

## **ALS 5905 - International Research Immersion**

**Fall 2020**

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**Course Description:** ALS 5905 provides students with the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with international agroecosystems through a collaboration with one of our international partner institutions. Along with their advisory committee, students will define the type of research experience and international location that will best serve their educational and career goals. Students are then placed with a partner institution for a semester (Summer B qualifies), during which they are expected to participate in on-going research with faculty mentors at the host institution. While taking ALS 5905, students may also enroll in distance education classes or attend local classes offered by the host program (at their own expense). At the completion of the course, students are required to give a public seminar describing their experiences at the partner institution. Other course assessments, such as a written summary or blog entries, may be required at the discretion of the advisory committee.

### **Justification:**

In order to illustrate the challenges, obstacles, and successes of agricultural practices or research, developing a research project in the context of an international immersion experience is invaluable. An emphasis will be placed on fundamental sustainability components that support local farmers, economies, communities, and ecosystems. The purpose of this course is to understand the need for agriculture practices that provide ample food for people, are economical to farmers, and environmentally friendly. This course gives international educational and research exposure to student.

### **Course Objectives:**

- Introduce students to agroecological systems that are different than those in the US or their home country
- Establish networking systems between students and international researchers
- Strengthen relationships between UF and international agroecology partners

**Student Learning Objectives:** Upon successful completion of this course the student should be able to:

- Recognize and identify sustainable agricultural approaches used by different countries and how they differ from the US or their home country.
- Compare and contrast systems from their host country and the US (or their home country) in accordance with the three pillars of UF agroecology: Production, Environment, and Society
- Implement effective communication skills through networking with international partners, written assignments, and oral presentation.

### Evaluation of Grades:

Requirement	Points (percent)	Total Points
Research Blog “OR” Written document	40	40
Oral Presentation	25	25
International Mentor Evaluation	35	35
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### Assessment Descriptions:

**Research Blog OR Written report/document:** Students can choose to write a series of four blogs or a 2-3 page written summary of their experiences at their host institution. Each blog posts should each be a minimum of 250 words and cover the following topics: 1) the agroecosystem in the host country, 2) role in research at the host institution, 3) results of the research project, and 4) justification/importance of the research being conducted. The written report should include the same themes but include a general introduction and conclusion about agroecology and the need for interdisciplinary research in agricultural sciences. Both assignments should follow standard citation guidelines and be submitted prior to course completion. An assessment rubric will be provided.

**Oral presentation:** A 5 to 10-minute presentation will be given at the University of Florida and evaluated by the agroecology team. The presentation should summarize blog or written reports, including a comparison/contrast between systems from their host country and the US (or their home country) in accordance with the three pillars of UF agroecology: Production, Environment, and Society.

**International Mentor Evaluation:** Student performance evaluation submitted by the international mentor. An evaluation form will be provided to the mentor and will assess the following: work ethic, quality of research, knowledge of host agroecosystem, and collaborative approach.

### Grading Scale:

Score	Percent	Grade	Grade Points
100-94.0	100-94	A	4.00
93.9-90.0	<94-90	A-	3.67

88.9-87.0	<90-87	B+	3.33
86.9-84.0	<87-84	B+	3.00
83.9-80.0	<84-80	B-	2.67
79.9-77.0	<80-77	C+	2.33
76.9-74.0	<77-74	C	2.00
73.9-70.0	<74-70	C-	1.67
69.9-67.0	<70-67	D+	1.33
66.9-64.0	<67-64	D	1.00
63.9-61.0	<64-61	D-	0.67
<60.9	<61	E	0.00

**Class Attendance and Make-Up Policy:** International mentor will be the one explains Class Attendance and Make-Up Policy.

**Students Requiring Accommodations** Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**Course Evaluation:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/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 and restrict eating to outside of the classroom. 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.

**Materials and Supplies Fees:** There are no material fees for this course. However, students are expected to cover travel and housing expenses at the host institution.

**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:** Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

### **Partner Institutions:**

#### **Focal Partners: -**

##### **- Universidade Federal Rural de Pernambuco (UFRPE) – Pernambuco -Brazil**

Primary Contact: Mario Lira ([mariolirajunior@gmail.com](mailto:mariolirajunior@gmail.com))

Research Focus: Agricultural Production Systems, Biodiversity and Sustainability

##### **- ISARA-Lyon- France**

Primary Contact: Alexander Wezel ([awezel@isara.fr](mailto:awezel@isara.fr))

Research Focus: Agronomy Food and Environment, Agroecology and Sustainable food systems

##### **- Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJI): Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment - Israel**

Primary Contact: Maya Oren ([mayaorentau@gmail.com](mailto:mayaorentau@gmail.com)) / Nir Ohad ([nir.ohad@gmail.com](mailto:nir.ohad@gmail.com))

Research Focus: Biochemistry, Food Science and Nutrition, Entomology, Environmental Economics and Management, Plant Pathology and Microbiology, Plant Sciences and Genetics in Agriculture, and Soil and Water Sciences.

##### **- Gyeongsang National University- South Korea**

Primary Contact: Chae-In Na ([jasmpnicacid@gmail.com](mailto:jasmpnicacid@gmail.com))

Research Focus: Food & resource Economics, Agro-system Engineering, Environmental Forest Science, Agricultural Plant Science, Agricultural Chemistry and Food Science & Technology, Plant Medicine and Animal Science & Biotechnology

**- Harper Adams University (HAU)- United Kingdom**

Primary Contact: Nicola Randall ([nrandall@harper-adams.ac.uk](mailto:nrandall@harper-adams.ac.uk))

Research Focus: The Crop and Environment Research Centre is the beating heart of research at Harper Adams, Precision Farming (NCPF), Integrated Pest Management, Soil and Water management, Evidence-Based Agriculture, Agri-Tech Economics, Urban agriculture, Drought Mitigation, and Sustainable Energy Systems.

**-Vidhya Bhawan Society, Udaipur, Rajasthan- India**

Primary Contact: Suraj Jacob ([nrandall@harper-adams.ac.uk](mailto:nrandall@harper-adams.ac.uk))

Research Focus: Cattle and Dairy, Field trials, Vermicomposting, Poultry, Soil Testing lab., Training and Research

**-People Science Institute, Dehradun, Uttarakhand- India**

Primary Contact: Debashish Sen ([psiddoon@gmail.com](mailto:psiddoon@gmail.com))

Research Focus: Climate Resilient Farming, Participatory Livelihood Rehabilitation, Community based Spring shed development, Community based Fluorosis Mitigation, Groundwater Sanitation Nexus, Air Quality Monitoring, Ensuring Sustainable Livelihood, promoting livelihood security, Understanding Urbanization, River Conservation

**- University of New England (UNE) – Armidale- Australia**

**- Western Sydney University – Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment (WSU-HIE) - Australia**

**- INRA Centre Antilles-Guadeloupe - Caribbean**

**- Agrosavia- Colombia**

**- Univerista di Foggia - Italy**

**- Wageningen University and Research Center - Netherlands**

**- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture- Nigeria**

**- Cranfield University- United Kingdom**

**- University of the Virgin Islands- United States**