COURSE OBJECTIVES AND ORGANIZATION

If one accepts the standard definition of energy security as “the uninterrupted availability of energy sources at an affordable price” (International Energy Agency), it is easy to imagine a community that is energy secure but environmentally or imperiled and/or plagued by social pushback. For this reason, the central aim of this course is to identify the enabling conditions to achieve sustainable energy security. This requires that stakeholders possess the wherewithal to simultaneously promote energy security, environment stewardship, and social acceptance, which represent the legs of a sustainability tripod. In this effort, institutions – policies, laws, and behavioral norms – will determine the manner in which a community’s economic, environmental, and social capital assets can be marshalled in the pursuit of a sustainable energy future.

After laying the conceptual groundwork, we will explore the challenges of sustainable energy security in a variety of country-level contexts. The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate that countries of the Global North pursue widely divergent approaches to sustainable energy security and that the Global South faces daunting challenges. At the end of this course, it is expected that students will possess the knowledge and skills needed to assess the energy security sustainability of a given community and to offer meaningful recommendations to its stakeholders. Topics covered in this course relate to a number of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG #7 (ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all), SDG #13 (taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), and SDG #16 (promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development).
LEARNING GOALS

Area E Approved Learning Outcome:

- Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, technological, and economic forces that influence social behavior.
- This course explores the ways in which historical, economic, political, social, technological, and spatial relationships shape national response to the challenges of simultaneously achieving energy security and environmental stewardship. Students will be able to describe how these factors shape individual, group, and state behavior as they pertain to sustainability in these linked policy domains.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Through comparative analysis of energy policy choices and their environmental and social consequences, students will demonstrate an understanding of how – and with what consequences – the social, political, and economic forces that influence a critically important area of sustainability develop, persist, and change.
- Students will become more aware of the diversity of cultural and ethical systems in the world. This will include the ability to identify, critically analyze, and apply distinguishing traits, perspectives, formulations, and institutions in comparative or international empirical cases or issue areas.
- Students will be able to describe the social, political, and economic forces that interact with scientific and technological factors to shape energy and environmental policymaking at the national- and subnational levels in different contexts.
- Students will have the ability to use different sources of data to comparatively evaluate national or subnational responses to common energy- and environment-related challenges.
- Students will be able to express their arguments clearly and effectively both in written reports and class discussions.
- Students will be able to work in small groups in a way that demonstrates respect for their colleagues and efficiency in working collaboratively towards projects and goals.

INSTITUTE POLICIES

- Honor Code: Academic honesty is required of all Georgia Tech students by the Institute’s honor code, the text of which is found at [honor.gatech.edu](http://honor.gatech.edu).
- Special Accommodations: Students requesting academic accommodations based on a documented disability are required to register with the Access Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students (ADAPTS) at [http://www.adapts.gatech.edu](http://www.adapts.gatech.edu).
- Diversity & Inclusion: The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts – of which the Nunn School is a constituent part – supports the Institute’s commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the
importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in broader society.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course grades will be determined by your performance on a combination of individual and group assignments. Course grades will be weighted as follows:

**Individual work**

- discussion post/peer review: 20 points (three posts + documentary critique; 5 points each)
- midterm examination: 20 points
- anonymous peer assessment of oral presentations: 10 points

**Group Work**

- research design exercise (group project): 10 points
- oral presentation (group project): 20 points
- research paper (group project): 20

DISCUSSION TOPICS AND COMMON READINGS

There are no required textbooks for this course. Common readings are available on-line or through the Georgia Tech Library’s website.

Week 1

**Lecture topics:**

- August 21: LECTURE A-Course Overview
- August 23: LECTURE B-Sustainability Tripod

**Required readings:**


**Week 2**

*Lecture topics:*

- August 28: LECTURE C - Energy Security
- August 30: LECTURE D - Environmental Stewardship

*Required readings:*


*Just for fun:* listen to the “Fracking Song”

*Discussion prompt:* TBD

*Timetable for discussion post / peer review*

- Discussion Post (3 points each) due by Wednesday at 11:59PM.
- Peer Review assignments: Canvas will assign a classmate’s post to peer review on Wednesday at 12:01AM.
- Peer Review (2 points each) due by Saturday at 11:59PM.
- Failure to adhere to this timetable will result in a grade reduction.

**Week 3**

*Lecture topics:*

- September 4 - Official School Holiday
- September 6: LECTURE E - Social Acceptance

*Required readings:*
• Rebecca Windemer, “Acceptance should not be assumed. How the dynamics of social acceptance changes over time, impacting onshore wind repowering,” Energy Policy, Vol. 173 (2023), 113363
• Marina Povitkina, "The limits of democracy in tackling climate change," Environmental Politics, Vol. 27 (No. 3, 2018), pp. 411-432

Week 4

Lecture topics:

• September 11: LECTURE F- Assessing Sustainability
• September 13: View documentary (see list of approved documentaries)

Required readings:


Discussion prompt: TBD

Timetable for discussion post / peer review

• Discussion Post (3 points each) due by Wednesday at 11:59PM.
• Peer Review assignments: Canvas will assign a classmate’s post to peer review on Wednesday at 12:01AM.
• Peer Review (2 points each) due by Saturday at 11:59PM.
• Failure to adhere to this timetable will result in a grade reduction.

Week 5

Lecture topics:

• September 18: LECTURE G-Stakeholders
• September 20: LECTURE H- Guiding Theories
Required readings:


Week 6

Lecture topics:

- September 25: LECTURE 1- Comparative Method
- September 27: Review for midterm examination

Required readings:


Week 7

Lecture topics:

- October 2: Midterm examination
- October 4: LECTURE J-USA (Liberal Market System)

Required readings:

Week 8

Lecture topics:

- October 9 – Fall Break
- October 11: LECTURE K-Japan (Coordinated Market System/Developmental State)

Required readings:

- “Japan ‘left behind’ by world over its lack of climate change measures,” *Mainichi Newspaper* (June 12, 2023)

Week 9

Lecture topics:

- October 16: LECTURE L-Denmark (Coordinated Market/Social Corporatism)
- October 18: LECTURE M-China (BRICS)

Required readings:


**Discussion prompt: TBD**

**Timetable for discussion post / peer review**

- Discussion Post (3 points each) due by Wednesday at 11:59PM.
- Peer Review assignments: Canvas will assign a classmate’s post to peer review on Wednesday at 12:01AM.
- Peer Review (2 points each) due by Saturday at 11:59PM.
- Failure to adhere to this timetable will result in a grade reduction.

**Week 10**

**Lecture topics:**

- October 23: LECTURE N-Argentina (Developing Country)
- October 25: LECTURE O-Fiji (Small Island Developing State)

**Required readings:**


**Week 11**

**Lecture topics:**

- October 30: LECTURE P-Uganda (Less Developed Country)
- November 1: LECTURE Q-Group Project Set-up

**Required readings:**

Discussion prompt:

Timetable for discussion post / peer review

• Discussion Post (3 points each) due by Wednesday at 11:59PM.
• Peer Review assignments: Canvas will assign a classmate’s post to peer review on Wednesday at 12:01AM.
• Peer Review (2 points each) due by Saturday at 11:59PM.
• Failure to adhere to this timetable will result in a grade reduction.

Week 12

November 6 & 8: Group Work

Week 13

November 13 & 15: Group Work

Week 14

November 20: Group Work

November 22 – Student Recess

Week 15
November 27 & 29: Group Work

Week 16

December 4: Group Presentations