Organizational Details
Instructor: Dr. Maurie Cohen
Office: Cullimore Hall 427
Telephone: 973.596.5281/5284
E-mail: mcohen@njit.edu
Course Website: http://njit2.mrooms.net (Note: Be sure to access from this URL as we will be using an experimental version of Moodle for this course)

Overview
Over the past two decades, the pursuit of sustainable development has become a prominent objective for many policy makers concerned with integration across social, economic, and environmental issues. The international community has created new institutions to foster sustainability and reoriented the focus of existing organizations. At the local level, numerous communities have begun to implement initiatives to facilitate more sustainable land-use practices and businesses have taken preliminary and tentative steps to reduce the adverse impacts of their operations. Despite this progress, sustainable development remains an ill-defined (perhaps even elusive) concept and evidence of unambiguous achievements—especially in the United States—can be difficult to ascertain. Moreover, developed and developing countries have formulated largely different (and potentially incompatible) agendas with which to engage with the notion of sustainability. Large countries with emergent economies, most notably China, India, and Brazil, pose especially vexing dilemmas. This course focuses particular attention on the challenges that sustainable development holds for economically advanced countries (the so-called G-20). We examine the intellectual roots of the concept and explore why it has become a central feature of international politics and policy planning in such a relatively short period of time. Of additional interest is how the sustainability agenda is likely to evolve over the next few decades given the onset of climate change and increasingly pervasive biophysical constraints on economic growth.

Required Readings
Dresner, Simon. 2008. The Principles of Sustainability, 2nd ed. London: Earthscan (available in paperback; ISBN 9781844074969) (Note: if you are able to locate an inexpensive second-hand copy of the first edition of this book that will be fine).
Other readings and multimedia presentations will be available via the course website (http://njit2.mrooms.net). Items are organized in weekly folders and can be viewed online or saved to your computer. You will need a UCID to access the website.

Evaluation
The evaluation of student performance is comprised of four components:

1. **Weekly Writing Assignments (25%)**: On Thursday morning of each week, I will post to the course website a set of two questions designed to assess understanding of the weekly module of material. Students are required to write an essay in response to one question of your own choosing [maximum length (strictly enforced) = 750 words; please provide word count at the top of your document]. Completed essays should be uploaded to the course website by 11:59pm on the following Monday (see schedule below). Each essay will be graded on a five-point scale (5 = excellent; 4 = good; 3 = satisfactory; 2 = needs improvement; 1 = unsatisfactory) and all students will receive supplementary feedback on a weekly basis. Each student will have one “exclusion” to be used at her or his discretion during the semester. No late submissions will be permitted and failure to complete a particular assignment will result in a zero.

2. **Online Discussions (20%)**: Running throughout the course will be a series of online discussions. I will pose (generally on a weekly basis, but sometimes more frequently) a question related to the course material and invite responses. You should feel free to reply to my question or pick up on a thread raised by someone else. The aim is for these exchanges to be interactive and conversational. You should also feel free to post your own questions. Evaluation on this component will be predicated on consistent engagement in these discussion forums.

3. **Midterm Exam (20%)**: The midterm is intended to be a “synthesizing experience” and I will provide an article for you to evaluate that integrates across the various themes that we will cover during the first half of the semester. Students will have several days to complete the midterm on an individual basis. While working on the exam it will be possible to consult all course materials including the downloadable lectures, required readings, and multimedia presentations. The midterm reading (and discussion question) will be distributed on the morning of Thursday, October 24 and completed responses will need to be uploaded to the course website by 11:59pm on Tuesday, October 28.

4. **Final Exam (20%)**: The final exam will use the same format described above for the midterm though the scope of the assignment will span the full semester. The final exam reading (and discussion question) will be distributed on Wednesday, December 16 and completed responses will need to be uploaded to the course website by 11:59pm on Tuesday, December 20.
Aggregate Grading Scale for Essays (Maximum score is 50 points—10 essays/5 points each)

A = 45-50
B = 40–44
C = 35–39
D = 30–34
F = < 30

Detailed Schedule for Weekly Writing Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week No.</th>
<th>Essay No.</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Questions Distributed</th>
<th>Completed Essays Due (by 11:59pm)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Conceptual and Scientific Foundations</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>International Politics of Sustainability</td>
<td>9/12</td>
<td>9/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Measuring Sustainability</td>
<td>9/19</td>
<td>9/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Theories of Post-Industrial Sustainability</td>
<td>9/26</td>
<td>10/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Industrial Ecology/Symbiosis</td>
<td>10/3</td>
<td>10/7</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Toward the Next Industrial Revolution?</td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>10/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sustainability and the Limits of Technological Innovation</td>
<td>10/17</td>
<td>10/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>10/24</td>
<td>10/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>GDP and its Flaws</td>
<td>1/31</td>
<td>11/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Is a Steady-State Economy Possible/Inevitable?</td>
<td>11/7</td>
<td>11/11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sustainable/Unsustainable Consumption</td>
<td>11/14</td>
<td>11/18</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>New Politics of Progress I</td>
<td>12/21</td>
<td>12/25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>New Politics of Progress II (Thanksgiving)</td>
<td>No Essay Due</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sustainability Transitions</td>
<td>12/5</td>
<td>12/9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>12/16</td>
<td>12/20</td>
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</tbody>
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Optional Face-to-Face Class Sessions
By fortunate coincidence, I am offering this semester an upper-level undergraduate course that covers much of the same ground as this course. This parallel course meets on Monday from 6 to 9pm on the NJIT campus (Kupfrian #209). Students are invited to attend these sessions on a regular or occasional basis.

Important Notices
Students enrolled in this course are forewarned that the consequences of plagiarism or academic misconduct of any kind are severe. Violations will be handled in accordance with the rules outlined in the NJIT Student Handbook (current edition). If you are unfamiliar with these procedures, you should consult the appropriate section of this governing manual at http://www.njit.edu/academics/honorcode.php.

Final grades are not subject to post-semester adjustment—with the exception of the change of a grading error. Under no circumstances will students be given the
opportunity to complete extra-credit papers or other assignments to bolster their final grades.

Course Schedule

I. Introduction

Week 1 (September 3–9): Conceptual and Scientific Foundations


Week 2 (September 10–16): International Politics of Sustainability


Week 3 (September 17–23): Measuring Sustainability


II. Sustainability and Post-Industrial Society

Week 4 (September 24–30): Key Concepts of Post-Industrial Sustainability


Week 5 (October 1–7): Industrial Ecology/Symbiosis


**Week 6 (October 8–14): Toward the Next Industrial Revolution?**


**Week 7 (October 15–21): Sustainability and the Limits of Technological Innovation**


**Week 8 (October 22–28): Midterm Exam**

**III. New Political Economy of Sustainability**

**Week 9 (October 29–November 4): Gross Domestic Product and its Flaws**

Clifford Cobb, Ted Halstead, & Jonathan Rowe. 1995. If the GDP is up, why is America down? *The Atlantic*. October (via Moodle).


**Week 10 (November 5–11): Is a Steady-State Economy Possible/Inevitable?**

Barber, Benjamin. 2009. The economic crisis isn’t all bad; it’s a chance for us and Obama to reimagine how we live our lives. *The Nation*, 28 January (via Moodle).

**Week 11 (November 12–18): Sustainable/Unsustainable Consumption**


**Week 12 (November 19–25): New Politics of Progress I**


**Week 13 (November 26–December 2): New Politics of Progress II**


**Week 14 (December 3–10): Sustainability Transitions**

Week 15 (December 16–20): Final Exam