Field Experience in Sustainability
SUS 4395 Fall 2023

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Office Hours: online; other hours by appointment or email
Department: Geography and Sustainability, College of Forestry (ATCOFA), SFASU
Class meeting time and place: Done in person and remotely from student’s residence

Course Description: 3 semester hours. Supervised on-the-job experience related to sustainability. Internships arranged by student in consultation with instructor. May be repeated once with change in host. Prerequisite: junior/senior standing. Student will work with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff at Caddo Lake on the following duties, which may total approximately 100 hours:

- Assist with rehab of existing herp array sampling traps and install new arrays as needed. This will involve carrying equipment moderate distances over unlevel terrain and through overgrown environments. The use of tools including, but not limited to power weed trimmers, loppers, mallets, rakes, and shovels.

- Assist with install of vegetative sampling plots for WMA monitoring activities. This will involve the use of handheld GPS devices, tablets and its software, carrying light loads of rebar and mallets.

- Assist with firebreak maintenance in preparation for prescribed fire season. This will involve the use of fire rakes to rake snags, pulling some small down wood into the interior, and other such labor-intensive activities.

The student will also work approximately 50 hours with SFA Center for Sustainable Community Development, students, campus staff (David Creech), and USDA staff (Dawn Stover) on native grass/wildflower establishment and restoration near Lanana Creek. Duties will include site preparation, planning/implementing volunteer plantings.


Course Requirements: Students are required to perform a minimum of 150 hours of service, to keep a journal of their internship experience, and to write a final paper that demonstrates their ability to apply their sustainability knowledge to real-world problems. A withheld (WH) grade may be given at the end of Fall 2023 to allow hours to be worked into Spring 2024 if necessary.

Grading: Course is pass-fail. You must meet ALL deadlines to receive a passing grade.

Program Learning Outcomes: The program in Sustainability has these program learning goals:

1. Students will demonstrate understanding of the historical development of sustainability.
2. Students will be able to identify the most significant philosophical, emotional, and intellectual obstacles to generating sustainable communities.

3. Students will be able to identify the most significant economic, political, and cultural factors in generating sustainable communities.

4. Students will be able to articulate the reasons that sustaining viable communities holds value to human societies.

5. Students will demonstrate ability to construct research models and analyze data.

6. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply their theoretical knowledge to the solution of real-world problems.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** More specific outcomes for this particular course are:

1. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply their theoretical knowledge to the solution of real-world problems.

**Attendance Policy:** Since this is an internship, we meet before the semester begins and during the semester as needed. It is the responsibility of the intern to meet her/his hourly obligations to the agency based on a three or six hour internship. The hourly requirements are detailed above. In the event of illness or other unforeseen circumstances that may interfere with the intern’s ability to meet these obligations, the internship coordinator should be contacted immediately. Students are responsible for observing drop deadlines in the schedule of classes. For more info see the official university policy at: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-add-drop_6.10.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-add-drop_6.10.pdf)

**Withheld Grades Policy**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor and with the approval of the department chair, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work due to unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. Note that a grade of WH is given at the discretion of the course instructor and department chair. Both must agree that a WH is appropriate. Furthermore, only students who have completed almost all of the course work will be considered for a grade of WH. For the official university policy please see: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades.pdf)

**Student Intern Requirements:**

1. Meet academic prerequisite
2. Cooperate with and support the agency and its personnel
3. Adhere to agency policies
4. Meet professional expectations related to work assignment(s)
5. Develop internship objectives for work assignment(s) and keep journal (daily or weekly) for duration of internship obligation
6. Submit 3-5-page research paper linking sustainability studies to internship experience through literature review and description of how experience applies to literature. Also submit 1-2-page written essay summarizing internship experience to internship coordinator by the end of Dead Week
7. Communicate to internship coordinator periodically throughout the semester.
8. Provide your own transportation to and from the agency; travel time is not included as part of internship required hours.

9. Ensure promptness for agency assignments and work.

10. Obtain agency approval (and Internship coordinator’s approval, if appropriate) for any alteration of work schedule (e.g., illness, etc.)

11. Remind field supervisor one month prior to the semester-end of the date of expected completion and termination of work.

**University Policies:** For policies on topics such as academic dishonesty, withdrawals, and accommodations for student with disabilities, etc., students are responsible for referring to the Stephen F. Austin State University 2023-2034 Bulletin. **Academic Integrity (A-9.1)** Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism. **Definition of Academic Dishonesty.** Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Students are responsible under the following 2023 revised policy: [https://www.sfasu.edu/docs/policies/10.4.pdf](https://www.sfasu.edu/docs/policies/10.4.pdf)

**Students with Disabilities:** To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**Acceptable Student Behavior:** Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Please see student conduct policy D-34.1K: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-code-of-conduct_10.4.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-code-of-conduct_10.4.pdf) Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate or inappropriate in the classroom.