Course title: Green Business and Policy in the Global Context (SPAN)
Course code: BUSI 3005 AFLA (SPAN)
Programs offering course: Liberal Arts
Language of instruction: Spanish
U.S. semester credits: 3.00
Contact hours: 45.00
Term: Spring 2020

Course Description
The seminar seeks to provide students with an overarching vision on the most recent international debates surrounding the complex relationship between unprecedented levels of global growth in production and consumption, and the imperative of environmental protection. In this direction, a wide array of theoretical notions for the understanding of this complex interplay (such as sustainable development, green economy, green growth, sustainable degrowth), emerging from international organizations, academia and the corporate sector will be introduced and discussed along the different sessions. Additionally, the opportunities and shortcomings of different technologically innovative strategies promoted by governments and private stakeholders in the search of achieving economic development while reducing environmental risks will be presented and assessed. Finally keynote national guest speakers will contribute to the discussion by sharing the outcomes of specific implemented measures associated with sustainable production and consumption, payments for ecosystem services, and energy efficiency among others policies.

Learning Objectives
By completing this course, students will:

- Evaluate the major theories, debates, concepts, and facts drawn from an interdisciplinary perspective in terms of business and the environment
- Compare multiple perspectives by identifying and analyzing the complexity of interests at stake in the relationship between sustainable natural resource managements, business opportunities, and practices framed in the national/regional settings
- Understand the role that different Latin American actors play in global discussions around business and the environment.

Course Prerequisites
None

Methods of Instruction
The teaching dynamic for the course will combine the structure of lecture and seminar modalities, meaning that each of the sessions will start by a breaking ice exercise with trigger questions to students for them to be able to provide a brief interpretation of the main arguments of the readings provided (which will allow the instructor to evaluate the overall level of understanding of the texts at discussion), followed by a presentation of the subject by the instructor that will help set the basis for opening up the discussing during the last 30 minutes of the session. This method will allow students to better follow the in-depth presentations by the instructor and other special keynote guest, enabling them to adequately understand and later on use the different theoretical and conceptual provided tools.

A discussion forum will also be held where students will have to represent the position of an organizations regarding on of the central subjects discuss in class, the proposals for climate change mitigation and adaptations by different relevant stakeholders involved in climate change governance and negotiations. This method will enable students gain a better understanding of the role that different actors present in Latin American play in global discussions around business and the environment. Additionally, special keynote speakers associated to the governmental/intergovernmental, corporate actor, and a civil society sectors will be invited to share local and regional empirically based experiences that will serve the purpose of illustrating with examples the ideas discussed at a theoretical level. This method will allow students to recognize the complexity of interests at stake in the relationship between sustainable natural resource managements and business opportunities and practices framed in the national/regional settings and their interconnections with intricate global trends. The final teaching goal of
the course is to enable students to critically think and reach the tools to deeply understand the interplay between environment, business and policies.

**Assessment and Final Grade**

1. Mid-term exam 25%
2. Group Project Paper 25%
3. Group Presentations 10%
4. Discussion forum 20%
5. Participation 20%

**Course Requirements**

**Mid-term exam**

During the fifth week, students will have to take an exam that assesses both the level of readings follow-up and the understanding of the issues at discussion along the first half of the course. The exam will consist of 3 proposed exam instructions from which students will have to choose 2 and elaborate their answers based on both the readings discussed and the contents provided in class. The length of each answer is of 1000-1250 words.

**Group Project Paper**

Students will organize themselves in small groups (three members maximum). Each group will select one topic of the previous sessions that the group is interested in researching further. There are three components to the assignment. The first step is to map out the actors involve in the selected topic (e.g. local energy matrix or extractive industries in Latin-America). Each group will also identify and describe the political and legal institutions related with the topic. The second step is to discuss economic aspects that govern the selected issue. The third step is to analyze the positive and negative social and environmental impacts of the topic. It should include recommendations to minimize the negative impacts. The paper should be between 2500 and 3000 words. This method will enable students to critically think, synthesize and integrate the contents gained during the previous sessions into a chosen subject of preference.

**Group Presentations**

Each group will present the research findings of the selected group topic. Presentations should be no longer than 15 minutes in length. The groups are required to submit presentations.

**Discussion forum**

After the overall performance of the group has been assessed showing that students have grasped the main theories, concepts and tensions presented in the course, a discussion forum will take place. The forum consists on a role-play exercise in which students will have to represent the positions and interests of different organizations in a multi-stakeholder negotiation (involving corporate, NGO, media and governmental actors) around a pertinent sensitive subject (i.e Climate change governance).

**Participation**

Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

**Attendance**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.
For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent.

Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to any required field placement. Students may not miss placement/work hours at an internship or service learning site unless approved in advance by the Academic Director and placement supervisor. All students must complete all of the requisite 100 minimum work hours on site at the internship or service learning placement to be eligible for academic credit.

Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Absences for classes will lead to the following penalties:

N.B. Course schedule is subject to change due to study tours, excursions, or local holidays. Final schedules will be included in the final syllabus provided to students on site.

**Weekly Schedule**

**Week 1**

Class: 1.1 General introduction to the course

A complete introduction to the course's contents, activities (forum, guest speakers), assessment methods and to the instructors will be made to students during part of the first meeting providing space for questions by students. Additionally, by highlighting the main topics to be discussed on the following weeks, we will provide an overall contextualization of how green business and policies will be approached in this course. In this direction subjects such as environmental governance and rule making, private-public partnerships, international negotiations, North-South cooperation, among others will be tackled.

Readings:


**Week 2**

Class: 2.1 Sustainable development and available tools for managing sustainability

Historical developments and current debates around the concept of sustainable development. The three pillars of sustainability. Tools for the analysis and management of sustainable development will also be cover with the aim of understanding how sustainability can be calculated and benchmarked in relation to a broad array of procedures associated to productive activities.

This session is the first conceptual-historical building block in the path of understanding the need for a more balanced relationship between economic, social and environmental imperatives in 21st century development.

Readings:


**Week 3**

Class: 3.1 Policy instruments for a green economy
Green Economy and Growth precedents, declarations and policy instruments. The session provides further conceptual tools for understanding and analyzing the interplay between business and the environment but also analyzes the main policy instruments available (regulations, tax instruments, trading systems, R&D) and their potential for achieving sustainable development.

Readings:

Week 4
Class: 4.1 Alternative visions and proposals

The proposals of Buen Vivir, Sustainable Degrowth and Post-development. The session is oriented at providing insight on the new alternative visions introduced by different groups of ecological thought. A comparison of the main conceptual components of these alternatives versus those of Green Economy and Green Growth, will help strengthening the students’ understanding of the substantial differences between the contributions of these approaches.

Readings:
Martinez Alier, J. (2009: 121-137)
Gudynas, E. (2014: 61-95)

Week 5
Class: 5.1 Mid-term Exam

In class mid-term exam. The exam is geared to serve as a reading follow-up stage but also as a way of assessing the understanding of the topics discussed along the first part of the semester. The exam will consist of 3 proposed instructions from which students will have to choose 2 and elaborate their answers based on both the readings discussed and the contents provided in class.

Due: Mid-term Exam

Week 6
Class: 6.1 Renewable energies in Latin America.

South America has the opportunity to develop alternative energies in a context of climate change. Due to economic reasons and to reach its sustainable international compromises, Latin American countries have to diversify its energy matrix and move from polluting energy to alternative options.

The session’s goal is to assess the potential and limits of renewable energies in economic, social and environmental terms.

Readings:
Fulquet, G. (2015: 38-70)
OCDE/FAO (2017: 1-10).

Week 7
Class: 7.1 Alternative and sustainable energy

Innovations from the corporate sector in the provision of alternative sources of energy. Guest Speaker: IMPSA. A leading Argentinean firm in the alternative energy sector, IMPSA has specialized over the last decade in the manufacturing of wind power generators supporting the development of wind power plants through South America. This session seeks to introduce a success example coming from the corporate sector in which technological innovation allows for sustainable and low carbon energy solution.

Week 8
Class: 8.1 Mining in Latin America.

Main challenges for extractive industries in the Global South. Environmental impacts, social conflicts and the perpetuation of a mere exporter role? The current technical, political and economic conditions have posed a different set of challenges involving high environmental impacts, social conflictivity and strong dependence on volatile prices.

The module explores the present of the extractive industries in Latin America, its economic, social and environmental aspects, and it also analyze the dynamic between the Global South and Global North.

Readings:

Week 9
Class: 9.1 Corporate social responsibility in Argentina

Sustainable practices emerging from the corporate sector in Argentina. Co-curricular activity: CSR responsible at La Serenisima. A large dairy, over the last few years La Serenisima has introduced changes with the goal of improving its environmental practices in the production and manufacturing of its products. This session aims to show by example, how the corporate sector can take the lead in carrying out innovative programs and policies encouraging a sustainable management of natural resource while also creating economic opportunities.


Due: Group project paper.

Week 10
Class: 10.1 Group presentations

Students will present to the rest of the class, their group project on the selected issue. It will be followed by a brief debate and reflections about the presented topics.

Due: Group presentations

Week 11
Class: 11.1 Climate change governance

Reflections on North-South tensions regarding rights and responsibilities before current global environmental problems (Tragedy of the Commons, Shared but differentiated responsibilities) in a context of a changing international order. Main existing coalitions in climate negotiations (G77, BASIC, AOSIS). Actors, interests and overlapping visions around Climate Change. Guest speaker: expert on climate change negotiations.

Readings:

Week 12
Class: 12.1 Private environmental governance

International and domestic nongovernamental organizations have recently been introducing a number of non-state maker-driven governance systems as a way to develop environmentally and socially responsible practices. The goal is to mapping the various approaches emerging from the corporate sector such as corporate social responsibility, voluntary sustainability certification...
systems/schemes, emissions credits, among others and assess whether they challenge or complement the process of public policy and rule making in the environment realm.

Readings:

**Week 13**
Class: 13.1 Civil environmental governance

The participation of NGOs as a driving force in key collective decisions: the monitoring of the clean-up Plan of the Matanza-Riachuelo waterbasin. The session seeks to analyze the process of civil society’s involvement in a litigation case on the remediation of one of Latin-America’s most polluted waterbasins in which more than 18 million people live. By looking at the different stages of a collective process involving a judiciary decision of Argentine’s Supreme Court of Justice, which created a Colegiate Charted (coordinated by National Ombudsman) integrating civil society organizations in the monitoring of the clean-up plan, the session discusses the opportunities and shortcomings of civil society organizations’ participation in environmental governance.

Readings:

**Week 14**
Class: 14.1 Climate change negotiations

In-class discussion forum. The forum consists on a role-play exercise in which students -divided into smaller groups- will have to represent the positions and interests of different organizations in a multi-stakeholder negotiation (involving corporate, NGO, media and governmental actors) around a pertinent sensitive subject (Climate change governance). This exercise will help students recognize the complexity of interests at stake and the discourses around the environment that different actors and interests groups evoke for achieving their goals and defending their positions in international negotiations.

**Due: Discussion Forum**

**Week 15**
Class: 15.1 Closing Session

Public-Private Partnerships is the currently topic in Latin-America related with business opportunities, national development, social and environmental impacts. What are the experiences in the Global North? Which are its positive and negative impacts?

Discussion, reflection, and feedback from students.

Readings:

**Course Materials**

**Readings**


Handbook of Global Environmental Politics.

Corporación Andina de Fomento. (2013). Energía: Una visión sobre los retos y oportunidades en América Latina y el Caribe. CAF.


Tudela, F. (2014). Negociaciones internacionales sobre cambio climático Estado actual e implicaciones para América Latina y el Caribe. CEPAL.
Online Resources


Media Resources
