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Final Reflection

Regardless of the way that it ended, this was the most influential and insightful semester of my experience in the sustainability program. Having the opportunity to take my last seminar while also completing my capstone project offered lots of parallels and opportunities to reflect on my coursework thus far. I thoroughly enjoyed all the guest speakers, activities, and assignments that we had throughout the term but a few stood out to me.

The most thought provoking lecture that we had in my opinion was with Michael Marshall and his discussion on incorporating sustainability in art. This was an entirely new concept to me and his passion sparked my interest to learn more about this topic. I really loved the way that he conveyed so much emotion through his pieces and collections and it was easy to tell that this was his calling. In addition, I appreciated him sharing his path to how he got to where he is now and I felt like his story was very relatable. Another class that really stood out to me was our field trip to the ACC landfill. I was in a rush to make it to the pickup location to go to the landfill and almost missed the vans but I am so glad that I didn’t because this was easily the most interesting tour I have ever gone on. I have been to landfills before to dump waste and always been blown away by the sheer magnitude of the operation. This location is 400 acres and processes over 300 tons of waste per day. Learning these statistics shocked me because it illustrates the unbelievable quantity of waste generated by the citizens of just one county in one state of one country. I can’t even begin to comprehend the amount of waste that our species creates each year after seeing this one landfill. I also was fascinated by the composting that takes place at this landfill and enjoyed learning about the ways that they are selling it back to the residents of Athens. Overall, I think that everybody should have the opportunity to go on a tour of this facility with the hope that it will make them think twice about their habits as a consumer.

With everything happening the way it is in the world right now, I am optimistic that this can and will be a turning point for our society in the ways that we take on climate change and the issues that it brings forth. I am grateful that my time in this program has equipped me with the proper skills to be a leader in the sustainability movement and motivated me to be a force for good. I am sad that my time in the sustainability program and at the University of Georgia is coming to an end, however, I am eager to see what my future holds.