

I like to think of “sustainability” as a modern-day social movement. Using what I have learned about sustainability from the textbook, “State and Local Government: Sustainability for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, I would be able to approach sustainability from a social movement perspective in either a State and Local Government course or even in an American National Government course. According to the authors, “sociologists and political scientists who have studied social movements have identified some characteristics associated with social movements that have been successful in the past.”

In order for social movements to succeed, organizers of the movement must be able to:

1. Raise sufficient financial resources to recruit and educate new members and to promote the desired policy outcomes in the general public.
2. Involve people and organizations with prior grassroots experience.
3. Identify emotional issues to motivate people to participate.
4. Use a "micro-mobilization" approach.
5. Work to eliminate crosscutting cleavages.
6. Have a diverse and "co-optable" communications network.
7. Have capable and competent leadership.
8. Have an optimistic expectation.
9. Encourage solidarity instead of free riding.

Students will be expected to answer questions regarding the mobilization of sustainability issues and how they get on a government agenda. They will also be able to evaluate differences between governing bodies in how they manage issues regarding sustainability and those issues not related to sustainability.

Students will be expected to answer the following questions: Is sustainability changing state and local politics? How do these issues arise on the agenda, and how do officials cope with them? Do sustainability policies follow different patterns than other issues? Is there variation among types of sustainability policies? Many suburban communities have small local governments, with few

staff, and part-time elected officials. Does this mean that sustainability issues are handled differently in local communities than in central cities or at other levels of government? This assignment will examine how sustainability policy is managed by municipal governments in the southwest suburbs of Chicago, in Chicago, and in the state of Illinois.

Sustainability issues can be controversial in nature. Provocative and pragmatic issues create extensive debates within the policy arena. The term, *arena*, is defined as a place where policy conflict occurs. These topics generate conflict, because they generally reflect the core beliefs of the individual. Typically, sustainability issues are supported by two passionate and unwavering opponents. Each side contends the “correct” position. This unbridled fervor surrounding value based issues births a sometimes heated, and often heightened discussion than the non-sustainability based issues debated in the political discourse. These debates are now entering the policy making process in suburbs and challenge the decision makers of these communities who have little to no experience in dealing with issues relating to sustainability issues. Therefore, the unique character of sustainability issues provides fertile ground for discussion. The diverse nature of the sustainability policy arena will demonstrate how the decision making process works for the introduction of an issue to the finalization of the issue.

1. Greening Your Curriculum 101
2. Deron T. Schreck, State and Local Government, PSC 115
3. Sustainability and State and Local Governance
4. Describe the major policy outputs and organization of the three branches of state government. Discuss the categories and types of local political systems and how the various sections of society influence the local political process. Identify the principle policy issues confronting state and local government.
5. Explain how sustainability relates to state and local government and governance.
6. Critical thinking skills will include a comparison and contrast between local governments, the city of Chicago and the state of Illinois regarding their management of sustainability issues. Students will be able assess the differences between these levels of government. They will also be able to trace the policymaking process from the mobilization stage to the finalization of policy into law.

7. Students will understand how the policymaking process works in their own communities.
8. Students will have to answer questions regarding sustainability policymaking from the mobilization stage to the time the policy becomes law.
9. The assignment will be assessed through an oral presentation as well as by a written group paper.