Instructors: Dr. Marianne Schmink and Dr. Bette Loiselle

Course description: This interdisciplinary seminar provides an introduction to history, ecology, and current issues and dilemmas related to Amazonian conservation and development policies, with a special focus this semester on UF's historic legacy in research and capacity-building in the Amazon region. UF alumni and partners in the field will participate virtually in seminar sessions focused on key research themes as well as current conservation and development challenges. The course explores issues and controversies in which UF faculty have carried out important research related to the interaction of biodiversity, ecology, history, socioeconomics and politics in shaping conservation and development issues in the Amazon, and the evolution of thinking about history, and development policies. The Amazon region provides a focal point to discuss major paradigm shifts and methodological innovations, ethical and political discussions, and conceptual debates in a variety of fields.

The seminar combines guest lectures, discussion, group projects and individual research papers/proposals.

Taught for the first time in 1979, this course has evolved over the past four decades as an engaging interdisciplinary seminar that brings together diverse graduate students and UF faculty to discuss emerging issues such as deforestation, climate change, social movement mobilization and the complex impacts of hydroelectric dams in the region. Co-taught by the former and current Directors of the Tropical Conservation and Development (TCD) program, this special 2018 edition will highlight the legacy of UF faculty, students, alumni and partners in key topics and landscapes in the Amazon region, especially Brazil, Peru and Ecuador.

Course website: Go to the Learning Support Systems homepage [http://lss.at.ufl.edu/] and enter your Gatorlink username and password into the boxes. The course page should come up if you are registered

Main course objective: At the end of the semester, students will understand the complexity of Amazon history, society and ecology, and its implications for alternative development policies and research priorities.

Student evaluation:

Class participation	20%
Comments on readings	10%
Group presentation	20%
Peer reviews	10%
Final paper or proposal	40%

Class participation: Students are expected to come to class having read carefully the reading assignments for that session. They should be prepared to contribute to class discussions by raising questions and comments related to the topic for that class. Each student also will be assigned to lead class discussion of assigned readings for one class period.

Readings are available on the Canvas website, under "Files" in folders dated for each week of class

**LAS6290(17807)/LAS 4935(21750) UF's Legacy in The Amazon,
Fall 2018**

Introduction
August 22   Introduction: Charles Wagley and the UF legacy in the Amazon

People and Landscapes
August 29   Indigenous knowledge and settlement patterns

September 5   Biodiversity patterns and processes
                               Title of paper

September 12   Geographical perspectives on people and landscapes in the Amazon
                               Preliminary statement and bibliography

Conflict and Change
September 19   *Conflict and change on the Amazon frontier
                               Peer review I

September 26   *Deforestation, fragmentation, fire/disturbance feedbacks, carbon

October 3   *Native Amazonians, identity and territory

October 10   *Human-wildlife interactions and/or conflict

October 17   *Gender issues in Amazon conservation and development

Policy debates and experiments
October 24   *Governance challenges

October 31   The legacy of Chico Mendes
                               Draft papers

November 7   *Forest-based development
                               Peer review II

November 14   *Dams, mining, and infrastructure

November 21   THANKSGIVING: NO CLASS

Building Capacity for Amazon Conservation and Development
November 28   TCD-inspired University programs and major Amazon funding programs

December 5   TCD's current Amazon initiatives
                               Final papers

*Class sessions for which student groups may organize collaborative projects

ASSIGNMENTS

Readings comments   Each student will provide comments or queries that flow from the readings assigned for that class period. The rationale behind this assignment is to provide us with insights of individual perspectives prior to class, better incorporate what others have to say on the topic at hand, and begin class dialogue.

Students are required to post brief comments (1-4 paragraphs) on the assigned readings, for 10 of the class periods (of the student's choosing). The sum of these comments is worth 10% of your grade.

Please don't summarize each of the readings. Rather, please share with the class some of the thoughts that were stimulated by one or more of the readings. What did you get from the readings? What was the author's main argument, and how convincing was it? What evidence was presented? Did the readings stimulate you to reflect on a past experience?

Each student should post his or her comments out by the Tuesday morning (8:00 am.) before each Wednesday class. Comments will be posted through UF's Canvas system; go to "Discussions," and click on the date for that week's class.

Student Presentations
Each student will participate as part of a small group of 1-3 students who will work together on a mini-research project focused on the topic of one class session. Students will be assigned to to these groups and topics on the first day of class, August 22.

A common framework of questions will guide student collaborative projects focused on specific topics:

- What are the main dimensions of the theme/issue?
- What are the key historical and contextual factors influencing the issue?
- What are some of the contributions of UF researchers/partners?
- What are potential solutions or pathways to address the issue at different scales?
- What kinds of research and analysis are still needed?

Information on each of these questions will be included in a 20-40 minute presentation planned and prepared by the students working together. Each student will carry out specific background research to contribute to the group presentation, and help to develop discussion questions designed to stimulate debate among all the students in the global classroom. Student groups will work together in advance of the class session using electronic communications, to jointly plan, prepare and present background analysis on the issue being addressed. Each group member will receive the same grade from instructors on the assignment, and part of their grade will be assigned by the peers in their group who will evaluate their collaborative contributions. The group assignment will count 20% of the course grade, 5% of which will be based on peer assessments. Students will also carry out a self-assessment of their own performance in the group collaboration.

Final paper
Each student must write a research proposal or paper for their final project, due on the last day of class. These projects are to be developed over the course of the semester. They should focus on a clearly-defined research question or problem, and show why it is important and relevant to the course.   In addition to establishing a clear conceptual framework and specific research questions, proposals

should lay out the precise research design and methodologies to be used to address the problem defined, and papers should present primary data or secondary findings and analyze their implications for the questions defined. Students are encouraged to discuss their ideas with the instructor during office hours (Schmink: 301 Grinter Hall, Mondays from 1:00-3:00 pm and Wednesdays from 9:30 to 11:30 am; Loiselle: 347 Grinter Hall, Tuesday from 11:00 – noon or 2:00-3:30 pm) or by appointment. USE SPELL CHECK AND GRAMMAR CHECK FOR ALL VERSIONS!

Several steps are required for the final project. First, each student should identify a general topic of interest and carry out some initial research to define a more specific problem and identify possible sources of information. By **September 5,** each student must turn in the title of the project. On **September 12,** students must submit a 2-3 page summary statement of the research problems, hypotheses and objectives to be addressed in the proposal or paper, a preliminary outline of the proposed methodology to be used (for a proposal) or succinct description of the data to be analyzed (for a paper), and a preliminary list of bibliographic sources to be used for the project. The instructor and one peer reviewer will provide written feedback to each student on the basis on these statements. This statement/bibliography is worth 10% of your final grade. Please submit your preliminary statement and bibliography on the Canvas course site under "Assignments" and send an email copy to your peer.

A complete draft of the project is to be turned in by **October 31**. These drafts are required, but will not be graded. The instructor, and a peer reviewer from the class, will provide written feedback to each student on the draft project. **PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR DRAFT IN WORD TO ALLOW FOR EDITING AND COMMENTS.** Please submit your draft paper on the Canvas course site under "Assignments" and send an email copy to your peer.

Finally, students will turn in a double-spaced 10-15 page (for graduate students) or 8-10 page (for undergraduates) research proposal or paper on **December 5**. Papers will be graded on: the significance of the research problem defined, conceptual/theoretical clarity, the coherence and creativity of the analysis, the quality of the writing and organization of the project, and relevance to issues addressed in the course. The final projects will be graded, but will not be returned to the students with comments. Please submit your final papers on the Canvas course site under "Assignments."

Peer reviews [for graduate students only]
Each student will be assigned another student's paper or proposal to conduct two written peer reviews, due on **September 19** and **November 7.** The peer review should provide a comprehensive and constructive appraisal, in 1-2 pages. This would be in addition to any comments you make in the margins of the preliminary statement and bibliography, and would like to share with the author. Please submit your peer reviews on the Canvas course site under "Assignments" and send an email copy to your peer.

Some suggested questions for your peer review follow; these are mainly tailored to research proposals so they must be adapted for research papers. **You do not have to address every item in these guidelines: select the ones most relevant for the paper you are reviewing.**

A. Title:

1. Read the title before reading any other section of the paper, and evaluate its effectiveness (i.e. is it informative, clear, descriptive?)
2. How does the title reflect the main ideas of the introduction? Read the introduction and underline main ideas or central issues. What necessary information is missing from the title? How might the author revise the title to make it more clear or informative?

B. Introduction and Problem Statement:

The goal for an introduction is to present a clear hypothesis / research questions and rationale for their investigation.

1. Does the introduction give adequate background information, definition of terms, and citations of relevant literature to understand the hypothesis/research questions?
2. Can you identify a clearly stated hypothesis/ research questions that will be addressed in the body of the paper? If so, underline it; if not, circle the sentences that you think may be addressing the central issue. How could the research questions be improved (e.g. organization, clarity, length, feasibility)?
3. Is it clear why the question is being asked, i.e. what is the writer's rationale? Does the question build on and promise to expand existing knowledge? Will results be useful to address specific practical problems?

C. Research Design and Methods:

1. What is the overall design of the research (site; timetable; key variables and methods)? Does the design clearly address the research questions? What type of organization might make the methods easier to understand (e.g. increase clarity)?
2. Does the author indicate the types of observations s/he plans to make, the types of data s/he plans to collect, and how and when s/he plans to quantify (measure) their observations? Does the author state how s/he plans to analyze the data?
3. Do you think the methods are sufficient? Are you confused about a procedure or have any unanswered questions (e.g. about sampling procedures, measurements or statistical analysis used)? Comment on specific paragraphs in the text that are especially helpful or those that are unclear.

D. References Cited:

1. Are all references cited in the paper listed in the references cited section, and are all of the references cited in the references cited section mentioned somewhere in the text?
2. Do the references seem appropriate to the subject of the paper? Are any key references missing?
3. Are the reference citations written in a consistent format?

E. Timeline (for proposals):

1. Does this seem adequate and reasonable to accomplish the research as described?
2. Is there sufficient detail to determine whether the research is doable given the timeframe and resources?

F. Overall Organization and Format:

1. Does the author present her or his ideas in a logical, straightforward, clear way?
2. Is the paper written in the most appropriate format? Any suggestions?