

International Sustainable Development (UNIV 304) – 5 credits

Summer 2018

A course developed in partnership between
Central Washington University and Growth International Volunteer Excursions (GIVE)

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Available by telephone or Skype by appointment

If instructor cannot be reached, please contact ce@cwu.edu for assistance.

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce students to the basic principles of international sustainable development by integrating academic instruction with experiential learning through volunteer excursions in Laos, Nepal, Nicaragua, Tanzania, and Thailand. Through recorded lectures, assigned readings, class discussions both online and in the field, and volunteering on actual sustainable development projects, students will explore the concept and practice of international sustainable development; evaluate impacts and opportunities with international sustainable development projects; and utilize opportunities for personal growth and professional development through cultural immersion in the communities they serve.

Course Objectives: By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify sustainable development imperatives in relation to cultural, environmental, and economic frameworks.
2. Analyze and evaluate challenges and opportunities associated with sustainable projects in the context of the destination community.
3. Synthesize how limited resources and multiple impacts are experienced and reconciled at the community level.
4. Describe the personal impacts of international experiential learning and how they affect future career path decisions and life goals.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Textbook:

Jeremy L. Caradonna, *Sustainability: A History*, Oxford University Press (2014).

Additional readings are assigned. All additional readings are posted in Canvas.

Students are expected to fully participate in the class by reading the assigned material; listening to recorded lectures; completing short writing assignments; and participating in the class discussions on the Discussions page. Details of each component are listed below:

1. Reading Assignments: Two or three readings will be assigned for each module. Additional research may be needed to complete each module's assignments.
2. Recorded Lectures: Recorded lectures and other information designed to help you better understand the course material will be posted in Canvas.
3. Group Discussions (50 pts total): For specific topics in each module, a discussion prompt will be posted on the Discussion page and students are required to participate in the discussion by responding to the prompt and then replying to at least two classmates. The response to the prompt is worth up to six (6) points and

the replies to at least two (2) classmates will be given two (2) points each. The maximum number of points available for each week's discussion is 10 points. Please see Guidelines for Group Discussions given below for further details.

4. Participation (25 pts): Students will receive points for participating in guide-led activities and discussions while in the field.
5. Pre-Trip Paper (30 pts): Students will write a 5-7 page paper exploring the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development and one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals in relation to their chosen field or academic discipline as preparation for the Capstone Project.
6. Reflective Paper (30 pts): Students will write a 5-7 page paper reflecting on what they learned through the class and the GIVE excursion.
7. Capstone Project (30 pts): Each student will complete a capstone project that allows them to incorporate what they learned about sustainable development into their academic field of study and/or future career. Possible projects include but are not limited to: a research paper on sustainable development they will complete under the supervision of a faculty member or adviser at their home university; or a presentation that educates people about the need for sustainable development and how they can incorporate sustainable development practices into their everyday lives.

To fulfill the requirements for this class, students only need to submit a 3-5 page synopsis of their project. The projects themselves will be completed under the guidance of a faculty member or adviser at their home university in order to ensure that their project meets their own major/minor requirements.

Evaluation and Grading: Total possible points equal 165 points. Final grades will be determined by taking a percentage of the total points. The breakdown is as follows:

A = 93-100%	B+ = 88-89%	B-= 80-82%	C = 73-77%	D<69%
A-= 90- 92%	B = 83 -87%	C+ = 78-79%	C-= 70-72%	F <59%

Disability Support: Central Washington University is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning, discuss your concerns with the instructor. Students with disabilities should contact Disability Services to discuss a range of options to removing barriers, including accommodations. Student Disability Services is located in Hogue 126. Call (509) 963-2214 or email ds@cwu.edu for more information.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Honesty and Integrity: Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity both for themselves and for their classmates. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, falsifying or inventing information, or interfering with another student's efforts to complete the assignments or exams will not be tolerated. Students will be penalized for academic dishonesty according to university guidelines and can typically result in the following penalties: no credit or failure for the assignment, reduced grade or failure for the course, academic warning, academic probation, suspension from the university, and permanent dismissal from the university. Instances of academic dishonesty in this class will automatically result in a failing grade for the course and further action, as warranted, by the university.

Class Etiquette and Civility: Students are expected to engage with each other and the instructor in a civil and respectful manner. Please review the section “Rules of Etiquette” under Discussion Guidelines for further details.

Due Dates and Late Assignments: Departure dates vary for each student. In addition, students can complete the assignments at their own pace. To the extent possible, the instructor will monitor departure dates, however students are responsible for ensuring that their work is submitted in a timely manner. If students need additional time to complete assignments, they must contact the instructor for written permission to turn the assignments late. Any missed assignments will receive a zero (0) for its grade and will be included in the final grade.

Changes to Syllabus: The instructor retains the right to change the syllabus in any way, for example, due dates for assignments, and will provide sufficient notice to allow students to plan for such changes.

Schedule

Modules 1-4 to be completed prior to student’s departure for the GIVE trip

MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Readings:

Jeremy L. Caradonna, *Sustainability: A History*, Chapters 1-4.

Jonathan M. Harris, “Basic Principles of Sustainable Development,” (Posted in Canvas.)

Robert W. Kates, Thomas M. Parris, and Anthony A. Leiserowitz, “What is Sustainable Development? Goals, Indicators, Values, and Practice,” (Posted in Canvas.)

UNDP, “Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All,” Human Development Report 2011. (Posted in Canvas.)

Assignment: participate in an online discussion

MODULE 2: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ACTION AND POLICY

Readings:

Jeremy L. Caradonna, *Sustainability: A History*. Chapters 5-6

Jeffrey D. Sachs, “From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals” (Posted in Canvas.)

United Nations, “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (Posted in Canvas.)

Assignment: participate in an online discussion

MODULE 3: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Readings:

Jeremy L. Caradonna, “The Future: 10 Challenges of Sustainability,” *Sustainability: A History*.

Stakeholder Forum, “Universal Sustainable Development Goals: Understanding the Transformational Challenge for Development Countries,” May 2015. (Posted in Canvas.)

Assignment: participate in an online discussion.

MODULE 4: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MY DESTINATION COUNTRY

(Laos, Nepal, Nicaragua, Tanzania, and Thailand)

Readings:

Common resources for all destinations as well as country-specific readings are posted in Canvas.

Assignments:

- Participate in an online discussion
- Write a 5-7 page paper discussing the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development and one or more Sustainable Development Goals as they relate to subjects in your academic discipline or field of interest.

Modules 1-4 to be completed prior to student's departure for the GIVE trip

MODULE 5: WHAT CAN I DO NOW? INCORPORATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INTO MY CAREER AND PERSONAL LIFE

Assignment:

- Participation in online discussion;
- Write a 5-7 page paper reflecting on what you learned and your experiences while volunteering; and
- Completion of capstone project

Module 5 to be completed within three (3) weeks after return

Discussion Guidelines

General Points: Online discussions will be an integral part of this class in order to allow you to gain both a broader and deeper understanding of sustainability and sustainable development. The online discussions also allow you to learn together as you think “out loud” on the topics and learn how to apply what you have learned to “real-life” scenarios. The field of sustainable development is relatively new so the approaches to understanding sustainable development and the politics surrounding the implementation and practices of actual sustainable development projects are often controversial, as many well-educated and intelligent persons continue to disagree about how to explain, describe, or answer the questions raised by academic inquiry and analysis. In order to provide a safe and respectful environment to meaningfully discuss these issues and learn from each other, the following guidelines will serve as a way to allow for meaningful discussion in a respectful manner. I also outline my expectations so that you can earn the maximum number of points for each discussion. Please keep in mind that the discussion posts essentially serve as mini-essay questions that might normally appear on an exam. Please take them seriously and put in sufficient time and effort into doing them well.

Grading Expectations: For selected topics, I will post a discussion prompt on the Discussion page. You are required to meaningfully respond to the instructor’s question(s) contained in the discussion prompt and then meaningfully reply to other students’ responses by the stated deadline. I encourage you to post your response to my discussion prompt by Thursday at midnight to ensure that a meaningful discussion can occur with plenty of opportunities for students to reply to each other rather than everybody waiting until the last minute.

The first response will be worth up to 6 points and each additional response will be worth up to 2 points each for a maximum of 10 points each week. Students are encouraged to build and maintain a dialogue thus multiple posts are strongly encouraged. However, students will be graded on the first three responses only (the response to the question(s) and the two replies to other students’ posts).

What does it mean to meaningfully respond? At the bare minimum, students need to show that they have read the relevant assignments and are actually responding to the question(s). This means that students need to reference the reading material assigned by summarizing the author’s argument and the evidence used to support the argument. In addition, students are expected to engage the actual question(s) posed by the instructor and not the general subject matter raised by the question.

To allow enough time for a meaningful discussion and for your classmates the opportunity to reply to your post, please post your response as early as possible. Please do not wait until the last minute to do your first post of the discussion. The varying departure dates could mean that only a few students are participating in the discussions at any one time. Consequently, the instructor will be an active participant in the discussion to ensure the discussion remains a meaningful learning opportunity for students.

Topic/Selection Choice: I have chosen source material that represent the best available research on the subject. The relevant author(s) has gathered data using methods that conform to the professional standards used within the social sciences, analyzed the data, and have drawn their conclusions based on the data. Some discussions may be based on points raised in a movie. Each movie is carefully screened in the same manner and chosen because they reflect the best available research on the subject and/or is the best available to teach and/or explain a particular sociological point. Quite simply, the authors or movie producers are not just giving their opinions. That said, you are certainly free to disagree with their conclusions and offer an alternative perspective. However, in formulating your response, you also must support your point with evidence. I am not expecting expert knowledge but please make an effort to educate yourself on the subject.

For the topics discussed in this class, I would encourage you to spend some time reading news websites such as the New York Times, Washington Post, the Seattle Times, and other credible sources. For our purposes here, “credible” can be measured by whether or not the reporter is fairly and relatively accurately describing all sides of the issue; is not obviously taking a side on the issue; and supports his/her statements with research gathered in credible methods, such as surveys and other statistical data or interviews with scholars, policymakers, and other researchers.

Rules of Etiquette: At all times, students are expected to engage with each other in a civil and respectful manner. To do so, students are asked to do the following:

1. Provide any background information that is necessary to illustrate/support your point. Don't assume that everybody in the class will automatically know what you are talking about.
2. Identify your sources for material not covered in the textbook, supplemental readings, or movies (i.e. my father taught me, I learned in my high school social studies class, I read in the New York Times the other day, etc.).
3. Do not allow the strength of your convictions betray you into making statements or allegations that are unfair or false. Spend considerable amount of time and effort to make sure you are using credible fact-based research.
4. Respect the different perspectives and cultures that each person brings to the class and discussions. Always assume that the other person has spent the same amount of time developing and formulating their point of view as you have for yours.
5. Listen carefully to what is being said and respond accordingly: respond to what is actually said, not what you think is the hidden meaning. Ask the speaker to clarify his or her point if you do not understand it.
6. Engage the substance of the argument, not the politics that may or may not be behind the argument. Some subjects raised in this class are inherently political; however, this is NOT the place to take a political stance on candidates and/or issues. Instead, students should be prepared to step back and use a sociological perspective to critically assess why issues are hot-button issues and why people take the stances they do.
7. Take advantage of hearing different perspectives and points of view to evaluate your own perspective. This does not mean you need to change your mind on a particular subject, but instead, remain alert to the possibility that new evidence and knowledge will prompt you to evaluate and/or change your perspective.