

White Paper

Sustainability Infusion Project

Katherine Nashleanas, Faculty of
Geography
knashleanas2@unl.edu

Title of Module/Activity

Community Sustainability Project

Course Name and Course Number

Quality of the Environment: GEOG 181

Length of Module/Activity

The team project will span the entire semester.

Primary Learning Outcomes

1. Teams will identify an environmental sustainability need and will create unique and creative projects that respond to that need within an identified community (UNL or City of Lincoln) and base that project on solid academic research including the use of peer reviewed materials and/or primary sources.
2. Team members will negotiate and collaborate within their teams using team skill techniques (such as NEWS) presented in class; 3. Students will perform as team and/or community leaders or advocates within their teams and community.

Resilience and/or Sustainability Connections

Team members will be required to bring three different definitions of environmental sustainability to share with their teams and in the process, collaborate on the development of a single definition that reflects the disciplines represented within the team. They will be assigned chapters 1 and 16 in the textbook, *Environmental Science: Inquiry and Applications* by Cunningham and Cunningham (2017) having to do with sustainability, sustainable development, and environmental policy and sustainability. They will also be assigned two chapters in an ancillary text *A Pivotal Moment: Population, Justice, and the Environmental Challenge*, edited by Laurie Mazur (2010) that links sustainability to global population growth: From Crisis to

Sustainability, and Ecomorality: Toward an Ethic of Sustainability. After agreeing on a definition of environmental sustainability, team members will be required to periodically check that their projects are in line with the team definition throughout its development.

Identify One or More of the Key Sustainability Competencies Addressed

This project will concentrate on two Sustainability Competencies: the Strategic or Action Competence and the Interpersonal Competence, (Wiek *et al.*, 2011, 2016).

Instructional Strategies

Within the span of the semester, the Community Sustainability Project will be scaffolded according to seven stages:

- 1) Team formation and self-evaluations (NEWS) analyzing what kind of team member they will be as they collaborate on definitions of sustainability;
- 2) as a result of community organizations' presentations to class, teams will collaborate on identifying a community sustainability need;
- 3) Teams will negotiate to develop a project topic and goal, fill out a project proposal form to be approved by the instructor, then, upon approval, individually team members will research peer-reviewed articles and primary sources in the development of a formal research paper on that topic (there will be a separate rubric for this);
- 4) Team members will negotiate what their individual media projects for their chosen community's needs will be and will create unique and creative projects that respond to need within an identified community (university or city) also basing that project on the solid academic research they have already done (there will be a separate rubric for this). Students can be as creative as they like, such as developing a PSA, lesson plans, website, applied project for campus or community;
- 5) Both in class and outside of class, students will negotiate and collaborate within their teams using team skill techniques presented in class, and will perform as team leaders and/or community leaders and advocates;
- 6) Teams will collaborate on the development of a montage of the individual projects they have done as individual team members to represent the overall team project; Once a team has posted their montage, then everyone on the team is to evaluate at least two other teams' projects;
- 7) Finally, each team member is to write a self-reflection paper regarding the Community Sustainability Project summarizing what they learned about the topic and about themselves by doing the project, evaluate the positives and negatives about the project itself, and present a thoughtful evaluation of each team member (they will have a separate rubric for this)

Students will engage the jigsaw technique, a modified gallery walk, and a research paper wrapper. Individual team members will work on their creative projects and, at the end of the semester, they will put all of their individual projects on a single Team PowerPoint (jigsaw)

with which students will get a stronger perspective of the comprehensive and unique projects they completed and how each of these projects contribute to an overall comprehensive program meant to benefit the community they chose. They will participate in a modified gallery walk in that they will be posting their comprehensive project on the Discussion Board in Canvas, and then evaluating at least two other posted team projects utilizing the same rubric that guided the development of their own projects. The research paper wrapper will be discussed below under assessments.

Assessment Strategy: Describe the types of assessments that will be used – formative and/summative - and how they align with learning outcomes and activities align with one another

There will be several formative assessments to be evaluated and commented on throughout the semester. These are ungraded but contribute to each student's team participation grade: evaluation of what kind of team member they evaluate themselves to be; definitions of sustainability; evaluation of the community organizations that present to class; representation on the team proposal and a personal signature of approval indicating their "buy-in" to the project; outline and sources for the research paper. Summative assessments will include the completed research paper, the completed creative project and team montage; a project evaluation paper using the project wrapper approach; and a final course summary essay. Throughout each summative assessment, students are to state their Team Number, Team Definition of Sustainability, and Team Goal. Within the summary portions of the summative assessments, team members are to evaluate how well they have adhered to the definition and goal set forth by the team.