

Sustainable International Development & Human Security

Overview

Political, economic, social and environmental development in Africa is essential if Africans are to meet their real needs. For fifty years foreign aid programmes and national development strategies have defined and promoted development that depended largely on imported human and financial resources. Success was measured almost exclusively in economic and quantitative terms and frequently neglected the need for local people to improve their capacity to assess local needs and devise approaches appropriate to the local context. The complexity of development issues and the need for complementarity in the roles played by government, business and civil society were frequently ignored.

Sustainable international development addresses both quantitative and qualitative issues of ecological, cultural, social, economic and political change. Over the long term sustainable development widens people's choices, and ensures that they have the freedom to identify and articulate their own needs and priorities, assess available options, decide what should be done and implement effective programmes appropriate to the contexts in which they live. By their participation they determine their own futures. By enhancing their own capacity to deal with both current and future challenges they become active agents of desirable change as individuals, families, and communities within states.

Sustainable development seeks to improve human security and increase people's confidence that their future can be better than their past. To be secure people must not only have freedom *from* fear and freedom *from* want but also the positive freedoms *of* belief and *of* association, the freedom *to* participate in making decisions that affect them. The capacity to exercise both *negative and positive freedoms* contributes to a sense of worth in collectivist as well as individualist societies. Such freedoms are the means through which people both generate and receive recognition and respect that contributes to human dignity.

The Sustainable International Development course examines the above issues and provides participants with opportunities to interact with local people and to observe how communities are addressing development in terms of "*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*". Participants will obtain an understanding of factors, approaches and institutions that contribute to, or detract from, development that is viable over the medium to long-term. They will use resource material that combines analysis of global and regional development challenges with practical experience in East and Southern Africa and will examine how the international community, including Canada, has responded to African and global development priorities.

Students are encouraged to develop appropriate and successful responses to the challenges of achieving sustainable development.*

- a *disciplined mind* that recognizes actions are often taken with imperfect knowledge;
- a *synthesizing mind* that integrates information from several disciplines;
- a *creative mind* that stresses there are no simple answers and encourages innovation;
- a *respectful mind* that avoids stereotyping by understanding people in their own contexts;
- an *ethical mind* that values personal responsibility - what world do you want to live in?

* Howard Gardiner, 2007, *Five Minds for the Future*. Boston, Harvard Business School Press

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Course Outline

Instructor: Art Wright *

The world's natural systems provide the energy, air, water, and soil that make human, animal and plant life possible. But collectively behavior of the 6.6 billion people who now inhabit earth puts the natural systems of the biosphere at risk. We are accelerating changes that threaten biodiversity, increase the rate of animal and plant extinction, and reduce the capacity of humans, animals and plants to adapt. The impact of global issues is particularly harsh in developing countries of Africa.

Duration: This course will be delivered over a **SIX WEEK** period providing 39 instructional hours.

Objective: To provide an integrated and interdisciplinary overview of sustainable development and provide students with a practical and enjoyable learning experience.

Content: We will examine Africa's experience of colonization, evolution to independence in the mid 20th century, ecological, social, economic and political challenges they face, and prospects for achieving sustainable development in the 21st century. Material will be drawn from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, other African countries and Canada.

Issues: Course material will focus on

- the **principles of ecology, conservation and sustainable use** of wildlife, the effectiveness of international law in protecting endangered and threatened species, the issues that arise when people and wildlife live in close proximity;
- the **social, gender and cultural issues** arising from impact of poor health and endemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis;
- the **theory, concept and definition of sustainable development** in the East African context;
- the **importance of human rights and basic freedoms that provide human security**, and enhance peoples' capacity and ability to become effective agents of change in their own communities;
- the **need to reconcile environmental, social and economic imperatives** to promote sustainable development;
- the **roles of government, business and civil society** in financing sustainable development;
- the **importance of reducing environmental, social and economic poverty** and addressing major global issues including population growth, consumption, climate change, extinction, urbanization and water;
- **Africa's sense of ownership of, and responsibility for, sustainable development.**

Desirable Prerequisites: 1st year Political Science, Economics, Anthropology, or Cultural Geography will be helpful **OR** permission of instructor; the course is designed for 2nd, 3rd or 4th year students.

Text: John Reader, 1999. Africa: A Biography of the Continent. New York: Vintage Books, Random House, \$26.00. **Students should buy this before leaving Canada.** Some copies may be available for purchase from the instructor in Kenya. Supplementary readings will be provided during the course.

Evaluation: Participation in class 20 marks; Analysis of a major public policy issue 30 marks
Journal Reflections 20 marks; Final examination 30 marks

Methodology: Lectures, seminars and class discussions 70%
Student presentations from case studies 15%
Student observations from field visits 15%

* Art Wright is a former Associate of UBC's Sustainable Development Research Initiative and currently an Associate of the Centre for Global Studies and the Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives at the University of Victoria. He was formerly a diplomat and served as Canadian Ambassador and High Commissioner in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, and as Vice-President of the Canadian International Development Agency for Asia and Multilateral programs. He has been a consultant with IUCN, the United Nations and the World Bank, and a faculty member of the Study in Africa program since 2000.

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Course Content

Week 1 – Introduction (6 hours)

Text Readings: Preface, Prologue, Part 1-3 & 4, Part 2-8 & 10, All of Part 3 Overview:

- Earth's Timescale, From the Big Bang to the 21st Century, Change & Complexity.
- Gaia, Stewardship, Ecology & the Ecological Footprint, the Challenge of Sustainability.
- The Shape of Africa, Africa's Diversity & Today's Reality, HIV/AIDS, Gender & Complexity.

Week 2 - Sustainable International Development Theory & Practice (7 hours);

Text Readings: Part 4 – 22, 25, 26, 28, & 30; Part 5 – 35 to 40 inclusive

- The Evolution of Development Theory, Concept & Definition of Sustainable Development
- Reconciling Environmental, Social and Economic Imperatives.
- Human Security & the Responsibility to Protect – Toward a Concept of Inclusive Security.
- The Blind Men & the Elephant: Human/animal Competition for Habitat, Environmental Law.
- The Elephant Issue: CITES (endangered species) Conservation & Sustainable Use.

Evaluation: The Elephant Debate: A public policy issue (30 marks)

Week 3 – Historical Perspective; Legacy of Colonialism & Independence (7 hours);

Text Readings: Part 6 – 41 & 42, Part 7 – 46 to 51 inclusive.

- Slavery, Exploration & Imperialism, Colonialism & Settlers; Pan-Africanism & Nationalism.
- The Approach to Independence, the Mau Mau Rebellion, Majimbo, “Big Man” Syndrome.
- Challenges & Choices, Decentralization/Centralization Post Independence Reality.
- Alternative approaches Kenya, Tanzania & Uganda today.

Week 4 – Who Pays for Development? More fun than it seems! (6 hours);

Text Readings: Part 8 – 52 to 55 inclusive.

- Millennium Development Goals, Effective Development Principles, Financing Development
- Domestic Savings, Foreign Investment, Export Earnings, Remittances, Corporate Charities.
- Canada's Foreign Aid, Foreign Aid, Trade & Investment – the Future Agenda, Debt.
- Complementarity of International Action & Domestic Priorities,

Evaluation: Reflections from Personal Journals (20 marks)

Week 5 – Poverty & Global Issues (6 hours)

- The Nature of Poverty, Importance of Poverty Reduction, Capacity Building, Poverty in Africa.
- Major Issues: Population, Consumption, Climate Change & Carbon's New Math
- Extinction, Urbanization, Water.
- Canada's Environmental Performance, Do we need a World Environment Organization?

Week 6 –Prospects for Sustainability (7 hours)

- Potential for Conflict, Global Inequality, Are Africans Addressing these Issues?
- The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), The International Response
- Sustainability as a Reality, Sustainability in Africa - - A Better Future
- The Sustainability Revolution, Sustainability within a Generation – A Vision for Canada

Evaluation: Final Examination (30 marks) Individual feedback will be provided to all participants.