

SAMPLE SYLLABUS, SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Northern Arizona University SUS 695: Elements Of Sustainable Communities

Prerequisites: must be admitted to the SUS degree program and have completed 21 or more hours of graduate work or receive permission of the SUS director.

Course Description: Examines several theories and practices that inform sustainable community life. Letter grade only. Prerequisite: completion of 21 hours in SUS program or SUS director's consent.

This course continues the programmatic theme of the SUS degree program, “Visions of Good and Sustainable Societies.” It serves as both a review and elaboration of several aspects of the theme. Students will bring together their experiences in a variety of courses as they discuss the theories and practices that inform sustainable community life. Students will have an opportunity to refine their philosophy of community and their approach to sustainable communities, test their ideas in conversation, and connect their individual work with the work and ideas of others.

Course Objectives:

- 1) To provide a forum for the elaboration and maturation of ideas about sustainable communities.
- 2) To gain exposure to a variety of approaches to and perspectives on sustainability and community life.
- 3) To make connections between theory and practice and between academic ideas and community life.
- 4) To enable advanced students to develop and share their philosophies of community and strategies for achieving sustainable communities, including as they are taking form in their thesis projects.
- 5) To facilitate the development of a range of skills appropriate for graduate level work, including analytic, writing, oral communication, and critical inquiry skills.

Course Structure: This course is structured as a graduate seminar. Assigned readings and writing are to be prepared for critical and constructive discussion in class. Students and faculty will share the responsibility of presenting course materials; all students are expected to attend class regularly and punctually, and to participate actively in discussion.

Required Reading: Course readings will be available on-line via VISTA. In addition, the following books may be obtained from University Text and Tools and/or the NAU Bookstore:

1. Heather Menzies. 2005. *No Time: Stress and the Crisis of Modern Life*.
2. Bill McKibbin. 2010. *Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet*. NY: Times Books.

3. Timothy Beatley. 2004. *Native to Nowhere: Sustaining Home and Community in a Global Age*. Washington: Island Press.
4. Robert Gottlieb and Anupama Joshi. 2010. *Food Justice*. MIT Press.
5. Frances Fox Piven. 2006. *Challenging Authority: How Ordinary People Change America*. NY: Rowman & Littlefield.
6. J.K. Gibson-Graham. 2006. *Post-Capitalist Politics*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
7. Bill McKibben. 2007. *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*. NY: Times Books/Henry Holt and Company.
8. Frances Moore Lappé. 2007. *Getting a Grip: Clarity, Creativity and Courage in a World Gone Mad*. Cambridge, MA: Small Planet Media.
9. Juliet B. Schor. 2010. *Plentitude: The New Economics of True Wealth*. NY: Penguin Press.

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

I. Elements of Sustainable Communities: An Introduction

Week 1 – January 18 (read for next week)

II. Theoretical and Analytical Tools

Week 2 – January 25

1. Jonathan Rowe. 2005. “The vanishing commons.” Pp. 150-164 in James Lardner and David A. Smith, *Inequality Matters: The Growing Economic Divide in America and Its Poisonous Consequences*. NY: The New Press.
2. Lynda H. Schneekloth and Robert G. Shibley. 1995. “Introduction: The tasks of placemaking practice.” Pp. 1-18 in *Placemaking: The Art and Practice of Building Communities*. NY: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
3. John Gardner. 1995. “Building a Responsive Community.” Pp. 167-178 in Amitai Etzioni (ed.), *Rights and the Common Good*. NY: St. Martin’s Press.
4. Lester W. Milbrath. 2002. “Redefining the good life in a sustainable society.” Pp. 199-205 in David Schmidtz and Elizabeth Willott, *Environmental Ethics: What Really Matters, What Really Works*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
5. Rogene A. Buchholz and Sandra B. Rosenthal. 1998. “Toward an ethics of consumption: Rethinking the nature of growth.” Pp. 221-234 in Laura Westra and Patricia H. Werhane (eds.), *The Business of Consumption: Environmental Ethics and the Global Economy*. Boulder: Rowman and Littlefield.
6. Martin H. Krieger. 2002. “What’s wrong with plastic trees?” Pp. 159-171 in David Schmidtz and Elizabeth Willott (eds.), *Environmental Ethics: What Really Matters, What Really Works*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
7. Robin Attfield. 2003. “The global community and global citizenship.” Pp. 159-187 in *Environmental Ethics*. Cambridge: Polity.
8. Nancy A. Wonders. 1999. “Postmodern Feminist Criminology and Social Justice.” Pp. 111- 128 in Bruce A. Arrigo (ed.), *Social Justice/Criminal Justice: The*

Maturation of Critical Theory in Law, Crime and Deviance. Belmont, CA: West/Wadsworth.

III. Elements of Sustainable Communities: Perspectives

Week 3 – February 1

7:00 pm Winona LaDuke

Post YOUR essay outlining the “elements of sustainable communities”

1. Vandana Shiva. 2001. “Globalization and poverty.” Pp. 57-66 in Veronika Bennholdt-Tomsen, Nicholas Faraclas, and Claudia Von Werlhof (eds.), *There is An Alternative: Subsistence and Worldwide Resistance to Corporate Globalization*. London: Zed Books.
2. Diane-Michele Prindeville. 2004. “The Role of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Class in Activists’ Perceptions of Environmental Justice.” Pp. 93-108 in Rachel Stein (ed.), *New Perspectives on Environmental Justice*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
3. Winona LaDuke, *Recovering the Sacred* (selection)

IV. Time and Changing Landscapes of Community

Week 4 – February 8

1. Mendzies, *No Time*, ALL

Recommended:

- a. Theda Skocpol. 2005. “America disconnected.” Pp.178-187 in James Lardner and David A. Smith, *Inequality Matters: The Growing Economic Divide in America and Its Poisonous Consequences*. NY: The New Press.
- b. Robert D. Putnam. 2000. “Thinking about social change in America.” Pp. 15-28 in *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. NY: Simon and Schuster.

V. Envisioning, Engaging, Remembering, and Building Community

Attend or participate in an arts/activism/community building event

Week 5 – February 15

1. Beatley, *Native to Nowhere*, Chapter 7
2. Scott Russell Sanders. 2001. “The common life.” Pp. 217-237 in Eric T. Freyfogle (ed.), *The New Agrarianism: Land, Culture and the Community of Life*. Washington: Island Press/Shearwater Books.
3. Wallace Heim. 2003. “Slow activism: Homelands, love and the lightbulb.” Pp. 183-202 in Bronislaw Szerszynski, Wallace Heim, and Claire Waterton. *Nature Performed: Environment, Culture and Performance*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing
4. Gavin Grindon. “Art & Activism.” 2000. *Art Monthly* (333):9-12.

5. John D.H. Downing. 2001. "Public speech, dance, jokes and song." Pp. 105-120 in *Radical Media: Rebellious Communication and Social Movements*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
6. Marie Howe. 1998. "What the Living Do." Pp. 89-90 in *What the Living Do: Poems*. NY: W.W. Norton and Company.
7. Steven Hoelscher and Derek H. Alderman. 2004. "Memory and place: geographies of a critical relationship." *Social & Cultural Geography*, 5(3):347-355.
8. Linda Camino and Shepherd Zeldin. 2002. "From periphery to center: Pathways for youth civic engagement in the day-to-day life of communities." *Applied Developmental Science*, (October), 6(4):213-220.

VI. Eearth – A Changed Planet

Week 6 – February 22

[Feb. 23 Koyla Abramsky – possible]

1. McKibbin, *Eearth*, ALL

VII. The Politics of Economic Possibility

Week 7 – March 1:

1. Gibson Graham, *Post-Capitalist Politics*, ALL

VIII. Food Justice

Week 8 – March 8

7 pm Robert Gottlieb

1. Gottlieb and Joshi, *Food Justice*, ALL

(SPRING BREAK – March 13-19)

IX. Places of Sustainable Community

Week 9 – March 22

1. Beatley, *Native to Nowhere*, ALL (except Ch. 7)

X. Democracy, Social Movements, and Social Change

Week 10 – March 29

1. Frances Fox Piven, *Challenging Authority*, selections

Week 11 – April 5

1. Lappé, *Getting A Grip*, ALL

XI. Strategies and Mechanisms for Achieving Sustainable CommunitiesWeek 12 — April 12

1. McKibben, *Deep Economy*, ALL

Week 13 – April 19

1. Schor, *Plentitude*, ALL

XII. Emerging Visions of Sustainable CommunitiesWeek14 – April 26

1. Student Presentations

Week 15 – May 3

1. Potluck at Nancy's

XIII. SUS Students – Public Presentations**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Because we will be using a seminar format for the class, it is absolutely essential that students attend all classes, complete the assigned reading prior to attending class, and come to class prepared to play a major role in class discussions. Success in graduate school isn't just about "knowing more," it is also determined by your ability to communicate what you know to others. It is my hope to create a classroom environment in which we all have an opportunity to learn from and challenge one another. Many of the topics that we will discuss are controversial. These controversies are best understood if people with differing viewpoints express their opinions in class. I expect us all to be respectful of one another, and to see every discussion as an opportunity to educate ourselves about information we may have overlooked or been unaware of. Creating an open and supportive environment for discussion is partly my responsibility - but it's partly yours too. In general the class will operate as a discussion group. Students will take turns leading discussion and devising questions to foster conversation about the reading. However, it is my expectation that all students will play an active role in each class.

Evaluation Method

Philosophy Statement	25
Paper 1:	50
Paper 2:	50
Paper 3:	100
In-class facilitation	25

Presentation of Research	25
Attendance/participation	<u>25</u>
Total Points	300

A=90% or more; B=89%-80%; C=79%-70%; D=69%-60%; F=59% or less

You will receive more detailed guidelines for these assignments as the semester progresses. Due dates are tentative; changes will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to know when papers are due. Late papers are subject to grade reductions unless arrangements are made with me **prior** to the due date.

Incomplete Grade: Failure to complete the work in the course will result in a grade of “F” unless an Incomplete Contract has been completed **prior** to the last regular class of the semester. You should be aware that I am unlikely to agree to an incomplete unless you can evidence that your inability to complete the assigned work was due to clearly unavoidable circumstances.

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty: Penalties will be based upon the NAU policy for academic dishonesty.

Tape recorders, cell phones and other electronic devices can be very disruptive to the learning environment; their use is not permitted in this course without my approval.

Keep all graded materials until you receive your final grade. Also, be sure to always have a copy of completed assignments in your possession.

The topics we will cover in this course are very mattering. For that reason, it is my hope that I can create a classroom experience that will facilitate your knowledge of the subject matter, professional development and personal growth. I want to encourage you to speak with me should you experience difficulty at any point during the semester. Of course, the sooner that you come to see me, the more likely it is that we can develop strategies to improve your experience and/or performance in the course. I have scheduled office hours to make it easy for you to see me if you have concerns or just want to chat. I am also available by appointment. I genuinely hope that you enjoy the course and that you find the information worthwhile. I look forward to getting to know you and to working together!