Paper I: Sustainability

This paper is due October 16, 2008.

First, read some background information:

- Read the article “Easter’s End” by Jared Diamond.

- Research the island of Nauru (not just its physical characteristics, but its history over the past century). Use the web to find one or two reputable resources that describe what has happened to the island and why. (Record these resources and include them as references in your paper.)

- Read the article by Martin Payne, “Peak oil: Why is it so difficult to explain/understand?”.

- Read the article by Jeroen van der Veer, Chief Executive of Royal Dutch Shell, “Two Energy Futures”.

Now write a 2-3 page paper that addresses the following:

- Briefly summarize the fundamental problems experienced by the way the inhabitants of Easter Island and Navu lived on their islands. Are there any applications to our lives in the 21st Century?

- Given the fact that there is only so much oil on the Earth, and that it is not forming any more, briefly summarize the issues with oil described by Payne.

- Now, in light of the above, consider the two scenarios described by van der Veer. Which do you think the world should take regarding future oil usage? Which do you think it is most likely to take? What do you think it will take to help the world toward the scenario you prefer?

In your paper you should reference the articles you used (in a normal, APA-type format), and give the information on the articles and other sources of information in a bibliography at the end of the paper. (The bibliography is not a part of the length of the paper.)

You will be graded on the basis of the depth of understanding displayed in your responses to the points above, and on the mechanics of the paper (i.e. grammar, references, spelling, etc). Late papers will lose 10% off the starting point for the grade for each week that they are late. Remember that you need to achieve an average of 70% for the three papers in order to pass the class.