An Interdisciplinary Research Symposium at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI.
Hosted by the Sustainability Scholars’ Forum (SSF)
www.sustainabilityscholars.wordpress.com

COMMUNITY ROOM, UNDERGRADUATE LIBRARY, 3RD FLR.
FRIDAY SEP. 11, 8.30AM - 5.30PM

“Social Institutions and Sustainability”

SCHEDULE
- 8.30-9 am : Coffee & registration.
- 9-9.10 am : Welcome. Matthew Seeger (Dean, CFPCA, WSU)
- 9.10-9.25 am : Opening. Walter Edwards (Dir., Humanities Center, WSU)
- 9.25-9.30 am : Thanks to sponsors. Rahul Mitra (Communication, WSU)
- 9.30-11 am : KEYNOTE. Andrew Hoffman (Holcim Professor, U. of Michigan)
- 11 am-12.30 pm : SESSION 1 : Sustainability Institutions
- Engineering Environmental Sustainability and Social Liminality: The Redevelopment of Martin, Kentucky. S.E. McComas (Bowling Green State U. – Firelands).
- Information-Centric Green Infrastructure Planning to Reduce Climate Change Impacts: The Climate Impacts Vulnerability Index as Smart-Urbanism. S. Molnar (U. of Michigan).
- 12.30-1.30 pm : Lunch (provided for presenters ONLY)
- 1.30-3 pm : SESSION 2 : Sustainability Processes
- Fostering Institutional Connections at “WaterNet”: Discursive Tensions of Inter-Organizational Engagement. H. Mitra (Wayne State U.).
- Social Institutions and Seafood Sustainability. C. Harris (Michigan State U.).
- 3-3.15 pm : Coffee break
- 3.15-4.45 pm : SESSION 3 : Interactive/Poster Session (See other side)
- 4.45-5 pm : Closing. Alisa Moldavanova (Political Science, WSU)
- 5-6 pm : Reception. McGregor Center, Rm. J.

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:: KEYNOTE ::

Andrew Hoffman is the Holcim (US) Professor of Sustainable Enterprise at the University of Michigan, with joint appointments at the Ross School of Business and the School of Natural Resources & Environment. He also serves as Education Director of the Graham Sustainability Institute. Professor Hoffman’s research uses a sociological perspective to understand the cultural and institutional aspects of environmental issues for organizations. He focuses on the processes by which environmental issues both emerge and evolve as social, political and managerial issues. He has written about the evolving nature of field-level pressures related to environmental issues; the corporate responses that have emerged as a result of these pressures; the interconnected networks among nongovernmental organizations and corporations, and how those networks influence change processes; the social and psychological barriers to these change processes; and the underlying cultural values that are engaged when these barriers are overcome.

Professor Hoffman’s talk is at 9.30-11 am at the Undergraduate Library Community Rm. (3rd Flr.)

TWEET TO US AT #SSF15

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SESSION 3:
LIST OF INTERACTIVE/POSTER PRESENTATIONS
3.15-4.45 pm

- Small Steps, Big Shifts: Belle Isle Aquarium’s Path to Organizational Sustainability. A. Moldovanova (Wayne State U.), J. Ram (Wayne State U.), & J. Gonzalez (Consumnes River College).
- Joining the conversation: A critical analysis of companies’ public communication about sustainability efforts. L. Chewning (Penn State U. Abington).

:: WHAT THIS SYMPOSIUM IS ABOUT ::

Ongoing environmental and social changes, such as climate change, population shifts, and globalization, highlight the question of sustainability—in terms of how communities may develop their human and natural resources, while ensuring long-term viability. This symposium centers on the role of social institutions vis-à-vis sustainable practices, noting their crucial role in setting socioeconomic trends, fostering public engagement, and diffusing innovations.

We define “social institutions” broadly—to include formal organizations that set societal agendas (e.g., governments, corporations, nonprofits, media, community groups), and institutionalized best practices of the contemporary social order (e.g., governance, due diligence, scientific rigor, risk management).

Research talks at the symposium examine how existing social institutions both restrict and enable the scope of sustainability; how they may be transformed by sustainable practices leading to newer, more adaptable institutions; and how sustainable solutions to specific problems have been facilitated by incorporating social components into their approach.

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All WSU faculty, staff and students are welcome to attend!