



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The main aim of this course is to help students prepare to, gain from and reflect upon their term abroad as a profound global experience. Through workshops, lectures, course readings, videos, discussions, and class field trips, students will actively reflect on the role of communities in sustainable development.

During their study abroad experience, students are confronted with unfamiliar situations and tasks in a real-world context. Through field trips, ongoing reflection, class discussions and course activities students will articulate their own experiences, respond to others' experiences and ultimately make connections and reflect about local engagement with global sustainability issues to better understand the role of communities in globally complex and interdependent socio economic, political and environmental challenges.

To complete these tasks, students need to figure out what they know, what they do not know, and how to learn it. This requires students to immerse in their community; consider their prior knowledge and expand and go deeper on it through reflection; transfer their previous learning to new contexts; master new concepts, principles, and skills; and be able to articulate how they developed this mastery (Linn, et al., 2004). Ultimately, these skills create students who become self-directed and life-long learners.

Objectives

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

- Identify and differentiate important facets of the host country's development dynamics and observe general aspects of the global context focusing on current events and challenges (context).
- Reflect upon the role of local communities in sustainable development through readings on community action and social impact, hands-on research, local newsletters review and interviews with community stakeholders during field trips (immersion).
- Develop a logical argument and use creative resources to share reflections and ideas (explore). Students will design a personal blog of their experience and process of gaining understanding of the community engagement and social impact of the cases analyzed.
- Generate ideas and reflect on how to build resilient and engaged communities to advance towards sustainable development.



Methodology

Active student participation is required throughout the course. Classes will include a combination of lectures, site visits, direct service, group reflections, individual blogging, and group/individual assignments. Active class discussions are a major feature of the course aimed to integrate the theoretical framework with the students' experience. Each week will include two (2) in-class sessions that can involve a presentation by students of week evidence gather for their reflective blog - i.e. students will use media reports, readings, videos, interviews and observation tasks as a basis for discussion and reflection on their experience - a lecture by professor, a discussion of assigned readings and a progress review and planning of site visits.

Community Work and Site Visits

Participation in site visits is a key element of the course. There are three major components to site visits: (1) preparation and comprehension of the local context; (2) engaging in community-based services; and (3) reflecting on them. Regular space will be assigned during in-class sessions to follow up on site visits and support the planning of activities and gathering of information for the reflection process on individual blogs.

Attendance and participation in class site visits is mandatory, and students will be assigned a grade in accordance with the calendar defined for this purpose. It is the student's responsibility to inform of any problem that may affect her/his participation during field trips (only official justifies reasons normed by ICDS code of conduct will be considered to justify students' absence to course activities).

Creative project: personal reflective blog

Based on the research conducted and the comprehension students will gain from class site visits, students will combine their research to create a personal blog. Students will develop a blog to reflect on their community experience, as well as on their study abroad experience in overall. The objective is to motivate the students to research and analyze the role(s) of communities in sustainable development.

It is expected that students will provide a diversity of evidence gathered during class site visits and class readings to support their blog reflections. Please refer to the class personal reflective blog guidelines for detailed examples of the type of evidence that can be used.

For the purposes of this class, the blog can be submitted using **Google web** or any platform of student preference that facilitates the development of an online blog.



Final presentations

Students will prepare a presentation based on their final blog reflections, class readings and study abroad experience during the final class.

Evaluation

| EVALUATION | % |
|---|------------|
| Attendance & participation | 10% |
| Assignments | 30% |
| Community work | 10% |
| Practical exercises (workshops, reflection sessions, guest speakers, etc.) | 10% |
| Final E-portfolio and Creative Project | 25% |
| Group and self evaluation | 10% |
| Community coordinator evaluation | 5% |

Special Needs

In case of requiring additional time for taking exams, or if experiencing any circumstance during the course of the term that would interfere with the student's ability to complete his/her work or take a test, students should let the professor know ahead of time.

Changes to Syllabus

The student acknowledges receipt of this syllabus and the information herein by continuing to attend this course. The Instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus if circumstances warrant such change, with previous approval of ICDS' Academic Director. All major changes will be provided to the student in writing.

Academic Integrity

Students in this course are expected to abide by common sense, normal regulations on Academic Integrity. Violations of the Academic Integrity policy include, but are not limited to plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, and academic misconduct, including dishonest acts such as tampering with grades or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of an administered or unadministered test/assignment. The intent to violate this policy also represents a violation of this policy.



Possible Sanctions for Violating Academic Integrity Policy

If an act of academic dishonesty is determined to have occurred, one or more of the following sanctions will be imposed, depending on the severity of a first-time offense:

- Reduction of a course grade
- An “F” for the assignment or exam
- Failure for the entire course
- Other action deemed appropriate by the faculty member
- Any of the above sanctions with the inability to withdraw.

The decision about the sanction to apply will be made jointly by the course’s professor and ICDS’ Academic Director, in consultation with the home university on-site Director for the program, if applicable. The incident will be reported to the home university and may result in an official conduct record for the student(s).

Second violation: A second violation will result in suspension or expulsion from the program, in addition to any sanction issued from the list above.

Course sessions

Please refer to class topic schedule

Course readings

Due to the nature of the course, there will almost certainly be changes in readings and adjustments to the syllabus based on which community site visits are organized. Changes will be announced in class and via e-mail, but you will need to be aware and flexible.

****Check your e-mail regularly for reading changes and other important course information****

A Google drive folder is available with class material and readings.

Bibliography

- Jeffrey D. Sachs (2015). The Age of Sustainable Development.
- Nussbaum (2002). For Love of Country?
- Nicholas Kristof (2009). Advice for Saving the World
- Allan G. Johnson, “The Social Construction of Difference” from RDSJ pp. 16-34.
- Basic Fundamentals and Principles of Community Development
- United Nations. Web Site. The Sustainable Development Agenda. Review website:
<https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>