

IFS2012 Sustainable Society (Fall 2017)

Credit hours: 3

Class meet:

Tu, Th 9:30-10:45 am (*class may end late on days of field work*, refer to the course schedule)
HSF 2009 (unless stated otherwise, refer to the course schedule)

Office hour: Tu 2-4 pm, or by appointment

Instructor

Dr. Tingting Zhao, Associate Professor, Department of Geography
Bellamy 304
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Course Description

In this course, we are working to equip with knowledge, skills, and critical thinking to tackle real-world sustainability issues that are complex and, in many cases, conflicting between environment protection, economic development, and social equity. Students are expected to:

- Be engaged in critical thinking about sustainability of human society and environment through lectures, discussions, field studies, and scientific writing.
- Examine and evaluate key components related to people's everyday life, with emphases on food/agriculture, energy, and pollution/waste etc.
- Observe and inquire about sustainable practices through field studies that involves survey data collection and analyses.
- Explore sustainability issues from various aspects of producers, consumers, public service, scholars, and policy makers.
- Work independently as well as in groups to investigate and explain challenges to sustainability using qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Course Objectives

Students shall be able to:

- 1) analyze and evaluate issues associated with sustainability from both environmental and human perspectives.
- 2) identify conflicting assumptions regarding sustainability by different individuals or groups, acknowledge these conflicts, and communicate effectively across borders.
- 3) employ creative thinking to device sustainability strategies that are novel, comprehensive, and addressing contradictory perspectives.
- 4) evaluate alternative approaches to a sustainability issue through reasoning and scenario analysis, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches.
- 5) work independently as well as in teams to solve problems associated with sustainability.
- 6) transfer the knowledge, skills, creative thinking, effective communication, and cooperative problem solving approaches to real-world sustainability issues in lifelong time.

Liberal Studies Competencies for E-Series

Students become competent interdisciplinary, analytical, and flexible thinkers and lifelong learners. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Describe the major questions or problems in the course using various intellectual perspectives.
2. Discuss or demonstrate the relevance of ideas or findings from the course.

3. Communicate arguments central to the course using clear, coherent prose that utilizes the conventions of standard American English.
4. Discuss relevant ideas from the course using sources from a variety of text types.

Liberal Studies Competencies for Social Science

Students become critical analyzers of theories and evidence about social forces and social experience. By the end of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Discuss the role of social factors in contemporary problems or personal experiences.
2. Analyze claims about social phenomena.

Required Textbook

Withgott & Laposata. 2015. *Essential Environment: The Science Behind the Stories* (Subscription), 5th Edition. ISBN-13: 9780321976864

OR

Withgott & Laposata. 2015. *Essential Environment: The Science Behind the Stories, Books a la Carte Edition*, 5th Edition. ISBN-13: 9780321976505

Creswell, J. W., 2009. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches, 3rd Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. (on Strozier Library course reservation)

Fink, A., 2003. *How to manage, analyze and interpret survey data, 2nd Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA; London: SAGE. (on Blackboard course website)

Electronic Materials

Class announcements, lecture notes, some of the reading materials, writing assignments, and grades will be posted on Blackboard course site.

Grading

You will be graded based on combined performance of two exams (20% each) and a term project. The term project comprises an essay of literature review (which includes writing, critique, and revision), a survey study for data collection and analysis, and a written report. Approximately 40% of the course grade is based on writing*. Approximately 20% of the course grade is based on team work.

Grade weights:

Exams	40
Essay*	
Writing	10
Revision	5
Essay Critique*	10
Survey Study (team work)	
Question design	5
Data collection	5
Data synthesis/analysis	5
Oral report	5
Written report*	15

Grading scale:

A (≥95%)	A- (90-94%)	B+ (87-89%)	B (84-86%)
B- (80-83%)	C+ (77-79%)	C (74-76%)	C- (70-73%)
D+ (67-69%)	D (64-66%)	D- (60-63%)	F (<60%)

Minimum-Grade Policy Statement

To demonstrate college-level writing competency as required by the State of Florida, the student must earn a “C-” or higher in the course, and earn at least a “C-” average on the required writing assignments. If the student does not earn a “C-” average or better on the required writing assignments, the student will not earn an overall grade of “C-” or better in the course, no matter how well the student performs in the remaining portion of the course.

Course Policies

Attendance is required throughout the semester. Absences due to your outside work schedule, extended job interviews, routine family or spousal responsibilities, and/or vacations are not excused absences. If an unplanned absence occurs, you will need to bring verification of your absence (a note from a physician or the Health Center, jury duty notification form, etc) in order to 1) reclaim a lost attendance or 2) request an exam makeup.

The Director of Student Health Services does not issue excuses to students. A card indicating date and time of admission, discharge or treatment will be given to the student for presentation to the faculty member in a timely manner. Ultimately, the authority for deciding whether the student is excused for medical reasons rests with the instructor.

Exam makeup is only permitted for a student when justified by illness, conflicting examinations, four or more examinations in a 24-hour period, or for certain emergencies. **Arrangements must be made prior to the scheduled exam.**

No delay will be accepted for essay, essay critique, or survey study oral report. The online peer evaluation system does not accept delay in essay submission, because it must distribute the collected essays to the entire class (for the essay critique assignment) immediately following the essay submission deadline. You normally have an entire week to work on an essay/essay critique, and several weeks for the survey study. Start as early as possible to avoid negative impacts from unfavorable situation arising close to the submission deadline.

Persistent informal talking and any reading or studying of other materials will not be tolerated during formal lectures.

The instructor reserves the right to direct students to the Division of Student Affairs Dean of Student's for absence verification.

Students are responsible for all missed class materials. The instructor will not provide handouts or notes; you will have to get them from your classmates.

All changes to the course schedule made in class are the responsibility of the student. The class schedule on our Blackboard course site gives the most up-to-date listing of our schedule.

Office appointments will be made only when there is a clear conflict with the student's course schedule. In office appointments, please ask specific questions to show you have attempted to master the material.

Liberal Studies Program E-Series and Social Science Statements

The *Liberal Studies for the 21st Century* Program at Florida State University builds an educational foundation that will enable FSU graduates to thrive both intellectually and materially and to support themselves, their families, and their communities through a broad and critical engagement with the world

in which they live and work. Liberal Studies thus offers a transformative experience.

This course has been approved as meeting the requirements for the *E-Series* and thus is designed to help you become an interdisciplinary and flexible thinker, a lifelong learner, and a team builder. In addition, this course has been approved for the Liberal Studies disciplinary requirement of *Social Sciences* and thus is designed to help you become a critical appraiser of the theories of the social sciences and the facts that support them.

University Attendance Policy

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy>.)

Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

Syllabus Change Policy

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

Schedule
(subject to change)

Week	Date	Topic	Readings¹	Notes
1	8/29, 31	Course introduction; Sustainability	Withgott chpt. 1,5	
2	9/5,7	Earth as a living system Ecosystem	Withgott chpt. 2	
3	9/12,14	Biodiversity	Withgott chpt. 3,4	
4	9/19,21	Agriculture & food	Withgott chpt. 7	
5	9/26, 28	Guest presentation -- Leon County Office of Sustainability Exam 1 (wk1-4)		
6	10/3,5	Nonrenewable Energy Energy conservation	Withgott chpt. 15	
7	10/10,12	Renewable Energy	Withgott chpt. 16	
8	10/17,19	Air pollution Water resources & pollution	Withgott chpt. 13,12	
9	10/24, 26	Guest presentation -- Campus Sustainability Exam 2 (wk6-8)		
10	10/31,11/2	Survey research methods Library resources (G)	Creswell page 49-61, 116-120, 132-137 Creswell chpt. 2	Topic of your term project due (Th)
11	11/7,9	Quantitative data analysis (We'll meet at <i>Dirac Library Instruction Lab Room 208</i>)	Creswell chpt. 8	Essay due (Th)
12	11/14,16	Term project design & data collection (possible field work)	Fink chpt. 1	Essay critique due (Th)
13	11/21	Term project design & data collection (if needed; possible field work)	Fink chpt. 2	Essay revision due (Tu)
14	11/28,30	Term project data analysis (We'll meet at <i>Dirac Library Instruction Lab Room 208</i>)	Fink chpt. 3,4	
15	12/5,7	Term project presentation ; Course summary & evaluation		
16		Term project written report due by 5 pm on Thursday, Dec 14		

¹ Finish reading by Tuesday of the assigned week