

Syllabus

S.Dev 1900 – Introduction to Sustainable Development

Mondays 11:40 am -12:55 pm
Hamilton Hall, Room 304

Instructor

Jason E. Smerdon, Ph.D.

Co-Director, Undergraduate Program in Sustainable Development

Office Phone: 845.365.8493

Email: jsmerdon@ideo.columbia.edu

Office Hours: Mondays, 2:30 – 4:30 pm, Hogan Hall B-103

Teaching Assistant

Rebecca Smith

Email: rrs2141@columbia.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays, 6-7 pm, Hogan Student Lounge (Basement)

This core course is required for all students in the Special Concentration and Major and will introduce the elements of the academic program in Sustainable Development. Weekly discussions will explore the breadth of subject matter and the multidisciplinary nature of the scholarship. Guest speakers will share information about specific courses, disciplines and opportunities. A course blog will be used to discuss reading and ideas in preparation of each class session.

Grading

Grading for this class is based on attendance and participation in the lecture discussions (30%) and the weekly assignments and posts on the course blog (70%). The assignments (blog posts) will be marked down 20% for being late and then an additional 10% per day. Assignments will not be accepted after one week past the due date. Absences must be excused in advance of a missed class period; in some cases a doctor's note or make up assignment will be requested.

Schedule (subject to change):

Week	Date	Topic
1	September 10 th	Welcome and Course Introduction
2	September 17 th	The Challenges We Face: The Case for Sustainable Development – Guest, Professor Jeff Sachs

3	September 24 th	How Did We Get Here? A Brief History of Sustainable Development
4	October 1 st	What Does it All Mean? Working to Define Sustainable Development
	<i>October 6th</i>	<i>Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory Open House</i>
5	October 8 th	Environmental Ethics – Guest, Professor Adela Gondak
6	October 15 th	Goals and Strategies: Sustainable Development Through Different Constructions
7	October 22 nd	Sustainable Development Yardsticks: Measuring Progress and Success
8	October 29 th	Cancelled - Hurricane Sandy
	<i>November 5th</i>	<i>Academic Holiday</i>
9	November 12 th	I Object! Surveying Contemporary Critiques of Sustainable Development
10	November 19 th	A look in the Crystal Ball: What is the Future of Sustainable Development? <i>And</i> But Can I Get a Job? Careers in Sustainable Development
11	November 26 th	Teaching the Next Generation: Educating for Sustainable Development
12	December 3 rd	Capstone Workshop and Senior Theses – Guests, Professor Stuart Gaffin and Professor Satyajit Bose
13	December 10 th	Defining Sustainable Development

Required Field Trip Date

- **Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory [Open House](#)** – October 6th from 10:00AM – 4:00 PM

Other Important Dates

- **Bi-Weekly Brown Bags** – every other Friday from 12:00PM – 1:00PM
- Speak with graduate students, career advisers and industry experts to see what opportunities are available to you with a degree in sustainable development.
- **Welcome Mixer** –September 11th from 5:30PM – 7:30PM

- Mingle with current students and faculty and learn about how to get involved with sustainability-focused student groups on campus. Delicious food will be provided!
- **Field trip: Canoe Trip Down the Bronx River** – Date and Time TBA
- Come enjoy a day on the river with experts, gather data on water quality and aquatic organisms, and find out how you can stay involved with restoring this urban ecosystem. .
- **Field trip: Gowanus Watershed** – November 16th
- Come tour the Gowanus Watershed and see not only the still present pollution problems and development pressures, but also efforts to create a sustainable future such as the creation of recycling centers and turning industrial buildings into community spaces.