Indiana University of Pennsylvania
American Language Institute
ALI 6920: Academic Research and Sustainability
Fall 2025 Special Program

Instructor: Nada Tayem   **E-mail: vtnw@iup.edu**
Class Time and Location: Zoom meeting invitation
Meeting ID: 923 9607 7855

 Group 1: 7:00-8:00
Group 2: 8:15-9:15

Course Overview & Objectives

This course provides students with guidance, information, and practice using skills necessary to conduct research in specific academic disciplines. It empowers students by guiding them through the research process. Students will develop English language and academic skills by completing individual projects related to their field.

Learner Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this class will be able to:
- Discuss the role humans have played in shaping today's environmental conditions.
- Discuss and better understand the psychological impacts of climate change.
- expand their environment and sustainability vocabulary.
- Develop critical thinking and communication skills by analyzing how environmental crises affect mental health across diverse communities.
- Improve their research skills.
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Required Materials:
- Computer and good internet connection.
- Cell phone with functional camera or digital camera
- Notebook

Course Requirements & Grading (100 points)

1. **Attendance and Participation (50%):**

   Attendance and punctuality are mandatory and essential to meet the objectives of this course. You must arrive on time for class. You are expected to come to class and participate in class activities including speaking, in-class discussion, and completing activities. **Your camera must be on during class.**

2. **iNaturalist Observation (25%):**

iNaturalist is a citizen science website where users submit observations (photos or sounds) of living organisms they encounter. These observations can then be identified by other users. Students will submit at least 5 unique observations they encounter to iNaturalist.

3- Presentation:

How Do you Feel ? Exploring the Psychological Toll of Climate Change and the Environmental Cricis of Our Time

Objective:
Students will deepen their understanding of the relationship between the environment and mental health by researching, analyzing, and presenting real-world examples, supported by key vocabulary and concepts from the lessons learned in the classroom and beyond.

Instructions:

1. **Individual Work:**

2. **Choose a Focus Topic:**
   Each student will propose *one* theme related to the environmental crisis of our time which can be related but not limited to the following:

   Eco-anxiety

   Climate grief and solastalgia

   Mental health effects of extreme weather (e.g., wildfires, floods, heatwaves)

   Mental health disparities in vulnerable communities (e.g., Indigenous, low-income, Global South)

   Role of media in shaping emotional responses to climate change

   Coping strategies and community-based mental health responses

3. **Research:**
   Use at least *two additional* credible sources beyond the Washington Post video. These can include scientific articles, news reports, or your personal observation and narratives.

4. **Presentation Format:**
   o **Length:** 7–10 minutes
   o **Visuals:** Use a slideshow (Google Slides, PowerPoint, or Canva). Include images, key terms, data/graphs, and at least one quote.

5. **Content Requirements:**
   o Brief summary of the issue
   o Explanation of how the environmental cricis in concern impacts mental health in your chosen context
   o Evidence or examples (statistics, case studies, quotes, visuals)
   o Your reflections: Why does this matter? What can be done?
   o 1–2 discussion questions for the audience

6. **Submission:**
    o Ideally I would like to have all your presntation be presented in live session but you have the option to record your presentation and submit your slide on D2L too.

Grading Criteria (25 pts):

Category	Points
Content accuracy & depth	5
Use of vocabulary	5
Visual design & clarity	5
Speaking & delivery	5
Engagement & discussion	5

IUP Grading Scale

P (pass)	60-100%
F (fail)	below 59%

Grade Appeal: If you do not agree with the grade your teacher assigns, you should first talk with your teacher to understand why you received the grade. If you believe that the grade is due to discrimination or error, you can submit a written appeal to the ALI office.

Student Policies and Responsibilities

Attendance
Attendance is required to be successful in ALI courses. To benefit from discussion, group work, instruction, and activities, students must be present and on time to class. If students come to class late, they will be marked tardy, with three tardies counting as an absence. Absences from class may lead to a lower class grade or an incomplete. Instructors and staff meet regularly to discuss concerns about students' attendance.
- Absences: If students have to miss class for any reason, it is their responsibility to communicate with the teacher. There are no excused absences. If students are not in class, it will count as an absence, and they need to make up any work that they missed.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

If students have excessive absences or are not following expectations for classroom etiquette, they may be placed on academic probation. To continue at the ALI, students on probation must meet with the ALI Assistant Director to create an academic recovery plan.
Students may be dismissed from the program in the following cases
- Failure to follow academic recovery plan
- Failure to follow visa requirements
- Illegal activities or student misconduct, including violation of academic integrity policies

Withdrawing from Classes
Students must submit a written request to the ALI office if they decide to cancel classes after registering for a term. Students who withdraw after the drop/add period can refer to the IUP withdrawal policies for dates and charges. Students should consult with the Office of International Education about how withdrawing from classes may affect their immigration.

Personal Electronics and Acceptable Use
Personal electronics including cell phones should be turned off and put away during classes unless the instructor has specifically given permission for students to use them. If students do not to follow this policy, teachers may count them absent or ask them to leave the class. Students should use IUP computers for educational purposes and use the IUP network in a responsible fashion.

IUP Email
Students are responsible for checking their IUP email regularly. It is the university's preferred method for official communication, so important information about classes, billing, etc. will be sent to students through email. Students should never give their IUP email password to anyone. Password requests through email should be considered spam. The university will never ask for a student's password. Responding to such requests may lead to the student's account being suspended.

Classroom Etiquette
IUP has a policy of reciprocal courtesy known as IUP Civility. This policy states that a classroom is a place where everyone should feel safe and respected. Tolerance, understanding, fair treatment, and open-mindedness should be maintained at all times when interacting with fellow students and instructors. Disrespectful and disruptive behavior towards other students or the instructor will not be tolerated and may lead to removal from a class. Serious offenses may lead to academic probation or dismissal from the program. Students also need to follow IUP rules for classroom spaces.

Academic Integrity

ALI Students are expected to follow the university's academic integrity policies. For more detail, go to (www.iup.edu/academicintegrity). Violations include plagiarism (copying someone else's work or claiming someone else's ideas as your own) as well as other forms of cheating. Students who violate these policies will not receive credit for the falsified work and will be subject to academic probation or dismissal.

Suggestions and Complaints

If students have a complaint or concern with the program or an individual at the ALI, it is usually best to talk about the issue with the people directly involved. Teachers and staff members want the best for students and are open to suggestions and ideas. If you cannot discuss your concern with the person involved or you are unable to reach a satisfactory conclusion, you can schedule a meeting with the Assistant Director. If we are still unable to reach a resolution to the problem, you can file a written grievance about your complaint that will be addressed by the Director and kept on file along with any action taken to address the issue.

Disability Access and Advising
If you have a disability or if think you might have a disability, please contact IUP's Department of Disability Access and Advising. Accommodations must be approved through this department. To make an appointment, students may call 724-357-4067 or email disability-access@iup.edu. If students need help with this process, the ALI Office can provide support.

Personal Safety
Indiana University of Pennsylvania and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the Department of Human Services (1-800-932-0313) and University Police (724-357-2141). Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at www.iup.edu/socialequity/policies/title-ix.

IUP Policies
Students at the ALI are entitled to the rights of IUP students and are also responsible for following university rules and policies. Questions about these policies can be addressed to the ALI staff.

Resources

SkillZone is a tutoring center for IUP international students and scholars. Tutors are IUP students who provide multilingual, multidisciplinary assistance for international students' academic and cultural concerns. In addition to tutoring for coursework, SkillZone also offers support in areas including study strategies, presentation skills, managing classroom expectations, academic integrity, group discussions, and test preparation. Learn more and make an appointment at www.iup.edu/international/skillzone.

The Kathleen Jones White Writing Center
The writing center is a quiet, comfortable place to work on class assignments or meet with a tutor. Peer tutors can help with class assignments or presentations at any point in the writing process, from brainstorming to proofreading. Tutors do not write or grade papers. Learn more and make an appointment at www.iup.edu/writingcenter.

Course Schedule

The schedule is subject to change based on students' academic needs. Changes will be communicated on D2L and through IUP email.

Week	Date	Class Topic and Activities	Homework Due
1	9/12	Introduction: The Environment Every Day Is Earth Day iNaturalist, and sustainability	**Watch:** iNaturalist Tutorials on D2L **Make iNaturalist account**
2	9/19	**Dealing with Devastation in Fire-Ravaged Hawaii**	**iNaturalist Observations Submission**
3	9/26	The Psychological Impacts of Climate Change **Banning Plastic Bags**	**Presentation How Do you Feel?**
		No Meeting	**Due : Recorded Presntation How Do you Feel?**

Grades and transcripts will be available through MyIUP at the end of the semester.