

**SCHOOL OF PUBLIC LEADERSHIP
UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH**

and

SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE

PROGRAMME IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Development

Module: Leadership and Environmental Ethics 773

3 - 8 April 2017

Location: Sustainability Institute, Lynedoch Road, Stellenbosch, South Africa

Module Teachers

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Introduction

This course focuses on the challenge of ethical leadership within a context of creating sustainable transitions. Courage, chaos and complexity are an inherent part of creating alternative futures. The key question for the redistribution of resources to ensure fairer futures in a way that ensures longer-term survival of the Earth must rest within the human species on the ability to exercise leadership through making sound judgements. In a world currently characterised by sharp divides - from mind/body within individuals to rich/poor within the international community – the enduring hunt is for places and people who seem to be 'going beyond'. The paradoxes within identity, voice and interpretation; indeterminacy and irony; power, policies and personalities form a field of uncertainty that needs to be traversed through minute attention to the patterns and processes continuously emerging. Environmental ethics and values-based leadership creates an approach to the study of human interaction with nature.

Aims

This intensive module aims to help participants reflect on their fundamental assumptions about environmental ethics, leadership and authority. Exercising leadership is a demanding, often gruelling and risky endeavour. The experiential approach focuses on creating space for shifting assumptions that can affect the way participants understand and address significant leadership issues. Active engagement in the classroom, small groups, morning work, individual reading and reflection will provide the context for grappling with the contradictions within ethics for leadership in socioecological transformation.

Learning Outcomes

In the course of this experience, specific outcomes would be:

- To identify and focus on the adaptive nature of a problem, rather than its technical aspects
- The skill to build identity through narratives
- The capacity to discern and work with the interplay between individual and group dynamics
- The skill to unlock individual and group creativity
- A sharpened ability to recognise and evaluate the values and principles underlying ecologically destructive as well as ecologically sound behaviour
- The capacity to analyse and evaluate the ethical positions and assumptions of different parties involved in socioecological disputes

Syllabus

The module is largely experiential in nature and made up of the following strands: morning work, classroom work, group project, individual reflection, reading and written work.

Since leadership issues are at work in any group at any time, the module dynamics themselves, in the here-and-now, will provide important content for learning about leadership.

Morning work

As before, participants will work in small groups for one hour on some of the following tasks:

- Indigenous gardens
- Pre-school
- Vegetable gardening
- Tree planting
- Cleaning
- Cooking

Classroom work

The module is process oriented in its conversational approach. However, general themes for the week include the following:

Day 1: Building a context and approach to leading transitions and environmental ethics

Day 2: Ethics and environmental ethics
Case studies

Day 3: Ethics of disruption, alternative voices – exploring alternative narratives
Case studies, class discussion

Day 4: Building identity – individual voice in transitions
Case studies

Day 5: Network narratives – wholeness and flourishing life

Group project

As in all modules, course participants will be required to formulate and present a group project on Saturday morning. Guidelines will be presented at the start of the week. Time will be allocated during the week for group work and discussion.

Assessment

Assessment will be based on the following:

- **Journal:** this should be submitted with the Assignment and must include two Sections, namely Section A which must contain short summaries of the reading you have done (about 8 lines of notes that captures the essence of the reading, i.e. the core 'storyline' or argument plus a description of the 'evidence' used to substantiate the argument/storyline); and Section B which is for any personal reflections on your learning experiences that you would like to write about. Section B is normally written in the first person, e.g. "I really enjoyed group work because it", etc. Try, in Section B, to express your feelings about things rather than just describe what happened.
- **Assignments:** You are required to write two assignments. Each individual assignment should be around 3000 words, i.e. a total together of approximately 6000 words. (If, however, you really need more space to say something significant and what you have to say is not full of waffle and unnecessary verbiage, then going over 5000 words will not be penalised. If longer than 5000 words and it is clear to the reader you could have said the same in less, then you will be penalised.) The assignment topic will be given during the module. The purpose of the assignment is for the participant to synthesize in a written form new knowledge and experience derived from reading, classroom work, community work, group project and your own knowledge background and experience. It is essential

that the assignment is more than just the summary of the readings. The assignment must demonstrate that you have something specific to say, and that you have said it clearly and logically. The following criteria will be used to assess each assignment:

- Has a significant body of literature been read and understood?
- Is there a coherent and logical argument?
- Is there an introduction and conclusion that introduces at the start and ties up at the end what the essay is all about?
- Is the mode of expression acceptable, with special reference to grammar, references, spelling and syntax?
- Has the work been presented in accordance with the requirements? i.e. typed, properly referenced using the Harvard Method, cover page with title and name and student number and submitted via TURNITIN to check for plagiarism.

Assignment topic: To be set in the module.

The due date for the assignment:

22 May 2017 @ 13:00 via turnitin on SUNLearn

Refer to the Student Info Guide for guidelines and instructions on writing your assignment.

- **Group Project:** although clear guidance will be given at the start of the module on how this will be organised, suffice it to say here that this will involve working in pre-assigned groups on a presentation to the wider group that will take place at the end of the course.
- **Reading test or class test:** you will be tested at some point during the week on a reading set in the module.

Evaluation

The final mark for the module will be calculated as follows:

1. Reading and/or Class Test – 10%.
2. Individual Assignment 1 (Part A) of 3000 words – 25%
3. Individual Assignment 2 (Part B) of 3000 words – 25%
4. Group Assignment – 25%
5. Journal and Reading Summaries – 15%

A minimum mark of 50% for each Individual Assignment is required to pass the module. Even if you get an average of 50% for both Assignments but fail one of them, you will still fail the module. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that high Group Work marks do not result in a pass mark for the module if the student has failed an Individual Assignment.

General

The following general comments may be relevant:

- The weather during April in the Cape has generally started to change towards autumn. It can be hot still, but also rainy with cool autumn days. So be prepared for different seasons all in one day.
- The dress style at the Institute is strictly informal at all times, and no formal dress will be required for any functions, meals or outings. Please note that the community work sessions each morning will result in getting your hands dirty and doing physical work. Comfortable clothes and shoes are advisable.
- All teaching and discussion will be conducted in English. During community work there will be interactions with people who speak the local languages of Afrikaans or Xhosa. Most people, however, get by with some form of basic English and there are always translators around.
- Course participants will be expected to pay for extra entertainment and transportation requirements that are over and above what is planned for in the programme.
- A meditation room is available for general use at all times. It is appropriate for people from all faiths. Formal meditation sessions are conducted on a daily basis at agreed times for those who are interested. This purely voluntary activity does not form part of the formal curriculum.
- All students have access to all the libraries at the University of Stellenbosch.
- Everyone is encouraged to bring computers if they have them.