

COURSE OVERVIEW

Course name	Environmental Sustainability and Development in Latin America
Code	07-0089
Credits	2.5 US Credits / 5 ECTS
Modality	Virtual with online sessions
Nature	Theoretical-practical
Duration	12 lessons spanning 6 Weeks (2 lessons per week, 3 hours per lesson) and one final Master Lecture on Week 7
Schedule	TBA
Professor	TBA

PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

Latin America (LATAM) is the most unequal region in the world regarding its distribution of wealth. Around half of the twenty most unequal countries in the planet are in this region, according to the Gini index. The regions many sustainable development challenges comprise both socio-economic and environmental dimensions, that demand such challenges address problematics linked to inequality, poverty, use of natural resources, rural and urban development, inclusive economic development and democratic governance.

LATAM is also one of the most biodiverse and naturally gifted regions in the planet, it's abundance of natural resources including its biodiversity, water reserves, land and mineral resources have been catalyst of profound social and political conflicts. It's past and current history offers ample examples of how the exploitation of these resources shape the way societies pursue their developmental goals, often with mixed results.

This course creates a space for students to analyze and reflect on the complex relations that exists between economic development and environmental sustainability. It is focused on LATAM to comprehend the complexity of these issues within its particular and diverse realities.

The main aim of the course is for students to comprehend the importance of sustainable development in the current context of the climate crisis and the unprecedented environmental degradation, to consider how environmental protection, economic development and sustainability are cross cutting issues with many other crucial variables in need of consideration.

COMPETENCIES

Traditionally, teaching has been based on content, but in ULACIT we use a competency- based curricular model, which means that students must effectively learn to think and act as experts in their discipline, and not only to understand the conceptual framework of their discipline. The following chart specifies the disciplinary and general competencies to be developed, as well as the performance criteria, which constitute a guiding framework for the evaluation of the mastery of these competences.

Competences	Subcompetences	Performance criteria
DISCIPLINARY COMPETENCE		
Develop innovative solutions to current problems in Latin America, to reach a development model that would take environmental sustainability into account, as a key success factor.	Analyze the main challenges and opportunities that the Latin American region faces, for achieving sustainable environmental development.	Students will develop skills to analyze the great challenges and opportunities, the region faces, for achieving sustainable environmental development, through class debates and group discussions with their peers and professor.
	Propose innovative solutions to specific challenges and problems, concerning environmental sustainability and development in Latin America.	Classifying environmental problems in the region and participating in simulations to get a practical experience of the reality on the ground. Coherently and creatively defending the pertinence of their project proposal, before an evaluation panel made up of their peers and professor, in the school's project fair.
Develop innovative solutions to future problems in Latin America, to reach a development model that would take environmental sustainability into account, as a key success factor.	Analyze and project the main future challenges and opportunities the Latin American region faces, for achieving environmental sustainability and development in Latin America.	Analyzing the great challenges, the region faces, for achieving environmental sustainability and development by researching, drafting, and submitting a critical analysis paper discussing the future challenges and opportunities of environmental sustainability and development in Latin America. Documenting a relevant regional environmental issue and discussing them with their peers and professor.
GENERAL COMPETENCES		
Innovation	Innovation competence involves the capacity to think in an open, critical and purposeful manner; to experience and reflect; inquire; synthesize and reorganize information; generate new ideas; manage change; take risks and anticipate consequences; use technology; act independently	It uses technology to conduct research, organize, evaluate and communicate information through case analysis and resolution. Use creative thinking in proposing solutions to the problems they face in everyday life by simulating scenarios.

	and collaborate with others, among others.	
Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship competence involves the ability to plan systematically, show initiative, geared towards quality, implement problem solving skills, influence, reach agreements, communicate, manage information and other resources, show self-confidence and assertiveness, among others.	Choose the best option according to the context using the information from the readings in the discussions and simulations. Create a social entrepreneurship plan that promotes environmental sustainability.
Integrity	Integrity competence involves the capacity to sponsor and apply high moral and ethical principles, respect others, and be consistent with their own values in difficult situations, among others.	Collaborate and interact with others effectively and respectfully in class discussions around the conflicts and challenges of intercultural communication. Consider and respect other forms of life and cultural patterns that are explored through readings and individual research.

PLAN OF THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Weeks and Lessons	Topics
<p>Week 1</p> <p>Lesson 1: Introduction and Basic Concepts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the syllabus. • Explanation of the course qualification mechanism. • Introduction to the course • Basic Concepts
<p>Week 1</p> <p>Lesson 2: Environment and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental paradigms. • Economic centered development. • Environment centered development. • Critical alternatives to development.
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Lesson 1: Challenges to environmental sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumerism. • Climate change and global warming. • Deforestation. • Environmental crisis and social unrest • Poverty and social inequalities. • Pollution and sustainability
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Lesson 2: Population, Poverty, Capitalism & Environmental Degradation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malthusian perception controversy • Capitalism & its contractions • Social inequalities as a threat multiplier • Prioritization of poverty alleviation versus/or sustainable development
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Lesson 1:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geopolitics of environmental sustainability • Case studies of environmental challenges/opportunities in Latin America

<p>Past & Present of Environmental Sustainability and Development Challenges in Latin America</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental sustainability efforts in Latin America • Challenges/opportunities of achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030
<p>Week 3</p> <p>Lesson 2: Climate change and global warming and the Latin American experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change adaptation in Latin America • Climate change mitigation in Latin America
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Lesson 1: National Policies, Local Communities & Rural Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers, environment, and maize production in Zacapoaxtla. • Planting trees, building democracy: sustainable communal forestry in Mexico. • Biodiversity conservation in Bolivia: history, trends & challenges. • Payment for Environmental Services (PES) in Costa Rica.
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Lesson 2: Public participation and justice systems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for a strong political will. • The problem with effective access to environmental justice. • Activism and environmental protection. • Climate justice movements.
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Lesson 1: The future of environmental sustainability in Latin America</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting point of policy and practice. • Future opportunities. • Future challenges. • Nuanced perspectives.
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Lesson 2: Resistance and Localization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Movements and Resistance • Indigenous people & sustainability • Agriculture and the Environment • Case studies of localization & resistance • Environmental sustainability & Justice
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Lesson 1: Policies for Sustainable Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and practice in environmental sustainability and development • Public-Private Partnerships for Sustainability • Democratic Politics and Sustainable Development
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Lesson 2: The Future of Sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paradigm shifts in environmental sustainability and development • Progress and challenges of sustainable development • An uncertain future and public action

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Teaching methodology

To ensure that the course is compatible with the needs, interests and styles of learning of all the participants, we use the methodology of “reversed classroom”, or “flipped classroom”: the assignments that need minor cognitive effort (remembering and understanding) are done by the students out of the classroom, and those who need major cognitive effort, such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation, are done in different scenarios in the classrooms.

The course provides materials such as readings, videos, narrated presentations and others, via the online learning platform of ULACIT (i.e. *Blackboard*). Students before coming to class are expected to prepare their participation in class and study the theory at home. The sessions are reserved to practice, reflection and discussion. They revolve around questions, controversies and issues of real business life. With this active, reflective and participative methodology, students are expected to develop inquiry, research and analytical skills. Moreover, they are expected to develop a deep understanding of the subject, participating in the construction of knowledge shared with other students, teachers and other members of society.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Required Texts:

- Stevenson, H. (2018) *Global Environmental Politics: Problems, Policy, and Practice*. Cambridge University Printing House.
- Lorenzo, C. (Ed.) (2020). *Latin America in times of global environmental change*. Springer.
- American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th Ed.). APA.
- Carr, D., Heger Boyle, E., Cornwell, B., Correll, S., Crosnoe, R., Freese, J., & Waters, M. C. (2021). *The art and science of social research* (2nd ed.). Norton & Company.

Suggested readings:

- Fuentes-Nieva, R., & Feroci, G. (2017). The Evolving Role and Influence and Growing Strength of Social Movements in Latin America and the Caribbean. *International Development Policy / Revue internationale de politique de développement*, 9 (1), 323-338. DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/poldev.2378>
- Kahl, C. (2006). *States, Scarcity, and Civil Strife in the Developing World*. Princeton University Press. [doi:10.2307/j.ctv36zrx1](https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv36zrx1)
- Locatelli, B., Evans, V., Wardell, A., Andrade, A., & Vignola, R. (2011). Forests and Climate Change in Latin America: Linking Adaptation and Mitigation. *Forests* 2011, 2(1), 431-450; <https://doi.org/10.3390/f2010431>
- Nolte, D. & Wehner, E. (2015). Geopolitics in Latin America, Old and New. In D.R. Mares and A.M. Kacowicz (Eds), *Handbook of Latin American Security* (pp.33-43) Routledge Handbooks Online <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315867908.ch2>
- Pagiola, S., (2008). Payments for environmental services in Costa Rica. *Ecological Economics*. 65, 712–724.
- Porto-Gonçalves, C.W., & Leff, E. (2015). Political Ecology in Latin America: the Social Re-Appropriation of Nature, the Reinvention of Territories and the Construction of an Environmental Rationality. *Desenvolvimento e Meio Ambiente*. 35, 65-88. DOI 10.5380/dma.v35i0.43543
- Romero, A. & West, S. (2010). *Environmental issues in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Sachs, J.D. (2015). *The Age of Sustainable Development*. Columbia University Press.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The qualification of the course is distributed in the following evaluative activities:

Activity	Percentage
<i>Virtual forums (4)</i>	40%
<i>Summaries of Discussion Topics (5)</i>	25%
<i>Group Project: Regional Context Analysis Report</i>	20%
<i>Class Participation</i>	15%
Total	100%

Virtual Forums: 40%

It is necessary that students do the readings assigned and demonstrate they understand the topics and concepts through class and online participation in virtual forums. Therefore, each student will participate in 4 virtual forums, each carrying a 10% grade.

Rubric to Evaluate the Virtual Forums

Virtual forums					
	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstration of an understanding of the topic of discussion through critical thinking, higher-order thinking, and uniqueness of contribution					
Community building through collaboration and connection with other students (minimum 2 replies)					
Proper netiquette and mechanics of writing					
Timeliness and participation with posts/replies					
Total					

Summaries of Discussion Topics: 25%

The professor will establish discussion topics based on the reading(s) assigned, students will discuss and summarize the main concepts and issues related to each topic, and respond to a series of questions provided by the professor. The expectation is that the students will collectively and cooperatively apply the knowledge and findings they have individually attained through the course readings and study efforts before class.

Rubric to Evaluate Summaries

Criteria / Group Activity	0	1	2
1. The group response or activity product is formulated clearly and responds to the appointed activity.			
2. The group response or activity product employs a correct use of grammar and spelling.			
3. The group response or activity product is presented as requested and in a structured, organized and clear manner.			
4. The group response or activity product is adequately supported by academic and documentary resources.			
5. The group response or activity product presents conclusions and arguments clearly and logically, the ideas presented derive from the studied readings, concepts and discussions. They are relevant to the course subject and the established activity.			
TOTAL			
Note: 0: does not comply, 1: incomplete, 2: complies			

Regional Context Analysis Report: 20%

Sustainable Development is a multidimensional phenomenon that includes interconnected dimensions. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established on 2015 by the General Assembly of the United Nations through its "*2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*", establish seventeen sustainable development objectives for the international community of Nations as pillars of sustainability:

- I. Social Sustainability with five objectives; i. end poverty, ii. end famine and achieve food security, iii. universal access to health, iv. universal access to education and, v. Achieve gender equity),
- II. Economic sustainability with five objectives on; Yo. promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, ii. build infrastructure and promote innovation and sustainable industrialization, iii. reduce socioeconomic inequality, iv. promote sustainable human settlements and, v. ensure sustainable production and consumption.
- III. Environmental sustainability with 5 objectives; Yo. ensure sustainable management of water resources, ii. ensure sustainable access to energy, iii. combat climate change, iv. conservation of the oceans and marine resources and, v. sustainable management of land resources and protection of terrestrial ecosystems.
- IV. Institutional capacity for the promotion of sustainable societies with 2 objectives: i. promote peaceful and inclusive societies through effective governments and access to justice and, ii. Strengthen the means of implementation through global alliances, which includes the management of public-private alliances to promote technological advances and in productive and commercial relations, as well as the harmonization of international and national law for the promotion of sustainable development.

Students will be organized in collaborative groups to write a Regional Context Analysis Report using the concepts and discussions learned throughout the course.

The Report's main objective is to summarize the regions current situation regarding its SDGs and main sustainable development trends and challenges. The Report should prioritize a thorough analysis of at least two specific countries in LATAM addressing comparatively the situation of three SDG's.

The written report should follow the structure of an Academic Paper and be presented in the following format:

- Font: Times New Roman, size 12
- Spacing: 1.5
- Reference style: APA 7th edition
- Length: 2500-3000 words.

Rubric to evaluate the Regional Context Analysis Report

Criteria	EXCELENT	GOOD	REGULAR	DEFICIENT
Use of theoretical aspects	The report evidences a thorough understanding of the theoretical aspects of the subject analyzed and incorporates adequate data analysis in theoretical interpretations.	The report evidences an adequate understanding of the theoretical aspects of the subject analyzed and incorporates limited data analysis in theoretical interpretations.	The report evidences limited understanding of the theoretical aspects of the subject analyzed and incorporates limited or no data analysis in theoretical interpretations.	The report evidences no understanding of the theoretical aspects of the subject analyzed and incorporates no data analysis in theoretical interpretations.
Understanding the case	The report demonstrates a complex and thorough understanding of the regional context and its components.	The report demonstrates an adequate understanding of the regional context and its components.	The report demonstrates a limited understanding of the regional context and its components.	The report demonstrates a lack of understanding of the regional context and its components.
Consistency of ideas	The report follows an argumentative line, with an introduction, an analytical body, use of theory, data and a precise closure statement and ensures a clear association between its components.	The report has a weak argumentative line, with an introduction, an analytical body, use of theory, data and a precise closure statement but lacks adequate association between its components.	The report lacks an argumentative line, but has an introduction, an analytical body, use of theory, data and a precise closure statement with no association between its components.	The report lacks an argumentative line, does not have some of its components like introduction, an analytical body, use of theory, data and presents an imprecise closure statement with no association between its components.
Analysis	The report has an insightful and complete analysis of the regional context and its components and includes all argumentative aspects that support the affirmations and conclusions.	The report has an adequate analysis of the regional context and its components and includes some argumentative aspects that support the affirmations and conclusions.	The report has a superficial and inadequate analysis of the regional context and its components and includes little or no argumentative aspects that support the affirmations and conclusions.	The report has no, or an inadequate analysis of the regional context and its components and includes an argumentative aspects that support the affirmations and conclusions.

Writing and style	The presentation has a clear and organized format, with no errors, correct spelling and appropriate use of the language.	The presentation has a clear and organized format, contains few errors, with correct spelling and appropriate use of the language.	The presentation has an adequate to poorly organized format, with some misspellings and few errors in the use of the language.	The presentation has a poorly organized format, with many misspellings and constant errors in the use of the language.
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Class Participation - 15%

Participation means that students must actively engage in all of the class activities and class discussions. **Just being present in the lesson is not considered participation. The student actively participated, significantly enhancing the learning experience for other classmates. The student read the assigned reading and actively listened to his/her peers and commented on relevant class discussions and their peers' opinions.** Attendance is mandatory. Failing to attend the class more than 3 times will automatically fail you. You must always let the professor know in advance if you are not going to make it to class; however, excusing yourself will not eliminate the attendance requirement. The only justified absences are justified health issues, mandated by a doctor with due evidence or a publicly known force majeure event, and evidence of how it affected a student's attendance. Leaving the class early is not as attendance. For virtual lessons it is mandatory for students to log in individually, they cannot share a computer with other students, and will need to have the camera on at all times.

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

Attendance

ULACIT's commitment is to ensure that its students successfully complete their curriculum. Active participation is a key factor in the use of learning processes, so attendance at on-site courses is mandatory. If a student absents himself unjustifiably to three or more lessons, he automatically fails the course (Student Regime Regulations, chapter IX). The justification of absences only comes for health or work reasons, based on official documents. The justification is processed directly before the teacher, who has discretionary powers to accept or not the justification. Irrespective of the nature of the absence, the evaluation activities carried out on the day of the absence are not replenished.

Academic honesty policies

ULACIT promotes the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life. For purposes of this course, participants are expected to avoid dishonest behaviors such as fraud or plagiarism. Making fraud includes inventing data, falsifying bibliography, using projects drawn up by other people, obtaining unauthorized help on qualified assignments or having someone else do the work that is your job. Plagiarism includes verbatim copying of sentences, sentences, paragraphs and whole pieces of printed material, Internet and other sources, without making the corresponding appointment; or to paraphrase without citing the sources. The cases of fraud or plagiarism will imply the automatic loss of the course, and if the fault is repeated, they will be sanctioned with the definitive expulsion. The institution through its Blackboard platform has the "safe assign" tool that allows us to check the source used by students in the papers presented with other academic documents, identifying a match between them. This option can be used to prevent plagiarism and create opportunities to encourage students to respect copyright within the classroom, and the importance of avoiding plagiarism of information.

Creating a culture of respect

In ULACIT, we establish high expectations of behavior of the members of the university community. Therefore, we emphasize the value of mutual respect and we expect everyone to treat others the way they want to be treated. We define respect as the consideration and appreciation that we can show others without disrespecting people, so we do not tolerate disruptive actions such as:

- Arrive late to class or leave early.
- Constantly interrupt the class, getting up from the seat.
- Eat and drink in the classrooms.
- Answer telephone calls during the school term.
- Pack your belongings before the teacher has finished the lesson.
- Fall asleep in the classroom.
- Read newspapers.
- Use mobile devices for purposes other than those of the class, promoting their own distraction and those around them.
- Come to classes without having prepared with the assignments for the session.
- Making negative or mocking comments about their classmates and the teacher.
- Speak out of turn.
- Show unwillingness to listen to others.
- Use vulgar language on campus.
- We ask teachers to take corrective measures to ensure a respectful environment of coexistence that encourages learning and respectful habits, fundamental in the integral and professional training of students. At the beginning of each school year, students should consult with the teacher the specific regulations that will be established in their course and the penalties that could be implemented for non-compliance.

Attention to diversity

The ULACIT curricular approach emphasizes the development of competences through the realization of projects, which allows each student to respond to the academic requirements from their own learning style, and according to their individual abilities and interests. The primary responsibility for learning rests with the student, so the teacher must clarify the expectations of the course from the beginning, offer the guidance and support to satisfy them, granting the necessary flexibility so that each one can define how they will fulfill them and advance to its own rhythm in the development of the assigned projects. The teacher also has the responsibility to provide the required bibliographic material and to offer, throughout the course, continuous feedback that responds to the rubrics established in each project, and therefore, must have a qualitative character in addition to the corresponding quantitative information.

Intellectual Property

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