



**Sustainable Community Development
FYC 6302, Section 1950 – Spring 2018**

Instructor: Mickie Swisher
e-mail: MESW@ufl.edu
Phone: 352-273-3538
Room: 3026 McCarty Hall D

Consultation Policy: Office hours are Monday and Tuesday, 2:00 – 5:00 PM, but I will meet with you any time that I am free. You can make an appointment by e-mail. I try to respond quickly to e-mails. Please do contact me at any time that you have a question or just want to discuss something.

Classroom Use of Electronics (Phone, Computer). Turn off your phone and put it away while in class. Bring your computer to class, but use it only during classroom activities where you need to use the computer to consult materials that you prepared for class. Do not have your computer open except in those periods when you are actively using it for a classroom activity. For example, it is acceptable to have the computer open and active if you are using it to refer to key points that you want to make during one of the brief presentations you will make during this class. ***Otherwise, keep the computer closed.***

Course Description: This course examines the current status of sustainable community development research, knowledge and practice. Students are encouraged to critically examine the underlying premises and goals of sustainable community development. Participants will explore different approaches to development for sustainability including socio-ecological systems, natural step or social evolutionary theory, planetary boundaries or resource limitation, ecological economics, and socio-environmental perspectives. Students will complete three analytic assignments in which they explore aspects of sustainable community development of specific interest to them.

Course Goal: Students will be able to conduct science-based research to support sustainable community development, articulate scientific perspectives and recommendations for sustainable community development, and provide leadership for community-based programs focused on sustainable development.

Course Objectives: After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Understand how four critical anthropic processes affect social, biological and economic systems globally
- Analyze how key functions such as food, water and energy availability depend upon and are affected by these global processes at the local (community) level
- Recognize the distinct and often contradictory premises that underlie contemporary research, policy, public discourse and practice of sustainability
- Appraise how these differences in premises lead to different approaches to creating sustainable solutions to problems, issues and need in local communities

Class Schedule

See the course web site for a weekly guide to our class. Click on the topics listed in the table at the course website to see what you need to do for class each week. The web pages for each week include

the required readings and any specific instructions for class preparation. The table also provides a link to a detailed description of each assignment and indicates when it is due. The table below provides a general schedule of topics and readings, but is subject to revision during the course.

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC	DUE
1	Jan. 09	Sustainable Development: A Disputed Concept	
2	Jan. 16	Driving Forces: Population Growth & Urbanization	
3	Jan. 23	Driving Forces: Globalization and Technology	
4	Jan. 30	The Anthropocene	
5	Feb. 06	Challenges to Sustainability: Climate Change, Energy & Resource Depletion	Assignment 1: Argumentative Analysis
6	Feb.13	Challenges to Sustainability: Water, Food, Agriculture	
7	Feb. 20	Challenges to Sustainability: Biodiversity, Conservation, Environmental Quality	
8	Feb. 27	Challenges to Sustainability: Social Inequality, Poverty & War	
9	Mar. 06	Spring Break – Class Dismissed	
10	Mar. 13	Complexity & Complex Systems	Assignment 2: Concept Map
11	Mar. 20	Presentations of Concept Maps	
12	Mar. 27	Building Sustainability: Ecological Frameworks	
13	Apr. 03	Building Sustainability: Economic Frameworks	
14	Apr. 10	Building Sustainability: Social Frameworks	
15	Apr. 17	Building Sustainability: Technological Frameworks	Annotated Bibliography
16	Apr. 24	Presentations & Closing Discussions	Assignment 3: Policy Brief

Approach and Expectations

I base most of my assessment of your performance in this course on how well you can apply the concepts that we examine in the course readings in your assignments and class activities. I expect you to develop and demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills. I also base my evaluation of your performance on the degree to which you provide evidence that you have taken responsibility for your own learning experience and that you are actively seeking out additional resources beyond assigned materials to make the learning experience as meaningful as possible. This includes your exploration of the literature about facets of sustainability that are important to you.

Grading Philosophy and Policy

I award grades not to punish poor performance, but rather to help you understand and master the material we are covering. My goal is for every student to earn an A in this course. I expect to see increased comprehension and dominance of the concepts and ideas that we discuss during the course. Most of us learn more effectively when we can discuss our ideas with others. I encourage you to

engage in collaborative learning. I think you will find it very helpful to share your work with other students to get their input and comments. In order to facilitate this kind of collaboration, we will rely heavily on discussions where you can exchange ideas and resources. I encourage you to develop working partnerships and extend this collaboration outside planned class activities.

Give-A-Gator Points

Give-A-Gator Points provide you with an opportunity to recognize individuals in this class who enriched your learning experience. Please be fair and take this seriously. Only award Give-A-Gator Points if someone really did help you understand and learn in this class. This is **NOT** for your best buddy or the nicest person in the class or someone you just really like or admire. The objective is to give a little “pay back” to someone who was important to your mastery of materials in this class and improved your learning process. You do not have to award any points – this is **not** a required element in this class. If you want to award points, you may award a **total of 50 points**. You may award points **to as many as three people** as long as you do not award more than the 50 total points. Please do not award “half points.” E.g., I might award 15, 17 and 18 points to three colleagues, but not 15, 17.5 and 17.5. Submit the points under Give-A-Gator listed as an assignment in Canvas. Submit as a comment, not a Word document. Write **ONLY** the last name of the person and the number of points to award. For example I might submit Cavallos 20, Padyal 15, Harrington 15. This assignment will open on April 10, 2018 and you must submit your Give-A-Gator Points by 11:59 PM on April 24.

Grading

I will not accept assignments submitted after the due date and I will award zero (0) points for the assignment. All due dates are provided at the class web site. ***I list the specific criteria that I will use to grade each assignment at the end of the assignment.*** Consult those criteria and ***complete the assignments based on the specific criteria given.*** I use the following general kinds of criteria in evaluating your performance in this class as a whole.

(1) Ability to apply the concepts learned in class. You must demonstrate that you understand the key concepts and that you can use what you have learned. Concentrate on applying the concepts, not on repeating phrases from our discussions or from the literature.

(2) Evidence that you are searching out and reading additional materials about sustainable development beyond the assigned materials. The assigned readings are a place to **start** your exploration of the literature about sustainable development. I expect you to seek out and read additional material in those areas of interest to you. Track all the literature that you consult, use it to complete assignments, and make sure that you cite the literature. Share good materials with your colleagues.

(3) Evidence that you can critically assess the contemporary research and practice in sustainable community development. Demonstrate that you have explored multiple avenues for addressing problems and that you can identify appropriate criteria for assessing the outcomes of interventions and policy changes.

Grading Scale

A	95 – 100%	A-	90-94%	B-	80-82%
B+	87-89%	B	83-86%	C-	70-72%
C+	77-79%	C	73-76%	D-	60-62%
D+	67-69%	D	63-66%	E	<60%

Distribution of Grade

Component	Points
Class Preparation & Participation	300
Assignment 1: Argumentative Analysis	200
Assignment 2: Concept Map	200
Assignment 3: Policy Brief	200
Annotated Bibliography	100
TOTAL	1000

Class Preparation & Participation (300 Points)

Objectives:

- Ensure that you gain a thorough understanding of key concepts, frameworks, issues and processes of sustainable community development
- Ensure that you can apply the higher cognitive skills associated with critical thinking to your academic and professional work in sustainable community development
- Extend your knowledge beyond the core required materials for this class
- Engage in collaborative learning with other students to improve the quality of the learning experience for all students

In most weeks, I ask you to complete specific preparations for class. These are indicated at the webpage for each week. I usually ask that you post these preparatory materials on Canvas so that we can all share our contributions more quickly and fluidly in class. In these cases, I will review what you post. I also assess preparation based on your demonstration in the classroom of how well you have prepared. I provide the specific kinds of evidence that I look for in the table below. I use these criteria to assess the degree to which your preparation has gone beyond simple “reading for general content” to include higher-level cognitive preparation. The latter provides evidence that you have read material in detail (reading for comprehension, analytic reading, critical reading) and that you have analyzed and synthesized the material. Think about how your area of interest is related to the required readings for each week and demonstrate that you have thought about critical linkages between the different components of a sustainable approach to community development. This is part of critical thinking – your ability to synthesize and see the connections between different concepts and approaches and to bring your own expertise and experience to bear.

I also assess this portion of your grade based on the degree to which you play an active role in class activities, including discussions. Class activities will build upon and extend your competence in each topical area, not cover the basics. My lectures will be limited to covering material or concepts that are **not** covered in the required readings. I will ask you to participate in several kinds of class activities. Many will require your active participation in class discussions. Each of you will probably have different kinds of interests and will explore different aspects of the literature about sustainable community development. I want you to share what you are learning through your individual work with the class.

I grade both preparation and participation on a scale from 1 (poor) through 3 (good), using the criteria listed in the table below. I expect the average level of preparation & participation to satisfy the criteria for a “3”. If you score a “3” on average over the semester, you will receive 300 points total for class preparation and participation.

Score	Grading Criteria for Preparation
0	Fails to submit required preparations
1	Contributions consist mostly of repeating verbatim or paraphrasing information in the readings Contributions do not synthesize key concepts and ideas in the readings for the week (e.g. tends to be an “article by article” analysis rather than a synthesis) Contributions fail to demonstrate that the student has developed his/her own conclusions based on analysis of the concepts or findings in the readings
2	Contributions states the authors’ concepts and ideas in the student’s own words (does not rely on paraphrasing or direct quotes) Contributions synthesize the key ideas and concepts in the readings for the week Contributions include a few of the student’s own conclusions based on analysis of the concepts or findings in the readings, such as critiques of the author’s ideas
3	Contributions consist largely of synthesis of the readings for the week, and draw upon the full range of materials covered at the time of the contribution; e.g., synthesize beyond the readings for the week Contributions challenge and/or extend upon the ideas presented in the required materials, compare and contrast key concepts, and when appropriate present alternative interpretations or conclusions. Student develops his/her own concepts by extrapolating ideas and information beyond the examples or applications covered in course materials and draws attention to other applications or related concepts from other classes
Score	Grading Criteria for Class Participation
0	Absent (no score awarded for class period)
1	Offers responses or contributions to activities primarily when asked, called on, or assigned to a group Participates sporadically, rather than throughout the activity or discussion Provides little or no leadership for group processes in the classroom
2	Consistent, active involvement in all aspects of classroom activities Listens respectfully and responds to other students' points thoughtfully, makes substantive comments, and questions others in a constructive way. Offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion in group work and discussions to stimulate discussion Helps identify goals and formats for group processes and helps keep groups on task during group activities.
3	Consistent, active involvement throughout class activities without dominating the group Plays a leadership role for classroom activities by facilitating group processes, for example, encourages colleagues to participate and is alert to who wants to participate and helps them do so Contributes to group’s understanding of materials by encouraging higher level critical and creative thinking (examples could be suggesting alternative ways of analyzing a reading, summarizing ideas that emerge during discussions, and formulating questions that help the group move from simpler to more complex ideas)

Assignment 1: Argumentative Analysis (200 points)

Objective: Develop your ideas about the roles of population growth, urbanization, technology, and globalization in shaping planetary processes and systems.

Submit this assignment on Canvas under Assignment 1: Argumentative Analysis as a single-spaced Word document. Title the document YourLastName_Argument. All assignments are due when class meets (5:10 PM) on the week indicated.

There are two basic types of analyses, explanatory and argument. An **explanatory analysis** provides a thorough, well-organized discussion of a topic. The purpose of an explanatory analysis is to provide the reader with a good understanding of the range of perspectives, explanations, viewpoints, kinds of research, research results, etc. about a topic. The purpose of the **argumentative analysis**, on the other hand, is for you to present your own point of view, supported by relevant facts published in reliable sources. An argumentative analysis has a thesis that is debatable – that is, someone equally knowledgeable as the writer and using the same information could disagree with the writer’s thesis and other experts could develop different, even opposing theses. In this assignment, you must develop an argumentative analysis. I strongly encourage you to read the material at the Purdue University On-Line Writing Lab (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/05/>). I think you will find this handout very helpful in this assignment.

We have examined a number of perspectives about the role of population growth, urbanization, globalization and technological change on geophysical, biological and social systems. We then explored the idea that the combined effects of all of these processes has become planetary in scope, leading to global dominance of planetary systems and processes and the emergence of a new geologic era, the Anthropocene. While the “start date” and “key event” of the Anthropocene remain hotly debated (see Ruddiman, for example), a majority of geoscientists agree that human activities are having geologically significant impacts on the planet (e.g., impacts that will persist for very long periods of time, even if the activity ends in the very near future). Therefore, for the purposes of this assignment, we will accept the idea of an Anthropocene Era as a valid one.

Your task in this assignment is to develop and support a thesis about the relative importance of population growth, urbanization, technology, or globalization as **the critical driver of the Anthropocene**. Your analysis should clearly argue for a pre-eminent role for **one** of these highly interrelated processes and, more specifically, **identify one or a few aspects** of the phenomenon that are critical to the onset of human planetary transformations. Use the required readings, additional materials, and materials that you find on your own to complete this assignment. Here are the required components for this assignment.

1. State a thesis. A thesis is a clear, unambiguous statement of your position with regard to a topic. The thesis **cannot** be a simple statement like “Population is the key driver of the Anthropocene Era.” It should be a substantive statement that shows that you have examined each of the four processes we have discussed in enough depth to formulate your own ideas about which specific aspects of one of these processes is critical to the onset of the Anthropocene Era. Be specific. For example, my thesis might be that the development of technologies that permitted large-scale transformation of natural systems, such as mechanical land clearing, is the single most important driver of the Anthropocene Era. You may and probably should identify more than one specific impact, but this should not be a compilation of a long list of potential critical impacts. Rather, you need to demonstrate that you have thought carefully about which specific components of a general process like globalization or population growth you think were turning points, key developments that “inaugurated” the Anthropocene. Good

theses have three traits. They are concise, specific, and arguable. *Concise and clear* means the thesis is short and easy to understand. *Specific* means the thesis deals with a narrow and focused argument – as explained, not “population growth” in general but specific aspects, of human population growth. *Arguable* means that someone else with access to the same information you have could disagree with you. E.g., your thesis is not just a statement of generally accepted fact. It is instead a carefully crafted conclusion that you have reached based on (in this course) scientifically accepted evidence.

2. Develop several (more than one or two) arguments to support your thesis. Arguments include **evidence** offered in support of your thesis **and** an explanation of the **logical connections** between the evidence and your thesis. You must draw upon published research reports, research reviews, and analytic pieces to develop the basis of your arguments (evidence and logical linkages). Call on a broad body of evidence that is relevant to your thesis. I really hate to give numbers, but I would suggest that your analysis should be based on a minimum of 20 publications (including the required readings). We are discussing a complex set of phenomena in this course, and when and why the Anthropocene started, or whether it even exists, is subject to great uncertainty and large gaps in our knowledge base. I believe that 20 is the **minimum** number of sources of information and ideas that you can consult and hope to come to a robust thesis that shows sophistication in your thinking. You may well need more than 20. These should include be publications **other than** the required readings for this class. Use APA format for all references. When you refer to or use ideas from a reference in the body of your essay, make sure to cite the source using APA style (requires page number).

3. Identify weaknesses in the body of evidence or train of logic (premises) that could undermine your arguments. The ideas we are discussing in this class rest upon incomplete evidence in almost every case. For example, very reputable scientists disagree about whether the Anthropocene is a very recent phenomena or, on the contrary, whether it started long ago. The evidence is insufficient to establish the time of onset. My thesis that the development of technology that permits large-scale landscape transformation is based on the premise that the Anthropocene is of recent origin. This is a weakness in my argument. Do not be overly critical of your own ideas, but do be honest about the weaknesses. Honesty about the weaknesses in one’s own arguments are a key requirement for “substantive, deliberative civil debate,” and one that is lacking in much of what you have been exposed to for the past several years. People yelling at each other and “talking over” each other does **not** constitute substantive or deliberative civil debate.

4. Identify the strongest counter-arguments to your own and explain why you reject them. You do not have to walk through every possible counter-argument, but be fair in presenting the strongest of the counter-arguments. For example, a strong counter-argument to my thesis is that there is a growing body of evidence that pre-industrial societies in Central and South America produced discernible landscape level changes despite not having mechanical technology of any sort. It seems as though these landscape level changes resulted from repeated small scale landscape changes that created a cumulative “large scale” effect. I owe it to the people who examine my argument to point out that this strong counter-argument to my own conclusions.

5. Develop a 500 word summary of your analysis. Post it to the discussion board for the week of February 06 prior to class. Be prepared to share your summary briefly (10 minutes) in class.

I use a grading rubric for assignments that indicates characteristics of responses that range from excellent to unacceptable. The table immediately below provides the characteristics that I will use to assess the quality of the arguments you present in Assignment 1 – e.g., one component in the grade on the assignment. I give a score poor, satisfactory, or excellent to your responses. I have a rubric like this for every component of every assignment. I do not include all this in the syllabus to conserve room – and to be honest I do not think most students read the detailed versions anyway and that is very

understandable. However, I thought you should see an example of the actual rubric I use for at least one component of this first assignment. In the syllabus, I provide only the standards that you need to meet to receive the full points for each assignment. The criteria listed in the table entitled “**Grading Criteria Assignment 1: Argumentative Analysis**” on the next page are the criteria that you need to meet to receive the full (200) points for this assignment.

Excellent	<p>Several arguments are offered and sequence of arguments is logical so that arguments build on each other in some way (e.g., simple to complex, related points, etc.)</p> <p>One argument is presented in each paragraph and paragraphs are internally well-organized – lead sentence states argument, followed by supporting or explanatory sentences and ending with a concluding or summary sentence</p> <p>Writer provides relevant evidence from the published literature to support each argument and cites the source of the evidence</p> <p>Writer clearly explains how the argument supports the thesis and addresses how the arguments build on key concepts about the Anthropocene, population growth, urbanization, technological development & globalization</p>
Satisfactory	<p>Few arguments are offered and/or sequence of arguments is not always consistent and logical</p> <p>More than one argument is presented in each paragraph and/or the argument being made is not clear or is poorly organized</p> <p>Writer provides relevant evidence from the published literature to support some arguments and cites the source of the evidence, but evidence relies primarily on a single resource</p> <p>Writer’s explanation of how the argument supports the thesis is weak or confusing and fails to incorporate key ideas about the Anthropocene, population growth, urbanization, technology and globalization</p>
Poor	<p>Few arguments are offered and sequence of arguments is not logical</p> <p>Writer provides little or no relevant evidence from the published literature to support arguments</p> <p>Writer does not explain how the argument supports the thesis and does not tie arguments to key concepts about the Anthropocene, population growth, urbanization and globalization</p>

Grading Criteria Assignment 1: Argumentative Analysis

Criteria	Possible Points	Your Points
<p>Quality of the Thesis</p> <p>Unambiguously states the writer’s position</p> <p>The position is arguable (is not simply a statement of accepted fact)</p> <p>Is concise and clear, a statement of the role of a specific component of aspect of population growth, urbanization, technological development or globalization (not overly general)</p> <p>Thesis reflects a thorough understanding of key concepts discussed in this class</p> <p>Demonstrates that the study has synthesized the information presented in the first four weeks of class by comparing and contrasting ideas and evidence from several of the topics, not just one (e.g., synthesize information about population growth and urbanization)</p>	40	

<p>Quality of the Arguments Several arguments are offered and sequence of arguments is logical so that arguments build on each other in some way (e.g., simple to complex, related points, etc.) One argument is presented in each paragraph and paragraphs are internally well-organized – lead sentence states argument, followed by supporting or explanatory sentences and ending with a concluding or summary sentence Writer provides relevant evidence from the published literature to support each argument and cites the source of the evidence Writer clearly explains how the argument supports the thesis and addresses how the arguments build on key concepts about the Anthropocene, population growth, urbanization, technological development & globalization</p>	60	
<p>Weaknesses in Arguments and Counter Arguments Identification of weaknesses demonstrates that the student has gone beyond simply looking for evidence to support his/her arguments to examine the full range of evidence in support of and contrary to his/her arguments and thesis Can identify weaknesses in the underlying premises of his/her arguments (logical fallacies or inadequate assumptions) Identified specific counter-arguments that are relevant to the validity of his/her thesis only (e.g., did not simply search out other ideas in general)</p>	50	
<p>Use & Mastery of the Literature Writer exhibits mastery of concepts in the required readings for this course and can apply those concepts to the development of logical arguments Writer draws upon extensive relevant published literature beyond the required readings for this course to develop arguments and conclusions Writer draws upon literature from a number of perspectives, disciplines and viewpoints, including competing assessments of the role and impacts of the, population growth, urbanization, technological development and globalization on sustainability Writer correctly cites and references all literature used Writer makes clear how the concepts or information in the literature was used in the essay – does not just “toss in” citations</p>	40	
<p>Followed all instructions; correct use of APA style</p>	10	
<p>TOTAL</p>	200	

Assignment 2: Concept Map (200 points)

Objective: Develop your ability to analyze complex problems, issues or needs, assess the relative importance of inter-connected concepts and linkages, and organize your understanding of the different components of a complex problem issue or need into a holistic, internally consistent and logical presentation of key ideas.

A concept map is a visual presentation of the relationships among a number of concepts, processes, or events. The map focuses on a single concept, process or event of interest – in your case one of the challenges to sustainability that we discuss in this class. The related concepts and/or processes are

tied to the central focus of the map through a linkages represented by lines with a word or phrase that describes the nature of the relationship between two components. Concept maps start with broad, general relationships and build on them to create very complex visual models of how many factors interact to produce a given outcome.

Resources about concept maps and examples:

<http://cmap.ihmc.us/docs/theory-of-concept-maps> Good explanation. Company sells concept map construction software I think.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2Js_9-ek7o A nice tutorial on concept mapping. I like it because it points out that a concept map is really a way of visually organizing knowledge. They help us systematize and organize what we learn. This is what I want you to do in this assignment. It's about 15 minutes long and worth hearing because it gives a lot of good ideas about how to use colors and types of connectors to make a more explanatory and useful concept map.

<https://library.usu.edu/instruct/tutorials/cm/CMinstruction2.htm> Good example of a concept map of what causes obesity.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=axZD1WMPRIo> This is from a class at the University of Maine. It shows how to use paper, Microsoft Word and Google Drive to create concept maps. It deals with the actual construction of the concept map. It is a good step by step procedure and also has good instructions on the use of the various programs to make one.

Your task in this assignment is to create a concept map, drawing upon the ideas we have discussed in class, required readings, and additional resource materials (research reports, other published articles, books, data, official statistics, etc.) that you find. **Your map should clearly show how social, technological, environmental and economic factors are related in producing a challenge or threat (e.g., inadequate water, food insecurity, violence, resource depletion) to the sustainability of a specific community.** You should also make sure you consider what we learned in the first part of the course and in Assignment 1 about the role of population growth, urbanization, technology and globalization on the challenges identified in the more recent weeks.

This is a partner project. Two minds are definitely better than one at creating a good concept map. Therefore you will work with one partner for this project. You can work with anyone you like, and you can select any community that you want. I strongly suggest that you use a community familiar to one of the two partners. Or you may want to have a sort of “ideal type” of community in your mind – like a rural community highly dependent on local resources. That’s fine, too. You do really need some “image” of the community to make this assignment doable. You will present your concept maps to your colleagues in class on March 13. When you submit your map, also turn in a **brief (2 or 3 page)** document with the information included in question 6 below. Submit the map under the title:

LastName1_LastName2_A2_Map. Submit a document responding to item 6 below so that I can understand the logic of your map – how you thought about the threat or challenge. Use the title: LastName1_LastName2_A2_Explain.

Here is a general procedure for making a concept map.

1. State a challenge or threat to sustainability that will serve as the focus for your concept map. I suggest that you select a precisely defined (somewhat narrow) threat or challenge to sustainability in the community or type of community you have chosen. “Biodiversity loss” is too broad. “Decline in population of wild animals important in the local diet” would be better. Concept maps get very

complex quickly and the broader the focus of the map, the more complex the map becomes. One good way to get started on the map is to develop a focal question about the threat of interest. For my example, the question might be “What drives the local extinction or decline of wild food animals in this area?” The question will help you focus on relationships between processes, concepts and the threat.

2. List the 5 to 10 “large scale” factors that you can identify that drive the process of interest to you. These should be readily identifiable to you – probably even before you conduct a literature review. They will probably include some of the key drivers that we have discussed in the course and other drivers that you identify through your own expertise. These “major” or “large scale” factors form the first tier of your map. These large-scale factors must reflect the major challenges to sustainability that we have discussed during the last four weeks, but should also incorporate examples of at least three of the major drivers we discussed in the first few weeks of the course (globalization, population growth, technological development, urbanization). Your objective by the end of this first phase is to have articulated three to five major factors that contribute to the core issue of interest. Portray these as major “clusters” of related concepts that all affect the core issue directly.
3. Now elaborate each of these clusters. Add detail. Add secondary processes that contribute to the major factors or processes that you have already identified. For example, in my example of the disappearance of a wild food animal, poverty would be a major process in my map because poverty drives people to rely on hunting for food. In-migration to the area might be another because this increases the demand for “bushmeat”. I might have unemployment and low-wage jobs as causes of poverty. Although these factors may not affect the decline in the food species directly like say habitat destruction does, they are important social drivers of the phenomenon. Further, these factors interact with each other. Unemployment tends to grow as a result of in-migration of people with limited skills.
4. Continue to build your concept map with at least one more tier or layer of factors that explain the core challenge of interest. That is, your final map should have the core challenge or threat of interest, at least three major clusters of factors/processes that **directly** affect the core challenge, and at least two more “layers” or tiers of factors in each of those clusters. For example, in my example, the third tier might include things like “poor schools” because poor schools create poor job skills, which creates unemployment, which creates poverty – which finally directly affects hunting for food. You are free to include as many layers or tiers as you want, but three tiers are the minimum. You can have too many tiers. Ultimately, I suppose “everything is related to everything” and that makes for an incomprehensible concept map. So – stop when the relationships become too tenuous for you to be able to explain them clearly.
5. Think of your concept map as a visual explanation of a threat or challenge that has very complex roots. Imagine that you are using your concept map to explain the challenge to a community meeting where many citizens have little or no knowledge of the processes and concepts that you want to explain or perhaps to a large class of freshmen in college in a course about sustainability. Your map should make the relationships clear to the audience. This kind of clarity – without losing detail and critical relationships – is what I want to see in your concept map.
6. The document accompanying the concept map has four components. (A) It states the focal challenge or threat (or question) you used as a starting point for the map. (B) It describes how/why you selected the concepts included in your concept map. (C) It explains the overall logic in the organization of your map (e.g., what constitutes the first level of concepts, second level, etc., the rationale). (D) It provides a description of the key points or arguments that you want to make with

the map. Include a bibliography of all materials used to develop the concept map (not part of the 2-3 page explanation).

Assessment Criteria for the Concept Map (Including the material you submit to me and your oral presentation)

Criteria	Possible Points	Your Points
<p>Concepts Identifies key concepts, both those that are directly related to the threat or challenge and especially important concepts that are indirectly related Includes concepts that reflect the range of challenges to sustainability that we have discussed (biological, social, technological, etc.) Provides a clear but succinct definition of each concept</p>	30	
<p>Structure Has a non-linear structure that provides a clear visual presentation of key ideas Includes multiple groupings of concepts and concepts included in each grouping are logically consistent¹ Both simple and complex connections between concepts are mapped Branching is complex and complete and more specific concepts are connected to more general concepts Linking words demonstrate conceptual understanding Links are precisely labeled</p>	40	
<p>Content Clearly identifies the main challenge or threat and subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the threat Shows how different aspects of the challenge or threat are related to each other. Demonstrates complex ideas and provides a good depiction of the relationships between concepts and linkages on the map Map makes clear the designers' overall arguments about the causes and relationships involved in generating the challenge Map provides insights into ways to go about addressing or solving the problem, issue or need</p>	40	
<p>Presentation Information is presented clearly and fosters understanding Uses techniques like color, diagrams, line style to facilitate understating complex concepts portrayed in map</p>	30	
<p>Explanation of Map Statement of threat or challenge is precise and focused Selection of concepts to include and emphasize in the map is well justified based on the published literature about the challenge and its potential causes There is a logical organization to the map that ties concepts together and avoids over-simplification of the processes involved Rationale is well explained and easy to understand The arguments illustrated in the concept map are clearly identified and explained</p>	30	
<p>Draws upon a wide variety of reputable and valid resources in developing</p>	30	

the concept map Uses APA style for all references		
Total	200	

¹ Groupings are the ways concepts can be linked or joined together. There are three types of groupings: 1. Point groupings: a number of single concepts emanating from one concept 2. Open groupings: three or more concepts that are linked in a single chain 3. Closed groupings: concepts that form a closed system [a loop].

Assignment 3: Policy Brief (200 Points)

Please note that a policy brief is NOT the same thing as a policy paper. A policy paper is typically presented to an informed audience. The writer can assume that the readers will know the issues and be able to understand technical language and complex ideas about the problem, issue or need. Policy papers often synthesize several position papers or analyses and are typically lengthy and technical in nature. **A policy brief is for a public audience – a lay audience.** The audience does not have technical expertise or extensive prior knowledge about the problem, issue or need. Policy briefs must therefore be easy to understand without a lot of background knowledge, written clearly and succinctly without technical jargon, and lay out alternative options for actions or strategies in a way that allows decision-makers to select among the alternatives.

Assignment 3 builds on the first two assignments in this class. In Assignment 1, you presented an argumentative analysis about which of many processes you think changed human impacts on the planet from local and limited in time and scope to global with long-term and planetary effects. In Assignment 2, you developed a concept map that shows the complex interactions between social, economic and environmental factors that affect a problem issue or need. Since then, we have examined alternative frameworks – really theories of change -- that are proposed for creating the ecological, economic, technological and social changes needed to achieve sustainable community development. Your task in this assignment is to prepare a policy brief that would convince decision-makers to follow a specific **strategy** for addressing a threat to sustainability that you identify. This may be the same threat or challenge you identified in Assignment 2, but it does not have to be. This is not a short-term plan or a planning process. Rather, you are trying to convince community leaders to adopt an **overall strategy** that the community can pursue over the next two to three decades. For example, you might argue for a “de-growth or no-growth” approach to infrastructural development in the community. That strategy would then guide the development of an action plan at some point (where to build, how much building to permit, policies to prevent sprawl, taxing decisions, etc.). However, developing an action plan is **NOT** your objective here. **Your objective here is to get the community leaders to adopt an overall strategic approach that will inform or guide specific decisions.** The description of a policy brief provided by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is excellent and provides a good example of what you need to include (<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/policy-briefs/>). Additional excellent resources that may help you with this assignment are available at https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/womens-and-childrens-health-policy-center/de/policy_brief/index.html. The links at this site provide several materials including a lecture and some files on how to improve a policy brief, how to translate a research article for use in a policy brief, and other helpful materials.

The primary audience (people you are trying to convince) for your policy brief are decision-makers, such as government officials, at the regional (within a nation, not global) or national level in the context that you describe in the introduction (see below). E.g., they are not scientists or experts in sustainable development, may know relatively little about the threat you have identified, and probably are people who have not been involved in discussions of the alternative approaches that we have studied. Write

your brief in a way that is cogent and understandable to decision-makers who may have little understanding of science, of technical terms and concepts, or of the scientific evidence pertinent to your ideas. Simply put – it has to be easy to read and easy to understand. Brevity, clarity, and a good visual presentation are critical. Use the resources you have consulted all semester, including required readings and the materials that you have found for yourself. Make sure your policy brief (1) draws attention to the factors driving change today (module 1 of the class); shows that the threat or challenge is a serious one with major causes and serious potential implications for the future of the community (module 2 of the class); and demonstrates divergent approaches to reducing the threat (module 3 of the class). Maximum length **excluding** Title Page, Table of Contents, Executive Summary, and Bibliography is 4000 words. This is actually a LONG policy brief – most are about 1,500 words long, but longer is actually easier so I decided to allow up to 4,000 words. You can (and probably should) include graphics in the brief. Submit the document under Assignment 3 on Canvas. Use the name YourLastName_Policy.

Required Elements in the Policy Brief

Title. The title is the first part of a paper readers see and it begins the process of communicating the message contained in the policy paper. An effective title of a paper should give readers a quick overview of the subject and problem addressed in the policy paper. A reader may use the title in deciding whether to read the paper or not. As a general rule, avoid titles of more than 10 words.

Table of Contents. The table of contents is a skeleton or overview of the structure of the policy paper. It shows the overall organization, the main sections and their sub-sections and page numbers to locate sections in the paper.

Executive Summary. The executive summary aims to interest readers in reading the whole paper. However, the main function of the executive summary is to satisfy the needs of those readers (especially decision-makers) who will not read the entire paper and readers whose main interest is in the key proposed policy recommendations. The executive summary represents the whole paper by providing a synopsis of all main parts and findings.

Introduction. The introduction sets the scene by presenting the context for the threat or challenge and linking this to the specific focus of the policy paper. Describe the setting and the nature of the communities that are the objective of the strategy – make sure the reader understand “who, what, and where” your strategy targets. The introduction demonstrates that an urgent threat exists and that your paper is worth reading because it will offer possible solutions. The introduction will include a statement about the purpose of the policy paper. Most policy papers also include a brief overview of the methodology for data collection and/or kinds of resources used in its construction, but this will be limited in your case to describing the sources of data, you have used to construct your recommendations.

Problem Description. The problem description identifies, defines and elaborates the nature of the threat or challenge under discussion. This may include the background information about the history of the threat, its causes, who is affected, descriptions of previous policies aimed at addressing the threat, and the outcomes of implementing those policies (positive and negative). It should also include a detailed and convincing description of the actual status of threat – the extent and impact of the problem now, who is affected now, the current policy and its successes and failures.

Policy Options. This section outlines, evaluates and compares the possible policy alternatives. Remember, you are focusing on overall strategic policy-making, not developing a plan of action. You should present all the approaches or strategies that you think are potentially useful for addressing the threat – e.g., do **NOT** limit this to a discussion of the option you prefer. Presenting the full range of

options helps you build a comprehensive and convincing case – e.g., it strengthens your final position because it shows that you have carefully considered several key alternatives. The focus is on evaluating how each option compares with regard to reducing the threat – the likelihood of success. On the basis of this evidence, an argument is made for the preferred policy alternative. Your policy options should clearly reflect the key differences in strategic frameworks that we have discussed in this class.

Conclusions & Recommendations. This section presents the case for your preferred alternative strategy to decision makers. This section provides a concise synthesis of major findings (from the literature in our class). However, this is more than a summary of the main findings. You should explain how your strategy will lead to and inform policy recommendations relevant to the threat. Finally, provide a list of three to six key policy recommendations that must be implemented as part of the strategy. For this assignment, this does not have to be highly detailed. Focus on the three to six **key policies that are critical to the success of the strategy.**

You will present your brief in our last class section. You will have at most 15 minutes for this presentation (including questions and answers). Limit your presentation to 10 minutes. Allow 5 minutes for discussion.

Grading Rubric for Brief

Component	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Points
Overall Presentation	High visual appeal; avoids use of colors not recommend by ADA. Interesting title that conveys meaning Sections and sub-sections chosen to provide a clear overview of the paper and titles are descriptive of what is in each section Executive summary provides the “hasty” reader with the key points made, including key arguments	Moderate visual appeal, but follows some recommended practices for style and fonts Title is too wordy or too “cute” or frivolous Too few or too many sections and sub-sections Some titles provide information about content, but not all Executive summary is incomplete	Layout is unappealing Title does not convey information about what is in the document Subsections are poorly organized and titles for sections and subsections are not descriptive of the content Executive summary is essentially an outline	15
Introduction & Problem	Introduction clearly defines the context in which the policy recommendations would be applied (for example, geographic region, type of community) Provides credible evidence that the consequences of the threat are damaging to the environment, people, and the economy in the context	The description of the context in which the policy recommendations would be applied is vague Provides some evidence about the consequences of the problem, but fails to include a robust discussion of all three (social, economic or	Little description of context Very little evidence about the consequences of the problem is offered Does not explain how the problem developed, or makes only very general statements Focuses on one or a few linkages	25

	<p>Provides a sound explanation of how the problem developed in the specific context (not generally globally)</p> <p>Explains the linkages between economy, technology, people and environment</p> <p>Describes what has been done to try to mitigate the threat (other policies and strategies tried)</p> <p>Offers explanations of why previous approaches have failed</p>	<p>environmental)</p> <p>Offers only general explanations of how the problem developed – a sort of generic description that is not specific to the context</p> <p>Describes few of the linkages between economy, technology, people and environment</p> <p>Descriptions of previous attempts to reduce the threat are vague</p> <p>Offers weak or vague explanations of why previous strategies failed</p>	<p>between economy, technology, people and environment</p> <p>No descriptions of previous attempts to solve the problem</p> <p>Does not offer explanations of why previous strategies failed</p>	
Strategies and Policy Recommendations	<p>Includes at least two very different strategies for addressing the threat</p> <p>Explains the underlying assumptions of each strategy and offers an explanation of why the strategy can be expected to address the threat</p> <p>Identifies the preferred strategy and justifies the preference based on the specific historical and current context of the community(ies) at risk</p> <p>Clearly states at least four explicit policy recommendations that flow directly from the strategic alternative proposed for adoption</p> <p>Provides several key reasons based on logic and evidence for making the recommendation</p>	<p>Strategies discussed are similar – not distinct approaches to addressing the threat</p> <p>Limited or no discussion of the assumptions of the strategies presented and provides weak arguments about the potential efficacy of the approaches</p> <p>Explanation of how alternatives were evaluated is vague – insufficient for someone else to follow the same procedure</p> <p>Recommendations are vague or incomplete</p> <p>The reasons for making the recommendations are hard to understand and do not clearly rest on logic and evidence</p>	<p>Does not state distinctly different policy options</p> <p>Does not discuss the environmental, social and economic aspects of the strategy</p> <p>No explanation of how alternatives were evaluated</p> <p>Recommendations are not specific to the context (vague, ill defined)</p> <p>No compelling reasons for the recommendations are offered</p> <p>Key decisions are not explicit and specific (vague, undefined)</p>	40

Style & References	Included at least 15 references that represent a broad body of literature Credible sources in all cases Consistently used correct APA style both for embedded citations and in the bibliography No errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation	Included at least 10 references that represent a fairly broad body of literature Occasional use of a questionable source Was fairly consistent in use of APA style both for embedded citations and in the bibliography Few errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation	Included fewer than 10 references References were not representative of the body of literature Many references were questionable Errors in APA style Common errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation	20
Total				100

Annotated Bibliography (100 points)

Objectives:

- Develop your skills in assessing the merit and usefulness of published research literature,
- Improve your ability to summarize and analyze the literature you consult;
- Enhance your capacity to identify the key perspectives or themes in the contemporary literature that have the greatest influence on your analysis of and conclusions about key issues relevant to sustainability; and
- Permit you to expand the perspectives that you consider in your decision-making processes about sustainable community development.

The assigned readings are a place to start your exploration of the literature and you should direct your exploration to resources and topics of interest to you. To assist in this process, you will submit an annotated bibliography. I have two outcomes in mind for this assignment. First, I want you to be able to retrieve the materials that you consult in the future. We all tend to find “good stuff,” and then lose track of it because we do not have a clear record of the citation for the resource and a synopsis of what was interesting in the resource. Second, I want you to think about those materials or resources that have the greatest impact on your thinking. No matter how much you read about a topic, in my experience there are a few materials that influence your thinking a great deal. That is a good and a bad thing. The good thing is that these “key resources” provide a framework or scaffold for higher level (or critical) thinking about complex issues. The bad thing is that we can unconsciously adopt a certain perspective without really realizing that we are doing so – we just sort of “absorb” a viewpoint without stopping to think about the implications.

The bibliography should include **at least fifteen key resources that you found (not required readings)** in your exploration of the literature. You can use materials from the “additional resources” that are provided on the web pages for some weeks of the class. Select the resources have been most influential for you. You may include more than fifteen resources, but the intent is for you to think about this carefully and assess which of the materials you have read during this course have significantly affected your thinking about sustainable community development. The bibliography is NOT a long list of every material you used during this class. I want you to consider how you thought about sustainable community development at the start of this course and how you think about it now and provide

substantive annotations of the materials that have played the biggest roles in shaping your thinking. Do not include materials that you did not find as a part of your work in this class. Submit the bibliography as assignments on Canvas. Use the file name for the Word documents YourLastName_Biblio.

Annotate each article. An annotated bibliography is **NOT** the same thing as an abstract. An abstract is a summary of the contents of an article. An annotated bibliography includes other components. It assesses the quality of information in a material, assesses its usefulness, draws the reader's attention to important aspects of the materials, and tells the reader how you used the material and why you think it is (or is not) important in understanding and addressing a topic. A good annotated bibliography (1) encourages you to think critically about the content of the works you are using, their place within a field of study, and their relation to your own research and ideas; (2) situates your understanding and contributions in a continuing professional conversation; and (3) provides a way for others to decide whether a source will be helpful to their research and understanding if they read it. Examine the Assessment Rubric for Annotated Bibliographies closely **before you start your exploration of the literature.** These are **evaluative annotations**. Therefore, my assessment of your bibliographies will be based in large part on the degree to which you:

- Select materials that expand the range of viewpoints about a topic;
- Go beyond summarizing an author's main points to explain his/her arguments and to assess the evidence s/he offers to support those arguments; and
- Explain how the material influenced your own ideas and analysis of the topic.

Assessment Rubric for Annotated Bibliographies

Criteria	Excellent	Acceptable	Poor	Points
Sources Consulted	All sources chosen are highly relevant to the topic Sources complement required readings by offering alternative or expanded viewpoints	Some sources are tangential to the topic Most sources tend to repeat or extend ideas in required readings rather than contribute other viewpoints	Sources generally are not directly related to the topic Few if any sources offer alternative viewpoints from those in the required readings	15
Completeness of Annotations	Annotations provide a clear and concise summary of the author's main points or conclusions Explain the key arguments that the author makes to support his/her conclusions Indicates the evidence that the author provides to support viewpoint or conclusions	Some annotations are too brief to gain good understanding of author's key points Some annotations fail to explain the arguments that the author makes or may not explain the evidence s/he provided to support viewpoints	Annotations are more like an abstract than an analytic discussion Annotations generally fail to present the author's arguments or evidence in support of his/her position	30
Role of Material in Student's	Explain how the materials extended or	Some annotations are not clear about	Few annotations explain how the	30

Thinking	expanded student's understanding or stimulated new ideas about the topic by citing specific ideas that the student gained	how the material extended the student's understanding or changed his/her ideas about the topic	material stimulated new ideas for the student	
Credibility of the Source	All materials are from scholarly publications or credible government or private organizations Few if any web sites and any that are used are highly credible sources	Most materials are from credible organizations More than one web site is cited and/or sites are not from clearly credible sources	Few materials from credible organizations Overuse of popular websites	15
Mechanics of Assignment	Each source has a complete, error-free citation in APA format Annotation is free of grammar, spelling punctuation errors	Some citations have errors in APA format Several errors in grammar, spelling of punctuation	Consistent errors in APA format Many errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation	10
Total				100

University of Florida Policies

Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: *"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."* You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/SCCR/honorcodes/honorcode.php>.

Software Use:

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

- *University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/*
 - Counseling Services
 - Groups and Workshops
 - Outreach and Consultation
 - Self-Help Library
 - Training Programs
 - Community Provider Database
- *Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, www.crc.ufl.edu/*
- *U Matter We Care, www.umatter.ufl.edu/*

Services for Students with Disabilities

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation 0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/

Classroom Accommodation: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.