Please complete the project summary and return the completed form to April Snyder, Associate Administrator for the Institute on the Environment at aprilsnyder@umn.edu. Paper copies will not be accepted. Please also attach any photos, publications, brochures, event agendas or other materials that were a result of the mini grant summary.

**Date of Report Submission:** April 30, 2015  
**Project PI & Dept/School:** Jeannine Cavender-Bares/CBS/EEB  
**Project Title:** Distributed Graduate Seminar in Sustainability Science  
**Grant Amount $:** $2,000

**Project Context & Purpose**

*Please include the original project purpose statement and revise for any changes that occurred in the project after the start date with a short explanation of the changes.*

We teach a distributed graduate seminar in Sustainability Science from IonE across four institutions across three countries in the Americas (US: UMN, ASU; Mexico: UNAM; Brazil: USP).

This course is a research seminar on core ideas in sustainability science -- an emerging field of problem-driven research dealing with the interactions between human and environmental systems. The problem that motivates the course, and the field, is the challenge of sustainability: improving the well-being of present and future generations in ways that conserve the planet’s life support systems over the long term. The goal of the seminar is to introduce researchers interested in sustainability science to the field’s principle themes, cutting-edge findings, active debates and unresolved research questions. To this end, participants critically discuss a set of presentations and papers covering the field in a systematic way, drawing on and integrating contemporary research from earth systems science, resource economics, institutional analysis, ecology, geography, development studies, health sciences, engineering, and other disciplines.

The motivation for the seminar is the need to integrate the various communities working on sustainability science. The fragmentation of those communities, by discipline, by institution, by applications focus, is a major impediment to the growth and maturation of the field. In response, we are experimenting with this distributed, interdisciplinary graduate seminar on sustainability science. The goal of this seminar is to bring together faculty and graduate students from different countries, cultures, universities, and disciplinary backgrounds, to discuss key concepts, findings and controversies in the field.

**Work Completed**

*Please provide a summary of the work that was completed for the mini grant project.*

We have nearly completed the fourth instantiation of the course. As part of this, we published a special feature in Ecology and Society on Ecosystem service trade-offs across global contexts and scales.  
Partnerships & Collaborations

Please provide a summary of the project personnel, partnerships and collaborations that worked directly on the project or were started as a direct result of the mini grant project.

AJ Lange was supported as a video technician on the project. We also used funds to help support the publication charges for the special feature.
Project Outcomes & Impacts

Please provide a summary of the outcomes and/or impacts of the mini grant project including future plans for the project.

The course has been well-publicized and has reached over two hundred students across the Americas in the US, Mexico and Brazil.

http://environment.umn.edu/ione-resident-fellow/a-course-of-a-different-color/

https://groups.nceas.ucsb.edu/sustainability-science

https://sites.google.com/a/umn.edu/sustainabilitysciencedgs/lectures

It was the subject of an NSF mini-symposium published on the web.

As mentioned above, it has lead to a series of publications from the Special Feature in Ecology and Society.

We are currently working to make the course publically available and to present this at the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) conference in Minneapolis in October 2015.

https://ww5.aievolution.com/ash1501/.