

Anthropology of Sustainability

ANT 2402 (14AF)
M PERIODS 9-11
TUR 2319

Instructor: Dr. Richard Stepp

Office Hours: Grinter 337 Mondays 1-4 and by appointment

Office phone: 392-0299

Overview:

This course applies the sustainability concept to the study of human interactions with the biophysical environment across space and time. As such, it draws upon all four subfields (Cultural Anthropology, Biological Anthropology, Archaeology, Linguistic Anthropology). The course is concerned with human perceptions of and interactions with their biotic surroundings, and the myriad linkages between biological, cultural, and linguistic diversity. The first part of the course explores different human adaptive strategies throughout time, beginning with foraging and the rise of agriculture, followed by the industrial revolution and up to the present. The nature of small-scale societies and their approaches to sustainability is addressed, especially with regards to traditional or indigenous ecological knowledge. The modern world system is examined in both political and cultural contexts related to environmental stewardship. Cross-cultural ideas about sustainability are explored. The human ecosystem and anthropocene concepts are examined. The goal of class is to provide a broader understanding of the role of culture in sustaining the diversity of plant and animal life on earth, and the role of nature in perpetuating cultural knowledge for future generations. The course will explicitly address all four of the substantive areas of sustainability studies. These four areas are: Ethics, Culture and Human Behavior; Economics, Law and Policy; Production Systems and the Built Environment; Ecology and Environmental Stewardship.

Learning Objectives and Goals:

- * To develop a holistic and systems-based understanding on how humans interact with the biophysical environment
- * To understand the inter-relationship between the biophysical environment and human cultures
- * To recognize the consequences of human activity on ecosystems at different scales
- * To understand the role of historical, economic and cultural forces in environmental stewardship
- * To explore the concept of resilience in human societies and culture

Textbooks (2 required):

Nabhan, G.

1998. *Cultures of Habitat: On Nature, Culture and Story*. Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint.

Robins, Richard

2014. *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. New York: Prentice Hall

Course Requirements and Grading

There will be two exams in this class, each of which will count toward 25% of your semester grade. These exams will consist of short essay questions. The second of the two exams will not be cumulative.

You will be required to present an overview of your final paper project (described below). Presentations are concise, in-class summations of the scope of your project, your methods, initial discoveries, and the relevance of your work toward advancing critical concepts in the Anthropology of Sustainability. Your presentation will comprise ten percent of your overall semester grade.

A comprehensive final paper is required, ranging from 10-12 pages in length, typed and double spaced, based on an original research topic or theoretical discussion of your own choosing. We will discuss potential paper topics early in the semester and you will need to turn in a one-page summary of your topic worth 5% of your final grade. *Paper topics must be approved before writing the final paper.* The paper should be carefully proofed and spell checked before they are handed in. Assignments that do not meet basic standards for correct spelling and grammar will be returned ungraded. This paper counts toward 25% of your grade.

This class involves discussion: active student participation is essential. You will be expected to have done the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss them. Participation counts for 10% of your grade.

Your semester grade will be based on the following percentages:

Exam 1:	25%
Exam 2:	25%
Final Paper:	25%
Participation:	10%
Paper Presentation:	10%
Paper Topic:	5%

Grading Scale	
A = 93 or above	C = 73 - 76
A- = 90 - 92	C- = 70 - 72
B+ = 87 - 89	D+ = 67 - 69
B = 83 - 86	D = 63 - 66
B- = 80 - 82	D- = 60 - 62
C+ = 77 - 79	E = 59 or below

*****Overview of the Course and Assigned Readings*****

Occasionally, additional readings will be sent via email before the following week's class.

Week 1: 1/7

Overview of the course
Introduction to anthropology and sustainability

Week 2: 1/14

Where you at? Culture and persistence
Guest Lecture: Global food production and sustainability Nabhan: Chapter 1

Week 3: 1/21

MLK Day

Week 4: 1/28

Biocultural diversity and human ecosystems Nabhan: Chapter 2-3
Ethnobiology: the science of survival

Week 5: 2/4

Subsistence strategies and domestication Nabhan: Chapter 4-5

Week 6: 2/11

Climate change and indigenous knowledge
Belief systems and sustainability

Week 7 2/18

Exam One

Week 8: 2/25

Surviving progress Robbins: Chapters 1-4
Paper Topic Due

Week 9: 3/4

Spring Break

Week 10: 3/11

The Culture of capitalism Robbins: Chapters 5-8

Week 11: 3/18

The Modern world system Robbins: Chapters 9-10

Week 12: 3/25

Globalization and biodiversity Robbins: Chapters 11-13

Week 13: 4/1

Exam Two

Week 14: 4/8

Student presentations

Week 15: 4/15

Student presentations

Week 16: 4/22

The future of sustainability
Final Paper Due

E-mail policy

If your query can wait until the next class time then please do so. I would much rather communicate in person than by computer. I receive an enormous number of emails each day and there are only so many hours in the day!

Classroom behavior policy

Absolutely NO cell phone use and NO texting is permitted in the classroom at any time. Students using a cell phone for any reason during class-time will receive a warning. If the problem occurs again during the semester, the student will be asked to leave the class and will receive a 0% participation grade. No video/audio recording or photography. Disruptive behavior in general is not allowed. Failure to follow these policies will negatively impact your participation grade and may result in your dismissal from the course.

Computer policy

An increasing number of studies have shown that laptop computer use in class hinders learning. Even more alarming is that this effect carries over to students seated nearby. This article links to many of these studies: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2014/09/25/why-a-leading-professor-of-new-media-just-banned-technology-use-in-class/>

Given these findings, I ask that you make an attempt at taking notes with pen/pencils and paper. If you absolutely must bring a laptop, you will need to sit in the back row of the classroom so as not to disturb other students with your screen. For those choosing this option, please do not use your computer for anything other than note taking.

Attendance and make up policy

Attendance at all times is strongly encouraged but not mandatory. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Honesty policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students 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." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

UF Grading Policy

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

UF Counseling Services:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center:

<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning- support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://career.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Disabilities Accommodations:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.