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Course Revision Description

As a participant in the Chesapeake Project, I was struck by the diversity of ways in which faculty at the University of Maryland can teach about sustainability. In particular, working with scholars from a wide range of disciplines helped me to clarify some of my own thoughts about teaching sustainability and what my own discipline has to provide. Specifically, it helped me to clarify the importance of teaching about the collective action problems (and their solutions) as one way to help students grasp the impediments to environmental protection.

While my courses (Global Environmental Politics and Introduction to Environmental Politics) are already organized around themes of sustainability, I did make three significant revisions to my course plans based on idea from the workshop:

- 1) Drawing on the case method presentation, I plan to teach a case of my own in my global environmental politics class. Specifically, I will use this approach to explore the conflict between goals of free trade and environmental protection, examining the shrimp-turtle conflict within the WTO. I intend to use the interactive style of the case method to get students to think about the principles at stake in reconciling these two objectives, and to brainstorm ways in which we might do so.
- 2) I will now introduce my Introduction to Environmental Politics course with a lecture entitled “visions of sustainability.” This lecture is intended to synthesize the broad interdisciplinary perspectives on sustainability I was exposed to at the workshop.
- 3) I will use the concept brainstorming exercise from the second day of the workshop to develop a new in-class simulation to illustrate the tragedy of the commons and potential solutions to it. In particular, I plan to tie this concept to the example of over-fishing to give students a concrete example of how these dynamics might play out and how they might be resolved.

I feel that these three revisions will make a significant improvement to my courses, both in terms of content and pedagogy. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the workshop, and look forward to putting these ideas into practice.