

Land Acknowledgement

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

APBI361 is a web-oriented course, and I am grateful to be instructing this course from the place where I call home that stands within the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the [Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group](#). Many indigenous peoples thrive on the lands and waters we are acknowledging and are alive and strong.

Course Information

Course Title: Key Indicators of Agroecosystem Sustainability

Course Code Number: APBI361 199

Course Credits Value: 3

There are no prerequisites for this course, however the course does seek to further develop and improve upon strong reading, critical analysis, independent research, and evaluation skills for experienced undergraduate students who are ready for 300 level course expectations and responsibilities, and who are capable of keeping pace with course assignments without a pre-scheduled meeting time.

Contacts

Course Instructor: DeLisa Lewis, PhD (she, her)

Contact Details: Email delisa.lewis@ubc.ca

(include course number (APBI361) in subject line of email correspondence)

Virtual Office Hours: Regular day and time for drop-in office hours are to be determined with student survey at beginning of term.

Students unable to make the regularly scheduled virtual office hours are to send an email with request for alternate time as noted above in contact details.

Course Instructor Brief Biographical Statement

I am an Assistant Professor in the Applied Biology Program of the Faculty of Land and Food Systems with a part-time appointment. I have been teaching

courses focused on Agroecology and Food Systems in our faculty since 2009. As a graduate student, I was a teaching assistant for this course, and have been working to provide student-centered updates on the course content since 2015. My areas of research and practice are focused on soil health centered best practices with an agroecological lens. I am also a full-time farmer living and working my family's 40-acre farm on Vancouver Island. My research collaborations with the Sustainable Agriculture Landscapes Lab and Dr. Sean Smukler connect our farm with a wider network of regionally focused on-farm investigations.

Course Teaching Assistant: Raelani Kesler

Contact via Canvas course email and view her introduction on the Canvas course introductions page.

Course Description

APBI361 offers an exploration of contemporary models and measurements of sustainable agriculture as developed by policymakers, non-government organizations, academic researchers, and for-profit commercial enterprises. Students will encounter the complexity, challenges, and limits of sustainability indicators at global, national, and regional scales.

Course Structure

APBI361, centered on a study of the 'Key Indicators of Agroecosystem Sustainability', was designed primarily as a web-based course. Review of course materials and a majority, but not all, course assignments can be completed with a regular schedule of asynchronous learning activities.

The course goal is to provide an opportunity for students to explore the ways agriculture and food systems sustainability is measured, and to critically examine these sustainability assessments with support from peers and the teaching team.

To that end, building skills and continued practice with collaborative and social learning is an important learning objective of the course and may require flexibility and coordination of your schedule. You will be asked to regularly contribute to discussions, to respectfully provide timely peer review and feedback as part of the course learning assessment.

Course readings and all assignments will all be located within the APBI361 Canvas course website. Students will need to familiarize themselves with how to navigate the site, where and how to submit each assignment, and take responsibility for communicating regularly with classmates and the instructor.

In response to student feedback and some of the identified additional pressures on online learning during the global COVID19 pandemic, this term I will also offer several opportunities for 'live' or synchronous and informal discussion with the goal of supporting each student in the preparation of specific course assignments, and more importantly, to meet course learning objectives. These will be organized as student driven Q&A discussions or project workshops, and will take place on Zoom, scheduled with your feedback from a beginning of term student survey.

Course Schedule

The schedule for the course will be organized on a weekly basis, with all written assignments due on Wednesdays and Fridays. The weekly course schedule can be found on the APBI361 home page in Canvas.

Any change to the course schedule will be communicated with Canvas Course Announcements and an updated version of the course schedule will be posted on the corresponding Canvas course page.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of APBI361, students will be able to:

- Identify and explain the 'what, who, and why' of agroecosystem sustainability indicators as currently utilized by policymakers, agriculture and food systems researchers, non-governmental organizations, for-profit commercial enterprises, and consumers
- Identify and critically engage with the process of selecting and applying sustainability indicators across multiple scales and for a wide range of intended outcomes
- Demonstrate increased proficiency with collaborative and social learning through completion and mastery of group discussion and peer review assignments
- Generate a well-supported written assessment of agroecosystem sustainability based on course materials and independent research
- Demonstrate additional proficiency with communicating evidence-based findings to audiences beyond the university with the completion of a

Key Indicators of Agroecosystem Sustainability APBI361 Syllabus

multimedia piece that showcases your understandings of Key Indicators of Sustainable Agroecosystems.

Learning Activities

To meet the course learning objectives, the activities and assessments for this course will consist of the following:

- Weekly required reading and viewing of course content provided by the instructor and hosted on the Canvas course platform.
- Weekly communication and engagement with course materials in the form of written and multimedia discussion assignments
- Peer review assignments to provide support, structure, and feedback as you generate the written sustainability indicators report and the indicators media project assignments.
- Indicators Project Outline and Rough Draft: A written assignment to help organize your weekly review of course materials, your preliminary independent research, written reflections, and discussions into a written project outline and draft format
- Indicators Written Project Report: Building from the weekly review of course materials, weekly assignments, and peer reviews, as well as from independent research to identify a specific 'agroecosystem' and set of indicators, this report will demonstrate your capacity to identify, evaluate, and apply sustainability indicators
- Indicators MultiMedia Project Assignment: Building from weekly engagement with the course materials, peer discussion and feedback, and self-directed interests, students will choose from an audio or visual format and communicate their main takeaways from their Indicators Project work.

Learning Materials

All learning materials for this course will be provided on the Canvas course website. No additional textbook or other purchases required.

Assignments and Grading Overview

Weekly discussion assignments (10 x Fridays, January 14 – April 1) 20%

Peer reviews (4 x Fridays) 20%

Indicators Project Outline and Rough Draft (March 4) 10%

Indicators MultiMedia Project Assignment (Apr.1) 20%

Written Indicators Project Report (Apr.8) 30%

See the Weekly Course Schedule linked on the Canvas home page and the Assignments tab link on left side navigation in Canvas for complete list of due dates, detailed assignment instructions, and marking rubrics.

The accepted format for all written assignments is the American Psychological Association (APA) format. **You are expected to follow this format for all written assignments.** In brief, the APA writing style aims to promote objectivity in communicating science, and the APA format is a means to standardize reports across the scientific community (Schwartz, Landrum, & Guring, 2013). More detailed information about this format, including how to cite references correctly can be found here [Links to an external site.](#) and here [\(Links to an external site.\)](#).

The Indicators MultiMedia Project Assignment is intended to offer an opportunity to demonstrate that students have met key course learning objectives with reflections, inspiration, and communication forms that reach beyond traditional academic audiences and include other ways of learning and knowing. The **Canvas assignment dropbox has limitations for accepted file format type and file size that sets the expectations for acceptable submissions of this assignment.** The details for acceptable file formats and file size for this assignment are found in the Indicators MultiMedia Project assignment description, linked with the Assignments tab on the course Canvas site.

Contacting the instructor and office hours

If you have general questions about the course content or assignments, please first post these to the Canvas course [Frequently Asked Questions/FAQS Discussion](#) Board. On the FAQS discussion board, anyone in the course may helpfully respond—another student, the instructor, or your TA. Please note, the teaching team will not be responding to incoming emails or this discussion board on weekends or during the Mid-term break.

Students are encouraged to send an email request to the instructor if you have questions that are personal or specific to your individual situation, or if you would like to schedule a virtual office hour outside of the regularly schedule office hours.

During my regularly scheduled weekly office hours, feel free to connect with me via Zoom. Please 'drop-in' anytime during this hour without making an appointment to ask me questions or discuss anything related to the course.

You will initially be put into the meeting waiting room, and I will let you in as soon as I am free.

Due Dates and Late Assignments

All assignments are due at the times and dates listed in the course calendar. All times listed are set to Vancouver campus time (PST/PDT, UTC-7 hours). Students in different time zones will be responsible for converting to their own time/date to meet on time assignment deadlines.

Marks reduction of 5% per 24 hours will result from late weekly discussion or peer review assignments.

Marks reductions of 10% per 24 hours will result from late submissions to the Project Outline/Draft assignment (March 4), the Indicators MultiMedia Project Assignment (April 1), and/or the Indicators Written project Report (April 8).

With acknowledgement of the challenges to health we are all currently facing, final marks for the weekly discussion assignments and peer reviews will be calculated as the best 9 out of 10 submissions.

Similarly, each student will have two 48-hour late 'tokens' to use as a waiver for late assignment submissions to the Project Outline/Draft assignment (March 4), the Indicators MultiMedia Project Assignment (April 1), and/or the Indicators Written project Report (April 8).

If you anticipate that you won't be able to meet an assignment deadline, and you would like to 'claim' one of these 48-hour late tokens, you must communicate with the instructor by email with that request as soon as you are able. Otherwise, your marks will be reduced by the late marks reduction standard as listed above.

Student Resources and Mental Health

If you are having issues with stress, anxiety, or other mental health problems, please do not hesitate to contact the instructor and to reach out to the wide range of UBC resource persons who are focused on providing support in this arena.

- <https://www.landfood.ubc.ca/student-services/medical-emotional-difficulties/>
- <https://facultystaff.students.ubc.ca/assisting-students-distress>

- <https://students.ubc.ca/campus-life/diversity-campus/sexual-diversity>
- <https://students.ubc.ca/health-wellness/student-health-service>
- <https://students.ubc.ca/health-wellness/mental-health-support-counselling-services>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are subject to the University's rules on [Academic Misconduct](#) and have a responsibility at all times to behave according to the standards of integrity that are required of all members of the academic community.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and any student caught plagiarizing will be subject to penalties set out in the UBC calendar. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying or paraphrasing from another author or source without proper citation
- Copying work from another student
- Copying your own work used for another course without clear acknowledgement and rationale
- Broadly, any form of intellectual theft where another's work or ideas are presented as another individual's assignment

International Students

During this pandemic, the shift to online learning has greatly altered teaching and learning at UBC, including changes to health and safety considerations. Keep in mind that some UBC courses might cover topics that are censored or considered illegal by non-Canadian governments. This may include, but is not limited to, human rights, representative government, defamation, obscenity, gender or sexuality, and historical or current geopolitical controversies. If you are a student living abroad, you will be subject to the laws of your local jurisdiction, and your local authorities might limit your access to course material or take punitive action against you. UBC is strongly committed to academic freedom, but has no control over foreign authorities (please visit [here](#) for an articulation of the values of the University conveyed in the Senate Statement on Academic Freedom). Thus, we recognize that students will have legitimate reason to exercise caution in studying and researching certain subjects. If you have concerns regarding your personal situation, consider postponing taking a course with manifest risks, until you are back on campus or reach out to your academic advisor to find substitute courses. For further information and support, please visit: <http://academic.ubc.ca/support-resources/freedom-expression>

Additional University Policies

UBC provides resources to support student learning, and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise, and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available on [the UBC Senate website](#).

Additional Learning Resources and technical support

Chapman Learning Commons

Resources for a wide range of learning support including:

Online learning, writing support, academic integrity, tutoring and advice

<https://learningcommons.ubc.ca/>

Faculty of Land and Food Systems Learning Centre:

Technical issues with Canvas

<https://lc.landfood.ubc.ca/support/>

Copyright

All materials of this course (course contents, lecture slides, assessments, course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of the Course Instructor or licensed to be used in this course by the copyright owner. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline.

Version: January 1, 2022

Schwartz, B. M., Landrum, R. E., Gurung, R. A. R. (2013). An easy guide to APA style (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Sage.