

**SJS 100: Sustainability and Social Justice
Program in Sustainability and Social Justice,
Spring 2019**



Professor

Email & Phone

Office Hours:

Class location

Class meeting times

Moodle key

Caroline Wiedmer

cwiedmer@fus.edu; 091 986 3653

M/TH 15:45-16:45; and by appointment on Wednesdays

LAC 7

Mondays & Thursdays 11:30-12:45

SJS100

COURSE DESCRIPTION

One of the fundamental questions we all face today is how to counter the urgent challenges posed by global climate change and unequal economic development. Questions coalescing around notions of ethics, justice, equality, and human rights intersect with questions on how to shape a culturally, politically and environmentally sustainable world. Exploring a wide range of theoretical and practical perspectives on sustainability and social justice, this cross-disciplinary, introductory course will give students multiple disciplinary frameworks to think critically and productively about the intersections between the social and the natural worlds. One of the main goals as we consider the intersections of these two hugely complex areas is to begin to form a response that takes into account not only some of the central areas of concern, but also your own personal response to them.

The course is divided into three parts. The first part provides a general introduction to the topics and develops around three main foci: first, the concept of ‘sustainability’, the concept of ‘social justice’, and methodological issues of relevance in the study of these two concepts. This introductory part is mainly theoretical. The second part focuses on key areas concerning sustainability and social justice in specific fields, such as the environment, poverty and wealth, human rights and politics. This part combines theoretical inputs and policy-related considerations and allows us to study the issues discussed in the more theoretical part through case studies. The third part I hand over to you to plan. You will have the chance to apply theories and policies on social justice and sustainability and reflect on achievements, contestations and future possibilities in a flipped classroom format.

Flipped classroom means that you, with a group of classmates, choose a topic, work up its theoretical, scholarly and scientific literature and present it in a class period which is all your own. This is quite a challenge, I know, but in the process, you will learn not only how to work effectively in a group, choose a topic with the right scale and find relevant theoretical literature that brings your discussion to a sophisticated level, but also how to plan a compelling lesson plan, and present materials in an interesting way.

RATIONALE

The course acts as the gateway to the Minor and Major in Social Justice and Sustainability (SJS).

COURSE GOALS

The primary goal of the course is to introduce students to contemporary debates in the fields of social justice and sustainability, focusing especially on the intersections between the two. By analyzing theoretical perspectives and problem-based frameworks, the course aims to provide students with a multi-disciplinary lens to critically engage with current geopolitical scenarios.

SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course students will

- Understand key debates concerning sustainability and social justice
- Be familiar with mainstream policies concerning sustainability and social justice and with main critiques to dominant approaches
- Be able to identify, compare and discuss key issues relating to inequalities and uneven development
- Be able to critically analyze and reflect on the interconnections between the Global North and South in key field such as economics, culture, politics and environment.
- Demonstrate enhanced awareness of and sensitivity about the politics of everyday choices and actions

TEXTS AND MATERIALS

I will make the weekly readings available to you on Moodle. The book *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot will be available to you in the bookstore.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS

- Attendance and participation
- Throughout the course you will give one presentation together with one other class mate on the assigned readings for the day coupled to a news item; you will write one mid-term exam, you will help lead one class period together with 3 or 4 classmates on a case study of your choice (the flipped class room) and you will write a research paper of 7-9 pages either about a case study (an event that happened and the media coverage of that event), or about a piece of activism which you took part in or developed. A third option you might contribute to the SWB program in a three-week internship with a project of your own choosing.

ASSESSMENT

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Your performance in this course and the degree to which you have achieved the expected learning outcomes will be based on the following assessments

Attendance and Participation	15%
Mid-term exam	20%
News of the day presentation	15%
Flipped classroom	20%
Research paper/activism/SWB internship	30%

Assignments due electronically on Moodle no later than 2 PM on the due date indicated on the syllabus.

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation

Class participation is crucial in this course, so read the articles and come prepared to talk. I expect you to have read the articles before you come to class, so we can jump right into defining the main points of any reading and your reflections on these main points.

Evaluation Rubric for Course Discussion/Participation

A - Provides concrete examples from the readings, integrates course material which has previously been covered, integrates personal observations and knowledge in an accurate and highly insightful way, presents new observations from additional research or experience, constructively responds to classmates

B - Refers to examples from the readings, integrates personal observations and knowledge in an accurate way, presents new observations, constructively responds to classmates

C - Alludes to the readings to support comments, integrates personal observations and knowledge in a cursory manner, does not present new observations, constructively responds to classmates

D - Does not refer to the readings to support position, does not integrate personal observations of knowledge, does not present new observations, responds in a cursory manner to classmates

Mid-term exam

Each week we will take about ten minutes to discuss the main insights of the readings, and to articulate a question that might be on the mid-term.

News of the day presentation

Together with one other colleague you will be asked to give a brief presentation (10-15'). This will focus on the reading(s) assigned for that day coupled with a piece of news which has appeared in a reputable media source over the past year, related to the topic of the readings. The presentation must provide evidence of critical and self-reflective thinking. There are 13 spots on the syllabus, beginning in week two, so we have one extra slot in case anyone gets sick and misses his or her slot.

Grading rubrics for presentation

-representation of reading (correct brief summary? Have you given your opinion?) 30%

-news piece (is the connection well established? Can we gain insights on the reading and vice versa for the connection?) 30%

-presentation (did you use appropriate tools such as power point or hand-outs? Was the talk well-structured?) 30%

Flipped classroom

The class will be divided into five teams of four/five members each. Each team will work on a specific topic of the member's choosing with the aim of preparing a lesson plan for a class to be led by the team. Each lesson should introduce a clearly delineated topic at the intersection of social justice and sustainability to the class, and contain reading(s), activities and/or viewings pertinent to the topic. At

the end of your flipped classroom you will hand in a log of the experience in which you detail your lesson plan, the rationale for choosing the reading or viewing or activity and your reflection on the experience. Each group will also kick off the discussion for the previous group with a 5-minute reflection and feed-back for that group. This log is due on Moodle within one week of the lesson. Each group will meet with me at least one week prior to the class you will lead with a detailed lesson plan and any materials you wish to upload onto Moodle. There are 4 groups, for exactly 6 students each.

Final essay, piece of activism or mini internship for Scholarships Without Borders

The final essay (7-9 pages, 250 words per page, MLA or Chicago citation style) is an individual piece of work and will consist of an analytical and reflexive review of one topic of your choice, related to one of the themes of the course, including those covered during the flipped classrooms. A list of possible topics will be discussed at the beginning of the course and you will be asked to choose a topic in the second week after travel. Your essay should be structured around a relevant question and should consist of three sections, as follows:

- *Introduction*: The introduction should start with a general introduction of your subject and lead to a very specific question and thesis. It should clearly state your question and explain why it is interesting and relevant (approximately 500 words).
- *Main body*: In this section you should firstly explain how you will address your question and then build your argument directly addressing your question (approximately 1000 words).
- *Conclusion*: Summarize your arguments and show how they answer the original question. The concluding section should start from a very specific point (the answer to your question) and become more general in its concluding paragraph (approximately 500 words).

Please come to speak to me if you are interested in starting a piece of activism or doing a mini-internship for Scholarship Without Borders. We have 3 spots at SWB. In order to qualify for an internship you will need to write a short application (1 page) stating how you would like to participate.

Evaluation Rubric for Written Assignments

A - An outstanding text with a clear thesis, well written and referenced, including original insights and critiques.

B - A well written text, with a thesis, correct references and including personal views on the topics addressed.

C - A text that is a good summary of the readings, but without a strong thesis, personal reflections/articulation or which has grammatical or referencing errors, or which is shorter than specified

D – A depthless text, with superficial and/or incorrect references to academic sources, which has grammatical or referencing errors, or which is shorter than specified

GRADING SCALE

A	94	Excellent
A-	90	“
B +	88	Good
B	84	“
B -	80	“
C +	78	Satisfactory
C	74	“
C -	70	“
D +	68	Unsatisfactory
D	64	“
D -	60	“
F	N/A	Failure

HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE (POLICIES / REQUIREMENTS)

Attend regularly

Attendance is mandatory. That said, I understand that sometimes you just can't make it to class so you have two freebies, no questions asked. Five points will be subtracted for each unexcused absence after the initial two, from the attendance grade. Your sixth unexcused absence will result in an F for the class. Please note that you will not be able to pass the course if you miss more than five classes regardless of your performance in other assignments. If you are ill for a long time, please bring me a doctor's note or a note from the Dean.

Participate actively

Class participation is very important in this course because it allows to share and exchange ideas with

others and this stimulates and enhances the learning process. Note that the quality of comments is more important than the frequency. I encourage you to make every effort to contribute in a thoughtful, cooperative and meaningful manner.

No phones, laptop or mobile devices

All phones must be turned off before class begins. Laptops and mobile devices may be used only for specific activities and with my prior permission. And please don't check your Facebook or email in class. If you do, I might have to ask you to bring cookies for the next session!

Ask for help and support in a timely manner

If you feel you are not performing as you wish, or if you are experiencing difficulty in keeping pace with the course, let me know. I want all of you to succeed and I am willing to help and support your learning, but I need to be informed clearly and timely so as to be able to make any necessary provision or adjustment.

Commitment and respect

In this course we all make every effort to create a safe and caring learning environment. We shall strive to recognize forms of domination, oppression and discrimination which exist in our societies - such as for instance classism, racism, patriarchy, heterosexism just to name a few- and do our best to avoid their reproduction within this class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: STATEMENT ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

To plagiarise means to use someone else's work without giving them appropriate credit. This includes anything from the failure to reference sources to paying someone else to write a paper for you. You also, by the way, cheat yourself because by plagiarising you skip a chance to show that you are joining a scholarly discussion, which has its own merit. I have very little patience once you've plagiarised, though I understand that it quite often stems from fear that your own thoughts are not interesting enough. By contrast, I have lots of patience if you have any doubts about the validity of your thoughts, or just don't know how best to incorporate ideas. So just come and see me, and we will discuss the best way to use other people's ideas in an ethical way to foster your own thinking and create an interesting and worthwhile piece of writing.

This is the official statement of the university on plagiarism:

pli A student whose actions are deemed by the University to be out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives or the spirit of good conduct as fostered by the University and Swiss community, may be placed on Disciplinary Probation or become subject to dismissal from the University. Cheating is a dishonest action out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives and spirit of the University. Furthermore, cheating reflects negatively on one's personal integrity and is unjust to those students who have studied.

See the Academic Catalog for full statement (page 199):

https://www.fus.edu/images/pdf/FUS_ACADEMIC_CATALOG_2018_2020_web.pdf

RESOURCES AVAILABLE

If you have a documented disability, or think that you may need additional learning services, please let me know and I will make every effort to support your learning process.

CLASS CALENDAR (might change in accord with class needs)

Please note: The readings and assignments are due on the day they are indicated. Please also note that this syllabus is not finished yet but will be completed with your names behind each presentation, and with your contributions in the flipped classroom portion of the calendar. I will provide you with a printed copy that includes all the names at the second meeting of our class, but the syllabus will be available on Moodle right after we determine the presentation schedule after our first meeting.

Part I: Grappling with Terms, Definitions and Paradigms

Jan 21

Introduction to syllabus

What is social justice? What is sustainability? Where do the two intersect? What is your role at this intersection?

In-class screening *The Story of Stuff* (official version 2007)
<http://storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-stuff/>

Sign-up for presentations and flipped classroom groups

Jan 24

Emily Badger et al, "Extensive Data Shows Punishing Reach of Racism for Boys"

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/19/upshot/race-class-white-and-black-men.html>

How do race and ethnicity influence class and economic standing? Work in small groups and prepare a short presentation of your chosen demographic working with the tools given in the article.

Jan 28

Brown et al, "Global Sustainability: Toward Definition"

4th National Climate Assessment, November 2018
<https://nca2018.globalchange.gov>

Presentation: Heidi and Martin

Jan 31

Screening: Global Wealth Inequality by The Rules
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWSxzjyMNpU>

Feb 4

Reading: Amartya Sen, "Freedom and the Foundations of Justice"

In-class screening: PBS News hour video clip (2011): Land of the Free, Home of the Poor <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnQwTS-K6jI>

Presentation: Fred and Elsa

- Feb 7** Reading: Anne Coote, “A new social settlement for people and planet: understanding the links between social justice and sustainability”
http://b.3cdn.net/nefoundation/550bcded7f0b7a8b45_5rm6b17dz.pdf
- Presentation: prescott and peter
- Feb 11** Reading: Excerpt from chapter 1: “What’s the Right Thing to Do?” in Michael J. Sandel, “Justice: The Right Thing to Do”
- Presentation: Jacklyn and justin
- Feb 14** Reading: Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”
- Screening: Van Jones, The economic injustice of plastic
https://www.ted.com/talks/van_jones_the_economic_injustice_of_plastic
- Presentation: stephanie and ansley

Part II: Environmental Justice, Activism and Human Rights

- Feb 18** Reading: Julie Sze and Jonathan K. London, “Environmental Justice at the Crossroads”
- Screening: Peggy Shepard at TEDxHarlem
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zJX_MXaXbJA
- Presentation: livi and Danielle
- Feb 21** Reading: Robert Nixon, excerpt from *Slow Violence*
- Presentation:
- Feb 25** Screening: Van Jones, TEDxGreatPacificGarbagePatch
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3WMgNIU_vxQ
- Presentation: Stephanie x 2
- Disposability, Choice and Bio Mimicry: where Do You Stand?
- Presentation: campbell and luciana
- Feb 28** In-class screening: Richard Wilkinson, How economic inequality harms societies (July 2011)
- Reading: Alastair Fraser, “Poverty Reduction Paper: Now Who Calls the Shots?”
- Presentation: saverio and arin

March 4 Reading: Naomi Klein, "Capitalism v the Climate", *The Nation* (Nov 9, 2011)
<https://www.thenation.com/article/capitalism-vs-climate/>

Presentation: wadia and corey

March 7 Reading: Betsy Hartmann, "Rethinking Climate Refugees and Climate Conflict: Rhetoric, Reality and the Politics of Discourse"

Presentation lily and asa

Review: Take-home mid-term

Academic Travel: March 11-22

March 25 Screening: Ursula Biemann, *Forest Law*

March 28 Workshop for flipped classroom
Goal of workshop: each group should come to class with the topic and the reading/viewing they want to introduce during their class.
Goal for this workshop is to come up with a detailed lesson plan that includes the aims of the lesson, the readings/viewings/activities on your chosen topic, a timetable for the lesson plan and the distribution of work. Please use the work sheet on moodle.

[Due after class on Moodle:filled-in work sheet.](#)

Presentation on Forest Law:

April 1 Reading: "Environment, Development and Human Rights"

Reading: Ratna Kapur, "Human Rights in the 21st Century: Take a Walk on the Dark Side"

Presentation:

[Due: your detailed lesson plan \(ca 3-4 pages\) on Moodle and the readings for your flipped class room.](#)

Part III: The Flipped Classroom

April 4 **Group I:** Flipped classroom (livi, danielle, luicana, justin, jacklyn, campbell)
Please find readings on Moodle

[Due: take-home mid-term](#)

April 8 Discussion of first flipped classroom with kick-off by group II

April 11 **Group II:** Flipped classroom (elsa, asa. Fred, lily, jenna, corey)
Please find readings on Moodle

April 15 Discussion of second flipped classroom with kick-off by group III

Due: elevator pitch of your final paper/activism/internship (1 minute)—be prepared to present to the class!

- April 18** **Easter Monday – No classes!**
- April 22** **Group III:** Flipped Classroom (Stephanie, Ansley, wadia, erin, saverio)
Please find readings on Moodle
- April 25** Discussion of third flipped classroom with kick-off by group IV
- Due: outline and first five pages of your final paper plus bibliography.
Peer review.
- April 29** **Group IV:** Flipped Classroom (Heidi. Prescott, martin, peter, three missing people)
Please find readings on Moodle
- May 2** Discussion of fourth flipped classroom with kick-off by group I
- May 9, 11:00-13:00** Optional presentation of final papers/activist project/SWB internship
Due before final's period on Moodle: [final research paper](#)

Bibliography for recommended reading

- Adam, W. M. (2009), *Green Development. Environment and Sustainability in a Developing World*. Oxon: Routledge. (Chapter 1, pages 1-25)
- Bond, P. and Dor, G. (2003). *Neoliberalism and Poverty Reduction Strategies in Africa*. Harare, Zimbabwe, EQUINET: 1-31
- Brown, B. J. et al. (1987) Global Sustainability: Toward Definition. *Environmental Management* 11 (6): 713-719
- Chang H-J. (2007) *Bad Samaritans. The Guilty Secrets of Rich Nations and the Threat to Global Prosperity*. London: Random House Business Book (Chapters 1 & 2)
- Fraser, A. (2005). 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers: Now Who Calls the Shots?' *Review of African Political Economy* 32(104/105): 317-340.
- Harvey D. (2005) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 3, pages 64-86)
- Loomba A. (1998) *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, New York: Routledge (pages 42-62)
- McMichael, P. (2005) Globalization. In Janoski, T et al. (eds). *The Handbook of Political Sociology. States, civil societies, and globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (pages 588-606)
- Jackson C. (2006) Feminism Spoken Here: Epistemologies for Interdisciplinary Development Research. *Development and Change* 37: 525-547.
- Lister S and Nyamugasira W. (2003) Design contradictions in the "New Architecture of Aid?" Reflection on Uganda on the Roles of Civil Society Organisations. *Development Policy Review* 21: 93-106
- Mercer C. (2002) NGOs, civil society and democratization: a critical review of the literature. *Progress in Development Studies* 2: 5-22.
- Nussbaum, M. (2002) Capabilities and Social Justice. *International Studies Review* 4(2) 123-135
- Santos, B. 1999: Towards a multicultural conception of human rights. In Berta Esperanza Hernández-Truyol (ed) *Moral Imperialism: A Critical Anthology*. New York: New York University Press: 39-60
- Schüssler, R (2001) Climate justice: a question of historic responsibility? *Journal of Global Ethics* 7(3): 261-278
- Scoones, I. (2010) Sustainability, in Cornwall, A. and Eade, D (eds.) *Deconstructing Development Discourse*. Rugby: Practical Action in association with Oxfam GB (pages 153-162)
- Sen A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (Chapter 3, pages 54-86)
- Shivji IG. (2007) *Silences in NGO discourse. The role and future of NGOs in Africa*. Nairobi & Oxford: Fahamu. UN – DESA (2006) *Social Justice in an Open World*. New York: UN Publications

Further suggested readings (optional)

- Abbas H and Niyiragira Y. (2009) *Aid to Africa. Redeemer or Coloniser?* Cape Town, Dakar, Nairobi, Oxford: Pambazuka.
- Donnelly, J (2007) The Relative Universality of Human Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 29 (2), 281-

- Evans, P. (2005) Counterhegemonic Globalization: Transnational Social Movements in the Contemporary Global Political Economy. In Janoski, T et al. (eds). *The Handbook of Political Sociology. States, civil societies, and globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pages 655-670
- Freire, P. (1993) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin Books
- George, S. (2003) *The Lugano Report: On Preserving Capitalism in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Pluto Press
- Makki F. (2004) The empire of capital and the remaking of centre-periphery relations. *Third World Quarterly* 25: 149-168.
- Mkandawire, T. (2005) Maladjusted African Economies and Globalisation *Africa Development*, Vol. XXX, Nos. 1 & 2, 2005, pp. 1–33
- Misturelli, F. and Heffernan, C (2008) What is poverty? A diachronic exploration of the discourse on poverty from the 1970s to the 2000s. *European Journal of Development Research* 20(4):666-684.
- Mohanty, C. (1988) Under the Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses. *Feminist Review*, 30, 61-68
- Payne, A. (2005) *The Global Politics of Unequal Development*. London: Palgrave.
- Pogge T. (2007) *Freedom from Poverty as a Human Right*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sen A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shivji IG. (2009) *Where is Uhuru? Reflection on the struggle for Democracy in Africa.*, Cape Town: Fahamu Books.
- Stiglitz, J. (2002) *Globalization and its Discontents*. London: Penguin Books
- Udombana, N. J. (2000) The Third World and the Right to Development: Agenda for the Next Millennium
Human Rights Quarterly 22 (2000) 753–787

