

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In 2019, Wesleyan launched a new course cluster in sustainability & environmental justice (https://iasext.wesleyan.edu/regprod/?wmaps_page.html?stuid=&facid=NONE&subj_page=XSEJ&term=1189). Encompassing climate change, ecological sustainability, and environmental justice, this course cluster recognizes that sustainability and environmental justice are (or should be) central to public policy debates, scientific and intellectual inquiry, and the foundations of social and economic life. By framing sustainability and environmental justice together, we draw attention to equitable access to protection to all species without unfairly distributing risk of harm to some individuals and groups that live within them.

This course cluster is intended to cut across Wesleyan's academic divisions and within all disciplines, whether natural, social, or humanistic modes of thought and practice. A course cluster also makes these courses easier to find for both students and faculty advisors (especially important as they cross both disciplinary and divisional lines), attract prospective students to Wesleyan, and raise awareness of this field among students and faculty.

CONTACT

To submit a course to the cluster, please contact Tony Hatch at ahatch@wesleyan.edu.

DESCRIPTION

Topics that fall within sustainability and environmental justice may include but are not limited to the following eight themes and questions:

1. The relationship between power, social inequities and the development of just and sustainable communities.
2. How diversity, including biodiversity and cultural diversity, contributes to sustainable systems.
3. Dynamics of industrial production and mass consumption as they relate to environmental health and human well-being and explore strategies for developing sustainable life practices.
4. How social systems promote, or fail to promote, cultures of sustainability, especially in terms of tolerance, non-violence and peace.
5. How human well-being depends on ecosystem processes and non-toxic materials.
6. The politics and economics of sustainable development including its social benefits and environmental costs raise critical questions about what development and progress mean for different communities.
7. How science and technology shape the environmental realities and public health policies at both the local and global levels.
8. Multiple ways of representing and understanding humans' relationships to the environment, and how taken-for-granted metaphors and stories can promote or damage environmental and public health.

Wesleyan currently has several academic units that house faculty whose interests may fall under the domain of sustainability and environmental justice (e.g., the College of the Environment, Earth & Environmental Sciences), but not entirely nor comprehensively so.

Through the Wesleyan Sustainability Office and with funding from the College of the Environment, we anticipate offering pedagogical support to faculty on an ongoing basis, both increasing and sharpening course offerings in sustainability

and environmental justice going forward. This will expand the number of faculty and students focused on this vitally important area of scholarly and policy concern.

COURSES ASSOCIATED WITH THE CLUSTER

For a current list of courses offered, visit WesMaps (https://iasext.wesleyan.edu/regprod/?wmaps_page.html?stuid=&facid=NONE&subj_page=XSEJ&term=1189).

The course list includes*:

(All courses listed by originating department/program, and with the approval of the instructors)

Code	Title	Hours
AMST174	Popular Culture and Social Justice: An Introduction to American Studies	1
ANTH312	Eat, Grow, Heal: The Anthropology of Food and Justice	1
ARHA352	Energy and Modern Architecture, 1850-2020	1
BIOL173	Global Change and Infectious Disease	1
BIOL215	Evolution in Human-Altered Environments	1
E&ES250	Environmental Geochemistry	1
GOVT322	Global Environmental Politics	1
GOVT392	Theorizing the City	1
LAST240	From the Banjo to Dembow: Afro-Caribbean Music in Motion	1
PHIL270	Environmental Philosophy	1
PHIL353	Blackness in the Anthropocene	1
PSYC361	The Psychology of Prejudice and Discrimination	1
SISP215	Metabolism and Technoscience	1
SOC315	The Health of Communities	1.25

*This list represents interdisciplinary and interdivisional regularly-taught courses on Sustainability and Environmental Justice. Some courses on this list have emerged through the Sustainability Across the Curriculum initiative while others already fell within the scope of faculty research and teaching interests. Some courses position questions of sustainability and/or environmental justice at the center of inquiry, whereas others may devote only one or two course modules to such inquiry.