



STS300: The Environmental Context

Autumn session, 2008, all campuses

8 credit points, prerequisite at least 36 credit points

SUBJECT OUTLINE

Subject coordinator

Brian Martin, room 19.2016

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Wollongong, NSW 2522

Phone: 4228 7860 (home), 4221 3763 (work)

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Email: bmartin@uow.edu.au

Web <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/>

Sometimes you can find me in my office, especially in the afternoons. You are also welcome to contact me by phone (at work any time; at home after 7am and before 9pm, please), fax or email, to discuss any issue or make an appointment.

Assessment Summary

Task	Format	Length	Weighting	Due Date
Attendance			pass/fail	Every week
Class activity	Segment of tutorial organised by student group	20+ minutes	20%	allocated in tutorials
Posts	Contributions to online discussion group	<500 words each	40%	Weeks 3-6 and 8-11, by 4am of the day of your tutorial
Essay	Essay in dialogue form	2000 words	40%	noon 26 May

for Arts Enquiries	staff contact details
Arts Central	▶ timetable
room 19.1050	▶ assignment coversheets
Monday-Friday, 8.30am-5.30pm	▶ handbooks
phone 4221 5328	▶ assignment submission
www.uow.edu.au/arts	▶ administrative forms
fac_arts@uow.edu.au	▶ general information
NB: Arts Central is closed Tuesdays 10am-11am for team meeting	

Class Contact Details

Contact details for other staff teaching the subject will be announced in Week 1.

Tutorial times and locations are available from the University's home page. Please note that tutorial times on the timetable are provisional.

Tutorial times are:

Monday 15.30-17.30, Shoalhaven

Monday 16.30-18.30, Wollongong 19.1004

Tuesday 17.30-19.30, Wollongong 19.2100

Wednesday 10.30-12.30, Batemans Bay

Wednesday 11.30-13.30, Moss Vale

Friday 10.30-12.30, Wollongong 19.2100

Friday 13.00-15.00, Bega

Students should have enrolled in tutorials via SOLS before the start of session.

Those with time tabling difficulties should see the Subject Co-ordinator.

Objectives

- To promote critical thinking about environmental issues and the science and economics associated with them and to practice using social theory in the environmental area.
- To ensure familiarity with mainstream thinking about environmental issues as embodied in the concept of sustainable development.
- To provide exposure to alternative views, philosophies and ways of thinking that can be applied to environmental problems.
- To encourage independent examination of possible solutions and courses of action for reducing or avoiding environmental problems.
- To develop and improve oral presentation, research and writing skills.

For success in most jobs, the most important attributes are, according to employers:

- motivation, self-discipline and self-understanding;
- ability to get along with others and work in teams;
- communication skills: verbal, written and using communication technologies;
- skills in critical thinking.

Knowledge — the factual material that you learn in classes — is less important. In STS300 there is emphasis on self-directed learning and on working in teams, as well as communication skills and critical thinking. But don't rely on your university education to give you everything you need for job success. Most university courses are built around individual work, not teamwork, and impose external incentives (marks) that often do not help to build internal motivation.

STS300 is run a bit differently from most other subjects. Please read the subject outline carefully rather than assuming things are like other classes. In particular:

- The penalty for less than 80% attendance is unusual. Please check it.
- Posts are due *before* the classes at which they are discussed. This is intended to promote better discussion.
- The assignments involve unusual combinations of theory and environmental issues. The idea is to get you to process the information and thus learn it better. If you paraphrase text from an article or book, you may not think it through all that carefully. If you have to apply the ideas in an unusual way, you have to think about them more deeply.
- The essay involves writing dialogue. Most students find that writing dialogue isn't all that difficult. What's challenging is processing the information to present it in a different format.

Outline

STS300 introduces you to the social and political aspects of environmental issues and policies from a variety of viewpoints. The major text is Sharon Beder, *Environmental Principles and Policies: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2006) available in the Unishop at \$56.95. The book plus additional readings substitute for formal lectures. There's plenty of educational research showing that lecturing is an inefficient method of teaching/learning. Unsupervised reading is at least as good. I can provide references on this point if desired.

Students are expected to review the appropriate material before each week's tutorial. For the assignments you will be expected to find additional material yourself, both on the internet, from the library and from other sources. Please note that electronic databases available through the library are a good source of research material.

Throughout the subject, we will be focussing on *actions* to address actual or potential environmental problems. Actions include personal behaviours (such as driving a car or joining a rally), corporate behaviours (such as investments and production of goods) and government behaviours (such as passing laws, enforcing regulations and approving projects). You can think, if you like, of actions as tactics. An overall plan for use of tactics is called a strategy.

Theories

In addition to the theories covered in the text, we will be exploring a range of other theories and how they can be used to understand environmental issues. Possibilities include:

- *political*
anarchism, communism, fascism, imperialism, liberalism, libertarianism, representative government, socialism, totalitarianism
- *economic*
capitalism, Gandhian economics, humanistic economics, Marxism, neoclassical economics, neoliberalism, political economy
- *religious*
atheism, Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Islam, Jediism, Rastafarianism, Scientology, Taoism
- *others*
altruism, feminism, militarism, pacifism, racism

Your group can also use theories from psychology, law, education and other fields. To find out about theories, consult introductory textbooks in economics, sociology or political science, or search library catalogues or the web using the name of the theory or related terms.

Theories you *shouldn't* use, for purposes of the assignments:

- ones closely related to principles in Sharon Beder's book, such as participatory democracy;
- ones that overlap with environmental topics, such as environmentalism, Gaia, deep ecology, social ecology and ecofeminism;
- ones covered in PHIL256/258, such as utilitarianism.

Subject Requirements

To pass the subject, you must attend at least 80% of tutorials. (Tutorials are omitted from the calculation when a special consideration request is made through SOLS justifying absence on medical or compassionate grounds.) If you are present for only part of a tutorial, that counts as fractional attendance.

With the agreement of all students, the following modification will be used. For those with less than 80% tutorial attendance, a corresponding percentage will be subtracted from the overall mark. For example, with 72% attendance, $80\% - 72\% = 8\%$ will be subtracted.

You are not required to pass every component of assessment to pass the subject. The subject coordinator and tutors reserve the right to hold an additional oral examination for any piece of assessment.

Plan

Week 1 (beginning 25 February): Introduction

We will introduce ourselves, discuss tutorial activities for the rest of the session, discuss the basics of Beder's six environmental principles, and try out some de Bono and/or other techniques for thinking and learning.

Reading: Beder, Introduction; STS300 subject outline; any book by Edward de Bono dealing with creative thinking.

Week 2 (beginning 3 March): Sustainability principle (1)

Prepare for the first post, due before next week's class.

Reading: Beder, chapter 1 and applications of the principle later in the book

Week 3 (beginning 10 March): Sustainability principle (2)

Reading: Beder, chapter 1 and applications of the principle later in the book

Week 4 (beginning 17 March): Polluter pays principle

Reading: Beder, chapter 2 and applications of the principle later in the book

Recess week (beginning 24 March)

Week 5 (beginning 31 March): Precautionary principle

Reading: Beder, chapter 3 and applications of the principle later in the book

Week 6 (beginning 7 April): Intragenerational equity

Reading: Beder, chapter 4, pp. 70-80 and applications of the principle later in the book

Week 7 (beginning 14 April): study week

Only the Friday class meets this week, to make up for Good Friday and Anzac Day.

Week 8 (beginning 21 April): Intergenerational equity

Reading: Beder, chapter 4, pp. 80-90 and applications of the principle later in the book

Week 9 (beginning 28 April): Human rights principles

Reading: Beder, chapter 5 and applications of the principles later in the book

Week 10 (beginning 5 May): The right to know

Reading: Beder, chapter 6, pp. 105-116 and applications of the principle later in the book

Week 11 (beginning 12 May): Public participation

Reading: Beder, chapter 6, pp. 116-121 and applications of the principle later in the book

Week 12 (beginning 19 May): Suppression of environmental science

Environmental scientists can come under attack from governments, corporations or other vested interests, suffering slander, loss of grants, and dismissal. What can be done to ensure that scientific work is used in service of environmental goals?

Reading: Robert R Kuehn, "Suppression of environmental science" at

<http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/dissent/documents/Kuehn04.pdf>

Week 13 (beginning 26 May): Reflection and planning

What should environmentalists be doing to be most effective?

Reading: Michel Shellenberger & Ted Nordhaus, "The death of environmentalism," 2004, available from <http://www.thebreakthrough.org/>.

Students will evaluate what they've learned during the session.

Assessment tasks

Class activity

You can work individually or in a group of two or three students (four at the most) to run a class on a topic agreed by the tutor. Normally the topic will cover both an environmental issue — your choice — and a theory (see section above on theories). For example, you might cover pesticides from the perspective of feminism or whaling under fascism. Focus on actions taken or not taken on the issue.

The class can be run as a presentation, debate, game, quiz, small group exercises or any other activity that helps others to learn. You should not just stand and talk, but should design one or more participatory activities. Consider using overheads, handouts, tapes and videos.

You should also include some method to evaluate how well the class has *understood* what you are trying to get across (not just how well they liked the activity). This is important!

In designing your activity, use one or more methods developed by Edward de Bono, as described in books such as *Parallel Thinking*, *Six Thinking Hats*, *Serious Creativity*, *Six Action Shoes* and *Water Logic*. Provide a handout for the class describing the de Bono method(s) that you've used, why you chose them and how they relate to your topic. Books by de Bono are available in most bookshops and libraries.

Time allocated for each class activity will be:

- individual, 20 minutes
- group of two, 38 minutes
- group of three, 54 minutes
- group of four, 68 minutes

Class activities will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

- knowledge of the environmental issue
- understanding of theory
- audience involvement
- aids (handouts, overheads, posters, videos, etc.)
- use of de Bono methods
- method of evaluating how well the class has understood your message.

To run an activity, it's best if there are at least four other students in the class, and preferably 6 or 8. If your class size is too small, arrange to run the activity with a class at a local school, with a community group or with students from some other class.

A few specific points:

- When speaking, use your memory or notes with dot points. *Do not* read from prepared text, because it almost always is worse than speaking more spontaneously.
- Identify sources for any quotes.
- If using overheads or powerpoint, use at least 24-point type (make the print large!).
- Plan every detail. For example, if you want responses to a question, you might say "Everyone write down a response on a slip of paper" rather than "What does anyone think?" Planning details will make your workshop more

engaging.

- Practise in advance to iron out difficulties and check that you can stay within the allotted time. Keeping to time can be a big challenge.

Once you've planned your workshop, you should discuss your plans with your tutor. We'll give you suggestions on how you might improve.

We'll assume you want each member of your group to have the same mark. Most groups do. But if not, here's an option. Suppose the mark for a group of three is 67. That's a total of 201 marks (3 x 67). You can allocate them in some non-equal way (e.g., 64, 64 and 73). See <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/classes/groupgrade.pdf> for suggestions for making this decision. Working in groups is a vital skill; don't avoid it because of the marks issue.

Posts

Due date: Weeks 3-6 and 8-11

Weighting: 10% each for 4 posts

Length: 500 words maximum (not counting references)

You will be assigned to a bulletin board group of 6 or so students from different tutorial groups, identified by a colour. In your group, decide on a sequence of 8 theories for weeks 3-6 and 8-11. These are called your colour theories. Choose theories you want to learn about and think you'll enjoy.

For each of weeks 3-6 and 8-11 you should make a contribution to the bulletin board dealing with (1) the environmental principle for that week, (2) your colour theory for that week and (3) an environmental issue of your choice.

You should cite at least one substantial source about the environmental principle (Beder's book and/or something else), one about the colour theory and one about the environmental issue. A "substantial source" is usually at least several thousand words long, hence excluding newspaper articles or blogs. You can use wikipedia for background but not as your cited source.

The environmental issue can be one addressed by Beder, but you can show originality and initiative by pursuing something else.

An example

In week 3 the environmental principle is sustainability. Let's say your colour theory for week 3 is Buddhism and you choose, as your issue, the environmental effects of genetic engineering. In your post, you might — for example — outline key Buddhist beliefs and how they relate to sustainability and then say how a Buddhist would approach genetic engineering. Or you could start with genetic engineering, describing different approaches to it, then say how Buddhism relates to these approaches and which approaches are sustainable. There's no required way to write your post. Just make sure you address the assessment criteria.

Posts will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

- understanding of the week's environmental principle
- understanding of the week's colour theory
- understanding of the environmental issue
- use of sources (including comment on a previous contribution)
 - argument (starting from clearly articulated premises; mobilising evidence and logic towards a conclusion; recognising assumptions made and limitations) and quality of expression (organisation of material, clarity, grammar, spelling, etc.).

You may find that the colour theory doesn't have any particular connection with the environmental principle and/or the issue. If so, say so and explain why not. The markers will take into account the difficulty of different theories and how easy they are to relate to environmental principles and issues.

Avoid summarising text material, especially Beder. Assume that others have read Beder. So you only need to highlight key points for your argument.

Posts will be counted if posted before 4am on the day of your tutorial.

You should comment on someone else's post, including a summary of what they said in a sentence or two. This doesn't apply to the first post of the week or any post within two hours of it.

Assessment will be based on your contributions made during four weeks chosen randomly, one from weeks 3-4, one from 5-6, one from 8-9 and one from 10-11. The same week will be chosen for all students in the subject. This means that 1/2 of your posts will not be assessed. You can consider this to be analogous to taking an exam: you study many different topics, but only some of them are covered by exam questions.

For each week selected, a single tutor will mark all contributions from all groups. To maintain a degree of anonymity, you should refer to yourself only by your group colour and an animal of your choice, for example Red Ibis.

Essay

Due date: noon 26 May

Weighting: 40%

Length: 2000 words

Submission: All essays from all campuses go direct to Brian Martin for marking. Either

(1) send by express post (posted by noon on 26 May) to Brian Martin, Arts Faculty, University of Wollongong, NSW 2522, or

(2) put under the door to my office (19.2016).

No cover sheet is needed. Put your student number on the essay — but **not** your name.

Write a fictional dialogue between two people (or possibly more) concerning an environmental principle and its application to an environmental issue.

The people ostensibly engaging in the dialogue can be fictional or real, dead or alive, but should not be staff or students at the university. For example, the dialogue might involve Joan of Arc, Rupert Murdoch, Cate Blanchett, Adolph Hitler, Gandhi, Wonder Woman, Aung San Suu Kyi, Garfield, Lady Macbeth, Britney Spears, Cindarella or Osama bin Laden, but not, for example, Sharon Beder or yourself. The dialogue should be as realistic as possible within the assumptions about the participants and situation. Virtually the entire essay should be dialogue. You may add "stage directions" (see stage plays for examples).

Each participant in the dialogue should speak from and/or advocate a theoretical position. See earlier under "Theories." For example, Joan of Arc might speak as a Christian and Hitler as a fascist.

The environmental principle can be one of those covered in Beder's book or, with agreement of your tutor, a different one.

The environmental issue can be anything you choose.

Participants in the dialogue should not normally refer to references explicitly (with the exception of well known writers). You, as the author of the dialogue, should provide footnotes at appropriate places, explaining what sources the speakers might be using, drawing inspiration from or bouncing off. You can see how this can be done by looking at some 2004 or 2005 essays: see http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/classes/STS300_04/topessays/ and http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/classes/STS300_05/topessays/

A minimum expectation is three different sources about the environmental principle, three about the environmental issue, and three different sources about each of the two theories. (That's a minimum of 12 in total.)

In addition to written sources, you should conduct one or more interviews with members of the local community (not students or staff of the university). Information about interviewing protocols will be provided during the session. You should refer to the findings from interviews directly in the dialogue and/or indirectly in footnotes.

You are welcome to work in a team to collect material for the essay. For example, in a team of four, two team members could investigate the environmental principle and issue and the other two members could study two theories. Each team member could conduct interviews and share them with the others. You must write your own individual essay.

You're also welcome to show your draft to others to obtain feedback. If you do this, it's appropriate to give an acknowledgement. For example, "I thank Orange Bee for information about species extinction, Purple Lizard for insight and suggested references about Rastafarianism and Yellow Rhinoceros for useful comments on a draft."

Essays will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

- understanding of environmental principle
- understanding of environmental issue
- understanding of theories
- use of sources (including interviews)
- quality of the dialogue

Submission of Assignments

- Students must keep a copy of all work/assignments handed in.
- Essays sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted unless agreed between the subject coordinator and student.

Return of Assignments

- The University's Code of Practice Teaching and Assessment requires that at least one assignment be assessed and returned before Week 9 of session.
- Essays submitted at the end of session will be held by the subject coordinator until the end of Week 3 of the following session. After this time, essays may be disposed of.

Extensions for written work/ Special Consideration

Students who miss a deadline, or fall below the minimum attendance requirements, or otherwise find their work in the subject affected by illness or serious misadventure should lodge a formal request for Special Consideration via SOLS. The procedures for lodging a request are available at www.uow.edu.au/handbook/course/rules/specialconsideration.html

Penalty for late submission of work

Late work (i.e. any work required for assessment that has not been given an extension) will be subject to a 10% penalty per day. The penalty is applied to the original mark awarded. Work submitted after seven calendar days will not be marked and will be given a mark of 0.

Plagiarism

Giving and gaining credit for ideas is so important that a violation of established procedures has a special

name: plagiarism. Plagiarism means using the ideas of someone else without giving them proper credit. That someone else may be an author, critic, journalist, artist, composer, lecturer, tutor or another student. Intentional plagiarism is a serious form of cheating. Unintentional plagiarism can result if you don't understand and use the acceptable scholarly methods of acknowledgment. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Irrespective, the University may impose penalties which can be very severe.

For full details about the University's plagiarism policy see www.uow.edu.au/handbook/course/rules/plagiarism.html

Codes of Practice, Rules and Guidelines

The University has in place codes of practice, rules and guidelines that define a range of policy issues on both educational and student matters. Students must refer to the Faculty Handbook or inline reference which contains a range of policies on educational issues and student matters. Some of the policies relevant to the Arts Faculty are listed below:

Code of Practice Teaching & Assessment:
www.uow.edu.au/handbook/codesofprac/teaching_code.html

Code of Practice Honours:
www.uow.edu.au/handbook/honourscode.html

Code of Practice Students:
www.uow.edu.au/handbook/codesofprac/cop_students.html

Code of Practice Student Discipline:
www.uow.edu.au/handbook/generalrules/student_discipline_rules.html

EEO Policy:
<http://staff.uow.edu.au/eed/eeopolicy.html>

Special Consideration Policy:
www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserules/specialconsideration.html

Non-Discriminatory Language Practice & Presentation:
<http://staff.uow.edu.au/eed/nondiscrimlanguage.html>

Occupational Health and Safety:
www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/ohs.html

Intellectual Property:
www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserules/ownersh_ipofwork.html

Human Ethics Research Guidelines:
www.uow.edu.au/research/rso/ethics/
Student Academic Grievance Policy:
www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserules/studacgrievpol.html

Faculty Handbook

The Faculty issues a Handbook free of charge to all students enrolled in an Arts Subject. It contains information on the structure of the Faculty's degrees, the majors offered, the more important University policies and other matters that may affect your time as a student in the Faculty.

Grievance Procedures

The term "academic grievance" refers to a complaint by a student concerning an act, omission or decision by a member of staff that adversely affects a student's academic experience. Some examples of a grievance include the following: failure to assess work in accordance with specified criteria; administrative error in the collating or recording of marks; failure to address requests for Special Consideration in accordance with the Special Consideration Policy; failure of a member of staff to adhere to General Course Rules or requirements of a relevant Code of Practice; failure to adhere to Faculty assessment or examination requirements.

The University and the Faculty of Arts have formal Student Academic Grievance Policies that are to be used **only after informal approaches** have been made to the relevant staff member. If the informal approach has an unsatisfactory outcome the student should follow the procedure outlined in the Faculty of Arts Student Grievance Form.

This form can be downloaded from the UOW website or a copy may be obtained from the Arts Central, Level 1, Building 19, Room 1050.

For more information:
<http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/course/rules/studacgrievpol.html>

Support Services

Both the Faculty and the University offer support services to its undergraduates.

Arts Central

Building 19 Room 1050
phone: 02 4221 5328 fax: 02 4221 5341
Mon - Fri: 8.30am to 5.30pm
Email: fac_arts@uow.edu.au
www.uow.edu.au/arts

Sub Dean

to make an appointment to see the Sub Dean, contact the Sub Dean's Assistant at Arts Central or phone: 02 4221 4838

Course Readers and Textbooks

UniShop - Building 11
phone: 02 4221 8050 fax: 02 4221 8055
unishop.uow.edu.au

Student Administration

Student Central - Building 17
phone: 02 4221 3927 fax: 02 4221 4322
e-mail: studentq@uow.edu.au
www.uow.edu.au/student/centre
www.uow.edu.au/student/sols

Woilyungah Indigenous Centre

Building 30
phone: 02 4221 3776 fax: 02 4221 4244
www.uow.edu.au/aec

University Library, including

the Faculty Librarian
Building 16
phone: 02 4221 3548
library.uow.edu.au

Student Equity and Diversity

Liaison Officer
Viv McIlroy - Room 19.1075
Phone: 4221 3635
The Student Equity & Diversity Liaison officer provides support when dealing with:
- student welfare, both domestic & international;
- EdStart (grants for financially disadvantaged students);
- Liaison for the Disability program, Counselling, Learning Development, Careers etc.
- Developing social networks for students within faculties.

Learning Assistance

Learning Resource Centre - 19.G102
phone: 02 4221 3977
www.uow.edu.au/student/services/ld

Careers Service - Building 11

phone: 02 4221 3325
www.uow.edu.au/careers

Counselling Service - Building 11 (level 3)

phone: 02 4221 3445
www.uow.edu.au/student/services/cs