

Department of Architectural Technology

ARCH 3551
Prof. Azaroff

SUSTAINABILITY: HISTORY AND PRACTICE
Final Paper

S21

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Description:

Throughout the semester you have been asked to constantly redefine sustainability and understand ideas of resilience. For your final paper you will be asked to write on several themes of your choosing.

Part 1. Identify the following terms (write the Definitions give one example each)

Social Equity
Environmental Justice
Green Economy

Social Equity

Social equity is concerned with justice and fairness of social policy. Since the 1960s, the concept of social equity has been used in a variety of institutional contexts, including education and public administration. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_equity

The concept of social equity is that it reflects ideas of “fairness” and “justness” which have a normative component in that they are based on moral values or considerations. What one person thinks is fair may differ markedly from what another thinks is fair.

<https://socialequity.unimelb.edu.au/stories/what-is-social-equity>

Example:- Education in terms of been able to provide extra help to students when in need outside of regular course hours.

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no population bears a disproportionate share of negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or from the execution of federal, state, and local laws; regulations; and policies.

<https://www.energy.gov/lm/services/environmental-justice/what-environmental-justice>

The term has two distinct uses with the more common usage describing a social movement that focuses on the "fair" distribution of environmental benefits and burdens.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_justice

Examples:- Inadequate access to healthy food
Air pollution

Green Economy

The **green economy** is defined as an **economy** that results in reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. It aims for sustainable development without degrading the environment.

https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_economy

An inclusive green economy is one that improves human well-being and builds social equity while reducing environmental risks and scarcities.

<https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/green-economy/why-does-green-economy-matter>

Example:- Singapore

Part 2. Identify 10 Major Problems in the world (these do not have to be tied to sustainability) Define each of the 10 problems and write brief two to 3 sentences of why it is a problem.

Extreme Poverty

Poverty, the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions. Poverty is said to exist when people lack the means to satisfy their basic needs.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/poverty>

Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopedia. "Poverty". Encyclopedia Britannica, 18 May. 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/poverty>. Accessed 28 April 2021.

Why?

Extreme poverty is a major problem as majority of the world is affected by it regardless of the location. Extreme poverty is affecting the quality of life of a person and is stops them from been able to satisfy their basic human needs which includes feeding.

Hunger

According to the dictionary hunger is a feeling of discomfort or weakness caused by lack of food, coupled with the desire to eat.

Why?

Hunger could be as a result of poverty or due to lack of food in the environment which could cause serious malnutrition especially in kids which affects their growth rate.

Illiteracy

The inability to read or write or lack of knowledge in a particular subject.

Why?

Illiteracy is a problem as this has the ability to completely hinder the growth of an individual. When proper education is not been received the person becomes completely unaware of certain issues as the knowledge and information cannot be passed across once written and has to be said out loud which in most cases are not always done and that leads to a lot of miscommunication and mis interpretation of information

Discrimination

The unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or sexual orientation.

Why?

Discrimination based on a race, gender, age, or sexual orientation has the ability to affect everything around them ranging from the individual been discriminated against to the community around them or even the state. Discrimination can determine if a person gets hired or not especially if they are being discriminated on especially when based on physical attributes.

Overpopulation

refers to a population which exceeds its sustainable size within a particular environment or habitat.

<https://biologydictionary.net/overpopulation/>

Why?

Overpopulation can either lead to lack of resources in the community on both natural resources and manmade resources like land or space availability for farming purposes.

Exploitation

The act of selfishly taking advantage of someone or a group of people in order to profit from them or otherwise benefit oneself.

<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/exploitation>

Why?

Exploitation is a problem frequently experience by immigrants especially illegal immigrants. This is because in an attempt to protect their source of income they open themselves up to inhumane conditions of working while been unable to speak up as the risk of replacement is very imminent.

Pollution

The presence in or introduction into the environment of a substance or thing that has harmful or poisonous effects.

Definition from Oxford Languages.

Why?

Pollution has the ability to come in different forms which could be land, air, water and so on. Pollution does not only affect the human society but has the ability to affect everything on earth which could make it inconceivable to live on.

Bad governance

As a result of lack of transparency and accountability a lot of decisions made by the government or government officials are not in accordance with the law or even trying to increase the quality of the life of the people been governed.

Why?

Bad governance is one of the major problems in the world because once major decisions are made based on what could be gained personally by the government or government officials this ruins the chances of progress that could be made in the country and also in the lives of the people living in the country as they would begin to feel extremely restricted.

Overconsumption

The action or fact of consuming something to excess.

Why?

Overconsumption can be viewed in two ways which are the exploitation of fossil fuels and other natural resources to produce a product which could be used by humans but in this case the products created tend to be always created in excess as a result of industrial revolution.

Climate Change

A change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels.

Definition from Oxford Languages.

Why?

Climate change is a major world problem as if the changes continue to happen at an exponential rate the planet would become inhabitable to humans which would either lead to humans trying to leave earth or finding new ways to adapt. As on right now although there is a lot of research, talks and set goals done we still have not made any progress that has the ability to do a 360 turn on climate change.

Part 3. Identify Five social equity topics specifically to New York City that Sustainability can have an impact.

1. The use of Net Zero housing design implementation in future affordable and low-income housing in NYC.
2. Expansion and diversification of Jobs.
3. Commuting to work via mass transit within 45 minutes.

4. Increase of access to health care to everyone regardless of age, race or Job.
5. Trying to lift 800,000 residents out of poverty or near poverty by 2025.

<https://www.greenbiz.com/article/new-york-citys-plan-fuse-sustainability-social-equity-and-resilience>