

# SUSTAINABILITY SEMINAR SERIES

SSS 4000

Sustainable Tourism

(California State Polytechnic, Pomona)

# SSS 4000 – Sustainable Tourism

(California State Polytechnic, Pomona)

Aug 2 - Aug 23, 2015, CATIE – Turrialba, Costa Rica

[www.go-sss.com](http://www.go-sss.com)

Program Director	Program Coordinator
Eliécer Vargas (Ph.D.)	Ann-Elin Norddal (M.Sc.)
<a href="mailto:evargas@catie.ac.cr">evargas@catie.ac.cr</a>	<a href="mailto:go-sss@catie.ac.cr">go-sss@catie.ac.cr</a>
(+506) 2558-2638	(+506) 8314-6118
Skype: eliecervargas3071	Skype: anorddal

## Course Description

This course begins by laying a basic foundation of the universal principles of sustainability. We then build upon this base by learning how to identify the links that join together various systems, the very links that hold the key to understanding and appreciating the complexity of the world we live in. Because these connections span across traditionally defined careers and fields, this course will expose you to a variety of disciplines ranging from the natural sciences, to the study of human behavior, to economics, and everything in between. The goal of the Sustainability Seminar Series is not to learn facts and figures, or how to apply formulas, but rather, to gain a perspective, a unique way of looking at the world that will allow you to find holistic solutions to the challenges we face. The great thing about this perspective is that it can be applied to any situation, from your personal life, to the operation of a successful business, to seeking solutions for the biggest issues humanity has faced.

# Method of Instruction

Because sustainability is so different from what you have been taught, this course will be conducted unlike any of the classes you have taken in your undergraduate career. Sustainability is all about the search for practical solutions to life's challenges, and there can be no one formula for success, no single 'right' method follow. Making the most out of this experience means putting to work not only what you have learned during your academic career, but also your personal experiences and interests. Finding solutions to overcrowding, environmental degradation, and poverty requires creativity and is heightened by participative discussions with people of diverse viewpoints. For this reason, it doesn't make sense to run class in such a formal manner where the instructor does all the talking. Questions, debate, and discussion are not only encouraged, they are part of how your performance will be evaluated.

Furthermore, because this is a Study Abroad course, you are encouraged to make the most of your time abroad by always taking the opportunity to learn from the Costa Rican approach to life. Whether about the environment, tourism, politics, society, or economy, you should be aware that no matter where you are, you are in a great position to be learning from your hosts. By doing so, you will maximize the benefits of your visit. In this way you will realize that learning is not limited to the confines of the classroom, but extends to encompass your whole stay.

Underlining this modern approach to 24-hour learning, class materials and notifications will be released on the course's Facebook page. Consequently, each participant is required to have a Facebook account, and regularly check the class page for up

# Learning Objectives

By the time you have completed this course, you should;

- Have not only a textbook understanding of sustainability, but having seen, heard, and experienced successful examples of sustainability, and specifically sustainable tourism, in practice.
- Possess an expanded knowledge base after being exposed to a variety of subjects including; biology, psychology, economics, tourism, and sociology.
- Re-assess your values and consider how to reflect these values in your personal and professional decisions.
- Interpret life differently, with a holistic sense of the world.
- Be able to analyze systems strategically, finding interactions through linkages, as well as opportunities to reduce vulnerabilities and optimize performance from the micro- to the macro-level of the tourism industry.
- Behave consciously, knowing how your choices affect communities, economies, and ecosystems around the world.

## Course Texts

Because sustainability is an emerging and multi-disciplinary field, traditional textbooks are best utilized as sources of topical information and as reference material. The two books that this course is based upon are Tom Wessel's *The Myth of Progress: Toward A Sustainable Future*, and *It's All Connected: A Comprehensive Guide to Global Issues and Sustainable Solutions* (Wheeler, et al.).

In order to provide more relevant and timely illustrations of various aspects of sustainability, you will be provided with articles, video clips, and other forms of media via the course Facebook page. These materials will comprise the course reading list. In turn, students are also encouraged to find and share interesting and informative sources with the intent to allow for the consideration of more diverse views.

# Course Calendar

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Topic</u></b>
Week 0	
Sunday	(1) Arrival in Costa Rica, transport from SJO to CATIE
August 2	
Week 1	
Monday	(1) Course overview: introductions, (2) Worldviews: Case Study 'the US' Socioeconomic Paradigm,' (3) Why is sustainability important? (4) Overview of Costa Rican economy and breakdown of industry sectors.
August 3	Activities: CATIE campus tour, Turrialba downtown tour and welcome dinner
Week 1	
Tuesday	(1) The Rise of Tourism In Costa Rica, (2) Expectation management, (3) Authenticity and the tourist experience, (4) Introduction to Sustainable Tourism (5) Tourism Analysis: A new class of tourist, and their motivations for travel.
August 4	
Week 1	
Wednesday	Field Trip: Yorkin & Cahuita
August 5	
Week 1	
Thursday	Field Trip: Yorkin & Cahuita
August 6	
Week 1	
Friday	Field Trip: Yorkin & Cahuita
August 7	

Week 1

Saturday Free Weekend

August 8

Week 1

Sunday Free Weekend

August 9

Week 2 (1) What is Sustainability? Understanding Sustainability and Resources (2) the Triple Bottom Line approach (3) The Science of Sustainability: Complexity vs. Linearity, (4) Systems Thinking.

Monday

August 10 Activity: Tour of Botanical Garden and Germplasm Bank.

Week 2 Sustainable Tourism Principles and Indicators  
(1) Sustainable Tourism, Responsible tourism, Ecotourism, Geotourism, Voluntourism - what do they all mean?

Tuesday

August 11 Activity: Visit Raleigh International to learn about voluntourism

Week 2

Wednesday The meaning of authenticity in tourist experiences

August 12

Week 2

Thursday Field Trip: Manuel Antonio

August 13

Week 2

Friday Field Trip: Manuel Antonio

August 14

Week 2

Saturday Field Trip: Manuel Antonio

August 15

Week 2

Sunday Free day

August 16

Week 3

Monday (1) Food: Organics, and the Food Industry

August 17

Activity: Field Visit to Integrated Organic Farm

Week 3

Tuesday

August 18

Community based tourism

Activity: Field Visit to Santa Cruz to participate in making cheese and traditional breads, as well as visiting Guayabo to learn about Pre-Colombian civilization.

Week 3

Wednesday

August 19

Sustainable tourism as mass tourism: Contradiction or reality?

Week 3

Thursday

August 20

Certification for sustainable tourism (CST)

The CST is a product of the the Costa Rican Tourism Board, and was designed to differentiate businesses of the tourism sector based on the degree to which they comply with a sustainable model of natural, cultural and social resource management.

Activity: Visit a certified hotel/lodge in the Turrialba region

Week 3

Friday

August 21

(1) Environmental Policy & Politics: Governance Innovations, (2) Demand-Side Tools, (3) Supply-Side Tools, (4) National and International Policies on Natural Resource Management, (5) Ecosystem Services & PES

Activity: Discussion on using policy tools to regulate development

Week 3

Saturday Work Day: Time to finalize essays and group project

August 22

Week 3

Sunday Transportation to SJO airport and departure

August 23

## Grading

Performance as Discussion Leader	15 points
Essay on Environmental Topic	15 points
Essay on Socio-Cultural Topic	15 points
Essay on Economic Topic	15 points
Participation in Group Project	10 points
Evaluation of Group Project	30 points

<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>
90 - 100	A
80 - 89	B
70 - 79	C
60 - 69	D
59 and below	F