SDGs OER20

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DR. JENNI HAYMAN: Hello OER20 participants welcome to my seven-minute project about the United Nations sustainable development goals or SDGs as they are called. In this short video, special guests and CC BY YouTube friends will share with you some information about the SDGs and why they might be relevant for post-secondary educators as part of content and assignments, especially in light of the global COVID-19 pandemic that we are all experiencing. These goals and the skills and innovation they may inspire in learners cannot be underestimated. I believe that the landscape of the value of post-secondary education is about to shift. This will likely happen in both good and bad ways for educators, learners, communities, and institutions. Many clear and present needs for human success have been laid bare the past few weeks and most are related in some way to the SDGs. I believe the SDGs and our consideration of them as learning tools for our courses and disciplines is now critical as a focal point for global change through education.

So, what are the sustainable development goals? Established and ratified by members of the United Nations in 2015, the SDGs are a collection of 17 goals including some preliminary targets and indicators that global citizens can consider in personal, regional, national, and international contexts. Information about the goals can be found on United Nations websites. In particular, I encourage you and your learners to click on any given goal and take a look at the targets and indicators for each goal. These read almost like outcomes that learners can use to explore the SDGs in their local context. For example, if I click on good health and well-being, it takes me to a background page that talks about the progress and information for the goal and, more importantly, if I click on targets and indicators, it shows me some of the things that nations are using as their targets and indicators, and these are things that the students can really explore in-depth with local community organizations.

JOSEPH STIGLITZ: I think the sustainable development goals, they're important as norm-setting, setting standards to which everybody should aspire, to which everybody should adhere. These sustainable development goals in some ways are even more important because they apply not just to developing countries but to the developed countries. One of the important points of the SDGs is to say, no there's a much broader agenda out there, GDP is not an end in itself, it's a means to an end. The idea that there being so many goals and so many targets has been criticized because it detracts from a sense of focus. I'm not so concerned. The SDGs are meant not just for governments, very clearly, they're meant for our society as a whole.

CANDY HO: There's something magical about the United Nations sustainable development goals and it's a natural fit with looking at career development. In my career development course right now, I get students to think about what problems they wish to solve in the world through the talents, strengths, and skills. So, the United Nations sustainable development goals are just a beautiful fit with the course.

PAMELA IP: And for me, I wanted to move away from disposable assignments. So, these assignments that students perform for a course objective. They do it once and that's it they never touch it again. So, by creating a renewable assignment, they're able to throughout the semester in a team work on something that they can maybe use in future courses or future jobs or maybe something that enhances future classes. And also, so much of marketing is about consumption, and there's a lot of negativity around that and I wanted to, hopefully bring something that was sustainable, something that was very positive toward creating some future business leaders.

SHELLEY STRAIN: My name is Shelley Strain and I'm a part-time faculty in the Ecosystem Management program and I teach a course called Sustainability at Work. I'm also a full-time Sustainability Coordinator at Trent University.

RACHEL STEPHENS: My name is Rachel Stephens, I'm a student in the Ecosystem Management Technology program here at Fleming College Frost campus and I'm a student in Shelley's class.

SHELLEY STRAIN: So, the assignment that we did was I provided groups of students with just printed tiles of the SDGs and really without context asked them to work together as a group to prioritize them. So the idea being if you could only do one SDG, if you could only make that one

happen which one would you choose and why.

RACHEL STEPHENS: Depending on the group that you were separated into we had things such as like clean water and sanitation being the most important to education to hunger and then kind of how they all follow through with each other. As well as the SDGs have been put in almost every assignment so it's just a way to almost critically examine how companies, organizations, people in general are using the SDGs and how they're promoting sustainability. So, it's been really interesting to even see kind of the difference between people, organizations, and what is being incorporated.

JESS O’REILLY: Hi I'm Jess O'Reilly and I teach Critical Thinking and Truth and Reconciliation courses at Cambrian College in Sudbury, Ontario. So, in my critical thinking course one of the major end projects asked students to solve a problem. I spoke to the professor who taught the

course last and she asked students to tackle big problems like ending poverty. And I thought if I was a student enrolled in a general education college course would I feel like that's even a possible problem for me to tackle in a few short weeks in one course? So, I started to do some research and I learned about UNESCO's 17 sustainable development goals, and I thought they would offer a really excellent anchoring point for students because they lay out the goals, the specific targets, and also actions that have been taking place globally to reach those targets. So, I designed my final capstone project to invite students to pick one of the goals, research what that goal looked like on a more global scale, and then do some local research to pull in the efforts that individuals or local agencies have been contributing to this larger global goal. So, they made the connection between the local and the international in really meaningful and contextual ways. So, students were invited to submit their final assignments as blog posts to a public-facing website and that website has been receiving some really great traffic since that time. Other faculty at my institution have adopted a similar project, their students are contributing to the website as well and so we've created this collection that really celebrates the 17 global goals but connects it to the activities that are happening in our local communities, and I think that's a really powerful takeaway for students in a course like critical thinking.

JENNIFER HARDWICK: I'm Jennifer Hardwick and I teach in the Department of English at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in British Columbia, Canada. Using the UN SDGs in my classes has helped my students feel like their research is part of something bigger and broader and that they're producing work that is not just for me but for a larger community. It encourages them to think of themselves as problem solvers, and as socially and globally engaged citizens, and to think critically about the narratives that we hear about development, and about progress, and about globalization, and about culture in really meaningful and important ways. I am a strong advocate for using the UN SDGs to teach and for using them as a framework for research and really important dialogues and critical thinking.

DR. JENNI HAYMAN: Hopefully you can see where I'm headed with the idea of using the SDGs in post-secondary contexts as a means of learner choice and engagement, every learner I have worked with in my courses and workshops has been so excited about the personal and relevant possibilities of choosing a goal or goals and figuring out how to apply the theory side of their course to the real world needs the goal represents. It's just as fun to ask learners what's missing in the goals as it is for them to choose one that has been defined. The learner-centered exploration is nearly limitless. There are several links for us to connect included in the YouTube description for this video and I look forward to connecting with you.

DANIELLE PROVENCHER: Number one No Poverty.

JESS O’REILLY: Goal two, Zero Hunger.

SARAH WENDORF: Number three Good Health and Well-being,

ALISON FRAUTS: Number four Quality Education.

DANIELLE PROVENCHER: Number five Gender Equality.

JESS O’REILLY: Goal six Clean Water and Sanitation.

SARAH WENDORF: Number seven Affordable and Clean Energy.

ALISON FRAUTS: Number eight Decent work and Economic Work Growth.

DANIELLE PROVENCHER: Number nine Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure.

JESS O’REILLY: Goal ten Reduced Inequalities.

SARAH WENDORF: Number eleven Sustainable Cities and Communities.

ALISON FRAUTS: Number twelve Responsible Consumption and Production.

DANIELLE PROVENCHER: Thirteen Climate Action.

JESS O’REILLY: Goal 14 Life Below Water.

SARAH WENDORF: Number fifteen Life on Land.

ALISON FRAUTS: Number sixteen Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

DANIELLE PROVENCHER: Number seventeen Partnerships for the Goals.

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