Environmental Studies 100
Environment and Sustainability in Southern Africa

“This course is a great overview of environment and sustainability challenges of the southern African region. The course is an ideal opportunity to acquire first-hand knowledge and experience of contemporary socio-ecological issues of southern Africa in context. An extremely informative, well structured and relevant course that is suitable for both new and old environmental studies students” (Chris Masara: ESD/SD Professional- southern Africa).

Location: Windhoek, Namibia

Instructor: Monika Shikongo

Liberal Arts Foundation (general education) requirement: ENV 100 meets the Social and Behavioral Sciences requirement for Augsburg University students.

Social and Behavioral Sciences Liberal Arts Foundation Statement
Social Science Liberal Arts Foundation (LAF) courses seek to show how our understandings of social reality, with all of its complexities and diversity, can be improved and clarified through systematic and critical analysis. The social sciences offer a variety of methods for systematically analyzing social systems and reality. Economics, political science, psychology, and sociology each utilize different theoretical frameworks and research methods to analyze and better understand various aspects of social systems. Moreover, the social sciences offer ways of gaining knowledge that are different from other intellectual disciplines (eg. the natural sciences; the fine arts) by focusing on a diverse array of social realms. Economics focuses on the economy, political science focuses on the polity, psychology focuses on the individual in social situations, and sociology focuses on social groups. The disciplines (areas of study) known as the Social Sciences at Augsburg College include economics, political science, psychology, and sociology. Students take two Social Science courses designated as ‘LAF’ as part of the Aug Core curriculum.

Course Description

An interdisciplinary introduction to current environmental issues. The course depends on ecological visions of the world and examines the connections we share as people living simultaneously in the human community and in physical environments. In examining these connections, we depend on the insights offered by political science, biology, economics, literature, sociology, chemistry, and history as well as experiential education and service-learning. The issues examined in this class — neither remote nor abstract — exist in our everyday lives, and a central feature of the course is the application of knowledge gained in the class to a campus project.

Purpose of the Course
This course explores and examines the human-nature interface in a southern African context of risk and vulnerability. The course draws insights from the social sciences to understand how environmental problems emerge and how their impacts can be mitigated.

Students will be provided with an opportunity to investigate the root causes of environmental problems and why environmental problems occur in a southern African context. You will be familiarized with some of the environmental concerns in southern Africa with particular emphasis on Namibia. The course will also introduce as well as investigate the impact of Climate Change in southern Africa. Climate Change adaptation strategies in a southern African context will be examined and discussed. An overview of Namibia’s ecosystems and biodiversity will also be explored by examining how various factors such as political, economic, historical, social and ecological factors impact both.

**Required Readings**


Hove, M. L. *The Urban Crisis in Sub-saharan Africa*: Stability, 2 (1); 7 2013


**Overarching Goals and/or Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course, students will:

1. Develop understanding of approaches used by the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences in the exploration of relationships between humans and environments.
2. Be introduced to some environmental and sustainability challenges of southern Africa in the 21st century in order to acquire an in-depth understanding of environment and sustainability challenges in context.
3. Explore the competing and contested socio-political, cultural, economic, and bio-physical dimensions of sustainability in a southern African context.
4. Undertake a field trip to an environmental centre and explore the centre’s philosophy of sustainable living and sustainability.
5. Sharpen your analytical skills in examining the causes and consequences of environmental problems through the application of sustainability framework in search of solutions.
6. Develop an understanding of how Namibia promotes sustainable natural resource-based livelihood within a framework of community-based natural resource management as well as through biodiversity protection mechanisms.

7. Deepen your understanding of climate change impacts and adaptation in southern Africa.

8. Examine social approaches aimed towards the alleviation of contemporary environmental problems by applying different theoretical frameworks or conceptual lenses in order to evaluate how several environmental movements intend to promote the concepts of eco-efficiency, environmental justice, equitable economic growth and eco-feminism.

9. Reflect upon your role as agents of change to impact on social, economic and environmental justice through involvement at different educational, social and political levels.

Course Requirements (100%)

- **Class Participation (10%)**: You are expected to regularly attend classes. Class attendance is the most important means to achieve the learning goals for this course. This aspect of the assessment will comprise compulsory class attendance, active class participation by providing feedback on assigned readings. You will also be required to engage with other students as well as with class guests, therefore you will be encouraged to ask questions as often as possible. Moreover, it will be your responsibility as a student to notify the course instructor in advance if you are unable to attend a class session.

- **Currents of Environmentalism (20%)**: This assessment exercise will require you to select and discuss any Environmental Movement of your choice from unit 6 readings. In your discussion, you will be required to use the Martinez-Alier (2002) reading (Currents of Environmentalism) in order to explain the current/s of Environmentalism informing the activities of the Environmental Movement that you will select.

- **NaDEET Fieldtrip reflection (15%)**: You will undertake a field trip to the Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET) and upon your return. You will be required to reflect on the NaDDET philosophy and sustainability practices.

- **Water Resources and Humans (10%)**: The purpose of this essay is to explore how poor access to clean water and sanitation affect the health of people in sub-Saharan Africa. You will be required to provide an analysis on how various population groups are affected by a lack of access to clean water and sanitation.

- **Climate Change and the Environment (10%)**: You will be required to provide a detailed critical analysis of the impact of climate change in Namibia/southern Africa. Additionally, the assessment exercise will require you to identify a theme/s that you will critically engage with.

- **Interdisciplinary Blog Assignment (5%)**: All students will be responsible for preparing two blog entries complete with photos during the semester. During the first week of the semester there will be a sign-up sheet posted, along with information about probable course content for the rest of the semester so that you could choose themes that most interest you and times of the semester that work best for you. The blogs will usually be written in groups of three (excerpt a few groups of four). A week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. **Length of Blog Entries**: Approximately one page per group.

- **Final Integrative Projects (30%)**: Final projects will address the Development Process, Religion, Political Science, Environmental Studies, History and Internship courses: This project can be done individually or in groups of up to three students. Projects should be creative (a play, a calendar, musical piece, etc), and
should: 1) be rooted in critical analysis of issues important to Namibia and/or South Africa, 2) draw upon your own experiences, and 3) be a synthesis of your learning that can be used to educate others on key issues facing Namibia and/or South Africa. Although this is an integrative project, each instructor will grade the final projects separately.

### Course Design

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to Environment and Sustainability in Southern Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sustainable Natural Resources Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Environmental Movements: Re-defining Environmentalism</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sustainable Living and Sustainability at NaDEET</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Water Resources and Challenges in Southern Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Integrated Risk Management in a Context of Climate Change</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Environment and Urbanization</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wrap-up</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Integrative Projects</td>
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### Teaching Methodology

The course is theoretically guided by humanities pedagogy thus incorporates elements of situated learning strategies in order to enhance the interaction of physical, mental and emotional experiences among students. One of the best ways to realize this kind of pedagogy is by means of supporting students to look into the social-ecological systems in which learning occurs. Consequently, a problem-based and solutions oriented approach will be utilized throughout the course. Therefore, the course will draw on various pedagogical methods such as course readings and class discussions of those readings, lectures, videos, classroom exercises, guest speakers by environmental stakeholders and field-based activities.

### Additional Comments

#### Explanation of Grades

Augsburg University uses a letter grading system using the following definitions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>G.P.</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>93-100% Excellent. Highest standard of excellence; Goes above and beyond stated expectations; Deep integration of discussions, lections, readings and/or service learning in assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>88-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>83-87% Good. Above basic course requirements. Some integration of class discussion, lecture, theory and/or service learning in assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>78-79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>73-77% Satisfactory. Basic standards and expectations for course met; minimum integration of class discussion, lecture, theory and/or service learning in assignments. Course grades falling below 2.0 will not be accepted toward licensure into Augsburg licensure programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>68-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>63-67% Poor. Below basic standards and expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>60-62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>&lt;60% Failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Pass*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>Low Pass*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>No Pass</td>
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*The letter grade equivalent of a P grade is a C- or higher for undergraduate courses and a B or higher for undergraduate courses and a B or higher. 
**The letter grade equivalent of an LP grade is a D-, D, or D+. 

CGEE Grading Policy and Late Assignments
You must submit assignments on time. If you need an extension, you must talk to us in advance to negotiate a new deadline. If you have not been given an extension in advance and you turn in a late assignment, you will be docked half a grade. If you are more than one week late, you will be docked a full grade. No assignments will be
accepted more than two weeks after the original deadline; a “0” will be given after that. Assignments due near
the end of the semester will not be accepted after the last day of the semester.

**Re-writing Assignments**
If you receive a grade of C- or lower, you may revise a paper as long as you resubmit it within one week of the
date it was returned to you. Your final grade will be an average of the two grades.

**Augsburg Honesty Policies**
You are expected to follow the [Augsburg Honesty Policies](#). We assume that you have read the honesty policy,
understand it, and are following it. Except when the assignment expressly encourages group work, it is assumed
that all course work will be your own. You may not copy other students’ work. The first occurrence of plagiarism
will result in the failure of the assignment. A student who commits plagiarism a second time will fail the course.

**Students’ Rights and Responsibilities**
Students with formally diagnosed learning or physical differences have legal rights to course modifications. Those
who qualify should identify themselves to the instructor as soon as possible in order to obtain extra assistance.

**Accommodation and Adaptation**
Augsburg University is committed to providing an environment where all students have the opportunity to
equally participate in the academic experience, including students with disabilities. Students with disabilities
have rights as determined by federal and state laws which require institutions to provide reasonable
accommodations for the student’s disability in order to afford an equal opportunity to participate in the
university’s programs, courses, and activities.

**Non-Discrimination Statement**
Augsburg recognizes that our individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another and the world
around us, rather than divide us. In this class, people of all races, ethnicities, gender expressions and gender
identities, religions, ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and nationalities
are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. If you feel your differences
may in some way isolate you from Augsburg’s community or if you have a need of any specific accommodations,
please speak with the instructor early in the semester about your concerns and what we can do together to help
you become an active and engaged member of our class and community.