COURSE and **TITLE:**   **COM/SUS 315 Environmental Dimensions of Communication**

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: **Professor Joanne Mundorf**

COURSE FORMAT: **Online**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

"Investigation of individual and mediated environmental and sustainability messages, application of communication tools to affect knowledge, attitudes and behavior, design of communication campaigns to affect resource use, social justice and ecological responsibility."

The scientific consensus is that human behavior is responsible for waste of natural resources and future global climate change, and that changes in human behavior can prevent environmental dangers. We can change the way we act and the choices we make, create a world which is sustainable for future generations, and at the same time improve our own health and quality of life.

Environmental threats impact the quality of human life in numerous ways. How we communicate and act as human beings can improve environmental conditions and benefit the well-being of individuals, families, and society. It is key to reducing carbon emissions, pollution, resource depletion and addressing Climate Disruption. We have the tools to target different audiences and move them along from a state of ignorance or indifference towards changing personally and becoming actively involved. We will learn about these challenges and face our *Civic Knowledge and Responsibility* to work towards a sustainable and just world.

In this class you will *integrate* what you have learned throughout your academic career, including Communication Fundamentals, to understand the challenges and opportunities of bringing about meaningful change. You will *apply* these skills to work with clients in the community to design communication campaigns which help them reach their own constituencies.

This course views threats to sustainability both at a global and a local level. Environmental sustainability, the economy, and social justice are becoming increasingly interconnected. All are subject to long-term change processes and principles. We will explore recent scientific information related to climate change and other environmental impacts and discuss ways to 'translate' it in ways that can be communicated to a variety of constituencies. This includes a range of media, from written text and visuals to conventional mass media and to social networking. We will investigate individual and mediated environmental messages; analyze and experiment with the ways that communication can affect environmental knowledge, attitudes, and behavior; and design communication campaigns to affect resource use and ecological responsibility.

Throughout the course you will work on identifying a local sustainability/social justice issue represented by a community organization (your client). You will research the underlying issues and develop communication strategies to address the resulting problems. Your team will design a campaign, present it to the client, and promote the solutions you have identified. Feedback from the client will be part of your project grade.

General Education Outcomes and Competency Areas
As a General Education course, this class will stress the full outcomes ***Civic Knowledge and Responsibility*** and ***Integrate and Apply.***

Civic Knowledge and Responsibility (CKR) *encompasses* actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community. Through exposure to civic engagement in a variety of learning environments, students will learn to clearly perceive and engage with the world in which they live.

Integrate and Apply (I&A)*.* Intended for the student to recognize the interrelatedness and interdisciplinary nature of knowledge, competencies, and responsibilities. It is the fundamental goal… to enable students to develop

themselves as scholars and individuals ready to synthesize knowledge, skills, and assume individual and social responsibilities, in order to engage confidently in personal, collective, public, and professional settings. Fostering students' abilities to integrate learning—across courses, over time, and in community life—is one of the most important goals and challenges for higher education.

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE GOALS

1. Recognize the connection of local and global impacts of unsustainable resource use, food insecurity, water waste and pollution; unsustainable transportation and energy choices
2. Apply communication skills and principles to Sustainability and Social Justice
3. Analyze your personal impact on the environment
4. Utilize your knowledge of communication to reach audiences who are unwilling or unable to change
5. Apply communication and behavior change principles to understand the challenges and opportunities of bringing about meaningful change
6. Differentiate target audiences based on your knowledge of communication and media
7. Develop a sustainable community project using your work in this class

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, the developer will be able to:

1. Describe political, social and economic decisions through the lens of sustainability
2. Appreciate the relationship between poverty, inequality, and environmental justice
3. Define your own role in building a sustainable community
4. Plan your continuous involvement in community environmental/sustainability activities
5. Execute the different steps in campaign planning, implementation, and evaluation
6. Formulate a behavior change campaign proposal for a community client
7. Assess the importance of adapting a campaign to meet the needs of different constituencies
8. Create a community sustainability project and present it to a professional audience

REQUIRED READINGS (All in Brightspace - Brightspace@uri.edu - Content)

Climate Communications & Behavior Change Readings
No Impact Man: Beavan, C. (2010). *No impact man.* New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux.
Other Open Source Readings in Brightspace-Couse Material—will be updated to include current developments
Miller/Spoolman (2015), Sustaining the Earth, 11th Edition (3 chapters) Foundational readings

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

To successfully complete this course, you will need access to a computer with reliable, high-speed Internet access and appropriate system and software to support the Brightspace learning platform. Typical technical requirements for users are:

Windows 7 (XP or Vista)	Mac OS X or higher
64 MB Ram	32 MB Ram
28.8 kbps modem (56k or higher recommended)	28.8 kbps modem (56k or higher recommended)
SoundCard & Speakers	SoundCard & Speakers
External headphones with built-in microphone	External headphones with built-in microphone
Mozilla Firefox 9.0 or higher	Mozilla Firefox 9.0 or higher; Safari 5.0 or higher

Also requires Word 2007 (PC) 2011 (MAC) or newer, PowerPoint, Excel, Adobe Flash, and Adobe Acrobat Reader.

BRIGHTSPACE HELP
Here is the link to access Brightspace https://Brightspace.uri.edu as well as the Brightspace resource page https://web.uri.edu/Brightspace/.

CLASSROOM PROTOCOL
For this online course, Brightspace is our "classroom." Please refer to the Brightspace YouTube video tutorials before you get started and refer back to them as a resource as needed while you complete this course.

In the online learning environment, "attendance" is measured by your PRESENCE in the site as well as your CONTRIBUTIONS to the site. The importance of regular logins and active participation cannot be overstated.

COURSE NAVIGATION
Watch the video posted in Brightspace – START HERE – Welcome Videos

MAJOR STUDY UNITS
Waste & Recycling, Food, Water, Energy, Community Sustainability, Communication & Behavior Change, Community Disaster Preparedness, Persuasion, Media Campaigns

STUDENT PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

A = Superior work   95 – 99 =A   90 – 94 =A-

B = Above average work   87 – 89 =B+   84 – 86 =B   80 – 83 =B-

C = Average work   77 – 79 =C+   74 – 76 =C   70– 73 =C-

D = Below average work   67 – 69 =D+   60 – 66 =D

F = Unacceptable work

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT:

This class is committed to environmental sustainability and stewardship. Through operational practices, transportation choices, and resource conservation we are dedicated to contribute towards a more resilient campus and a culture of environmental sustainability among students, staff and faculty.

You can make a difference, starting with small changes. Think: ***Refuse, Reduce, Reuse & Recycle:***

Refuse Styrofoam packaging and plastic bottles

Reduce paper use

Reuse beverage/food containers and shopping bags

Recycle paper, plastic, aluminum

Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) automobile **transportation** is one of the greatest contributors to Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change, congestion, pollution, urban sprawl, and depletion of green spaces. Make an effort to choose alternatives: Carpool, Public Transportation, Walking, and Biking. Avoid or combine trips. Choose housing near your workplace, school, or public transit. Choose an energy efficient vehicle; avoid idling.

Conserve Energy, Food, Water, and Oil. Let businesses know they are wasting air conditioning or heat. Cut your shower time in half.

You may buy **half-price RIPTA bus passes** in the URI Memorial Union.

This class is part of the **Sustainability Minor** and affiliated with the **Sustainability LLC (Living Learning Community)**. Learn more about URI's sustainability programs online www.uri.edu/sustainability

METHODS OF EVALUATION

Student Deliverables	Module	Weight
Discussion Postings		10%
Online Quizzes		15%
Environmental Art Analysis		25%
Midterm Exam		20%
Final Project		30%

ASSIGNMENTS

DISCUSSION POSTINGS (10% of final grade: weekly discussions; submitted in Brightspace: *Discussions* - **I&A**; **CKR;**) You will only get credit for comments if you submit your primary discussion post. Rubrics instructions are posted in BS—Content—Course Material. Note that there no attachments are accepted in the Discussion tool; always past your work into a dialog box.

Preparation:	Coming to class prepared by completing assigned readings and exercises
Involvement:	Active involvement in discussions, individual and group activities, which integrate assigned readings
Collaboration:	Collaborative approach towards class discussions, activities and exercises
Quality:	Quality contributions to class and online discussions, which integrate course content
Online:	Participation in online discussion and completion of online assignments

ONLINE QUIZZES (15% of final grade; submitted in Brightspace: *Quizzes* - **I&A**)
Quizzes will focus on textbook and other readings and videos. They require you to apply key concepts learned in this class to solving a behavior change and communication problem related to environmental sustainability. Demonstrate that you can correctly identify Stages of Change and related concepts and incorporate appropriate sustainability concepts.
Plan to have online access during the 18-hour time frame for the quizzes. No make-ups.

ENVIRONMENTAL ART ANALYSIS: (25% of final grade; submitted in Brightspace: *Discussions* - **CKR; I&A**). Analyze a work of art or art event related to *one* of the following: (Assignments instructions are posted in BS—Content—Course Material. Note that there no attachments are accepted in the Discussion tool; always past your work into a dialog box.

> Sustainability (social, political, economic, environmental)
> Climate Change, Resource Depletion (food, energy, water, forests)
> Threats to environment and/or health (nuclear accident, water pollution, obesity, threats to food supply)
> Global Environment

MIDTERM EXAM (20% of your final grade; submitted in Brightspace: *Discussions* - **CKR; I&A**).
Design a **Personal Sustainability Plan** for: The next Month - The next Year - The next 5 Years
On the backdrop of the *No Impact Man* reading and other class materials, outline effective ways to 'make a difference' in terms of environmental sustainability for yourself, your friends, family, workplace, community (in Brightspace Discussions). Consider things you can do immediately, in the short run, and in the long term. Make these changes last, and to promote them among others. Assignments instructions are posted in BS—Content—Course Material. Note that there no attachments are accepted in the Discussion tool; always past your work into a dialog box.

FINAL PROJECT (30% of your final grade; submitted in Brightspace: *Discussions* **I&A**, **CKR**), includes multiple components throughout the semester (Assignments instructions are posted in BS—Content—Course Material):
The final project is designed to 'make a difference' by using what you learned throughout the semester and at the same time applying the behavior change principles to a **hands-on, 'real world' project**. You will assemble the information, pictures, videos, and interviews created throughout the semester and create a project that might contribute to improving the quality of life in the community, in school, or at your workplace. Be sure to incorporate course communication concepts, such as behavior change, persuasion, SolveClimate, etc. This project **integrates** the work you have done throughout the session including the readings, videos, and class discussions, and **applies** it to a real-life setting, and background research. It will help us develop **civic responsibility.** You will create and implement a project encouraging environmentally and/or socially responsible behavior. Your Project includes the components listed below. Go to Brightspace—Content—Course Material—Assignments for assignment details and rubric.

Components:

1. **Design/Target:** identify literature and collect background information; talk to decision makers and community

2. **Research:** Research interested environmental, religious and political community groups. Clarify the issue and address your target audience

3. **Change:** Create and implement a plan to change the behavior of a group within the community

4. **Promote:** create media, social media, and interpersonal messages to advertise and promote the project Consider where you can reach a large number of people

5. **Analyze and Report:** produce a well-written and documented final report

Note that there no attachments are accepted in the Discussion tool; always past your work into a dialog box. You may attach surveys, visuals, etc, but not the written descriptions/components listed above.

Criteria for an excellent project:
Apply Communication and Media Principles
Demonstrate that you can reach your target audience
Show that you are able to change attitudes and behaviors
Reach out into the URI community and/or beyond
Create an impact, which lasts beyond the semester.

Examples: Final Projects. Below are a few ideas for the final project. Feel free to think of other topics and ideas.

Local Food; Reducing Food Waste; Conserving Water; Reduce/Reuse/Recycle

Greening the local business community. Think global, act local! Local food is an important dimension, and so is reduction in food—and water—waste. Many local businesses have great potential to become 'green' by embracing recycling, reducing food waste, purchasing of local food, and reducing their carbon footprint otherwise. Think about opportunities for change related to local businesses, or even your own employer!

Green Community
Design, conduct, and record several brief interviews related to sustainable transportation and 'green' culture around your community, commute, work with people representing a range of demographic characteristics and environmental attitudes (i.e. readiness for change). Use text, video, audio, and pictures. Present your materials in a meaningful order, and provide proper analysis.

Sustainable Transportation/Food and Community around URI and in Rhode Island
One way to improve environment and quality of life is to promote sustainable transportation and community planning. Of particular interest is promotion of walking, biking, transit use, and carpool instead of Single Occupancy Vehicle transportation. Communities need to be designed for walk-ability and bike-ability, and develop a culture of sustainability. Conduct interviews with commuters as well as decision makers, such as transportation Planners, and include additional transportation and community related video as needed.

(Rubrics are provided in Content--Course Material)

ATTENDANCE AND OTHER CLASS POLICIES

COURSE COMMUNICATION: Since this is a communication course, you should read all assignment instructions. You are responsible for everything that is posted on our Brightspace course site. Also, your communication with me as an instructor reflects on the quality of your communication skills.

Email: You can communicate with me in **BS—Messages—Email**. Note that you will not receive a response to emails sent outside of Brightspace, unless Brightspace is down systemwide. I check my email daily Monday through Friday during normal business hours. You can expect a reply from me via Messages within 24 hours during the workweek. You *may* get an email reply during the weekend, but that would be an exception, not the rule.

PARTICIPATION. You are expected to adhere to scheduled online assignment deadlines to engage in meaningful exercises and class discussions. Also, you are responsible for logging into Brightspace regularly. Late submissions will impact your final grade in this course (see Assignments and Deadlines).

PREPARATION. Follow the readings and assignments. Quizzes, postings and discussions are an essential feature of this course. You will be graded on the quality of your online contributions, which should illustrate that you have completed the readings and can apply what you read about to examples from situations not found in the textbook or readings. You are responsible for everything that is posted on our Brightspace course site.

ONLINE (Brightspace). Our course will be conducted entirely in Brightspace. It is your responsibility to know all of the information posted on the Brightspace course site, and to complete all assignments. Read the entire Syllabus and check the Calendar/Schedule and Announcements often. Also, I post your grades in the Gradebook. You have up to three days from the time that I post a grade to discuss it (the grade and the assignment) with me.

Readings and other materials are posted in Brightspace – Content - Course Material. You will post your work here in Discussions, Assignments and Quizzes. You can communicate with me using Messages.

You are responsible for reliable access to Brightspace. System-wide technical issues will result in an alternative assignment. It is your responsibility to check in Brightspace—Announcements for these assignments. Absences: If you are absent, look at our Brightspace Calendar/Schedule, Announcements, and ask a classmate. Email: You can communicate with me in Brightspace—Private Messages or make an appointment to meet in the Meetings tool.

ASSIGNMENTS and DEADLINES. Late submissions are subject to a penalty. Any assignment turned in after its due date will receive a reduced grade. You are expected to submit your work by the date and time scheduled. You have up to 10 hours past the deadline to submit a late assignment; 10% will be deducted from your grade for any assignment that is submitted late for each hour it is late. Beyond the 10-hour deadline, assignments will not be accepted for grading. Failure to follow submission instructions will result in a substantial initial grade deduction, and additional deductions until the assignment is submitted correctly.

NETIQUETTE FOR *THIS* ONLINE COURSE

Net-1: Be polite and respectful of one another. Avoid personal attacks. Keep dialogue friendly and supportive, even when you disagree or wish to present a controversial idea or response.

Net-2: Be careful with the use of humor and sarcasm. Emotion is difficult to sense through text.

Net-3: Be helpful and share your expertise. Foster community communication and collaboration.

Net-4: Contribute constructively and completely to each discussion. Avoid short repetitive "I agree" responses and don't make everyone else do the work. 2 word postings (e.g.: I agree, Oh yeah, No way, Me too) do not "count" as postings.

Net-5: Consider carefully what you write. Re-read all e-mail and discussion before sending or posting. Keep responses professional and educational. Do not advertise or send chain letters. Respect privacy, and don't forward a personal message without permission. Remember that e-mail is considered a permanent record that may be forwarded to others.

Net-6: Be brief and succinct. Don't use up other people's time or bandwidth.

Net-7: Use descriptive subject headings for each e-mail message.

Net-8: Cite references. Include web addresses, authors, names of articles, date of publication, etc.

URI ACADEMIC WRITING STANDARDS

Specific writing standards differ from discipline to discipline and learning to write persuasively in any genre is a complex process, both individual and social, that takes place over time with continued practice and guidance. Nonetheless, URI has identified some common assumptions and practices that apply to most academic writing done at the university level. These generally understood elements are articulated here to help students see how they can best express their ideas effectively, regardless of their discipline or any particular writing assignment.

 Venues for writing include the widespread use of e-mail, electronic chat spaces and interactive blackboards. URI is committed to guaranteeing that students can expect all electronic communication to meet Federal and State regulations concerning harassment or other "hate" speech. Individual integrity and social decency require common courtesies and a mutual understanding that writing--in all its educational configurations--is an attempt to share information, knowledge, opinions and insights in fruitful ways.

Academic writing (as commonly understood in the university) always aims at correct Standard English grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Writing Center, Roosevelt Hall, 4th Floor, 401-874-2367, www.uri.edu/writingcenter

The URI Writing Center is open and free to all members of the University of Rhode Island community and is available to all writers, at all levels, in all disciplines. Any student may bring any piece of writing at any stage to the Writing Center for feedback.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: All work submitted for a grade must be in black, 12-point font. Your work must be well written, grammatically correct and free of typographical errors and misspellings (be sure to proofread your work). Also, refer to Online Discussion Rubric and the Course Rubric [in Content--Course Material] for additional guidance related to written assignments.

AEC tutors can answer questions, clarify concepts, check your understanding of course material, and help

you to study. The Academic Enhancement Center helps students get more out of their studies. They offer tutoring in a wide range of subjects, help with time management and study skills, supplemental instruction in challenging courses, and a comfortable place to relax and study alone or with friends.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offenses, which are deal with firmly by the College and University. Scholastic integrity presumes that students are honest in all academic work. **Cheating** is the failure to give credit for work not done independently (i.e., submitting a paper written by someone other than yourself), unauthorized communication during an examination, or the claiming of credit for work not done (i.e., falsifying information). **Plagiarism** is the failure to give credit for another person's written or oral statement, thereby falsely presuming that such work is originally and solely your own.

If you have any doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, visit the following website: https://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/whatisplagiarism, the URI Student Handbook, and University Manual sections on plagiarism and cheating at http://web.uri.edu/studentconduct/student-handbook/.

Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. A student's name on any written work, quiz or exam shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student's own independent thought and study. Work should be stated in the student's own words, properly attributed to its source. Students have an obligation to know
how to quote, paraphrase, summarize, cite and reference the work of others with integrity. The following are examples of academic dishonesty:

  Dishonest = Using material, directly or paraphrasing, from published sources (print or electronic) without appropriate citation (including AI-generated work);

  Dishonest = Claiming disproportionate credit for work not done independently;

  Dishonest = Unauthorized possession or access to exams;

  Dishonest = Unauthorized communication during exams;

  Dishonest = Unauthorized use of another's work or preparing work for another student;

  Dishonest = Taking an exam for another student;

  Dishonest = Altering or attempting to alter grades;

  Dishonest = The use of notes or electronic devices to gain an unauthorized advantage during exams;

  Dishonest = Fabricating or falsifying facts, data or references;

  Dishonest = Facilitating or aiding another's academic dishonesty;

  Dishonest = Submitting the same paper for more than one course without prior approval from the instructor.

Please note the following section from the University Manual:

  8.27.17. Instructors shall have the explicit duty to take action in known cases of cheating or plagiarism. The instructor shall have the right to fail a student on the assignment on which the instructor has determined that a student has cheated or plagiarized. The circumstances of this failure shall be reported to the student's academic dean, the instructor's dean, and the Office of Student Life. The student may appeal the matter to the instructor's dean, and the decision by the dean shall be expeditious and final. Such action will be initiated by the instructor if it is determined that any written assignment is copied or falsified or inappropriately referenced.

  Any good writer's handbook as well as reputable online resources will offer help on matters of

plagiarism and instruct you on how to acknowledge source material. If you need more help understanding when to cite something or how to indicate your references, PLEASE ASK.

Please note: Students are responsible for being familiar with and adhering to the published **"Community Standards of Behavior: University Policies and Regulations"** which can be accessed in the **University Student Handbook.**

URI ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Office of Disability Services
Americans With Disabilities Act Statement
Any personal learning accommodations that may be needed by a student covered by the "Americans with Disabilities Act" must be made known to the university as soon as possible. This is the student's responsibility. Information about services, academic modifications and documentation requirements can be obtained from the The Office of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity (AAEOD). https://web.uri.edu/affirmativeaction/

Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact me early in the semester so that we may work out reasonable accommodations to support your success in this course. Students should also contact Disability Services for Students, Office of Student Life, 330 Memorial Union, 401-874-2098, https://web.uri.edu/disability/
Academic accommodations for students include Electronic Books and Noting Taking, etc.
    See: https://web.uri.edu/disability/home/accommodations/academic-accomodations/
    And: https://web.uri.edu/disability/electronic-books/

From the University Manual: 6.40.10 and 6.40.11 Accommodations for Qualified Students With Disabilities.
Students are expected to notify faculty at the onset of the semester if any special considerations are required in the classroom. If any special considerations are required for examinations, it is expected the student will notify the faculty a week before the examination with the appropriate paperwork.

Counseling Center: 27 Roosevelt Hall, 874-2288, https://web.uri.edu/counseling/

Uri Online Library Resources
https://web.uri.edu/library/

*CKR: Civil Knowledge and Responsibility
**I & A: Integrate and Apply