“Sustainability” implies both environmental and societal goals and actions. Some global issues are being addressed through multinational cooperation, but many issues are being tackled locally by governments, businesses, and civil society. This course in Nicaragua will examine programs being undertaken by local leaders to address problems in their communities. In this relatively poor country, we are going to be focusing on two inter-related issues: incomes and public health. We will examine efforts to promote sustainable agriculture, especially for the cash crop, coffee, which is seriously affected by climate change. Our investigation of aspects of public health include access to fresh water, proper waste disposal, rural health clinics, and programs to support rural poor and other disadvantaged segments of the population.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To discuss the impact of global climate change on subsistence farmers.
2. To explore local solutions to the environmental sustainability issues in Nicaragua.
3. To describe sustainable development in both environmental and social contexts, with particular focus on issues of public health.
4. To implement leadership techniques and strategies for achieving sustainable development.

SKILLS

1. To strengthen critical thinking and analytical skills
2. To build written and oral communications skills
3. To strengthen leadership capacity to promote change
REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Readings Packet from instructor

DAILY REFLECTION:

We will spend one hour per day (generally just before dinner) as a group, reflecting on the day’s activities.

CONSULTING PROJECT:

Students will have a choice of three consulting projects to design future strategies for a young coffee business, and Ecotourism business, or a public health NGO. We will visit these organizations and others. More information will be provided during the class and your instructors will be available as advisors/coaches.

FINAL EXAM

You will be given a list of seven or eight questions about things we have seen and discussed on this trip. Write an essay for each question, about one-page long for each answer. Send the document to me via email by January 24, 2016.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION:

Consulting Projects and Presentations 30%
Final Examination (Reflective Essays) 30%
Class participation 40%

PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING

We will have a pre-departure meeting in mid-November (date to be decided) to discuss logistics and expectations.

SCHEDULE (on separate sheet)