

BHM344 COMMUNICATING SUSTAINABILITY

Academic Year 2013/14

Number of Aston Credits: 15

Number of ECTS Credits: 7.5

Staff Member Responsible for the Module:

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Pre-requisites for the module:

None

Module Aim:

To critically analyse and evaluate the role of the traditional and new media in public relations, marketing and advertising in promoting pro sustainability knowledge, values, and action.

Module Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

<p><i>Module Outcomes – what the student should gain from successful completion of the module:</i></p>	<p>Learning and Teaching and Assessment Strategies to enable outcomes to be achieved and demonstrated</p>	
	<p><i>Learning and Teaching Methods</i></p>	<p><i>Assessment Methods</i></p>

<p>Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p>Show a coherent, broad comprehension of the key organisations and processes involved in public communications in the promotion of sustainable development</p>	<p><i>Tutor led discussion on key reading</i></p> <p><i>Individual and online small group work</i></p> <p><i>Student led online discussion</i></p> <p><i>Case study analysis</i></p>	<p><i>Reflective self and peer assessment</i></p> <p><i>Formative tutor feedback</i></p> <p><i>Summative: Ass1</i></p>
<p>Intellectual Skills</p> <p>Analyse and evaluate the methods used by community, corporate, NGOs, and other groups to communicate pro sustainability messages and images.</p> <p><i>Critically analyse the role and use of film, television and new screen media in generating public understanding of sustainable development</i></p>	<p><i>Tutor led discussion on key readings</i></p> <p><i>Individual and online small group work</i></p> <p><i>Case study analysis</i></p>	<p><i>Reflective self and peer assessment</i></p> <p><i>Summative: Ass 1</i></p>
<p>Professional/Subject Specific Skills</p> <p>Exhibit critical, systematic and reflexive understanding of informal learning and communication regards promoting sustainable development in corporate and community contexts</p>	<p><i>On line seminar discussion</i></p> <p><i>Individual and online small group work</i></p> <p><i>Critical evaluation of media products</i></p>	<p><i>Reflective self and peer assessment</i></p> <p><i>Summative: Ass1 & 2</i></p>
<p>Transferable Skills</p> <p><i>Effectively use of multi-media platforms in the presentation of complex ideas and issues</i></p>	<p><i>Practical communication exercises</i></p>	<p><i>Reflective self and peer assessment</i></p> <p><i>Summative AV presentation &/or production of video viral</i></p>

Module Content:

- > Media ecology and media noise
- > Media and Sustainability Literacy – the rhetoric of the image
- > Key aspects of traditional media coverage of sustainable development

- > Public relations and public communication - business, NGOs campaigns
- > Advertising and selling sustainability
- > Social Marketing and everyday life
- > Radical, independent and alternative media
- > From awareness to action

Corporate Connections:

The Media and Communication industries are both diverse and ubiquitous straddling both traditional and new media technologies. This module is closely engaged with new developments in content creation, delivery and audience interpretation. In a moment when users are also producers there exists a wide range of opportunities to interact with small and large companies, NGOs, Indy media sites and other bodies.

International Dimensions:

Media communication has been a key element in the globalization process and many of the large media organizations operate transcontinentally. The movement to secure changes to business and social practice in support of conservation and sustainability also operate on an international and transcontinental basis.

Contribution of Research:

The module Leader, John Blewitt, has an extensive research record in the fields of sustainable development and media research. He has published widely and presented at many international conferences. His research has recently focused on media, conservation and ecology and he is presently working on issues relating to new media, sustainability literacy and urban development.

Ethics, Responsibility & Sustainability:

Media, business and sustainability ethics interact closely in this module. Issues relating to access and control, freedom of expression and digital exclusion and inclusion are of major concern to governments, businesses, NGO, regulatory authorities and many others. The aim is to bring them together in a fashion that enhances and supports the sustainable development process.

Method of Teaching:

Face to face seminars, workshops and discussions, supported by interactive online learning units relating to each area identified in the module content on line presentation of written and audio-visual learning materials via Blackboard (or related VLE); individual contact with tutor by e-mail, telephone or video conferencing; opportunities for student

interaction by means of a shared bulletin board, chat room, e-mail; video conferences; individual student assessment on topics defined by the tutor; formative feedback on assessed work; online individual tutorials and guidance concerning reading and private study.

Method of Assessment and Feedback:

E-Portfolio to include:

One communication case study in the region of 1500-2000 words – 50% of the final mark

One 59 second video “viral” or similar A/V presentation with written critical evaluation (1250 words) – 50% of the final mark

Learning Hours:

Pre-reading	10
Lectures	30
Independent Study	110
Total	150

The following readings are subject to change. Students should not therefore purchase textbooks prior to commencing their course. If students wish to undertake background reading before starting the course, many of the chapters/readings are available in electronic form via on-line library catalogues and other resources.

Pre-reading:

Green (Fr, 2009)
<http://www.greenthefilm.com/>

Select one:

Lester, L. (2010) *Media and Environment: Conflict, Politics and the News*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Maxwell, R. and Miller, T (2012) *Greening the Media*, New York. OUP

Blewitt, J. (2010) *Media, Ecology and Conservation*. Totnes, Green Books

Essential Reading:

Allan, S., Adam, B. & Carter, C. Eds (2000) *Environmental Risks and the Media*. London Routledge.

Beder, S. (2002) *Global Spin: the Corporate Assault on Environmentalism*. Totnes, Green Books.

Blewitt, J. (2010) *Media, Ecology and Conservation*. Totnes, Green Books.

Boler, M. Ed (2008) *Digital Media and Democracy*. Cambridge, Mass; MIT Press.

Couldry, N. & Curran, J. Eds (2003) *Contesting Media Power: alternative media in a networked world*. New York, Rowman and Littlefield.

DeLuca, K.M. (1999) *Image Politics: the new rhetoric of environmental activism*. New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum.

Gross, L., Katz, J.S. & Ruby, J. Eds (2003) *Image Ethics in the Digital Age*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Hansen, A. (2010) *Environment, Media and Communication*. London, Routledge

Kotler, P. & Lee, N.R. eds (2007) *Social Marketing: Influencing Behaviors for Good* 3rd edition. New York, Sage.

Lester, L. (2010) *Media and Environment: Conflict, Politics and the News*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Maxwell, R. and Miller, T (2012) *Greening the Media*, New York. OUP

McKenzie-Mohr, D. (1999) *Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing*. Washington, DC. New Society Publishers.

Moser, S.C. & Dilling, L. Eds (2007) *Creating a Climate for Change: Communicating Climate Change and Facilitating Social Change*. Cambridge, CUP.

UNEP (2006) Walk the Talk?: advancing sustainable lifestyles through marketing. Available at: http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/news_events/8.1/ttw_fin.pdf.

Introductory Learning Resources:

Blewitt, J. (2008) *Understanding Sustainable Development*. London, Earthscan. Ch8.

Blewitt, J. (2009) "New Media Literacy: communication for sustainability" in Stibbe, A. Ed *Handbook of Sustainability Literacy*. Green Books, Totnes.

Dan Ackerman Greenberg (2007) The secret strategy behind many viral “videos”. available at: <http://www.techcrunch.com/2007/11/22/the-secret-strategies-behind-many-viral-videos/>

Online Resource:

Futerra Sustainability Communications
<http://www.futerra.co.uk/>

Green TV
www.green.tv

Adbusters
www.adbusters.org

Planet 2025
<http://www.planet2025news.net/>

Other Recommended Resources:

An Inconvenient Truth (USA, 2006)
<http://www.climatecrisis.net/>

Black Gold (GB, 2007)
<http://www.blackgoldmovie.com/>

Green (Fr, 2009)
<http://www.greenthefilm.com/>

The Age of Stupid (GB, 2009)
<http://www.ageofstupid.net/>