

Spring 2025 / Volume 11

SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

Glocal in Gainesville Spotlights

- Shop
- Eat
- Events
- Local Organization
- Other Opportunities

Gators Travel

- Local
- Vacation

Gators Going Green

- On-campus Club
- Alumni Network
- Professor Spotlight
- Alumni Spotlight

Behind the Newsletter

- Editor/Director
- Contact Information



ABOUT

The Sustainability Studies Newsletter provides information about events, people, and places dedicated to sustainability. It is published at the beginning of fall, spring, and summer semesters and is exclusively available to University of Florida Sustainability Studies students and alumni. This edition focuses on events and opportunities in and around the Gainesville community.

GLOCAL IN GAINESVILLE

Find out more about sustainable stores, restaurants, organizations, places to visit, events to participate in, and career opportunities that think glocal in Gainesville.

glo·cal

*/ˈglōk(ə)l/
adjective*

Considerate of local and global impacts, essential to sustainability

Ward's Supermarket



Ward's Supermarket is a Gainesville staple that offers seasonal and fresh food from local vendors in the convenience of a supermarket. They have weekly specials that highlight local vendors, and have been doing so for over 75 years!

Their [website](#) highlights the benefits of shopping local for people, the planet, and the community.

Frenchman Street Food

Frenchman Street Food GNV is a local food vendor that specializes in plant-based cajun specialties. Its start began in 2021, when they decided to showcase spicy cajun foods. Their location on South Main serves delicious and vegan forward brunch menus for everyone!

Stop by to try Po' Boys, Chick'n sandwiches and more southern bites with a vegan twist!

Learn more about Frenchman Street Food at their [website](#)!



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Life Unplastic Puzzle/Board Game Swap



Life Unplastic, a local plastic free store and refillery, hosts a weekly puzzle and board game swap! Come out to this weekly event to trade in your used and pre-loved board games for a new and exciting game or puzzle. While you're there, check out the rest of the store. Check out the website [here](#) to learn more and even order online!

Local Events

recurring

#UNLITTER yoga

Date: Wednesdays

Location: Plaza of the Americas

Hours: 6:00pm-7:00pm

Grove Street Farmers' Market

Date: Recurring Mondays

Location: Cypress & Grove Brewery

Hours: 4:00-7:00 pm

upcoming

Earth Advocacy Day

March 5th-6th, 2025

Click [here](#) for more!

Sustainability LIVE: Net Zero

March 5th-6th, 2025

[Website](#)

Green Greeks Earth Day Event

April 22, 2025

@ufgreengreeks

GLOCAL IN GAINESVILLE

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more info LOCAL ORGS

Visit
<https://gatorsvolunteer.ufl.edu/for-volunteers/volunteer-with-environment/>
for more information.

Kanapaha Botanical Gardens



Kanapaha Botanical Gardens is a 68 acre non-profit facility that houses local and tropical plants. The gardens showcase the state's largest public display of bamboos and herb garden in the Southeast.

There are special events throughout the year to showcase the species on display. Learn more about the gardens [here!](#)

Opportunities

intern

Keep Alachua County Beautiful

Gainesville, Florida

Their mission is to beautify, conserve resources, recycle, educate and preserve our community's environmental legacy. Sustainability Interns and volunteers are always needed.

Alachua Conservation Trust

Gainesville, Florida

ACT has semester long internships in the Fall, Spring, Summer for students 18y and older that are seeking to deepen their experience in natural resources and nonprofit careers.

volunteer

Sierra Club

<https://www.sierraclub.org/>

Sunrise Movement

<https://www.sunrisemovement.org/>

#UNLITTER

<https://www.unlitter.org/>

Project Sunshine

projectsunshine.org

GATORS TRAVEL

Some new ideas to improve your summer vacation and explore new places both within and beyond the Gainesville community!

UF in Belize: NGOs, SUSTAINABILITY, & DEVELOPMENT

This transformative study abroad program explores the roles, operations & impacts of Non-Governmental Organizations (aka. nonprofit organizations) on environmental sustainability and social development across the globe and specifically in the beautiful Central American country of Belize. It includes travels across Belize for field visits to 9 NGOs; observation of marine & forest eco systems; cultural immersion; and field stays at the Belize Barrier Reef (second longest on Earth), a rainforest, and a wildlife sanctuary. Several Sustainability Studies students attended Dr. Kumaran's 2022 and 2023 'UF in Belize' and benefited greatly from its academic, experiential and contextual learning experiences. Interested students can contact Dr. Kumaran at kumaran@ufl.edu for an information session and interview for admission.

Vacation Opportunities

Rainbow River State Park

Float down the river via paddleboard, kayaking, or swimming!

Key West

The perfect weekend or week long trip that includes discovering beaches, diving, and exploring nature.



GATORS GOING GREEN

A closer look at how UF students, clubs, alumni, and faculty all contribute to a more sustainable future.

more info: STUDENT CLUBS

visit orgs.studentinvolvement.ufl.edu

> Log in

> Organization

> Find an organization.

Public Interest Environmental Conference

University of Florida Levin College of Law

2025 Public Interest Environmental Conference

Preserve Today, Protect Tomorrow



The 2025 Public Interest Environmental Conference will be held by the UF Levin college of Law. This event will focus on conservation. Speakers will cover topics ranging from energy, finance, and innovation to coastal resilience and the Florida Wildlife Corridor.

Click [here](#) to register and learn more about the event and see the conference agenda!

LinkedIn Alumni Network

The UF Sustainability Studies Alumni Network on LinkedIn aims to connect current students and alumni with each other. This network frequently features local and global career opportunities, local UF Sustainability news, and general environmental current events.

By creating a network of Gators passionate about sustainability, new opportunities and insightful conversations can arise. This network is also open for alumni and students to post their own content regarding career opportunities.



Gator Sustainability Studies Alumni Network

Listed group

GATORS GOING GREEN

Professor Spotlight

James W Jawitz

James W Jawitz is a professor who primarily focuses on landscape hydrology and conducts research on the effects of minimizing human impacts on natural hydrologic ecosystems. He teaches courses such as SWS4245/5245 Water Resource Sustainability.



What inspired you to pursue a career in academia and teaching?

I was working as a civilian engineer for the US Air Force and I was tasked with managing the environmental issues on our base. I had learned a lot in my undergraduate studies, but I realized that some of our environmental problems did not have clear solutions. I decided to go to graduate school to learn more about how to resolve the environmental challenges of our times, and I discovered the possibility of becoming a scientist.

What is your favorite course to teach, and why? If given the opportunity, what would your dream course look like?

I most value teaching 'Water Resource Sustainability' because it brings together students from across campus who are interested in the many ways that water resources underpin our entire civilization. After more than 20 years, I am still finding new ways to illustrate the centrality of water resources. In addition to environmental science, I am also interested in history, art, and urban design. So, since 2022 I have led a cities-focused study abroad program with UF students traveling by train from London to Rome, learning about how the great cities of Europe have contributed to historical and artistic revolutions. It's cities, history, and art - but perhaps a dream scenario would be if the students were all also motivated by sustainability.

GATORS GOING GREEN

James W Jawitz

(cont.)

Your research focuses on minimizing human impacts on natural hydrologic ecosystems, including watersheds, wetlands, and aquifers. How does this work contribute to broader sustainability efforts?

Our society is built on ecosystem services, and extracting resources without regard for ecosystems is not a sustainable strategy.

What do you believe are the most pressing challenges in the field of sustainability today, and how can we address them?

Many people lack access to basic services, much less life's luxuries such as Chipotle and iPhones. Meanwhile, the lifestyles of many other people impose huge global footprints. Reducing global inequality continues to be our biggest challenge.

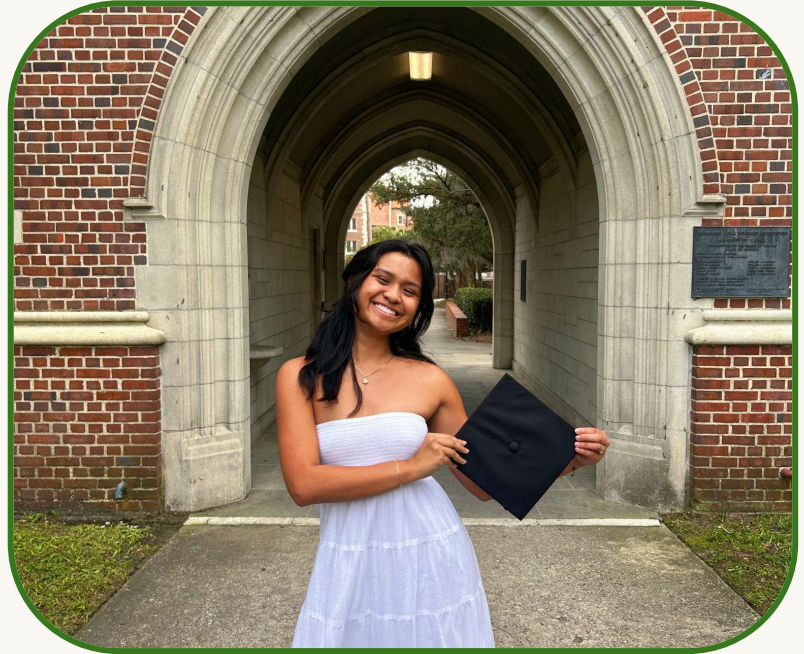
What advice would you offer to current sustainability students?

Sustainability should mean more than just being a bit more environmentally responsible. Real sustainability assessments can be made and can stimulate innovative pathways towards a sustainable future.

GATORS GOING GREEN

Alumni Spotlight Kianna Nelson

Kianna Nelson is a recent UF graduate who obtained her B.A. in Sustainability Studies with minors in Agriculture and Natural Resource Communications and Business Administration in 2024. She is currently a global sustainability analyst at Viatrix!



Why did you choose to study sustainability at UF?

I switched my major to Sustainability Studies in the second semester of my sophomore year. I was originally a Microbiology and Cell Science Major looking to do Pre-Med. I felt unfulfilled by my STEM classes and sought more people-focused courses that were interdisciplinary. I first learned about sustainability through the issue of fast fashion – how important it is for companies to be transparent and the social and environmental implications associated with producing cheap clothing. As I read more on the topic, I found that sustainability combines all the areas I'm interested in: society, the environment, and the economy. I took a leap of faith, changed my major, and haven't looked back since!

What is a sustainability issue you are passionate about?

The struggles of climate refugees underscore the urgency of climate action, especially from corporations and first-world countries. The fact that people have to leave their homes due to the extreme weather conditions exacerbated by climate change is so heartbreaking. First-world countries and corporations are massive polluters yet do not suffer the consequences of climate change in the same capacity as marginalized communities. It can be easy to think of climate change as a distant issue when it hasn't affected you yet. It's crucial to recognize that our actions affect the livelihood of people thousands of miles away.

GATORS GOING GREEN

Kianna Nelson (cont.)

What does a typical day look like in your role at Viatris?

I'm currently a Global Sustainability Analyst for a pharmaceutical company called Viatris. My role consists of tracking global sustainability regulations, assisting with our yearly Sustainability Report, updating the Global Sustainability webpage, and helping with sustainability disclosure surveys i.e. EcoVadis, ISS, CDP, etc. I work remotely so thankfully I have no commute! I'll typically attend any meetings I have scheduled for the day then work on updating my Global Regulations tracker and other writing/communications-related tasks my boss assigns me. I also do a lot of "Peer Reviews" where I look at the sustainability work other companies are doing and find opportunities for improvement at Viatris.

How do you find communication-focused work different for non-profit vs for profit businesses?

Communication-focused work for smaller non-profits compared to larger/nationally recognized non-profits and for-profit companies tends to offer more creative liberty. I worked for a smaller non-profit called the Greater Sum and found that I had more room to experiment with designs and storytelling. Larger nonprofits and for-profit businesses have pretty strict brand guides that you have to follow: certain colors, fonts, mission statements, logo placements, etc. You can still be creative but you will be limited to certain rules. There can also be multiple rounds of approval and the final product may not look like your original draft.

What advice do you have for sustainability students graduating this spring semester?

Don't be afraid to apply to internships after graduation! I think it's common to feel like you need to have a job secured right after you graduate and applying can be quite stressful. Internships can be a great bridge from post-college to a full-time job. If you're still unsure about what sector you want to work in, an internship can give you a look into what's out there. It's also a great way to network and if you're lucky it could turn into a full-time role! Regardless, you will acquire new skills that you can use in a future role and figure out what you like and don't like.

BEHIND THE NEWSLETTER

Cameron Delgado **EDITOR**



Cameron Delgado is a fourth year Sustainability Studies student who is earning minors in Environmental Justice and Policy, Communication Studies, and Public Relations. She is also working towards a certificate in Geospatial Information Analysis and participating in the Social Impact and Sustainability Initiative Scholars Program and International Scholars Program. At UF, Cameron is involved in Green Greeks as the Executive Vice President. She is currently an Environmental Assistant Intern at Verde Environmental Co, an environmental consulting firm. After graduation, she hopes to continue her education in a graduate program that focuses on sustainability and business!

Dr. Thiele **DIRECTOR & DEPARTMENT HEAD**



Dr. Leslie Thiele is the Director of Sustainability Studies and oversees the Active Learning Program (ALP) in the Center for Adaptive Innovation, Resilience, Ethics and Science (UF CAIRES). He teaches the gateway and capstone course for the Sustainability Studies Program as well as political theory courses and seminars in the Department of Political Science.



Here's to a successful & sustainable Spring 2025 semester!

Contact

If you have questions, suggestions, or contributions for future newsletters, please contact Cameron Delgado at camerondelgado@ufl.edu