



SYLLABUS

KSU JOURNEY HONORS COLLEGE

HON 2400: HONORS DISCOVERY:

SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

FALL 2024

Course Information

Class meeting time: *Thursdays 5:00-7:00 PM*

Modality and Location: *Face to Face course, Atrium (J) Building, Room 109*

Syllabus is posted in D2L

Instructor Information

Name: Hazem Rashed-Ali, PhD

Email: [hrasheda@kennesaw.edu](mailto:hasheda@kennesaw.edu)

Office Location: Architecture (N) Building, Room 124.

Office Phone: 470-578-5203

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursday 12:00 noon to 1:00 or by appointment.

Preferred method of communication: Email.

Course Description

Honors Discoveries are short-term, not-for-credit learning experiences focused on topics outside the usual college curriculum. They often integrate disciplines, current events, or popular culture. Honors Discoveries involve small groups of Honors students learning through seminar discussion and experiential learning under the guidance of a KSU faculty member. *0 Credit Hours. Pre-requisite: Admission to the Undergraduate Honors Program.*

The course will introduce students to the latest studies on the status of climate change around the world and the need for developing mitigation and adaptation strategies in response to its forecasts. The course will then focus on the role played by the built environment, both as one of the contributors to the causes of climate change as well as a source of ideas for developing innovative approaches for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Case studies of such innovative approaches from around the world will be identified and analyzed including innovative approaches for university campus sustainability as well as in high performance buildings and communities. The course will draw from the latest studies by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, IPCC, the US National Climate Assessments, the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), and other recent literature on the topic.

Course Materials

Required Texts: all learning materials (including readings, class presentations and other resources) are available in D2L

Technology requirements: D2L, KSU e-mail, Office365 (including Microsoft Teams), and Adobe creative Cloud. Assignments in the course should be submitted using Adobe Acrobat. For technology support, please contact the [UITS student help desk](#).

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will learn about the latest studies and assessments of climate change, its possible consequences, and appropriate mitigation and adaptation strategies.
2. Students will learn about the role of the built environment in causing climate change as well as the potential offered through innovative approaches to improve the environmental performance of buildings and communities including university campuses.
3. Students will practice different communication skills including leading discussion groups, public presentations, and technical writing.
4. In addition to the topic of study, the Honors Discovery will emphasize the Foundations of Honors Learning. Students will be able to apply information about the chosen foundation(s) as it relates to the topic of the course and their learning:
 - *Critical Thinking*: Students analyze and evaluate information. Students synthesize information to develop effective arguments and justify positions.
 - *Interdisciplinary Learning*: Students articulate how their major field of study relates to other disciplines and to the world around them. Students deepen their knowledge of their own field of study through connections to other disciplines and through applications to the world around them.
 - *Appreciation of Diverse Viewpoints*: Students seek to understand and appreciate different perspectives and arguments. Students appreciate diversity in all of its many forms.
 - *Information Fluency*: Students select appropriate sources and search strategies to gather information. They critically evaluate sources and content found. Students learn and refine skills of traditional digital literacy, integrating technology with discipline-specific knowledge, critical thinking, presentation, participation, and communication skills.
 - *Effective Communication*: Students develop, improve, and refine clear communication skills across communication modes and mediums.

Course Requirements and Assignments

The course will involve five class meetings. Each meeting will be dedicated to a specific topic related to the overall theme of the course. Related readings will be made available to the students for each of these topics. Student activities in the course will involve conducting group research on selected topics, leading class discussions, an individual research assignment, and a reflection essay. A description of each of these tasks is included below:

- 1- **Group Research Assignment/Group Presentation/Leading Class Discussions:**
Students will be divided into six groups (4-5 students each). Each group will be assigned a research topic. The group will develop a presentation based on this topic, to be presented to the whole class. The group will then lead a class discussion about the topic. The presentations will be divided over class meetings 2 through 4 (two presentations/discussions each).
- 2- **Individual Research Assignment / Presentation:**
Each student will develop a short presentation (5 minutes maximum) on selected case studies of innovative buildings or communities that aims to address climate change. Possible sources for selecting these case studies will be provided by the instructor, and instructor approval is required before starting the research. Students will present their case study to the class during the fifth class meeting.

3- **Reflection Essay:**

Each student will write a reflection essay about their experiences in the course, and how the course affected their views about climate change and the built environment. Essays will be a maximum of 1000 words.

Evaluation and Grading Policies

Students will earn a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grade in this course (i.e., Pass/Fail). To achieve a Satisfactory grade requires a minimum grade of C (70%). The distribution of the grade on course activities will be as follows:

- Group assignment: 30%
- Individual Presentation: 30%
- Reflection essay: 20%
- Class Participation: 10%
- Attendance & Punctuality: 10%

All grades will be posted in D2L.

Grading Scale

Satisfactory (Pass): 70-100%

Unsatisfactory (Fail): 0-69%

Course Policies

Attendance: It is imperative that you be present for every class. Excused absences need to be discussed with the instructor. Some examples of excused absences include illness and family emergencies. Documentation will be required for excused absences. Each unexcused absence will result in a reduction in the overall course grade of 10%. Late arrival or early departure from class will be counted as 0.5 of an unexcused absence and will result in a 5% reduction in the overall course grade.

Late Assignments: All assignments must be submitted on time. A late submission will result in a reduction in assignment grade of 10% per calendar day. Missing an assigned class presentation will result in no credit being awarded for this presentation.

AI Use Prohibited: You are expected to generate your own work in this class. When you submit any kind of work, you are asserting that you have created it completely on your own unless you indicate otherwise using quotation marks and proper citation for the source(s) you used to help you. Submitting content that has been generated by someone other than you, or that was created or assisted by an AI generative tool is cheating and constitutes a violation of the KSU Code of Academic Integrity.

General Policies:

- An atmosphere of mutual trust and respect is essential to the success of this course. I strongly encourage lively debates and urge students to respect each other's opinions. Expressions of intolerance are discouraged. Disagreeing with others intelligently and politely is a skill, one that we will all strive for during the semester.
- • Students are expected to come to class having read the material carefully and fully prepared to discuss its finer points.

College Policies

Students must earn a grade of Satisfactory in this course to pass and earn one Honors Learning Experience credit.

Institutional Policies

[Federal, BOR, & KSU Required Syllabus Policies](#)

KSU Student Resources

This link contains information on help and resources available to students: [KSU Student Syllabus Resources](#). You can also access information regarding [Financial Aid](#), [the Registrar](#), and [the Bursar](#) by visiting their websites. KSU's [Online Learning Support](#) division is also available if you need assistance with online courses.

Mental Health and Well-Being: YOU MATTER at KSU, and your well-being is a priority to us. College is exciting, but it can cause students to experience stress and feel overwhelmed. Through counseling, health education, addiction and recovery support, fitness and recreation activities, and access to basic needs, [Wellbeing@KSU](#) is here to help you do well and be well.

Interpersonal Violence: Please contact [TellKSU](#) or [campus support services](#) if you have witnessed or been the victim of any form of interpersonal violence (or fear that you might be) such as nonconsensual sexual contact, sexual harassment, dating/domestic violence, stalking and sexual exploitation.

Course Schedule

The following is a tentative description of activities in each class session. Modification of this description may be needed to respond to unexpected circumstances.

Date and Time	Activities
Thursday 8/29/2024	<p><u>Topic: General course introduction:</u></p> <p>Syllabus review, description of class activities and expectations, forming of groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate Change, definition, current status, and future impacts. - Introduction to next week's topic: mitigation and adaptation strategies.
Thursday 9/12/2024.	<p><u>Topic: Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group I Presentation: Adaptation Strategies, class discussion. - Group II Presentation: Mitigation Strategies, class discussion. - Introduction to next week's topic: UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
Thursday 9/26/2024	<p><u>Topic: UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group III Presentation: selected SDGs, class discussion. - Group IV Presentation: selected SDGs class discussion. <p>Introduction to next week's Topic: Campus Sustainability</p>
Thursday 10/10/2024	<p><u>Topic: Campus Sustainability – STARS System</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group V Presentation: Campus Academics, class discussion. - Group Presentation VI: Campus Operations, class discussion - Introduction to next week's topic: High Performance Buildings and Communities
Thursday 10/24/2024	<p><u>Topic: High Performance Buildings and Communities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual case study presentations.
November 7th	Reflection Essay Due on D2L.