-4088.

1. **Other Information:** A course schedule is available in Canvas. This outline is tentative and many be modified during the semester as needed. You will be notified of any changes both in Canvas and in class.

**IX. Virtual Library Information:** [**http://coloradomtn.edu/library**](http://coloradomtn.edu/library)

The Virtual Library has its doors open 24/7, providing access to thousands of online journals and newspapers, e-books and art images, downloadable videos and audiobooks, career resources, and practice tests.

**Login Instructions**

Use the CMC Libraries link from Canvas course menu to access the CMC libraries web site. The link will pass authentication credentials to the server that will allow you to use online library collections. It will also take you directly to the libraries’ home page.

**Ask a Librarian**

If you need assistance with your research project, you can ask a librarian online. Select the AskAcademic chat box on the libraries’ home page, and type in your question. This service is available 21 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also email reference@coloradomtn.edu or call the library staff at 800-621-8559, extension 2926.