



**JOHN FELICE
ROME CENTER**

Course: Environmental Sustainability (Envs 283)

John Felice Rome Center

Spring 2026

Mondays 9:00-12:00a.m.

Dr. Mario Carere

Email: mcarere@luc.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Please note: this is an Engaged Learning course, approved for the Service-Learning category, satisfying the Loyola University Chicago Engaged Learning requirement. All students must complete the service-learning experience and related assignments in order to successfully pass this course.

Course Description

This course will give you the basis to understand which is the impact of human activities on our planet and which are the main actions that policy makers, stakeholders and citizens should carry out to avoid the decline and deterioration of our ecosystems with dramatic consequences also for human being.

We will undertake a science-policy journey through the knowledge of the international strategies for sustainable development, the current European green deal policies and the global and local actions needed to fight the climate changes and chemical pollution.

The course will cover basic topics such as the protection of water resources (the most precious and limited resource) and our oceans, the importance of the protection of our ecosystems, the impact of chemical pollution on the environment and in which way this affects human health, the importance of sustainable food. A study visit and a practical activity about sustainability will be also scheduled.

This course has a Service Learning component through which students can learn about environmental education, sustainability, and community engagement by merging classroom work with practical experience at the Orti Urbani Monte Ciocci, a local community garden that promotes urban farming.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course students should be able to:

- a. Develop the basic concepts of the environmental sustainability.
- b. Determine the main drivers of environmental degradation and assess the social and economic risks.
- c. Provide examples of policy initiatives and projects to achieve high levels of individual and ecological wellbeing.
- d. Articulate and apply environmental sustainability indicators (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decision making).
- e. Improve awareness and communication skills related to the environmental sustainability.

Please note that, as this is a Service Learning course, you are asked to satisfy the first two learning outcomes in connection with your Service Learning experience at Orti Urbani Monte Ciocci.

Required Text / Materials

Assigned readings will be posted on Sakai

Assigned readings will be found on various scientific and policy publications, printed papers/slides Each week's readings must be completed before coming to class



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Attendance Policy

In accordance with the Rome Center mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, and in compliance with full-time student visa status, all courses adhere to the following attendance policy.

Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student and synonymous with academic success. Attendance is mandatory at every class meeting for each course. Lateness or leaving class early will impact the course grade at the professor's discretion. All absences, including medical absences, will be treated the same, unless they are documented long-term conditions or emergencies. Such situations will be evaluated case-by-case by the Academic Affairs office.

Once-a-week classes:

- After 1 absence, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class.
- Missing 3 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

Assessment Components

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|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| • Participation (including assignments) | 25% |
| • Midterm Exam | 25% |
| • Service Learning Component | 15% |
| • Work Groups | 10% |
| • Final Exam | 25% |

Participation

Participation and attendance are key aspects of this course. Students must be active in participation and be prepared about the readings assigned along the course. They also should demonstrate to have passion and awareness towards this topic and should also contribute to stimulate the discussions. In this component will be included also 2 assignments.

Midterm Exam

The midterm exam is a fundamental moment along the course and will be based on arguments related to the covered topics. Students will have 2 hours to complete the exam.

Work Groups

We will create groups of 4-5 students that will discuss important environmental topics and the way to solve them and apply measures: we will organize a team debate in which the students will play different roles (Citizen, Researcher, Policy Maker, Farmer/Industrial, Syndicate of workers) and will try to solve relevant questions (e.g. the effect on environment of a new industrial installation in an urban area).

Service Learning Component

The Service Learning component of this course, which should total at least 20 hours, requires students to engage with the Orti Urbani Monte Ciocchi community garden to support its development and maintenance. This will be achieved through on-site engagement and reflection tasks. Specific project details will be shared in class.

The Service Learning portion of the course will be assessed taking into account the quality of practical engagement with the site and the thoroughness of the reflection component, which will be demonstrated through in-class discussion and a dedicated written assignment.

Final Exam

The final exam will be based on the topics presented and discussed throughout the course. Students will have 2 hours to complete the exam.



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Grading

94-100: A
90-93: A-
87-89: B+
84-86: B
80-83: B-
77-79: C+
74-76: C
70-73: C-
67-69: D+
60-66: D
59 or lower: F

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are unacceptable at the the Rome Center and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here: <https://catalog.luc.edu/academic-standards-regulations/undergraduate/>. You are responsible to comply with the LUC University Catalog.

Late or Missed Assignments & Exam Policy

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor. ***As per the JFRC academic policies, students who miss any scheduled exam or quiz, including a final exam at the assigned hours will not be permitted to sit for a make-up examination without approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Permission is given rarely and only for grave reason; travel is not considered a grave reason. Make-up exams will only be given for documented absences.***

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) requiring academic accommodations should contact the Academic Affairs office at the John Felice Rome Center during the first week of classes.

Statement on Title IX

The Rome Center follows Loyola's [Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, Retaliation](#) and will comply with those as indicated and instructed.



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Course Schedule

Monday Class Days:

Monday,

Date	Topic	Text/ Assignment
Week One (19 th January)	Welcome/UN Sustainable Development goals	on sakai
Week Two (26 th January)	Sustainable Food Production	on sakai
Week Three (2 nd February)	Visit to the Urban Garden in Monte Ciocci (Rome)	on sakai
Week Four (9 th February)	Protection of water resources	on sakai
Week Five (16 th February)	Study Visit-FAO (Food Agriculture Organization)	
Week Six (23 rd February)	Biodiversity Protection	on sakai
Week Seven (2 nd March)	Mid-Term Exam	
SPRING BREAK		
Week Eight (16 th March)	Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability	on sakai
Week Eight (20 th March)	Sustainable Lifestyle	on sakai
Week Ten (23 rd March)	Climate Changes: impacts and adaptation measures	on sakai
Week Eleven (30 th March)	Working Groups	on sakai
Week Twelve (13 th April)	Visit to the Urban Garden in Monte Ciocci (Rome)	on sakai
Week Thirteen (20 th April)	Circular Economy/Waste Management	on sakai
Week Fourteen (27 th April)	Final Exam	on sakai