

Title: Identity and Sustainability Engagement

Host: Jonathon Schuldt

Date: October 19, 2015, 12:00-1:00 pm

Abstract: In this age of social media, people appear to wear their identities on their sleeves—from Facebook to live tweeting during presidential debates, we have grown accustomed to making our various social, cultural, and political identities clear. But how are these identities related to our engagement with environmental and sustainability issues? Perspectives from across the social sciences and humanities suggest that individuals' engagement on sustainability issues is shaped in part by a motivation to express core aspects of one's identity and to signal a connection to meaningful social groups. What are the different ways that climate and sustainability scholars conceptualize identity, and how can the concept be used to better understand and promote engagement with sustainability issues across diverse social groups? This topical lunch aims to bring together scholars from different disciplines to advance the conversation about the role of identity factors in sustainability engagement and to identify key areas ripe for further inquiry.