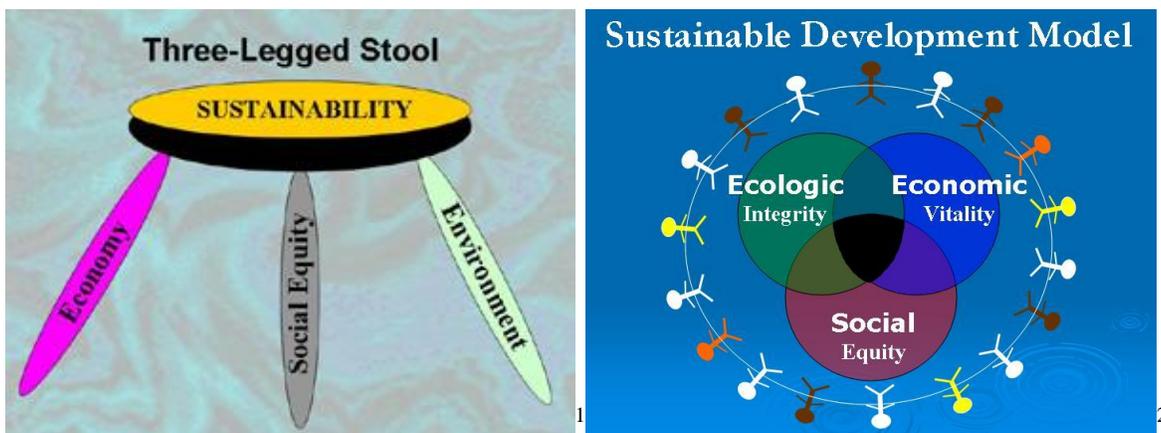


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MIEH 300, Introduction to Environmental Public Health

When people hear the word “environment”, many times it is thought that the physical, natural environment is being referred to. This may be true in some cases, but in regard to Public Health and the Environment, it can be and is any and all places that affect Public Health. This includes everything from the physical and natural environment, to the work place, people’s homes, grocery stores, agriculture, communities, animals, and everything in between.

The field of Public Health requires a multi-disciplinary approach to achieve its’ goals. Knowing this, I attended the Chesapeake Project workshop with the intention of learning new venues and specific people at UMD in which to extend my network of professionals into other fields. The idea was to learn how others are addressing a multi-disciplinary model to achieve success with Sustainability and, thus, integrate these approaches into my course.

The Sustainability Model is one of the primary modes by which I teach sound environmental public health practices to students in the Introduction to Environmental Public Health (MIEH 300). I have included two visual aids that demonstrate the importance and necessity of sustainability:



The Three-Legged Stool and the Sustainable Development Model both demonstrate how the three components of Sustainability - ecology/environment, economic, and social equity - rely upon each other for success. If one of these components fail, then all parts of the system fail. It is essential that all components of people’s lives (e.g., political science, history, economy, ecology, culture, language, gender, etc.) are considered with any public health approach.

For example, an economy must produce and maintain a profit, however, economically viable solutions that reduce resource consumption, stop pollution, and conserve natural habitats are more likely to provide a sustainable economic venture than one that does not consider these issues. According to the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, *Sustainability* is “about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come”.

With this in mind, as the course was developed, it was designed to include Sustainability in as many places as possible. In the first session of the course, I introduce the Source-to-Effect Model in

¹ Journal of Ron Gibson. <http://www.rongibson.org/blogs/index.php/2008/08/06/sustainability-the-three-legged-stool>. Accessed August 30, 2009.

² Create A Better Future. <http://www.abetterfuture.org/index.htm> . Accessed August 30, 2009.

conjunction with the Sustainability Model to illustrate the connectivity of individual and community behaviors and how they affect the outcomes.

I have made changes to the syllabus, because of my participation in the Chesapeake Project workshop. Each session will have an objective that correlates environmental public health and sustainability to the sessions' topic. For example, session #7's topic is air pollution. Therefore, the added objective is to *explain/discuss the connection between air pollution, environmental public health, and sustainability.*

It is my intention, with this course, to demonstrate that Environmental Public Health is a part of how we live and with the integration of Sustainability, there is a greater chance for success in achieving public health goals and objectives.