

ENV 151 – Introduction to Sustainability SYLLABUS – Winter 2019

Professor: Dr. Jess Vogt – *Please call me “Jess”*

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Cell: (920) 850-2016 – *OK to call, text, and leave voicemails here; this is my only phone number*

Office: McGowan South 203 G

Office Hours: *See Communication Philosophy below.*

Class: Tues/Thurs 11:20 am – 12:50 pm in McGowan South 401

ABOUT THE PROFESSOR

Dr. Jess Vogt is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Environmental Science & Studies at DePaul University. She teaches courses in sustainability science, urban forestry, and mixed methods research. She has a Ph.D. in Environmental Science, a Master’s of Public Affairs in Sustainability, and a M.S. in Environmental Science, all from the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University. Jess is active in the urban forestry professional community, serving an Associate Editor for the journal *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, as Director of Research for the Illinois Arborist Association, and Vice Chair of the Science & Research Committee of the International Society of Arboriculture. She was awarded the 2018 International Society of Arboriculture Awards of Distinction Early-Career Scientist Award. In August of 2018, Jess spent a month in Zhengzhou, China, as a Visiting Foreign Expert in the International Lab of Henan Provincial Landscape Architecture at Henan Agricultural University.

At DePaul, Jess runs LUFA, the Lab for Urban Forestry in the Anthropocene. LUFA does research at the intersection of urban forestry and sustainability science, examining how trees and urban greening activities can make cities more ecologically sustainable as well as livable for people. You can find more information about LUFA research as well as opportunities for students on our website: www.lufa-depaul.org.

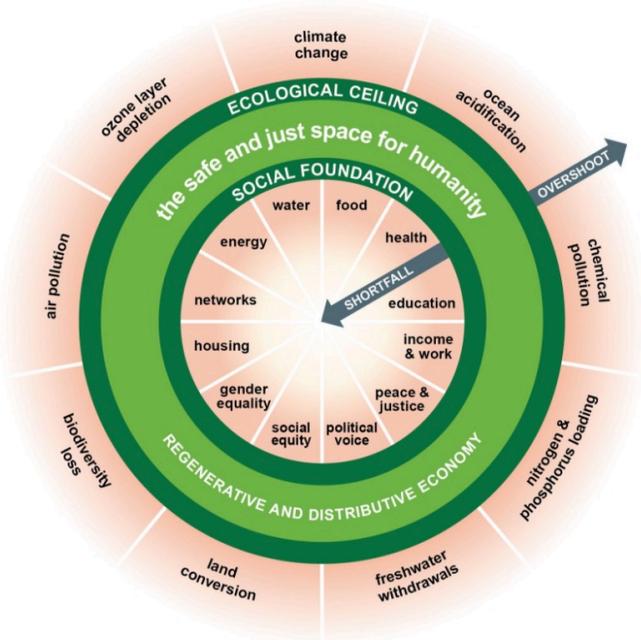
Communication Philosophy:

In order to make this course a successful a learning experience for all of us, I am available to meet with students outside of class as much as possible. Therefore:

- Most Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays between 9 am and 4:30 pm, I am in my office (203 G). During these hours, my door is always open to you. Please feel free to stop by to ask questions about this class, with BA or M.S. ENV advising issues, or even just to chat.
- Mondays and Fridays are my research/writing days, during which I will be writing either from home, a coffeeshop, or sometimes my office. If you need to get a hold of me on these days, you can try email, but it might be better to call or text if you want/need a quick reply, as I often spend large amounts of time off email while I’m writing.
- Email me or talk to me before or after class if you want to schedule an appointment.
- Feel free to call or text me on my cell phone (920-850-2016) during reasonable hours with questions or concerns. If you leave a voicemail, I’ll get back to you.

COURSE INFORMATION

Humans and the natural world are complexly and inextricably linked, with each influencing and shaping the other. Fostering a transition toward a sustainable world in which fundamental human needs are met and the Earth’s life support systems are maintained is one of the central challenges of the twenty-first century. *This course introduces students to the dynamic and emerging interdisciplinary field of sustainability (a.k.a. “sustainability science”).* It provides students with a broad survey of the global sustainability science challenges and their potential solutions using an integrated social-ecological systems approach.



Course Objective:

By the end of this course, you will be able to explain the main challenges of global sustainability to a novice learner and begin to operationalize solutions to these challenges in your own life and in your relationships and conversations with others. Through a combination of close reading of the sustainability science literature, watching and critiquing videos on sustainability topics, and activities that challenge us to practice sustainability in our daily actions and conversations, we will learn to understand the main challenges of sustainability through the lens of *sustainability science* and the Raworth (2017) “doughnut model” of sustainability (above).

Learning Outcomes:

To achieve the above course objective, we will work our way through several learning outcomes specific to ENV 151. We will:

1. Be knowledgeable about the major global sustainability challenges and opportunities;
2. Have an understanding of “systems thinking” – the interactive and complex nature of coupled human and natural systems (a.k.a., social-ecological systems) – and how we can use systems thinking to help solve sustainability problems;
3. Be able to think analytically, critically about proposed solutions to environmental problems and their potential impacts for people and the planet;
4. Have an increased capacity to integrate information on and communicate about sustainability; and,
5. Realize how sustainability relates to our everyday lives, and possess tools to operationalize solutions to sustainability challenges in our relationships with our friends, families, communities, organizations, etc.

This course fulfills the requirements of the Social, Cultural, and Behavioral Inquiry (SCBI) Learning Domain in the Liberal Studies Program. SCBI Learning Outcomes that ENV 151 will meet are: (*Specifics to ENV 151 are in italicized text.*)

6. Students will be able to frame a theory about the relationship between individuals and modern society. *In ENV 151, this theory is the Doughnut Model of sustainability.*

7. Students will be able to articulate an argument based on theory and empirical evidence regarding the modern world. *In ENV 151, we'll talk about the Planetary Boundaries concept of a "safe operating space for humanity" (Steffen et al. 2015) and the scientific argument that the Earth has entered a new geologic epoch scientists call the "Anthropocene" (textbook: Vince 2014).*
8. Students will be able to reflect, in writing, upon their role in the modern world, including their relationship to their own and/or other communities. *In ENV 151, this learning outcome will be met via the Impact Project and Breaking Through Gridlock activities.*

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Book:

The required book for this class is the popular science book *Adventures in the Anthropocene*, written by Gaia Vince, the former editor of the scientific journal *Nature Climate Change*. Vince writes a very readable, yet scientifically backed, synthesis of modern sustainability science and our future on the planet.

Vince, Gaia (2014). *Adventures in the Anthropocene: A Journey to the Heart of the Planet We Made*. Milkweed Editions, Minneapolis, Minnesota. 436 pp.

Both used and new copies of the book are available at the bookstore as well as on Amazon (www.amazon.com/Adventures-Anthropocene-Journey-Heart-Planet/dp/1571313583). For those interested in an electronic format, the DePaul Library has a free e-book option (<https://depaul.on.worldcat.org/oclc/898421636>). Either will work for the purposes of this course, as long as you can access the book text during class discussions. However, in the past, students have liked this book so much they want to share it with friends and family, so I strongly recommend getting a (more easily sharable) paper copy.

Weekly Reading Schedule:

In addition to the book, a variety of content from scientific literature and the internet will be assigned. We will read selections from primary and secondary scientific literature, popular science articles, relevant news items, short instructional videos from YouTube, TED talks, infographics, and more. *All reading assignments and course content will be posted for each week on D2L, which you should consult exclusively for required content and assignments. I expect that you will have read and watched all assigned materials before coming to class.* See the modules for each day of class on D2L in Content >> Weekly Reading Schedule.

What's in the News?:

In addition to the textbook and assigned readings/videos, as you peruse social media and the internet during the quarter, keep your eye out for sustainability news. In particular, **subscribe to *The Daily Climate*** (www.dailyclimate.org), a daily news blast that collates sustainability and climate-related news stories from around the web. You may post interesting stories you find to the "What's In The News?" Discussion forum on D2L, and I may periodically ask you what you're reading during class. If something particularly interesting happens in sustainability- or climate-related news this quarter, I may even re-arrange the weekly readings/topics to accommodate. Always check D2L for the latest pre-class reading material.

D2L:

All course materials will be posted to D2L, and most assignments will be turned in via D2L Submissions. I will send class-related emails via D2L so make sure your email address is updated in the system. Inside D2L Content, there are a number of sections:

- Syllabus: Contains a copy of this syllabus
- Assignments: Contains a module with information for each major assignment
- Writing, Reading, Citing, Speaking Tips: Contains helpful documents for writing, how to read scientific papers, citing sources in scientific writing, and speaking. You will find these useful for the various assignments in this course.
- What's in The News? Contains links to news sources and a Discussion Forum for news posting
- Weekly Reading Schedule: A list of links to assigned readings, videos, and other web content, as well as associated assignments

Technological competency:

As college students, I expect that you are minimally competent using the basic features of a computer. This includes but is not limited to the following basic tasks:

- Opening, reading, editing, saving, and converting/exporting files in commonly used software programs:
 - Word processors (Microsoft Word, Google Docs, Apple's Pages);
 - Slide/presentation makers (Microsoft PowerPoint, Google Slides);
 - Spreadsheets (Microsoft Excel, Google Sheets); and
 - PDF readers (Preview on Macs, Adobe Acrobat on PC or Mac).
- Finding and viewing websites and downloading/uploading files using an internet browser (on a computer at minimum, but also ideally on a tablet or mobile device)
 - In particular, I assume that you know how to view, download, save, retrieve, and upload files from D2L, including changing file formats (from Google Docs to Word or PDF for example).
 - *All documents turned in via D2L Submissions should be in PDF or Microsoft Word form only. If I cannot open or read your file, I will not grade it and you will get a zero. If you need help converting from another word processor program (e.g., Pages, Google Docs) to PDF format, please let me know; I'm happy to assist.*

These skills are crucial in this and every college course (and probably for your future jobs). The DePaul Genius Squad (<https://offices.depaul.edu/information-services/support/Pages/genius-squad.aspx>) may be a good place to ask for help if you don't know how to do any of the tasks listed above. I'm also willing to help you, but I must confess to being a lifelong Mac user so I might not be much help to PC users.

It would also be helpful if you are comfortable reading and annotating (underlining, highlighting, making notes on) PDF documents on a computer or tablet (or if not electronically, on printed copies). You will be expected to have read assigned material in detail and taken notes on the important points, key questions you have, etc., and class discussions will go much better if you have access to both the assigned reading and your notes during class time. If you're doing all your reading for class on a computer or tablet, you should get used to annotating and taking notes on the computer or tablet. Here's a good source on how to make annotations on e-books, PDFs, websites, and more: <https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/annotations-guide-and-tools/>

COURSE EVALUATION & ASSIGNMENTS

Final Grade:

Your final grade in the course will be based on the following. There is no in-class final exam. No extra credit is available. Your attendance is required and your final grade may be adjusted if you do not attend regularly.

	Percent
Class Participation + Misc. Assignments	15%
Book Chapter Discussion Leadership	5%
Book Chapter Discussion Question Answers	10%
Impact Project	10%
Breaking Through Gridlock	10%
Individual Project	25%
Final Essay	20%
Course Reflection	5%
<i>Attendance Grade Adjustment</i>	<i>See below</i>
TOTAL	100%

More information on individual assignments will be provided in class as assignments are introduced throughout the quarter and available on D2L in Content >> Assignments.

Point Scale before attendance grade adjustment:

The following point scale will be used to assign letter grades *before the attendance adjustment*: A (92%-100%), A- (90%-91.9%), B+ (88%-89.9%), B (82%-87.9%), B- (80%-81.9%), C+ (78%-79.9%), C (72%-77.9%), C- (70%-71.9%), D (60%-69.9%), and F (0%-59.9%).

Attendance & Participation:

You are valued in this class. Your attendance and participation are crucial to not just your own success in the course, but to a successful learning experience for the entire class. Vibrant class discussion is a group effort, you part of this group, and your presence and voice matter. (See also the “Step Up, Step Back” section in *Additional Classroom Policies* below.)

That being said, I know sometimes things come up and you cannot attend class for whatever reason: family matters, mental health, illness, an unexpected conflict, etc. If you need to miss class, I don’t need to know the exact reason; you are an adult and I trust you to make good decisions. However, it is helpful for me in planning class activities, discussion, etc., to know in advance if you’re going to be absent or late on a particular day (email notification is preferred).

Class time will always involve your active participation in class discussion about the readings/videos, activities in pairs and small groups, and other active learning exercises. Occasionally, I will collect individual or group work completed during class to assess our progress as a class; this work will be graded based on completion. If you miss a class, be sure to check in with me or a classmate to see what you miss and how to make-up the work. I will not make accommodations for assignments missed or late work due to the student missing class and not keeping up with in-class activities or assignments explained on a class a student missed.

Attendance Grade Adjustment:

There are 20 total class meetings. I will take attendance every day. If you miss more than 3 classes, in addition to your participation grade suffering, I will also deduct directly from your final grade in the following manner: (Classes missed counts any classes missed for any reason.)

		Grade before attendance adjustment									
		A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
Classes missed	0, 1, 2, 3 (no grade change)	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
	4 or 5 (drop half letter grade)	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	D	F
	6 or 7 (drop 2 half letter grades)	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	D	D	F
	8 or more (drop 3 half letter grades)	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	D	D	F	F

Deadlines:

All major assignments that you are expected to complete outside of class are listed below, in chronological order based on the deadline. Fill in the due dates for all major assignments as we go over them in class. These are also posted in the Weekly Reading Schedule and on D2L with the Submission folder for each assignment.

Assignment	Turn in via	Due	Date
Book Chapter Discussion Questions for my group	D2L Submissions (group submission)	<i>Varies depending on chapter assignment</i>	
Book Chapter Discussion Leadership	In-class, nothing to turn in	<i>Varies depending on chapter assignment</i>	
Ecological Footprint Calculator results	Google Form linked on D2L	Week 2 Tuesday	
Anthropocene Assignment	D2L Quizzes	Sunday b/t Weeks 2/3	
Impact Project Discussion Posts 1, 2, & 3	D2L Discussion Forum	Sunday b/t Weeks 2/3	
Ch. 1 Question Answers	In-class, paper copy	Week 3 Tuesday	
Ch. 2 Question Answers	In-class, paper copy	Week 3 Thursday	
Impact Project Discussion Posts 4, 5, & 6	D2L Discussion Forum	Sunday b/t Weeks 3/4	
Ch. 7 Question Answers	In-class, paper copy	Week 4 Thursday	
Impact Project Discussion Posts, 7, 8, & 9	D2L Discussion Forum	Sunday b/t Weeks 4/5	
Individual Project Topic	D2L Submissions	Sunday b/t Weeks 4/5	
Individual Project Planetary Boundaries Worksheet	D2L Submissions	Sunday b/t Weeks 5/6	
Breaking Through Gridlock Parts 1 & 2 Worksheets	In-class, paper copy	Week 6 Tuesday	
Ch. 9 Question Answers	In-class, paper copy	Week 6 Tuesday	

Ch. 5 Question Answers	In-class, paper copy	Week 6 Thursday	
Individual Project Social Foundations Worksheets	D2L Submissions	Sunday b/t Weeks 6/7	
Ch. 7 Question Answers	In-class, paper copy	Week 7 Tuesday	
Ch. 3 or 6 Question Answers	In-class, paper copy	Week 8 Tuesday	
Individual Project Final Product	D2L Submissions (and in-class, hard copy, if applicable)	Week 8 Thursday	
Questions for Guest Speaker	In-class, hard copy	Week 9 Tuesday	
Breaking Through Gridlock Part 3	D2L Submissions	Sunday b/t Weeks 9/10	
Final Essay	D2L Submissions	Scheduled final exam period	
Course Reflection	D2L Submissions	Scheduled final exam period	

Late Assignments:

Late assignments will likely be accepted *if you notify me in writing in advance of the due date*. Typically, I am willing to negotiate extensions with students who ask courteously and respectfully.

***** THIS NEXT SECTION IS REALLY IMPORTANT! *****
***** YOU SHOULD READ IT! *****

Citations:

For all written work completed for this class you should be sure to consult sources (reading and other materials assigned for this class or additional sources you find on your own) and to properly cite these sources in your written work. I've provided a "Citations" document to you on the first day of class (also posted to D2L in Content >> Writing, Reading, Citing, Speaking Tips), which contains some basic, partial information for a few common types of scientific sources, but is not an all-inclusive reference for how to properly cite all sources you might encounter for this course. **If you've used MLA format in classes before, be advised that MLA is not a proper citation formatting system for scientific purposes.** I recommend either using APA or Chicago style. The Purdue OWL website (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>) is an excellent reference for how to properly cite sources if you're new to this.

*Please, please, please **do not** use an online citation generator. I have never yet seen one be used effectively.* If you're in the market for a citation management software, something like Endnote or Mendeley works very well and does provide the copy-paste functionality that online citation generators lack but recognize that these citation management softwares still require the user (you) to enter all the information for a source properly before their copy-paste functions will work accurately. **Be warned, incorrect in-text citations or improper Literature Cited references are major pet peeves of mine, but I am more than happy to help**

you learn how to properly cite sources if you're new to this game. It's a relatively easy to memorize and terrifically valuable skill.

ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM POLICIES

Step Up, Step Back:

We all come to class with a unique set of experiences, perspectives, and goals and challenges in our personal and professional lives. I encourage students in all my classes to bring their full, whole selves to class, and hope you will feel comfortable sharing this whole self in the small and large group activities we do during class time. In this way, your participation is crucial to the success of the class. This being said, during class, we will encourage all of use to consider the *step up, step back* classroom discussion philosophy: This means that if you find yourself speaking a lot in class, you should consider *stepping back* and letting others contribute to class discussion. Conversely, if you're finding yourself holding back relative to others in the class, we encourage you to *step up* and make your voice heard. This includes recognizing who we are not only in the classroom, but also in society at large, and making a conscious effort to listen to those who might not normally be heard.

Academic Integrity:

DePaul University is a learning community that fosters the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas within a context that emphasizes a sense of responsibility for oneself, for others and for society at large. Violations of academic integrity, in any of their forms, are, therefore, detrimental to the values of DePaul, to the students' own development as responsible members of society, and to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Violations include but are not limited to the following categories: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification or sabotage of research data; destruction or misuse of the university's academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct. Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by other university officials and possible civil or criminal prosecution. Please refer to your Student Handbook or visit Academic Integrity at DePaul University (academicintegrity.depaul.edu) for further details.

Minimum Technology Policy:

Because participation and engagement with one another is so important, I prefer not to have any technology – laptops, tablets, phones, etc. - in the classroom (unless I specifically ask you in advance to bring an internet-enabled device to class).

Here's why:

Studies have shown that allowing technology in the classroom is distracting and results in decreased student learning. Although we may think we are effectively "multitasking" when you're simultaneously using multiple applications on our computers (or when you're listening to class discussion and checking your email), you cannot truly do more than one thing at once. At best, "multitasking" results in what is called "fast switching," or rapidly moving between separate activities, where at any instant all of your brain is only focused on one of the activities. Take it from

Adam Gazzaley, MD, Ph.D., a professor of neuroscience at University of California, San Francisco (from his TED talk, www.youtube.com/watch?v=tiANn5PZ4BI):

“With each switch, there is a time delay, and this leads to a cost and an impact on performance. You do not do two things as well as you do one thing, if you switch back and forth between them.”

Technology is a type of distraction and interference that impairs long-term and short-term memory, and, ultimately, learning. *For these reasons and others, technology – computers/laptops, tablets, cell phones, etc. – are discouraged in the classroom* when not specifically asked for. With these distractions at a minimum, we will be able to more fully engage in the class, with each other and with the readings in class discussions and activities.

Email Etiquette:

I would prefer that you use email communication for all class business. This way, we all have a record of communications (and so I will remember when I agreed to meet with you, etc.!). Please practice the following email etiquette, which you might find useful not just in this class, but in all your email communications.

- Use a short but descriptive subject line. *Something more than just “ENV 151” is crucial.*
- Continue conversations about the same topic or question in the same email thread by *replying* to the email rather than creating a new message.
- Emails should be as brief as possible but also include sufficient information for me to know what you’re asking.
- See emailcharter.org for more suggestions on email etiquette to help keep our inboxes manageable.

Online Teaching Evaluations:

Instructor and course evaluations provide valuable feedback that can improve teaching and learning. The greater the level of participation, the more useful the results. As students, you are in the unique position to view the instructor over time. Your comments about what works and what doesn't can help faculty build on the elements of the course that are strong and improve those that are weak. Isolated comments from students and instructors’ peers may also be helpful, but evaluation results based on high response rates may be statistically reliable. As you experience this course and material, think about how your learning is impacted.

Your honest opinions about your experience in and commitment to the course and your learning may help improve some components of the course for the next group of students. Positive comments also show the department chairs and college deans the commitment of instructors to the university and teaching evaluation results are one component used in annual performance reviews (including salary raises and promotion/tenure). The evaluation of the instructor and course provides you an opportunity to make your voice heard on an important issue – the quality of teaching at DePaul. *Don't miss this opportunity to provide feedback.*

Students with Disabilities:

Students seeking disability-related accommodations are required to register with DePaul’s Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) enabling you to access accommodations and support services to assist your success. There are two office locations:

- Loop Campus – Lewis Center #1420 – (312) 362-8002

- Lincoln Park Campus – Student Center #370 – (773) 325-1677

Students are also invited to contact me privately to discuss your challenges and how I may assist in facilitating the accommodations you will use in this course. This is best done early in the quarter and our conversation will remain confidential.

Writing Center:

I strongly recommend you make use of the Writing Center throughout your time at DePaul. The Writing Center provides free peer writing tutoring for DePaul students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Tutors work with writers at all stages of the writing process, from invention to revision, and they are trained to identify recurring issues in your writing as well as address any specific questions or areas that you want to talk about. Visit www.depaul.edu/writing for more information.

Dean of Students Office:

The Dean of Students Office (DOS) helps students in navigating the university, particularly during difficult situations, such as personal, financial, medical, and/or family crises. Absence Notifications to faculty, Late Withdrawals, and Community Resource Referrals, support students both in and outside of the classroom. Additionally, they have resources and programs to support health and wellness, violence prevention, substance abuse and drug prevention, and LGBTQ student services. The Office is committed to your success as a DePaul student. Please feel free to contact them at studentaffairs.depaul.edu/dos.