

## **Economics of Sustainability**

ECO 2310 Section 4C36

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:45am-1:40pm

Location: Online. Modality: partially synchronous

Spring 2021

Instructor: Michelle A. Phillips, Ph.D. Email: [michellephillips@ufl.edu](mailto:michellephillips@ufl.edu)

Location: Online, Partially Synchronous<sup>1</sup>.

Office hours:           Mondays: 8:00pm-9:30pm  
                              Tuesdays: 7:15am-8:15am  
                              Thursdays 7:15am-8:15am

The office hours Zoom link and password are posted on Canvas. Note: I will hold extra office hours before each exam. These will be announced via email and on Canvas.

### **Course description**

The course will examine issues in sustainability from an economics perspective with a focus on climate change. A detailed list of topics that will be covered in class is listed in the course topics section of this syllabus. **This course deals primarily with the Economics of Climate Change.** Important: *This course does not count as an economics elective, as it is a 2000 level course but it does count for the Sustainability major and minor<sup>2</sup>.*

### **Required Textbook**

1. “The Climate Casino: Risk, Uncertainty, and Economics for a Warming World” by William Nordhaus. ISBN: 978-0300212648.
2. Material available through Canvas

**Course Topics and Calendar are available on the last pages of this syllabus.** The easiest way to keep up with the course is to check the course Modules on every class day (Or if you want to, before each class day. You are welcome to work on some Modules earlier than scheduled, but you are not able to work on Modules after their due dates). Each week corresponds to one course Module. Exams are fully synchronous and must be taken on the scheduled exam days.

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<sup>1</sup> Exams 1 and 2 are fully synchronous and can only be taken during the scheduled class time. Tuesday’s lectures can be watched live during the scheduled class time or pre-recorded (you can decide what works best for you). Thursday’s lectures are pre-recorded. I highly recommend that you complete each week’s quizzes and discussion assignments during the scheduled class time, but you have the flexibility to complete them at any point before the deadline if you wish to do so. Quizzes and discussion board work are due at 11:59pm on class days. You can work ahead of deadlines but cannot work after deadlines.

<sup>2</sup> In the past, this course was taught as a 4000 level course and did count as an economics elective. However, this is no longer the case because the course is now a 2000 level course. This course does not count as an Economics elective but it does count for the Sustainability major requirements.

## Evaluation of Grades

Your grade will be determined by your performance on the following:

Exam 1	32%
Exam 2	33%
Quizzes/Discussion board	25%
Research Paper	10%

## Grading Policy

The following scale will be used to determine your final grade:

Grade	Grade Points
93.4-100 A	4.00
90.0-93.3 A-	3.67
86.7-89.9 B+	3.33
83.4-86.6 B	3.00
80.0-83.3 B-	2.67
76.7-79.9 C+	2.33
73.4-76.6 C	2.00
70.0-73.3 C-	1.67
66.7-69.9 D+	1.33
63.4-66.6 D	1.00
60.0-63.3 D-	0.67
0.00-63.2 E	0.00

\*\* Important: There will be no rounding under any circumstances.

## Class Attendance and Make Up Policy

Excused absences are consistent with university policies in the undergraduate catalog<sup>3</sup> and require appropriate documentation. Documentation must be provided within a week of the absence. Excused absences will be accepted for exams.

From the catalog: "In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused." Note that I require proof for all exam absences.

Late online quizzes, papers, or discussions will not be accepted unless the student had an acceptable reason for the absence that lasted for the majority of the time the quiz, paper or discussion was open. A makeup midterm and makeup final exam will be provided for students who miss either exam due to extreme, documented circumstances. These can only be taken on the scheduled make up dates. I require exam absences to be verified by the DSO.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

*Important:* Please communicate any health or other type of issues you are experiencing with me as early as possible so I can work with you.

### **Disability Accommodations**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. I cannot adjust exam times on the day of the exam, so please provide me with your letter as soon as you get it (and ideally at least 4 days before the first exam).

### **Course Evaluation**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### **Class Demeanor**

Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Please avoid the use of cell phones during class. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be held at minimum, if at all. Please be professional in e-mails to me and your classmates.

### **University Honesty Policy**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### **Counseling and Wellness Center and other resources**

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/> (352) 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies. Alachua Crisis Center: 352-264-6785. National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-8255.

### **Course Website**

We will be using Canvas. The address is: <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>. You log-in using your Gatorlink ID and password and the course should automatically appear as one of your e-learning

options. If it does not, check to make sure you are properly registered for the course. If that is not the issue, contact the UF Computing Helpdesk at: <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>. Do not contact me about access issues. I cannot help you and the help you do need will only be delayed if you do. Most course materials and grades will be posted here.

### **Research Paper**

Students will complete a 8-12 page paper and conduct a 5-10 minute presentation on a sustainability issue of their choice. The papers can be done individually or in groups of up to 5 students. You can either choose your group, have me choose a group for you, or work by yourself. The issue studied must be approved by the instructor. A detailed outline (two page proposal) will be due at the date specified on the modules. The full paper and presentation deadlines are listed as well. Details about the format and citations will be made available on the course website. Both the proposal and paper must be submitted online. You are welcome to submit earlier than the deadline. Plagiarism will result in a grade of 0 (this includes self-plagiarism).

### **Important:**

1. You are expected to apply what you learn in class during exams. Exams will not be the same as the quizzes. You will be expected to be able to apply the framework learned in class to other contexts.
2. If you email me to ask something that is either on the syllabus or on a Canvas announcement, I will direct you to the syllabus or Canvas announcement.
3. I provide curves to exams when necessary. For this reason I do not round grades up at the end of the term under any circumstances. I am aware that certain jobs, scholarships and even graduation require you to have a grade above a certain level. I will be more than happy to help you study and prepare for exams, but I will not, under any circumstances, raise your grade because you need a high grade for a job or graduation. Grades are earned, not negotiated nor “given” by the professor. Furthermore, one course is not to blame for you missing a grade cut off. Preparing just for the last exam is not sufficient. I will help you prepare for exams if you ask for help throughout the term. I cannot help you if you come to my office hours the last two weeks of class trying to learn an entire semester of lectures in a few weeks.
4. I will answer emails within 2 business days from the day in which I receive them.
5. With the exception of cases where the points have been added wrong, if you want me to regrade an exam question but don't have a specific complaint or question about it, I will regrade the entire exam, which could result in a higher or lower grade. Sometimes a mistake is made, and regrading is called for. The following system has been instituted to ensure that my time is spent re-reading exams where there has been a serious mistake and there is a legitimate concern and not spent re-reading correctly graded exams.
6. All Exams are on Canvas using Honorlock and are closed book. The exams consist of short essay questions and problems. They may sometimes have multiple choice questions. Partial credit will be given for partially correct answers in your exams, so make sure you answer every question. Please use the Honorlock calculator for exams. Cellular phones may not be used during the exams as calculators or for any other reason. A full list of Honorlock rules will be provided before each exam. Your exam will not be counted if you break the Honorlock rules. For example, wearing headphones is not allowed. Exams will be curved if the class average is below 70%.

7. I am always happy to answer questions you may have via email, but that does not mean you can send me test banks you found on the internet and expect me to provide answers for them or ask me to help you solve a question from a homework/quiz/study guide for a different course (with a different instructor).
8. If you are stressed out or experiencing difficulties, UF offers several services such as the Counseling and Wellness Center and GatorWell. Please use these resources, your health is important.
9. Expectations: You are responsible for all the material covered in class, and all the chapters covered from the textbook.
11. All quizzes for this class will be through Canvas.

Some lecture slides, notes or exercises used in this course may be the property of the textbook publisher or other third parties. All other course material, including but not limited slides developed by the instructor, the syllabus, assignments, course notes, course recordings, and examinations or quizzes are property of the University or of the individual instructor who developed them. Students are free to use this material for study and learning. Republishing or redistributing this material, including uploading it to web sites or linking to it through services like iTunes or CourseHero, violates the rights of the copyright holder and is prohibited. There are civil and criminal penalties for copyright violation.

If I make any changes to the syllabus, I will announce them via email and will list each change here.

#### Course Summary<sup>4</sup>:

Date	Details	
Thu Jan 14, 2021	Discussion post: <a href="#">Introductions</a>	due by 11:59pm
	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 1</a>	due by 11:59pm
Thu Jan 21, 2021	Discussion post: <a href="#">Changes</a>	due by 11:59pm
	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 2</a>	due by 11:59pm
Thu Jan 28, 2021	Assignment: <a href="#">Proposal</a>	due by 11:59pm
	Discussion post: <a href="#">Quiz 3</a>	due by 11:59pm
Thu Feb 4, 2021	Discussion post: <a href="#">Carbon intensity</a>	due by 11:59pm

<sup>4</sup> Any changes to due dates will be announced via e-mail and on the Modules.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Details</b>	
	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 4</a>	due by 11:59pm
Thu Feb 11, 2021	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 5</a>	due by 11:59pm
	Assignment: <a href="#">Research paper</a>	due by 11:59pm
Thu Feb 18, 2021	Discussion post: <a href="#">NASA evidence</a>	due by 11:59pm
	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 6</a>	due by 11:59pm
Thu Feb 25, 2021	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 7</a>	due by 11:59pm
Thu Mar 4, 2021	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 8</a>	due by 11:59pm
	Discussion post: <a href="#">Reflection</a>	due by 11:59pm
Tue Mar 16, 2021	Exam: <a href="#">Exam 1 (synchronous)</a>	During class time
Thu Mar 25, 2021	Discussion post: <a href="#">Per Capita Emissions</a>	due by 11:59pm
	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 11</a>	due by 11:59pm
Thu Apr 1, 2021	Discussion post: <a href="#">Island energy snapshots</a>	due by 11:59pm
	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 12</a>	due by 11:59pm
Thu Apr 8, 2021	Discussion post: <a href="#">Bitcoin</a>	due by 11:59pm
	Quiz: <a href="#">Quiz 13</a>	due by 11:59pm
Tue Apr 20, 2021	Exam: <a href="#">Exam 2 (synchronous)</a>	During class time