

Instructor: Mickie Swisher
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Classroom: McCarty A – MCCA 3194
Tuesday Class Meeting: Periods 5-6, 11:45 AM – 1:40 PM
Thursday Class Meeting Period 6, 12:50 PM – 1:40 PM

Consultation Policy: Office hours are Monday and Wednesday, 2:00 – 5:00 PM, but I will meet with you by Zoom at any time that I am free. Please make an appointment in advance 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). Please turn off your phone and put it away while in class. Bring your computer to class to use 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, close your computer.***

Course Description: This course examines the quality and status of contemporary sustainable community development research, knowledge and practice. Students are encouraged to examine the underlying premises and goals of sustainable community development critically. 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 Goals

- Critically assess the existing empirical data, assumptions, and theoretical approach to the scientific evidence relevant to sustainable community development;
- Articulate scientific perspectives on and recommendations for addressing threats to the sustainability of communities; and
- Provide knowledgeable and well-reasoned leadership for students, professionals, and citizens concerned with sustainable community 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 – Subject to Revision as Needed

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 it is subject to revision during the course.

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 friend 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 Scale

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

Distribution of Grade

Component	Points
Class Preparation & Participation	300
Assignment 1: Descriptive Abstracts	250
Assignment 3: Policy Brief	250
TOTAL	800

I will accept late submissions only when the conditions specified in the UF Catalog. Consult those criteria and *complete the assignments based on the specific criteria given*. I use the following 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 search out and read 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.

Class Preparation & Participation (250 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 on the page in Canvas for each week. 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. 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. 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.

	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: Descriptive Abstract (200 points)

Excellent	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 idea is presented in each paragraph and paragraphs are internally well- organized – lead sentence states the main idea, 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 idea and cites the sources Writer clearly explains how the ideas build on key concepts about the Anthropocene and processes we have examined
Satisfactory	Few ideas are offered and/or sequence of statements is not always consistent and logical Statements made are somewhat unclear or poorly organized 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 Writer's explanation of how the argument supports the thesis is weak or confusing and fails to incorporate key ideas about the Anthropocene and sustainable community development
Poor	Writer provides little or no relevant evidence from the published literature to support arguments Few arguments are offered and sequence of arguments is not logical Writer does not explain how the argument supports the thesis and does not tie arguments to key features of the Anthropocene, population growth, urbanization and globalization

Submit this assignment on Canvas under Assignment 1: Abstract as a single-spaced Word document. Title the document YourLastName_Assignment 1. All assignments are due when class meets on the week indicated. I use a grading rubric for assignments that indicates characteristics of responses that range from excellent to unacceptable. I give a score poor, satisfactory, or good to your responses

Assignment 2: Policy Brief (250 Points)

I wrote this because I understand how difficult it is to practice “critical thinking” and to distinguish critical thinking from criticizing. Unfortunately a topic like “sustainable development” easily becomes an ideological statement rather than a concept used to stimulate public discourse about problems, issues and needs confronting contemporary societies. Public discourse, by definition requires that you present your ideas, the logic that informs them, and the evidence on which you base your conclusions AND that you sincerely and systematically listen to and consider the ideas of others, especially those whose ideas are very different than your own. I hope these instructions will help you.

Overall Presentation 40 points	Good 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 reader with the key arguments Satisfactory Moderate visual appeal, but follows some recommended practices for style and fonts Title is not descriptive of the content and not all titles provide information about content Too few or too many sections and sub-sections Executive summary is incomplete Poor
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	Layout is unappealing Titles do not convey the content of the document Subsections are poorly organized Executive summary is essentially an outline
Introduction & Problem Statement 60 points	Good Clearly defines the context in which the policy recommendations would be applied Satisfactory Vague description of the context in which the policy recommendations would be applied Poor Little description of context Very little about the consequences of the problem
Strategies and Policies 100	Good Includes different strategies for addressing the threat Explains the underlying assumptions of each strategy and offers an explanation of why the strategy can be expected to address the threat Identifies the strategy chosen and justifies the preference based on specific historical and current context of community(ies) at risk Clearly states at least two or more explicit policy recommendations that flow directly from the strategic alternative proposed for adoption Provides several key reasons based on logic and evidence for the recommendation Satisfactory Strategies discussed are similar – not distinct approaches to addressing the threat Limited or no discussion of the assumptions of the strategies presented and provides weak arguments about the potential efficacy of the approaches Explanation of how alternatives were evaluated is vague – insufficient for someone else to follow the same procedure Recommendations are vague or incomplete The reasons for making the recommendations are hard to understand and do not clearly rest on logic and evidence Poor Does not state distinctly different policy options Does not discuss the environmental, social and economic aspects of the strategy No explanation of how alternatives were evaluated Recommendations are not specific to the context (vague, ill defined) No compelling reasons for the recommendations are offered Key decisions are not explicit and specific (vague, undefined)
Style and References 50	Good Included enough references to adequately 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 Satisfactory Included at least 10 references that represent a fairly broad body of literature Occasional use of a questionable source Was consistent in use of APA style both for embedded citations and in the bibliography Few errors in grammar, spelling or punctuation Poor 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

Please note that a policy brief is NOT the same thing as a lengthy policy analysis. A policy analysis is typically presented to an audience that is very well informed about the topic. The writer can assume that the readers will know the issues and be able to understand technical language and are well informed about and deeply involved in trying to solve the specific problem, issue or need. **A policy brief is for an informed and active public audience – decision-makers and citizens who participate in the public sphere.** The audience may not and often does not have technical expertise or extensive prior knowledge about the problem, issue or need. Many of these individuals are busy – elected officials, local citizens who take time from family and work to contribute to the public good, or professionals whose work in the public or private sphere makes enormous demands on their time. In short, policy briefs are for busy people with many responsibilities, little time to waste, and **for whom the problem, issue or need of interest to you is only one of many they are trying to address.** They have little time to devote to individuals who come to them “pushing” a particular perspective. If your objective is to win these individuals over to your own specific beliefs, values, norms, opinions, ideas, or passions, they will not want to devote much time to listening to you. That may work with specific individuals *who already share your beliefs or opinion*, but you will fail to become a sought-out resource person for this group as a whole because they all have individual ideas of their own. They do not need you as an expert to tell them what to think or inform their ideological or political stance. They *do need thoughtful evidence-based and accessible information* because these individuals form groups that have to reach enough consensus to make decisions. They will listen to you if you are useful in this way – that you synthesize a lot of ideas and information, present it cogently to them, include multiple perspectives, carefully delineate between alternatives, and provide a “balanced” set of recommendations that reflects the options most likely to succeed based on expertise and well-developed critical thinking skills. 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.

University of Florida Policies

Grades and Grade Points

For information on current UF policies for assigning grade points, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>.

Attendance Make Make-Up Work

Attendance and Make-Up Work Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Online Course Evaluation Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/.

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/.

Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

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/process/student-conduct-honor-code>

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.

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, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>

- University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575, www.counseling.ufl.edu
 - Counseling Services
 - Groups and Workshops
 - Outreach and Consultation
 - Self-Help Library
 - Wellness Coaching
- U Matter We Care, www.umatter.ufl.edu/
- Career Connections Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, <https://career.ufl.edu/>.
- Student Success Initiative, <http://studentsuccess.ufl.edu>.

Student Complaints:

- Residential Course: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-studentconduct-code/>.
- Online Course: <https://pfs.tnt.aa.ufl.edu/state-authorization-status/#student-complaint>

Additional information Instructors may choose to clarify in their syllabus their teaching philosophy, expectations for classroom behavior, utilization of e-learning, and other information that will help students succeed in the course.

University Police Department: Visit police.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services career.ufl.edu/.

Library Support: cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. teachingcenter.ufl.edu/

Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/