COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course examines issues of cultural landscapes, human-environment relations, and sustainable development in South America, taking full advantage of its location in Ecuador. Ecuador is one of the most bio diverse nations in the world, with rain forests, high mountains, and coastal mangrove estuaries. It is also ethnically diverse, with over 40 indigenous nations, a large Afro-Ecuadorian population, and mestizos, as well as European, Middle Eastern, and Asian immigrants. The country’s three largest cities (Guayaquil, Quito, and Cuenca) display a range of issues involving housing, employment, water and food provision, poverty and gentrification, and preservation of historical districts. The nation is rich in agricultural and aquacultural products, including flowers, bananas, shrimp, and cacao, as well as more traditional subsistence crops such as manioc, potatoes, quinoa, and corn. There is a large system of national parks and preserves spanning landscapes from high grasslands (páramos) to tropical forests; the interaction between the goals of conservation, indigenous territoriality, and the (growing) mineral and hydrocarbon extractive industries spurs ongoing debate.

The 2008 Ecuadorian constitution enshrined the protection of mother earth (pacha mama) and cultural diversity while pursuing the culturally appropriate good life (buen vivir, sumaq kawsay). This course will examine ongoing issues in sustainable development in these local contexts, which provide an excellent sample of similar issues in the rest of Latin America.

From 2007 until 2017, Ecuador was governed by Rafael Correa, a “21st Century Socialist” who has promoted modernization, nationalism, social justice, and the fight against poverty; controversially, he has sometimes combatted environmentalists and indigenous movements who went against his programs. On May 24, 2017, another socialist, Lenin Moreno, who uses a wheelchair and is a champion of people with disabilities, took office. He has continued some programs and changed others.
Field trips and site visits will include coastal, highland, and Amazonian destinations illustrative of Ecuador’s natural and cultural diversity. Students will examine selected issues through readings, discussions, site visits and field trips. There will be an extended amount of time in and near Cuenca, Ecuador’s third-largest city (population 730,000 in the larger metropolitan area). Cuenca was a Cañari indigenous settlement before it became first an Inca, and then a Spanish colonial city. Indigenous and colonial monuments explain its listing on the UNESCO world heritage list, while its highland setting (8200 feet above sea level) provides for a diverse hinterland with small farms, national parks, and villages noted for artisanal crafts. It has also become an important destination for ecotourism and retirement migration.

This course may be used towards the Sustainability Studies major, Geography major (Cultural Track, Sustainability Track), Latin American Studies major (core requirement and/or concentration), and as part of the Latin American minor in International Relations and Global Studies (IRG).

Global Cultures Flag
This course carries the Global Cultures flag. Global Cultures courses are designed to increase your familiarity with cultural groups outside the United States. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one non-U.S. cultural group, past or present.

Host Institution
Our course in is hosted by CEDEI Foundation (Centers for Interamerican Studies) in Cuenca, which will provide for home stays in Cuenca, lodging and meal arrangements elsewhere, transportation, facilities, and security. CEDEI was founded in 1992 as a nonprofit institution of higher learning. It offers English classes to 600 local Ecuadorian children and adults; a non-traditional trilingual elementary school focused on social and environmental consciousness; and support for a variety of international programs including this University of Texas program. The main facility at Gran Colombia 11-02 and General Torres, in central Cuenca, is the location of our classroom and computer lab during our stay in that city.

Course Format
Most classes will involve site visits (in Cuenca) or longer field trips. Lectures by the course instructor will be combined with group discussions (including peer group discussions) of questions related to the readings and site visits. Where appropriate, students will meet with entrepreneurs, farmers, and community leaders in local settings to discuss their needs and concerns. Many activities will involve trained local guides whose perspective is valued as reflecting Ecuadorian points of view. Students are expected to attend all course activities, read all materials, submit all assignments on time, and be prepared to participate. Students will consult their email and the Canvas website frequently for course updates, including updates in
the schedule.

**Canvas Websites**
The course has a Canvas website that will contain all course readings and other materials and assignments. It is also where students will submit required assignments, including the field notebook at the end of the course. Students are also subscribed to the UT Study Abroad Office’s Canvas website that contains important information.

**Facebook Website**
Students should also subscribe to the course’s private Facebook Website which is a good place to post news about extracurricular events.

**Prerequisites:** The course is open to all students in good standing in all majors, but students must be admitted to the corresponding Ecuador study abroad program. This is considered an Upper Division course, but is also open to lower division students. Although the course will be taught in English, students should have had some background in, and/or willingness to learn, Spanish. In particular, during your home stay in Cuenca, you should strive to learn to speak Spanish in front of your family.

**Summary of Grading:**
Grading will be based on 3 written assignments (15%), a cumulative class logbook (50%), and class participation (35%).

The Class Logbook is the record of the class, consisting of responses to questions pertaining to your lecture notes, field trips, and your readings. The logbook must be kept up to date. You will normally maintain the logbook as a file on Canvas. Students' written assignments and logbook entries may be used in classroom discussions, including peer groups proctored by students. They will be graded on the basis of overall quality, originality, creativity, and evidence of independent personal investigation. Points will be lost on the basis of factual errors, and failure to complete assignments on time.

Grading will be on the plus minus system, as follows. Scores and totals will not be rounded up or down.

93-100 A
90-92.99 A-
87-89.99 B+
83-86.99 B
80-82.99 B-
77-79.99 C+
73-76.99 C
Course Readings

Student handouts: after your arrival in Ecuador, you will receive emergency contact information, program calendars, information on health and safety, information on host families, maps and other information on Cuenca, and basic historical and geographical information on Ecuador.

You will be assigned readings in Ecuador for specific course assignments; you do not need to do any readings prior to June 6, but readings are placed online on Canvas for your convenience; read for background as desired.

The following four books will be placed online on Canvas; read for background as desired. Other readings will be placed on Canvas as required for essays or as background for site visits.


In addition, other required and background readings will be provided on Canvas.

PROGRAM CALENDAR AND ITINERARY -SUBJECT TO CHANGE!

Reading Assignments will be provided on Canvas as the course proceeds

**Week One**

June 5 Arrival in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and Orientation 1. You must book your flight according to our instructions (sent to you separately). Group Welcome Dinner at Hotel.

June 6 Guayaquil City Field Trip; Orientations 2 and 3. Lecture 1. Welcome Dinner

June 7 Lecture 2. Orientations 4 and 5. Manglares Churute community-led mangrove swamp site visit. Guayaquil-Cuenca bus trip; meet host families for home stays.
June 8  Free day with families. Log Book Draft 1 due.

**Week Two**
June 9 Gualaceo and Chordeleg Field Trip; Indigenous communities, markets and food. Essay 1 Due.
June 10 Lecture 3; Cuenca City Field Trip (urban overview). Cooking classes begin.
June 11 Catedral Antigua site visit.
June 12 Pumapungo Archaeological Museum, ruins, and gardens site visit; Lecture 4 (Politics)
June 13 Lecture 5; Ceramics classes begin.
June 14 Dance classes, Embroidery classes begin. Logbook Draft 2 due.
June 15 Field trip. Ingapirca Inca site; Iglesia de la Virgen de Rocio.

**Week Three**
June 16 Free day with families (Father’s Day).
June 17 San Joaquin Valley field trip (organic farms). Essay 2 Due. Lecture 6 (Dr. Stuart White on Paramo ecology).
June 18 Homero Ortega hat factory site visit. Lecture 7.
June 19 ETAPA Water Treatment Plant site visit. Lecture 8 (Traditional Medicine)
June 20 Lecture 9 (Llactalab Mapping Projects) and 10. Logbook Draft 3 due.
June 21 Cajas National Park field trip, Andean and Paramo ecology, water supply issues.

Optional extra cost overnight camping trip.
June 22 Free day. Essay 3 due.

**Week Four**
June 23 Free day.
June 24 Lecture 11, Farewell dinner with CEDEI leaders.
June 25. Free day. Final dinner with families
June 26 Cuenca-Patate bus trip (Hacienda Leito); Tungurahua Volcano Observatory with Lecture 12.
June 27 Patate – Cotacocha Lodge, rain forest field activities.
June 28 Field activities; Amazon conservation and community development issues.
June 29 Cotacocha– Quito bus trip via Papallacta thermal baths

**Week Five**
June 30 Quito urban field trips, cultural and historical preservation issues, Guayasamin museum.

Log book check.
July 1 Quito – Vicundo, organic agriculture and agricultural community home stay with activities.
July 2 Vicundo activities; flower plantation visit, night in Otavalo.
July 3 Lecture 13. Otavalo, Peguche, community development and irrigation issues, farewell
dinner.
July 4 Log Books Due. Otavalo-Quito via Quitsato equatorial community tourism site.
July 5 Airport transfers, Quito – US