WRIT 112 is a theme-based course focusing on sustainability. While instructors may incorporate the theme of sustainability in different ways and to different extents, during this course, you will be asked to learn more about this topic and explore your thoughts about it in your writing, especially in areas related to your major.

To facilitate more in-depth learning on the subject of sustainability, the Writing Department has developed the Sustainability Reading List (SRL), a handy toolkit of sources that includes book excerpts, scholarly articles, essays, websites, films, and podcasts. Links on online sources are provided here. Many of the print sources here are available as PDFs through the Writing Center website.

Please use the SRL as a jumping off point for your research into sustainability. The SRL is far from comprehensive. It does not address all the many specific ways in which sustainability can be understood across disciplines, and it will not contain your curiosity about the topic or answer all your questions. Your research must extend beyond just using the SRL. The Woodbury Library page Sustainability: A Guide to Sustainability Resources at Woodbury and Beyond is an excellent place to start extending your research. Find it at: http://woodbury.libguides.com/content.php?pid=88109&sid=655531

ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY

The idea of sustainability is often traced to a report published by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987. This report, Our Common Future (also often referred to as the “Brundtland Report”) describes sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This expression has become both a frequently quoted definition of sustainability and a kind of starting point for exploring the topic in more detail. The full text of the report is available at: http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm

When you think about sustainability, think broadly and creatively. Sustainability is not just about “the environment” or being “green.” While sustainability does have important application in such fields as environmental studies, environmental education, regenerative design, and conservation ecology, it also encompasses far-reaching philosophical and practical ideas that span all the disciplines and take shape in terms not just of the human relationship with the natural world, but also resource management, development, economics and management, design, social and economic justice, security, built environments, the arts and humanities, legality, and personal choices and lifestyle issues.
Once you have used the SRL to gain a working understanding of the concepts of sustainability, you can begin applying those concepts in terms of your own interests.

**PRINT MATERIALS**


The objective of this paper is to highlight the need for the inclusion of environmental education into the curricula of engineering studies in order to raise environmental awareness at an early stage in their careers.


This article discusses the work of the former faculty member of the German Bauhaus school, Herbert Bayer, who introduced modernist imagery in relation to globalization, conservation values, and maps dealing with environmental concerns in the United States


Carson’s last book, *Silent Spring* (1964), from which the about essay is taken, aroused immediate controversy for its indictment of the use of pesticides.


In this controversial tour de force of scholarship and unsparing vision, Mike Davis writes of Los Angeles as a Book of the Apocalypse theme park. By brilliantly juxtaposing L.A.’s fragile natural ecology with its disastrous environmental and social history, he compellingly shows a city deliberately put in harm’s way by land developers, builders, and politicians, even as the incalculable toll of inevitable future catastrophe continues to accumulate.


Through a multidisciplinary perspective, this book considers the theory and practice of environmental citizenship -- what it is and how it can be achieved? And also examines obstacles and opportunities for environmental citizenship. The book covers such topics as the necessity of an active role for the state, the claims of environmental justice, the democratic potential of online participation in rulemaking, and the role of education in promoting environmental citizenship.

Fernandez, Lisa O. and Anthony A Leiserowitz. “Toward a new Consciousness: Values to Sustain Human and Natural Communities.” Environment. 50. 5 (2008): ProQuest, Web. 24 Oct. 2008. This paper is the result of a conference which focused on the role of cultural values and worldviews in environmentally destructive behavior within affluent societies - patterns that are being adopted throughout the world, including the rising centers of Western-style affluence in the developing world.


Korten, David C. The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2006. Print. Korten argues that corporate consolidation of power is merely one manifestation of what he calls "Empire": the organization of society through hierarchy and violence that has largely held sway for the past 5,000 years. Korten also draws on evidence from varied sources to make the case that "Earth Community"--a life-centered, egalitarian, sustainable alternative to Empire based on democratic principles of partnership--is indeed possible.


Contending that more is not better for consumers, bestselling author McKibben offers a realistic, if challenging, scenario for a hopeful future. For those who wonder if there isn't more to life than buying, he provides insight on individual responsibility as well as global awareness.


Orr focuses not on problems in education, but on the problem of education. Much of what has gone wrong with the world, he argues, is the result of inadequate and misdirected education that alienates us from life in the name of human domination; causes students to worry about how to make a living before they know who they are; overemphasizes success and careers; separates feeling from intellect and the practical from the theoretical and deadens the sense of wonder for the created world.


Today’s college graduates confront the first truly worldwide environmental challenge—that of balancing the carbon budget—the stocks and flow of carbon through the biosphere—to ameliorate the negative consequences of global climate change. Colleges and universities have an obligation to ensure that they provide students with the knowledge and experience necessary to accomplish that challenging task.


Pollan masterfully links four fundamental human desires—sweetness, beauty, intoxication, and control—with the plants that satisfy them: the apple, the tulip, marijuana, and the potato. In telling the stories of four familiar species, he illustrates how the plants have evolved to satisfy humankind’s most basic yearnings. And just as we’ve benefited from these plants, we have also done well by them. So who is really domesticating whom?


World-renowned physicist and activist Vandana Shiva boldly confronts the neoconservative Project for the New American Century with her own plan, describing what Earth democracy "could" look like, and outlining the bedrock principles for building living economies, living cultures, and living democracies.


One of the world’s most influential philosophers here considers the ethical issues surrounding globalization, showing how a global ethic rather than a nationalistic approach can provide illuminating answers to important problems.


In “Sustainability on Campus” campus leaders recount inspiring stories of strategies that moved eighteen colleges and universities toward a more sustainable future.


**WEBSITES**

**Global Issues:**


**Legal and Policy Decisions:**


**Sustainability:**


FILMS


Al Gore’s groundbreaking film on global warming; works well with many other sources, but might work best with sources drawn from business/economics perspectives.

Life and Debt. Dir. Stephanie Black. Tuff Gong, 2002. DVD.

The film details the UN-sanctioned economic policies (WTO) that have decimated Jamaica’s local economies. The film collects a range of commentators, including interviews with Michael Manley, former Prime Minister of Jamaica, as well as very articulate, local, Jamaican farmers. Black presents a detailed analysis of the production of both food and clothing in the “free trade” era. Narration: Jamaica Kincaid; Soundtrack: Bob Marley and other reggae greats.


Remarkably incisive commentary from a “who’s who” of environmental thinking about the planet and the diversity of human action to both destroy and save the planet. I’ve used this film twice in class, to astounding effect.


The film presents some of the ethical and legal problems of the GMO “food revolution.” Well-supported analyses, insightful interviews, and key players in the GMO debates appear throughout the film.


Water is the very essence of life, sustaining every being on the planet. 'Flow' confronts the disturbing reality that our crucial resource is dwindling and greed just may be the cause.


This documentary takes the viewer on a deeply personal journey into the everyday lives of families struggling to fight Goliath. From a family business owner in the Midwest to a preacher in California, from workers in Florida to a poet in Mexico, dozens of film crews on three continents bring the intensely personal stories of an assault on families and American values.
One of the best web sources is Ted.com (Technology, Entertainment, and Design), on which you will find most current thoughts on social, cultural, technological, environmental, and design topics that you will be able to use for your WRIT112 research.

In this inspiring talk about recent developments in biomimicry, Janine Benyus provides heartening examples of ways in which nature is already influencing the products and systems we build.

Photographer Phil Borges shows rarely seen images of people from the mountains of Dharamsala, India, and the jungles of the Ecuadorean Amazon. In documenting these endangered cultures, he intends to help preserve them.

Legendary oceanographer Robert Ballard, discoverer of the Titanic, asks the questions, “Why are we ignoring the oceans?” “Why are we ignoring our own planet?” He states that NASA’s(National Aeronautics and Space Administration) budget for one year would fund NOAA’s(National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) programs for 1,600 years. He concludes by asking, “Why are we not looking at how to move out into the sea? Why are we ignoring the resources at hand?”

Rob Dunbar, Professor of Geological and Environmental Sciences and Founder of Stanford University’s Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Program in Environmental Resources discusses climate change science and examines the question, “what do we do now?”

For almost three decades, John Francis has been a planetwalker, traveling the globe by foot and sail with a message of environmental respect and responsibility (for 10 of those years without speaking). A funny, thoughtful talk with occasional banjo.

Worldchanging.com co-founder, Alex Steffen, discusses the fact that our world is being used in “wildly unfair” ways.

A rousing call from Al Gore to take action on the environmental front. Gore states that we should approach this issue with joy and gratitude for having been the generation entrusted with the solution and the one to solve this crisis to lay the base for a bright and optimistic future.

Nokia researcher Jan Chipchase’s investigation into the ways we interact with technology has led him from the villages of Uganda to the insides of our pockets. Along the way, he’s made some unexpected discoveries: about the novel ways illiterate people interface with their cellphones, or the role the cellphone can sometimes play in commerce, or the deep emotional bonds we all seem to share with our phones.

Michael Pollan, author of “The Omnivore’s Dilemma” and “In Defense of Food,” discusses his origins as a writer in the world.

Visionary urban planner and politician Jaime Lerner discusses how every city in the world can be improved within three years.

Gary Hirshberg, CEO of Stonyfield Farms, discusses how to make money and save the world.
“There’s no business to be done on a dead planet.”

Jeffrey Sachs reads State of the Planet Conference attendees a memo he has written to the next Presidential Administration titled “Peace Through Sustainable Development.”(Sachs begins speaking at 6 minutes, 10 seconds)

Gustave Speth, Dean of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, discusses how economic growth and excessive consumption have become substitutes for dealing with real social and environmental concerns. Speth states that sustaining people and sustaining nature have been eclipsed by the relentless pursuit of economic growth.

We all want to make the world better -- but how? Jamais Cascio looks at some specific tools and techniques that can make a difference. It’s a fascinating talk that might just inspire you to act.

Gustave Speth states that all we have to do to destroy the planet is continue doing exactly what we’re doing today.

Pollan surmises that humans (and even insects and animals) have developed very specific and self-serving vocabularies which place them at the top of the ladder when, in reality, plants may “control” much more than we think. For more information in this vein, read Pollan’s book “The Botany of Desire.”

Specialists from the areas of human health, energy and environment and international issues discuss how to apply valuable entrepreneurial thinking to the area of global environmental problems.

Chris Abani tells stories of people: People standing up to soldiers. People being compassionate. People being human and reclaiming their humanity. It’s “ubuntu,” he says: the only way for me to be human is for you to reflect my humanity back at me.

Anthropologist Wade Davis muses on the worldwide web of belief and ritual that makes us human. He shares breathtaking photos and stories of the Elder Brothers, a group of Sierra Nevada indians whose spiritual practice holds the world in balance.

“What’s Wrong With What We Eat.” Mark Bittman. TED Talks, December. 2007. 16 May 2009. 20 minutes

In this fiery and funny talk, New York Times food writer Mark Bittman weighs in on what’s wrong with the way we eat now (too much meat, too few plants; too much fast food, too little home cooking), and why it’s putting the entire planet at risk.


HOW SUSTAINABLE IS WOODBURY?

Sustainability likely “starts at home,” as the saying goes. We can most readily have a positive impact on the things close to us...like where we go to school for example. Is Woodbury University sustainable? What does that question mean?

To explore these matters, you might start at the Woodbury University Sustainability Page at:


You might also look at sources like these:

Campus Consortium for Environmental Excellence
 http://www.c2e2.org/

Campus Environmental Resource Center
 http://www.campuserc.org/Pages/default.aspx