International Environment and Development – IED

Fall 2013 Syllabus

SIS 471 900T and SIS 472 001T

Washington Semester Program
School of Professional and Extended Studies
American University

Dr. Heather Heckel
Hheckel7@aol.com or heckel@american.edu

Office: Available by appointment
Cell phone: 540-421-3188

Course Description

The International Environment and Development (IED) program is a unique course of study that combines an 11-week seminar in Washington, DC with an intensive field practicum in Costa Rica. The seminar and field practicum (8 credits) provide a comprehensive experiential learning program in which students:

- meet and interact with experts, decision-makers, activists, and others who work in the fields of development and environment protection;
- attend regular class meetings, lectures, panels, films, and discussions;
- actively participate in a trip to Costa Rica designed to provide a case study for analysis, engagement with, and application of some of the key themes of the course.

This program will provide a broad overview of development and environment issues facing the world today. Together, we will learn about key actors, study specific development and environment topics, consider debates over how to approach those challenges, and both study and experience some of the potential solutions. We will seek to understand the linkages between development and environmental concerns while recognizing their enormous complexity.

Course objectives:
This course will:

- Improve student understanding of the challenges and potential successes in the fields of environment and sustainable development through experiential and active learning.
- Immerse students in both theory and practice through meetings with experts and site visits in Washington, DC and Costa Rica.
- Explore relevant career opportunities, preparing students to pursue professional fields.
- Examine various approaches, theories, and models in the fields of sustainable development, and environmental preservation.
- Provide students with an opportunity for independent research in fields of their choice, as well as exploration of these fields in DC and Costa Rica.

Course outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify key actors in the global arena that impact development and environment issues.
- Compare and contrast diverse positions and theories on development, sustainability, and environmental protection.
- Articulate your own perspectives on such issues as environmental protection, development priorities, and the connections between them.
- Demonstrate active learning and engagement through such activities as: critical questioning, synthesis and evaluation of course readings and resource materials, individual research, active discussion, written presentation, and analytical writing.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the 'big picture' of sustainable development – through articulation of key actors, priorities, challenges, and potential solutions.
- Understand and be able to apply varied approaches to solving these challenges and current theories regarding advocacy for change, 'best practices' in the field, and collaborative approaches including public/private partnerships and networking.

Course format:

The Seminar – meets three days per week (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday) and consists of classroom lectures and discussions as well as visits to DC based organizations, events, and lectures/meetings with policymakers, practitioners, and a range of other specialists. The meeting times for our class will be announced via email each Sunday. Please note that you should plan to be available from 9am to 5pm every day, though we will rarely meet this entire time.

The Internship – internship days are generally Monday and Tuesday. You are also strongly encouraged to work during final exam week at your internship. This course has a separate syllabus.

The Field Practicum in Costa Rica – this trip will provide us with the opportunity to study a 'national case' in depth and to consider the various course concepts we have studied in a real-world setting. While abroad we will visit diverse organizations and their site projects, while also participating in cultural and tourism activities. **Students should be aware that the time abroad and group travel are physically and emotionally challenging**.

Texts and Course Materials

Recognizing the breadth of materials available on environment and development issues, I have chosen to prioritize readings and other resources available on-line for this course. My intention is to enable students to experience the diversity of information available, to explore resources that will allow you to continue to learn over time, and to emphasize materials directly and concisely related to course concepts and guest speakers.

On-line readings (resource websites) will be included in each weekly schedule (emailed on Sundays). It is important that you carefully read these works and critically consider them before class. There will also be three books assigned during the course.

- *UNDP Human Development Report – 2013 (available free online at* http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2013_EN_complete.pdf)
- *Book review selection (your choice from a list, more information below)*
- *WWF living Planet Report - http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/all_publications/living_planet_report/*

As part of our class, I will regularly distribute current event articles and utilize both on-line video clips and DVDs. Use of multi-media can help us to have a common understanding of a topic and to visualize and have a deeper understanding of a particular issue. You will also be required to view some films in preparation for class, such as *End of the Line*.

Highly recommended for regular reading and background material for the course are:

- TED.com and TEDx.com
- BBC News or CNN International
- The Economist
- Washington Post (for local coverage and perspectives on policy issues)
- Newsweek and/or Time
- National Geographic

Course requirements and grading system

Participation – Site visit reflections, reading activities, class assignments, and discussion: 20%

- Throughout the course, I will be asking you to complete activities related to our site visits, preparatory materials/readings, and discussions.
- Additionally, there will be class-based activities, which will be assessed based upon effort and demonstration of understanding of key course concepts and reading comprehension.
- A portion of your participation grade will reflect your professionalism, engagement, and written reflections while in Costa Rica. As a group traveling to many sites and especially in a developing nation, it is extremely important that you follow trip guidelines and represent our program professionally. Unprofessional behavior can result in removal from the trip and/or significant grade impact.

Mid-term exam: 20% - Thursday, Oct. 10th, 9:00am to 11:30am

- This exam will include identifications and short answer questions asking you to describe and apply key course concepts and to connect to course speakers, site visits, and readings/resources. The exam emphasizes lectures, assigned readings, along with initial site visits. It is much more content driven than the final exam, which emphasizes analysis and 'putting it all together' in a big picture.

Book Review: 10% (see end of syllabus) – due October 30, in hard copy in class

- Select a book from
  - The Bottom Billion or Development as Freedom
  - Where the Wild Things Were or Song of the Dodo or the Last Rhino or Cerulean Blues: A Personal Search for a Vanishing Songbird
  - The Forest Unseen or the World is Blue
  - Collapse or Hot Flat and Crowded

- Half the Sky (Gender/Women) or Girls Like Us or The Road of Lost Innocence
- The Pipeline and the Paradigm: Keystone XL, Tar Sands, and the Battle to Defuse the Carbon Bomb

- Write a reflective essay describing a minimum of four themes of the book and specifically ***connecting those themes and examples from the book to our course topics and experiences***. You are strongly encouraged to reflect upon 'best practices' and 'activism strategies' described in the book and to consider what attributes make these entrepreneurs and leaders 'successful.' **Detailed instructions are found at the end of the syllabus.**

Individual Engagement Project: 20%

The students in this class have widely divergent interests, which will not all be covered in our limited time together. This project will enable you to more thoroughly pursue an IED topic of interest to you. Extensive details on the assignment are provided below, but it includes the following:

- Attendance at a minimum of two public educational events, of your choice, during the semester with reflective summary/analysis.
- Minimum of one site visit with documentation of the connections to your topic.
- Two interviews of people involved with and/or impacted by your topic.
- Video analysis/review of a film related to your topic (you are strongly encouraged to collaborate with fellow students to watch films together)
- Annotated bibliography of resources on your topic
- Education summary handout on your topic for your classmates

Please submit your project topic via email on Monday, August 26th by 8pm.
Annotated Bibliography is due Sunday, September 22nd by 5pm by email.
Final project, with all components, due in hard copy in class Wednesday, Dec. 4th

Comprehensive Take Home Final Exam: 30% - Due Monday, 12/9 at 5pm via email

- The exam will be essay based. One of the essays will focus upon and require significant reflection and examples drawn from your experiences, observations, and site visits during the Costa Rica trip.
- I cannot accept late exams due to the university's deadline for grade reporting. If an exam is not submitted on time, the student will receive an automatic incomplete.

Course Schedule

Every Sunday I will email you a weekly schedule with meeting times, locations, and specific details regarding our lectures and site visits for that week. You should always leave Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday open from 9am to 5pm unless otherwise noted in the schedule below.

Topics to be covered are listed below. While I will lecture on these topics during the week indicated, speakers and site visits on these and other issues may occur at any time during the semester. We attend panels, workshops, and speakers when they are available, and thus relevant

environmental and development topics might be considered at any time during the semester. Students are strongly encouraged to be flexible throughout this course, to understand that speakers may change with limited notice, and to strive to make connections across site visits and topics through your own thoughtful self and group reflection.

Introductory Week – Thursday, August 22

- 9:15 am – WSP required orientation Presbyterian Church
- TBD – Syllabus distribution and brief introduction to IED, internships

Week 1 – Introduction – Week of August 26

- Internship bazaar –Monday, August 26 in Bender Arena on Main Campus (optional, but strongly encouraged for networking)
- Introduction to IED, your classmates, course concepts, and modern global challenges
- Key roles of the media in environment and development
- Individual Project initial discussions
- Activism strategies and an introduction to 'Best Practices' of activism
- Please note that the first two weeks of the semester are less intense than the schedule of the remaining 13 weeks. This is intentional and is designed to give you time to find and begin your internships and to get settled into WSP and DC.

Week 2 – IED issues in DC – Week of September 2

- Monday, 9/2 – Labor Day – Most of your internships will be closed
- Exploring IED issues locally

Week 3 – Introduction to Key Actors in IED – Week of September 9

- Poverty, underdevelopment, inequality, and environmental impact
- ***UNDP Development Report* reading should be completed for class on 9/11**
- Key actors in environment and development – INGOs, IFIs, IOs, corporate actors and corporate social responsibility, foundations, governments, the media, individuals, etc…

Week 4 – Key Actors Continued – Week of September 16

- Millennium Development Goals
- US Foreign Aid

Week 5 – Food and Agriculture - Week of September 23

Week 6 – Oceans – Week of September 30

Week 7 – Oceans continued and Mid-term – Week of October 7

- *Midterm exam – Thursday, Oct. 10th morning*
- Friday, Oct. 11th – Fall Break – No class

Week 8 – Biodiversity, Species, and Forests – Week of October 14

- ***WWF's living planet report should be read for class on October 16***
- Bio-diversity and species preservation

- Community based resource management and forests – the case of Namibia

Week 9 – Climate Change and Energy – Week of October 21

- Climate change as an environment and development challenge
- Understanding climate change causes and potential solutions
- Recognizing climate change and its connection to other course issues

Week 10 – Success Stories and Social Entrepreneurship – Week of October 28

- *Book Review due in hard copy Wednesday, Oct. 30th in class*

Week 11 – Costa Rica trip preparation

- Friday, November 8th – internship make-up day

Trip to Costa Rica

- Sunday, November 10th – Meet at IAD – you are responsible for your own transportation to the airport
- Monday, November 25th – Return to IAD – you are responsible for your own transportation from the airport

Week 12 – Course conclusions and trip review

- Course conclusions, next steps, evaluations
- Wednesday, December 4th, Individual Projects due in class
- Thursday, December 5th, last class, distribution of final exam
- Friday, December 6th, class activity TBD

Comprehensive Take Home Final Exam – Due Monday, December 9th, 5pm, via email.

Additional information and resources

Flexibility: Please be flexible when times and speakers change as this will happen on occasion. Keep in mind that each week's schedule will vary due both to speaker and classroom availability.

Guest speakers/site visit expectations:

- With each weekly schedule, I will provide resources regarding our speakers generally including organizational background and biographies. Read these in advance and come prepared to thoughtfully engage with the presenter.
- Our time to get to speakers is limited. Please be sure to meet at the assigned time and place and to be prompt. If you are running late, text me so that we can discuss whether the site is one that can be entered late or not.

Classroom guidelines/expectations:

- Plan to be on time to class as well, as late entries are disruptive to others.
- It is helpful to bring your notebooks, writing materials, readings (when requested), weekly schedules and syllabus to class daily.
- I ask that students **not bring laptops** to class or speakers. While they are useful in some ways, they are also distracting to other students, the instructor, and guests. Engagement with the course, the instructor, and the materials seems improves in classes without laptops.
- **Sleeping or texting/use of cell phones in class or during guest speakers is a professional concern on many levels** and will be addressed individually as well as significantly impact your participation grade.

Course Costs:

- Unfortunately, AU does not pay for transportation costs while you are in DC. Please be sure to get a metro card early and to be prepared to pay for your metro expenses. There will also be times when I ask the class to have lunch downtown (between speakers or events). You can obtain a bag lunch from the university by asking one day in advance.
- There will be two to three scheduled events with small entry fees ($3 to $7) – if these present a problem for you, please let me know, in advance.
- We estimate that you will need approximately $300 of supplementary funds for your trip to Costa Rica to cover some food and personal expenses during the trip.
- Your book review selection will be about $15 when purchased online. The UNDP and WWF texts are free.

Office Hours:

- Please contact me to schedule an office appointment. I am available regularly via email. I will not have pre-scheduled office hours due to the changing class/speaker times each week, but I am able to come in on some evenings, as well as to schedule meetings when we do not have class. In some cases I can also meet you at your internships.

General Assignment Policies:

- Papers should be proofread, in 12-point font, Times New Roman, with 1-inch margins and page numbers clearly marked.
- Students with questions should contact the instructor early in the semester to receive assistance.
- The grading scale will follow AU's policy – 90-100 A; 80-89 B; 70-79 C; 60-69 D; below 60 F.

- Please note AU's academic integrity policies. If you have questions about how to cite materials, please see the Writing Center and/or the instructor. Remember, when in doubt, cite!

Academic Integrity Code

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's Academic Integrity Code which can be found at ***http://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/code01.htm***. It is expected that all assignments will be completed according to the standards set forth in this code. By registering, students have acknowledged awareness of the Academic code and are obliged to become familiar with their rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary action will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if there are any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general, or as they relate to particular requirements for this or any other course or work at AU.

Disabilities statement

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please do not hesitate to consult with me. A wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.
Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities.
Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus resources.
Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

AU – Emergency Preparedness

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease) or other emergency, American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. All faculty members will design alternative means of completing classes. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. We will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and/or Blackboard. Students are responsible for checking AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, you should refer to the AU Web site (www. prepared. american.edu) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information. AND contact your faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/ college-specific information.

Book Review Assignment

1) Your reflective essay, of approximately 4 to 5 pages, is not a summary of the book. Instead, the essay should demonstrate your understanding of connections between the book and course concepts.

2) A sample outline for the essay is as follows:
   a. Introduction – 2 paragraph summary with key themes.
   (*This should show your ability to write concisely, in your own words, and to identify what is significant for a summary.)*

   - Transition paragraph – Why did you select this book, what is your interest in the topic? What are the major themes you chose to highlight in your essay? Why are they the most significant? If this were a longer assignment, are there other subtopics or connections you might have written about?

   b. Sub-topic one – A topic that connects the book to the class such as: a best practice, an issue like gender or species preservation, a challenge.
      i. With each sub-topic be sure to give specific stories, quotes, and examples to demonstrate that you thoroughly read, analyzed academically, and personally understood the theme or issue.
      ii. Also for every topic give multiple examples from class (site visits, discussions, readings, etc.) and link the two together. Feel free to include examples from your internship course or other life experiences as well.

   c. Sub-topic two – see above

   d. Sub-topic three – see above – it is very important that you discuss three separate sub-topics in your paper.

   e. Conclusions – Answer some of the following questions in a summary reflection discussing your overall opinion and assessing the usefulness of the book.
      i. What did you learn from overall?
      ii. What was valuable from an academic standpoint?
      iii. Overall did it connect well with class, is it worth including in the curriculum?
      iv. Did it inspire you or help you to understand the issues any better?
      v. Do you have any questions you wish you could ask the author, etc.?

Remember:

- Edit your paper by reading it through – do not rely only on spell check.
- Consider having someone peer edit your work or to ask for assistance at the Writing Center.
- All papers should be in Times New Roman, 12 point font, double-spaced, and page numbers should be indicated.
- All papers need a title, author, date, and class title.

Individual IED Project: ***Due Wednesday, December 4th in hard copy in class***

Step one: Select a topic of interest to you that connects to IED. Most of you expressed an interest in a particular theme in your pre-course surveys and those will work well.

Submit your topic with a one-paragraph description of why you are interested in the topic and why you want to research it further before ***Monday, August 26th at 8pm via email – hheckel7@aol.com.***

Project Details: The project will count as 20% of your final grade. You will submit it as an entire portfolio or project summary during the last week of class. The annotated bibliography, however, is due earlier in the course, as noted below. I have built in some project time during the semester, but please keep in mind that some of these activities (particularly the attendance of public events and video viewing) will likely need to occur in the evenings or on weekends. You are strongly encouraged not to wait until the end of the course, but rather see this as a semester-long effort.

Project Components: All of the following are required for this project to be complete.

Annotated Bibliography – minimum seven sources – ***DUE Sunday, September 22 at 5pm via email – hheckel7@aol.com***

- An annotated bibliography includes the following information for EACH of the seven sources you find:
    - The source website, title and date created (if available) or date accessed.
    - Type of resource – video, podcast, reading, etc. and length of source (example 10 minute film or 15 page reading).
- 5 to 7 sentence description of the resource – its theme and material it presents. Be specific – instead of saying, "the author presents three theories on climate adaptation", say "the author's three theories on climate adaptation are: 1…2…3…"
- 3 to 5 sentences about what you learned from the resource and how useful the resource would be for others

Attend Relevant Events

- Attend a minimum of two public educational events, of your choice. I will provide you with a list of organizations that commonly offer free, relevant events during the first week of class.
- Write one to two pages, for each event, describing:
    - Major themes of the event
    - Specifically what you learned from the event
    - Make connections between the event and class, the larger topic of IED, your professional and personal interests

Site Visit

- Visit a minimum of one DC site that connects to your topic
    - Write a one page description of:
        - Why you chose this site
        - How it connects to your topic
        - What you learned
        - I encourage you to include photos as a supplement

Conduct Interviews

- Interview at least two people who are involved with your topic. Please note that these do not have to be famous people or issue leaders. Instead, you could interview people impacted by your issue, volunteers, speakers at the events, etc.
- Each interview should be written up in a two to three page summary:
    - Describe the setting of the interview – when/where
    - Describe why you chose this person
    - Describe the content of the interview – what did they say
    - Describe what you learned from the interview
    - Describe the usefulness of the interview to understanding your issue

Video Analysis

- Watch a full-length non-fiction film relevant to your topic. You are encouraged to collaborate on this and to find films that connect to several of your topics.
- Write a two to three page review of the film that includes:
    - Brief summary
    - Description of content relevant to your topic
    - Description of what you learned
    - Connections to larger IED issues, class, speakers, readings, etc.

Educational Issue Handout

- This is a key component of your final grade, as it demonstrates your understanding of the field and your ability to concisely summarize that understanding in an educational manner (i.e. to teach others).
- We will discuss methods for conveying information in handouts, for teaching and engaging others during the course. The format can be a brochure or a two page document.
- Your handout must include a bulleted list of resources (sites/films/etc.) for the reader to learn more.

IED Introductory Activity – Fall 2013
Fill out the following chart by talking with your fellow classmates. Submit whatever you have completed of the chart at the end of class today (you are not expected to finish).

Find a person who	Give the person's name and a detail or two about the topic on the left (i.e. where were they born if outside the US?)	Describe one new thing you learned about this person in addition to the characteristic in column one. (i.e. ask them something about themselves.)
Was born outside the US		
Plays a musical instrument or a varsity sport. What instrument or sport?		
Is majoring in something that is not environmental studies or international relations? What is their major?		
Speaks two or more languages fluently (what are they)		
Already has an internship (tell where it is)		
Is a vegetarian or vegan.		
Has a pet. What is it?		

IED Fall 2013 - Student Information Sheet

Please complete the following and submit before leaving class today.

1. Name (that you prefer to be called): _____(first) _____ (last)
2. Preferred Email: _____ Cell phone # _____
3. Country of citizenship: _____ Birth date _____
4. College/University: _____
5. Major(s) or primary field(s) of study:
6. Languages spoken (please indicate conservational or fluent):
7. Do you have an internship? If yes, what is it? If no, what type of position are you seeking?
8. Are you taking the research paper course for the additional 4 credits? _____ If yes, what is the topic or area that you plan to research?
9. Please list places that you want to be sure to visit during this course and your time in DC.
10. Are you certified in CPR or First Aid or have similar training? If so, please describe.
11. Do you qualify for a WSEM work award and if so, are you still looking for a position?

Please remember to submit two copies of your passport (and US visa if international student) at the beginning of class next Wednesday. It is essential that I have them on Wednesday in order to finalize our Costa Rica travel plans.