

SAG 201-001: Cultural Perspectives on Sustainability

(This course satisfies the new UK GenEd Global Dynamics requirement.)

**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30 – 1:45 pm
A6 Ag Science Building North**

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Office Hours

Tues/Thurs 2 pm – 3 pm

SECTION 1. COURSE OVERVIEW

Course Content

What is meant by *sustainability*? What constitutes critical elements that define sustainability and sustainable agriculture in particular? Who defines what sustainability is?

Sustainability is a multifaceted, highly contested concept. This course begins with two premises that: (a) sustainability does not exist in the physical world, but is an ideal, that is, a concept to work toward; and (b) how we define sustainability as individuals comes from our daily practices and interactions with people, plants, animals, spirits, and everything that is meaningful to us. In this class, we will focus on the social processes and cultural mechanisms that underlie everyday agricultural practices, in the U.S. and abroad. To do so, we will compare agriculture and food systems between the U.S. and other countries. Such cross-cultural comparison will help you: (a) appreciate distinctiveness of each society's effort to build agricultural sustainability; and (b) recognize the common challenges these societies face in the effort in the context of globalized agricultural trade and food production.

This course is structured into modules focusing in farming and agriculture throughout several regions in the world. Each module consists of readings, guest speakers, lectures and student-run seminars. Readings are selected from classic sustainable agriculture literature to expose students to key authors writing on cultural aspects of the sustainability movement. Guest speakers will speak about their work in sustainable agriculture around the world, and challenges to it. Student-led seminars will augment lectures and guest speakers focusing on farming systems outside of the U.S. in several cultures around the world. Leading seminars will give you experience leading discussions and in lesson planning, and your contributions will add depth to our cross-cultural comparisons. Student-led activities and participation in discussion and lectures are integral to this course. Students are expected to come to class fully prepared, willing to take responsibilities for organizing and running seminars, contributing to discussion and presenting original case study research. In your independent research, you will delve even deeper into a culture or commodity of your choosing, and write a semester-long paper using a case study approach to draw your own cross-cultural comparisons, and present your work at the end of the semester.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Appreciate the existence of diverse perspectives of sustainability across time (history) and place (cultures/societies);
- Develop analytical skills to investigate how agricultural sustainability is defined and practiced in a given location at a given time;
- Critically evaluate how certain social processes and cultural mechanisms shape these perspectives;
- Systematically compare the perspective of sustainability between one society/community in the U.S. and the other from non-U.S. society/country; and
- Communicate effectively how diverse, often competing, perspectives of sustainability reflect on the global dynamic in which agricultural and food products are produced, distributed, and consumed in today's world.

Required Textbooks

- King, F.H. 2004 [1911]. *Farmers of Forty Centuries: Organic Farming in China, Korea, and Japan*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc.
- Lyson, Thomas A. 2004. *Civic Agriculture: Reconnecting Farm, Food, and Community*. Medford, MA: Tufts University Press.

Supplemental Reading

Supplemental readings will be distributed in class, and, when possible, made available on the course Blackboard site.

- The European Union. *The Common Agricultural Policy Explained*. http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/capexplained/index_en.htm. Last verified 1/11/2010.
- Berry, Wendell. 1978. Agricultural Solutions for Agricultural Problems. *In: Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food*. P. 19-30.
- Berry, Wendell. 1986. A Defense of the Family Farm. *In: Bringing it to the Table: On Farming and Food*. P. 31-48.
- Jaffe, Daniel. 2007. Excerpts from *Brewing Justice: Fair Trade Coffee, Sustainability, and Survival*. P. 36-92. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Graduation Writing Requirement (GWR)

This is a writing-intensive (W) course approved to fulfill the upper tier of the graduation writing requirement (GWR). To receive W credit for this course, you must have successfully completed the first-year writing requirement (ENG 104 or its equivalent) and have completed at least 30 hours of coursework. As the GWR course, you must accomplish the following learning outcomes:

- Write a paper that is essentially free of mechanical errors (grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax) and awkwardness, using a style that is appropriate to the purpose and audience.
- Demonstrate an ability to discover, evaluate, and clearly present evidence in support of an argument in the subject area and utilize documentation that conforms to the formats and the citation conventions of the subject area.

- Be aware that composing a successful text frequently takes multiple drafts, with varying degrees of focus on generating, revising, editing, and proofreading.
- Write a capable, interesting essay about a complex issue (discipline-specific) for a general university audience.

To receive GWR credit, students must earn a grade of “C” or higher on *ALL FORMAL* assignments.

Please submit an ungraded copy of one of your report section to you for SACS assessment. This paper should contain only their student id number listed at the top of the page. All other identifying information (student name, instructor name, course and section number, etc) should be removed. The student id or billing number is located on the right hand corner of the student ID card. Questions about the W option should be referred to the Director of the UK Writing Initiative, Professor Janet Carey Eldred, eldred@uky.edu.

Assessment

Point breakdown

		<u>Points</u>	<u>%</u>
Case Study 1: Kentucky (Draft)	30		
Case Study 2: Non-US (Draft)	30		
Comparison (Draft)	30		
Presentation	10		
Final Paper	50		
Paper Total		150	75
Reading Summaries	2	10	5
Participation	40	40	20
Total		200	100

Grading Scale

Grade	Scale	
	Points	%
A	≥ 180	≥ 90
B	160 – 179	80 - 89
C	140 – 159	70 - 79
D	120 – 139	60 - 69
E	< 120	< 60

Assessment Criteria

- A** Exceptional work, beyond expectation, which demonstrate one's ability to effectively integrate all the required course materials and additional materials into an assignment. Written work requires little or no editorial revision.
- B** Very good work that demonstrates one's competence in integrating all the required course materials into an assignment. Written work requires minor revisions.
- C** Acceptable work that uses most of the required course materials. Written work needs major revisions for better integration of the course materials.
- D** Poor work that uses some of the required course materials. Written work needs major revisions.
- E** Unacceptable as an assignment.

Excusable Absences & Make-Up Policy

I do require written documentation (doctor's note, etc.) to grant an excused absence. I am strict about this policy for the sole reason of ensuring that each student has the same set of standards in determining whether or not an absence is excused. In accordance with the UK's policy (S.R. 5.2.4.2), the following reasons will be accepted for excused absences: (a) serious illness, (b) illness or death of family member, (c) University-related trips, (d) major religious holidays **or other church-related absences**, and (e) other circumstances I find to be "reasonable cause for nonattendance."

Students with excused absences will be granted the opportunity to turn in written assignments and will not be penalized for their absence. However, if you miss class due to an excused absence, it is your responsibility to provide documentation and arrange for make-up deadlines within one week of your absence. Please be proactive in your communication with me regarding absences so that mutually agreeable accommodations can be made as soon as possible.

Late Submission

All assignments must be submitted by the specified date and time. Points will be deducted from your assignment for late submission, **UNLESS** an arrangement for extension has been made between you and me at least 24 hours before the deadline. The percentages deducted from the total points of a given assignment are listed below. Please note that Saturday and Sunday will be counted toward the number of dates passed the deadline.

Penalty Scale

	<u>%</u>
1-day late	10
2-days late	30
3-days late	50
4-days late	70
5-days late	100

Academic Offenses

I will not tolerate plagiarism or any other forms of cheating in this class, intentional or unintentional. Please read “Plagiarism: What Is It?” in the UK Ombud’s website (<http://www.uky.edu/Ombud/Plagiarism.pdf>) very carefully so that you understand what constitutes plagiarism. Additionally, please familiarize yourself with the consequences for academic offenses described in UK Student Rights & Responsibilities Part II Section 6.3.1 through 6.3.2 (see www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html) and UK’s new policy on academic offenses at <http://www.chem.uky.edu/research/grossman/acadoffenses/index.htm>.

The Classroom Environment

I expect civil and courteous behaviors from students both inside and outside the classroom. This course involves discussions on various ideas and practices surrounding food and agriculture, and often times you will find your beliefs called into question. This is part of the learning process, and we will all have varying opinions on how we will produce food for future generations. It is very important to me that we all work together to create a classroom environment where everyone feels comfortable to freely voice his/her opinions. This means that attacks of a personal nature or statements denigrating another will not be accepted. Additionally, please refrain from tobacco use of any kind in the classroom. It is against University policy.

Moreover, sometimes your life circumstances will force you to miss a class or delay the submission of your assignment. Whether your absence from the class or delay in the submission of an assignment is excusable or not, you need to let me know so that I will be able to suggest a necessary arrangement for you to catch-up on the work. Please be proactive about any absences or delays in assignment submission, so that we can plan accordingly. Please communicate to me via phone or e-mail that you will miss a class or that your assignment will be submitted late.

Classroom Use of Laptop & Cell Phone

I permit the use of laptop in the classroom only for taking notes. Please silence your cell phones in the beginning of our class, and remind your peers to do the same. I also ask that you refrain from texting or using your cell phone to access the internet, check email, etc.

Email Contacts

If you are unable to come to see me during office hours, you can receive my consultation through e-mail. However, please remember that email is an official form of communication with your instructor. When you send an e-mail message, please use common courtesies, such as filling out the “Subject” line, using an appropriate salutation that addresses me personally (please don’t just say “Hey”), and please include your name in the message.

Drafts of Your Writing Assignments

You are encouraged to submit a draft (even if they are just merely outlines) of any assignments at any time *BEFORE* their due dates. However, please give me at least 36 hours to return a given draft to you with my comments.

Rewrites of Your Writing Assignments

Based on my feedback, I expect you to revise your writing assignments to improve your grade. The opportunity for revision is required to meet the guidelines for the graduate writing requirement, and I will provide you substantive feedback to help you improve your writing

through your work in this course. Please resubmit your original draft (with my comments) when you re-submit your assignments so that I can determine what changes have been made. Please note that it is not guaranteed that your new versions will receive higher marks than the originals. Although you can submit them anytime, all your rewrites must be included in your final paper, due on May 2, 2011.

Special Consideration

If you need accommodation for a documented physical or learning disability, please see me. If you have another special situation that will affect your participation or work, please see me.

SECTION 2. LEARNING PLAN

Research Paper: The Cultural Perspective of Agricultural Sustainability

You are required to write a research paper which examines how the perspective of agricultural sustainability is situated in particular place and time. Using the *case study methodology*, you will collect and analyze data from one agrifood system in Kentucky and the other from a non-U.S. country/society, to answer the following *research questions*:

1. What is agricultural sustainability in each case of the two agriculture/farming systems?
2. How is the idea of sustainability defined in each system?
3. What are the key ethical and social justice issues raised in each system?
4. What are the opportunities and constraints for making agriculture more sustainable in each system?
5. What do we learn about sustainability as a concept and the global dynamics of agriculture and the food economy?

For each case study, potential data includes, though are not limited to: newspaper, magazine, and academic journal articles about a particular agrifood system; economic and trade statistics available from government and international agencies; interviews with farmers, NGO leaders, government officials, immigrants from your case country, etc.; and participant observation at the farm.

In the course of the semester, you will be asked to submit at least the draft of three sections at different times (see below). Please remember that I consider these submissions up to the final week to be your “drafts” for the final paper. I will provide as much feedback as possible so as to help you succeed in this course. You will be presenting your paper one week before the Dead Week (or two weeks before the Final Exam Week). For the final paper, due on *May 2, 2011*, you will be revising all three sections and integrating them into one coherent paper with additional introduction and conclusions sections.

IRB Certificate

Before you begin your research project, you must successfully complete the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) web-based human subjects’ protection training program. Go to <http://www.citiprogram.org/> and follow the instructions. It will take about 3-4 hours to complete the entire training program. You do not need to do the program in one sitting; you can save the work you’ve completed and come back later to finish the program. Once you successfully complete the program, the site will ask you if you need to print out a copy of the certificate of completion. Do this, and please submit your copy to me by *January 27, 2011*. If you have already been certified as an approved “research personnel,” you do not need to do this program.

Research Exercises

To help you carry out your research project, there will be three Research Skill Development exercises. The content of each exercise will be posted on the Blackboard course site at least one week before the exercise session.

- | | | |
|------|------------------------------|--|
| 1/20 | 1. Social Research | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is social research?• How is it different from natural science research?• Where do I need to start my project?• What ethical issues are there in social science research? |
| 1/27 | 2. Data Collection | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do I find documents I need?• How do I interview people?• How do I conduct participant observation on the farm? |
| 2/3 | 3. Data Analysis & Synthesis | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do I analyze data I collected?• How do I synthesize data I collected?• How do I write-up different sections? |

Paper Sections

1. Case Study: Kentucky (Draft Due on 2/8/11): This section of your paper examines how sustainability is defined in the agrifood system in Kentucky. I strongly recommend that you find a farmer or a group of farmers in a particular community in Kentucky for interviews and conduct participant observation of his/her/their farm(s). In your paper, you will use Kentucky as a case study, discussing the way farming has been shaped by historical and institutional contexts, through state and federal policy and programs, the economic environment, etc.

2. Case Study: Non-US (Draft Due on 3/8/11): This section of your paper examines a case outside the U.S. Consequently, much data will come from documents, including but not limited to social and economic statistics, magazine articles (e.g., National Geographic), books, and academic journal articles. You may also use documentary films, radio reports, interviews with immigrants from that country and scholars who conduct research in that country.

3. Comparison of the Two Cases (Draft Due on 4/12/11): To write this section, you need to compare the two cases to ask the following questions: (a) Are there any similarities and differences between the cases in how sustainability is defined? (b) How are the similarities reflected on the global dynamics which agrifood systems are transformed? (c) How are the differences reflected on the unique local features which shapes the agrifood system in a given place and time?

Format Requirements

1. Paper:

- Double-spaced, 12-point font, 1" margins all sides
- Page numbered, your name in either header or footer
- Title page with the paper title and your name
- Reference pages (with any social science citation format)

- Each section draft should be no longer than 10 pages, **including** tables, figures, and bibliography. The final paper should be at minimum of 15 pages, maximum of 30 pages in length, **excluding** references, tables, figures, and appendices

2. Presentation:

- 15 minutes in length
- Presented in a professional manner
- PowerPoint is not necessary, but would be nice

Evaluation Measures

You will receive an evaluation rubric for your research papers, presentations and seminars well in advance of their due dates. I will do my best to communicate with you my expectations for your work, but if you feel something is unclear, please do not hesitate to let me know.

1. Paper: Each section draft will be assessed separately from the final paper to be evaluated on three areas:

- Appreciation for diverse perspectives of sustainability;
- Critical evaluation of ethical dilemmas, conflicts, and trade-offs in the effort to make agriculture more sustainable;
- Analytical skills for data collection, analysis, and synthesis to develop own perspective on sustainability; and
- Effectiveness of communication of ideas.
- Integration of course materials

Your final grade on your paper drafts will be grade you receive on your final paper. That is, final grades will override existing draft grades in your final grade tabulation.

2. Presentation: Your presentation will be evaluated on three areas:

- Succinct summary of your research;
- Integration of all the course materials; and
- Effectiveness in communicating own perspective on sustainability

Participation (Student-Led Activities)

Half of your participation grade (20 points or 10% of your final grade) will come from the quality of your performance as the seminar leaders. At least two students will be assigned as “the seminar leaders” for each seminar. The leaders must plan the content of their seminar session and lead class activities. Be creative with learning activities (e.g., movies, speakers, games, debates). I will meet with the leaders at least one day before their assigned seminar date to approve their learning activity plan and prepare the necessary arrangements, although it is strongly encouraged to schedule this meeting several days prior to the seminar date.

The other half of your participation grade will come from the quality of your participation in the discussion for each class. I expect that you come to class fully prepared. This means that you’ve completed all the required reading assignments and developed a list of questions and discussion points. You will find your reading summaries useful in generating your question set.

Evaluation Measures

As the seminar leader, each student will be evaluated on the following two areas:

- Understanding of the assigned course materials;
- Appreciation for diverse perspectives of sustainability; and
- Critical evaluation of complex and nuanced ethical and social justice issues involved in making agriculture more sustainable.

Reading Summaries

Summaries of reading assignments are worth 5 percent of your final grade, or 2 points (1%) each. Reading summaries should not be longer than a page, and should primarily be your reflections on the readings, how they contribute to your ideas about sustainability and the sustainable agriculture movement, and 2-3 discussion questions. These are not designed to be taxing, merely to help you stay on track with the reading and be prepared for discussion.

Evaluation Measures

Grading for reading summaries will be as follows:

- 2 points for clear work that is not rushed, with reflection and discussion questions;
- 1 point for incomplete or unclear writing or significant components missing; and
- 0 points for unacceptable or no work.

SECTION 3. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Reading Assignments	Date	Tuesday			Date	Thursday		
			Topic	Activity	Due		Topic	Activity	Due
1						1/13	Overview & Introduction	Introduction	Information Sheet
2	Lyson Ch 1-4 (pp. 1-60)	1/18	Sustainability in the US Agrifood System	Lecture		1/20	Research Exercise 1: Social Research	Exercise	
3	Lyson Ch 5-7 (pp. 61 -106)	1/25	Sustainability in the US Agrifood System	Lecture	Reading Summary 1	1/27	Research Exercise 2: Data Collection	Exercise	IRB Certificate
4	Berry: 2 essays	2/1	Sustainability in the US Agrifood System	Discussion	Reading Summary 2	2/3	Research Exercise 3: Data Analysis & Synthesis	Exercise	
5		2/8	Sustainability in the US Agrifood System	Discussion	KY Draft	2/10	Sustainability in the US Agrifood System	Seminar 1	
	The European CAP Explained	2/15	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Europe</i>	Lecture	Reading Summary 3	2/17	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Europe</i>	Discussion	
6		2/22	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Europe</i>	Guest Speaker		2/24	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Europe</i>	Seminar 2	
7	King: Intro & other assigned chapters	3/1	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>East Asia</i>	Guest Speaker	Reading Summary 4	3/3	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>East Asia</i>	Guest Speaker	All pre-midterm assignments
8	King: Assigned chapters	3/8	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>East Asia</i>		Non-US Draft	3/10	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>East Asia</i>	Seminar 3	
9		3/15 Spring Break				3/17 Spring Break			
	Jaffee: Chs 2 & 3 (pp. 36-92)	3/22	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Latin America</i>	Lecture	Reading Summary 5	3/24	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Latin America</i>	Seminar 4	
10		3/29	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Latin America</i>	Guest Speaker		3/31	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Global South</i>	Seminar 5	
11		4/5	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Global South</i>	Seminar 6		4/7	Agrifood Systems Outside the US: <i>Global South</i>	Seminar 7	
12		4/12		Research Paper Presentation	Comparison Draft	4/14		Research Paper Presentation	
13		4/19		Research Paper Presentation		4/21		Research Paper Presentation	
14		4/26	Conclusion			4/28	Conclusion		
15		5/2	Research Paper (by noon)						

SECTION 4: LESSON PLAN

Module 1. Overview & Introduction

January 13 Course Structure and Introductions

Module 2. Sustainability in the US Agrifood System

January 18 Transformations of the US Agrifood System 1 (Lecture)
January 20 Research Exercise 1: Social Research (In-class Activity)
January 25 Transformations of the US Agrifood System 2 (Lecture)
January 27 Research Exercise 2: Data Collection (In-class Activity)
February 1 Transformations of the US Agrifood System 3 (Discussion)
February 3 Research Exercise 3: Analysis & Write-up (In-class Activity)
February 8 Discussion of Kentucky Case Studies
February 10 Seminar 1: US-focused

Module 3a. Agrifood Systems Outside the US: Europe

February 15 "Protecting" Traditional Food Culture & Agriculture (Lecture)
February 17 European Agricultural Policy (Video/Discussion)
February 22 Farming in Europe: Guest Speaker
February 24 Seminar 2: Europe-focused

Module 3b. Agrifood Systems Outside the US: East Asia

March 1 Farming in East Asia: Guest Speaker
March 3 Farming in East Asia: Guest Speaker (Midterm grades calculated based on work to date)
March 8 Farming in East Asia: The Work of F.H. King (Lecture/Discussion)
March 10 Seminar 3: East Asia-focused

Module 3b. Agrifood Systems Outside the US: Europe

March 22 The Globalizing Agrifood System: North-South Issues (Lecture)
March 24 Seminar 4: Latin America-focused
March 29 Farming in Latin America: Guest Speaker
March 31 Seminar 5: Global South-focused
April 5 Seminar 6: Global South-focused
April 7 Seminar 7: Global South-focused

Module 4. Cross-Cultural Comparisons

April 12 Student Research Presentations
April 14 Student Research Presentations
April 19 Student Research Presentations
April 21 Student Research Presentations
April 27 Conclusion
April 29 Conclusion

Student Information Sheet
SAG 201-001:
Cultural Perspectives on Sustainability
Spring 2011

Your Name:

Student No.:

Level:

Major:

Email Addresses:

Phone Number(s):

Please briefly describe your interest in sustainable agriculture:

How do you define “sustainable agriculture”:

Please list courses taken in the Sustainable Agriculture Program:

What is your signature dish?