RURAL AND URBAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:
GLOBAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course analyzes the global context of urban and rural development with a focus on local issues from Costa Rica and Latin America. It is designed to provide a historical understanding as well as the current context surrounding urban and rural development. A multi-dimensional approach will be taken to analyze the causes and effects of development from social, environmental and economic perspectives.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This course aims to create understanding about the current and historical context surrounding urban and rural development globally and in Costa Rica.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• Recap the global context of urban and rural development and examine the current situation of Costa Rica within that context.

• Understand the effects of urban and rural development on social, environmental and economic dimensions of human living conditions as well as the effects these dimensions have on development.

• Know and understand the range of policy interventions for environment and development, and the links among these.

METHODOLOGY

Active student participation is required throughout the course. Classes will include a combination of group discussions, individual presentations, group work, homework, reading, and lectures. We will aim to have a positive learning environment for all of us, so we will respect each other in class as well as those we come in contact with during the course.

DROPBOX

Each student has an individual dropbox folder shared with the lecturer. This will be where all homework and paper advances are turned in. In addition, there is a folder for the entire class, where you will find the literature needed per week and other materials that the lecturers may choose to share with you or your fellow classmates. YOU MUST accept the invitation to share the folders, this is critical for the successful completion of the course.
SEMINARS

Every other week (from week 4 on) there will be seminars that will take the form of a short presentation by two students on the readings for the lesson (and can draw on past readings as well) with the aim of generating and introducing a discussion highlighting a set of issues, arguing a case, exposing colleagues (and us) to significant ideas, sources and evidence that we may not have come across, etc. So, extension on the topics of the readings will be expected when presenting, in order as well, to relate the issues more directly to your interests.

Following the presentations and initial questions by the audience, the sessions will involve a discussion generated by the presenting group within 2 or 3 smaller break-out groups, each identifying key issues, evidence and conclusions, for report back to the full seminar group. How this is arranged may, however, vary between weeks, in relation to experience and feedback from previous sessions (as well as to differences in topics).

Although presenters will clearly do the most preparation for seminars, these are not meant to be supplementary lectures (with a passive audience). What students get out of these sessions depends on what they put in. Hence, all members of the class are expected to have done enough preparation to participate actively in discussion in an informed way.

To avoid the need for detailed note-taking during the seminar (except about points you want to make), PowerPoint files from presenters will be made available on the public folder for the course if these are uploaded in dropbox, before or after the presentation.

FINAL PAPER

It is expected that each student designs and turns in a research question by week 4. The topic may be from any section of the course or related content. The research proposal must not be longer than one page, including the research question, hypothesis (if it applies), and a proper scientific justification for the chosen question. It will be uploaded to your dropbox folder before class starts on week 4.

The final essay should be 5,000 words excluding the bibliography. You must show expertise on your chosen topic and fully answer your research question.

EVALUATION

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<th>Item</th>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homework, in-class assignments and quizzes</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper and its presentation (Includes advances turned in previous to final paper)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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ICDS ACADEMIC POLICY

**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.

**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 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.

**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.
CONTENTS

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE, OVERVIEW AND CONCEPTS.

Objective: To identify major institutions and actors in sustainable development and examine the evolution of their roles in policy making (includes the issue of corruption), touching upon the history of rural/urban development in Latin America (including agro and industrial reforms). To start to explore LA development indicators.

WEEK 2: CONSERVATION VS. GROWTH DILEMMA

Objective: To discuss the different views and approaches of the dilemma; and distinguish key theoretical elements for sustainable growth. To explore the case study of Costa Rica’s conservation history and to introduce Latin American conservation issues and challenges.

WEEK 3: THEORY, REALITY AND CHALLENGES plus Field-trip (Exploring the city space/in search of sustainability)

Sustainable consumption and production, economic geography, and local economic development in LA.

Objective: To outline the evolution and main issues in the region concerning sustainable consumption and production and to show the bridge between globalization and opportunities for sustainable local economic development in Latin America.

WEEK 4: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, SOCIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Objective: To discuss the social dimension of sustainability in rural and urban environments; and the environment’s role in both defining and understanding poverty.

WEEK 5: STRATEGY AND INSTITUTIONS (plus QUIZ)

Strategy, risks and the importance of institutions for sustainable development in rural and urban contexts.

Objective: To consider key aspects while evaluating or designing sustainable local economic development strategies; and to examine how both formal and informal institutions play a key role in development, and evaluate whether they perpetuate urban/rural disparities.

WEEK 6: MIDTERM PLUS CLASS DEBATE.

Objective: take and defend an SD position, i.e., Environmental Modernization, Deep Ecologists, weak sustainability and strong sustainability.

WEEK 7: THE ROLE OF POLICY IN ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Objective: To understand the range of policy interventions for environment and development and the links among these in the context of market failures; and to examine policies correct these, on the poor.
**Plus - COOPERATIVES AND MICROFINANCE.**

Objective: To show the importance of cooperatives and the importance of microfinance to help them overcome financial challenges.

**WEEK 8: URBAN GROWTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT PLUS (possible) FIELD-TRIP (La Carpio and the INA Model Farm).**

Objective: To assess the impact of urban growth tendencies and policies on the environment and quality of life.

**WEEK 9: ASSESSING PAYMENTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES plus QUIZ**

Objective: To examine the possibility of managing environmental impacts through market mechanisms.

**WEEK 10: RISKS AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT: LATIN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS.**

Objective: To analyze the way in which environmental degradation and risk and disaster management affect resilience in urban and rural areas.

**THE OUTLOOK FOR URBAN AND RURAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA.**

Objective: To examine current debates, challenges and future paths for Latin American sustainable development.

**WEEK 11: PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**WEEK 12: FINAL EXAM**

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**READING - Please Note:**

The reading texts which are listed below are to be found in the drop box and assigned before the class discussion and seminars. You will be given more instructions in class on how to manage the reading and seminar assignments.

You must read at least two of the texts for each week and hand in (each week on the Thursday) a mind-map summary of the main points from each text that you have written. You can combine your mind-map to include the two texts or more. This activity is to help you find the most important elements, ideas, issues and data from each text – and what interested you, and to be ready for participation in discussions.

If you are leading the seminar you are expected to read all of the texts for that week and hand in a power point presentation and summaries.
READINGS

WEEK 1: Introduction to the course, overview and concepts.


WEEK 2: Conservation vs. growth dilemma.


WEEK 3: Sustainable consumption and production: economic geography and local economic development in Latin America.


- Check this out (it’s fun!): http://gecon.yale.edu/ -- this gives a graphic portrait of the uneven geography of world output

WEEK 4: Environmental justice, social equity and social dimensions of sustainability.


WEEK 5: Strategy, risks and the role of institutions in sustainable development in rural and urban contexts.


WEEK 6: Midterm plus Class Debate – choose your own reading material to help you defend your SD position. A selection of texts and suggestions will be placed in the drop-box.

WEEK 7: The role of policy in environment and development in developing countries:


Cooperatives and microfinance.


WEEK 8: Urban growth and the environment


WEEK 9: Assessing payments of environmental services


WEEK 10: Risks and disaster management: Latin American experience and lessons


Hardoy et al., 2011. Local disaster risk reduction in Latin American urban areas. Environment and Urbanization. 23(2):401-413

The outlook for urban and rural sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean
