

2019

Sense of Place in the Anthropocene: A students-teaching-students course

Giannina Sol Gaspero-Beckstrom
UVM

Ella Mighell
UVM

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“ENVS 197: Sense of Place in the Anthropocene”
A Students-Teaching-Students Course

Giannina Gaspero-Beckstrom & Ella Mighell

A senior thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Science

Environmental Program

University of Vermont

2019

Advisors:

Dr. Amy Seidl, Environmental Studies Senior Lecturer & Professor, The University of Vermont
Dr. Karen Nordstrom, Environmental Studies Lecturer & Professor, The University of Vermont

Abstract

Contemporary environmental education is tasked with the acknowledgement of the Anthropocene - an informal but ubiquitous term for the current geological epoch which arose from anthropogenic changes to the Earth system - and its accompanying socio-ecological implications. Sense of Place can be a hybridized tool of personal agency and global awareness for this task. Through the creation, execution and reflection of a 14-student students-teaching-students (STS) course at the University of Vermont in the Spring of 2019, Giannina Gaspero-Beckstrom and Ella Mighell aimed to facilitate a peer-to-peer learning environment that addressed sense of place, social justice and community engagement. The students-teaching-students framework is an alternative educational approach that supports the values and practices of the University of Vermont's Environmental Program, as well as an intentional breakdown of the hierarchical knowledge paradigm. Using alternative pedagogies (predominately critical and place-based), we attempted to facilitate meaningful learning through creative expression, experiential education, community dialogue and personal reflection. Our intention with this was to encourage awareness and action.

Keywords: Alternative Pedagogy, Anthropocene, Place-Based Education, Sense of Place, Students-Teaching-Students

Acknowledgments

We would first like to acknowledge the thoughtful and engaged co-learners of *ENVS 197: Sense of Place in the Anthropocene*: Sophie Berg, Sarah Boatner, Zowie Caouette, Ciara Fagan, Ariane Goldsmith, Nadia Kamel, Chloe Kirk, Alexis Martinez, Fiona McCarthy, Molly Perry, Annika Ruben, Elise Schumacher, Olivia Stafford and Sharon Webster. Your trust and insight brought power to our vision. Thank you for moving forward with us.

To our thesis advisors Amy Seidl and Karen Nordstrom, thank you for your dependable guidance and unwavering support. You inspired us to pursue an education that aligns with our heart-fires and to keep asking questions.

Thank you to the University of Vermont Environmental Program for sustaining the students-teaching-students structure. To Brendan Fisher and Laurie Kutner, we deeply appreciate your instruction during and after *ENVS 201: Research Methods* and your help with the logistics and formatting of this thesis.

Our peer-to-peer learning community garden would have wilted without the nourishment from our guest pollinators. Thank you to Marie Vea-Fagnant, Katherine Elmer, Betsy McGavisk, the student organizers of NoNames for Justice, Corie Pierce, Ren Weiner and Susan Teare. You each inspired us with your work, stories and perspectives.

We send deep gratitude to the land for holding us and acknowledge the immense privilege to be able to pursue this project on the land of the Abenaki. Wlioni.

Thank you to our mentors, professors, teachers and peers for giving us feedback throughout this process and modeling the type of educators that we aspire to be. Thank you for showing us that learning is a journey. To our friends and families, we appreciate and thank you for believing in us.

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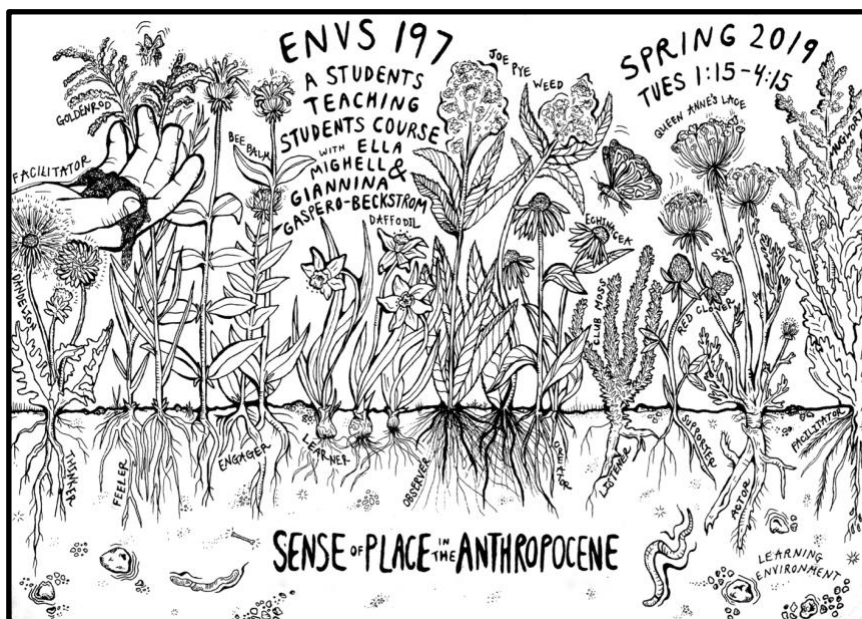
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Introduction

‘Sense of Place’ is a deep, multidimensional reverence for place. With reverence comes reciprocity. Sense of place is a theory and a practice that when combined creates a framework. In this time of grand challenges - environmental catastrophes, dualistic politics, systemic injustices and land disconnection - what role can sense of place have in our understanding of the Anthropocene? What role can it have in moving forward? To us, moving forward means knowing the facts without losing hope in a continual cycle of action and reflection.

As students of the Environmental Program at the University of Vermont we have been confronted with the Anthropocene but given few tools to respond with deep understanding and fortitude. In wanting to create a space for reflection and inspiration, we designed, proposed, created and facilitated a 16-person peer-to-peer learning community in the form of a students-teaching-students (STS) course. This was the senior capstone of Ella Mighell and Giannina Gaspero-Beckstrom and our course outcomes were to cultivate a sense of place that encourages environmental stewardship, support action-oriented community engagement and inspire critical consciousness while maintaining a consistent lens of social justice. Background research and preparation for this STS course was based on five areas of literature that we felt would inform us about sense of place and moving forward: “the case for the Anthropocene,” “sense of place,” “pedagogies for the Anthropocene,” “place-based education” and “indigenous knowledge and unsettling education.”

Our classroom was a garden! Let us explain. Our soil was our learning environment: that from which we grow. All the students - us included - were plants of all sorts, each with their own set of needs and contributions, all active pieces of the whole. A loving gardener’s hand appeared to facilitate healthy soil, but with the right environment and room to grow, the garden is meant to flourish on its own. This capstone became the fuel for our heart-fires.



This course was about how we move forward and engage with the world as thought-provokers while holding compassion and intention and remaining rooted in place.

Literature Review

The Case for the Anthropocene

The “Anthropocene” is the name of the proposed geological term for the current era, defined by rapid global changes that are scientifically proven to be caused by humans, or “anthropogenic” (Crutzen, 2002; Steffen et al., 2018). Although the formalization of the term “Anthropocene” depends on its geological differentiation from the Holocene, these changes to geological, climate and ecological systems are accompanied by social implications.

Despite its increasing ubiquity among environmental publications and debates, the term “Anthropocene” has yet to be formalized by academic and political authorities, and the debate for such official recognition continues to this day. Neither the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) nor the International Commission on Stratigraphy have officially accepted the term, claiming that the current epoch is still the Holocene (Stromberg, 2013). The World Meteorology Organization (WMO) also has not officially endorsed the term; however, its most recent annual Statement on the State of the Global Climate (2017) contains ample references to the anthropogenic causes of Earth system change. Some organizations that actively accept and use the term include the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which titled its second issue of its quarterly publication, the *Courier*, “Welcome to the Anthropocene!” in June of 2018, and the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), an international research collaboration founded in 1987, which began focusing directly on research for the Anthropocene in 2012 (IGBP, 2015, p. 6). In October of 2018, the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) endorsed the term for the first time in a Special Report, stating that “the overarching context of [the] report is this: human influence has become a principal agent of change on the planet, shifting the world out of the relatively stable Holocene period into a new geological era, often termed the Anthropocene” (Allen et al., 2018, p. 53).

Regardless of the term’s formalization, the notion that humans have driven changes to Earth’s system at an alarmingly rapid rate is widely acknowledged by the scientific community (UNESCO, 2018). Paul Crutzen and Eric Stoermer, who first proposed the use of the term Anthropocene in 2000, refer to the expanding impact of humankind in these terms: human population, per capita exploitation of natural resources, urbanization, water use, land transformation, release of greenhouse gasses, species extinction, habitat degradation, geochemical cycle modification, and fishery depletion (Crutzen & Stoermer, 2000).

Some argue that the Anthropocene epoch began several thousand years ago, when the agricultural revolution began to alter atmospheric carbon dioxide levels; some say it was the dawn of the Industrial Revolution which enabled the present-day rapidity of global systems alteration; still others name mid-20th century “Great Acceleration” of humanity or specifically, the detonation of the atomic bomb in 1945 (Zalasiewicz et al., 2015). Some argue that the latter option, a 1945 start boundary, makes the most sense because it marks a historical turning point,

providing disciplines outside of just geography a relevant context for contributing to the discourse of the Anthropocene.

However, most scientists agree that it is not so much where the boundary between the Anthropocene and the Holocene lies in Earth history, but rather the *how* the Anthropocene differs from the Holocene that matters most to debate and study. Waters et al. (2016) claim that there are indeed stratigraphical (as in the layers of Earth's crust, or geological) distinctions as discerned through ice cores and sediment samples. They observed new anthropogenic materials (from landfills, mines, construction), the modification of the sedimentary process, different geochemical signatures (for example higher levels pesticide residues), different radiogenic signatures (particularly higher levels of isotopes from the nuclear fallout in the '40s), outstanding carbon dioxide concentrations, new, higher trends in global warming, and massive species extinctions that all indicate a different geological context from the Holocene.

For the sake of environmental arguments and movements forward, the Anthropocene defines more than just a geological timescale. It is well articulated by Sybil Seitzinger, director of the IGBP from 2008-2015: "I conceptualise the Earth system through the lens of the Anthropocene: a complex, integrated socio-eco-bio-geo-chemical-physical system in which humans are the dominant force of change. The Earth system operates within and across all temporal and spatial scales." (IGBP, 2015, p. 9)

The "Great Acceleration" graphs, originally published in 2003 by the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), use indicators such as population, water use and primary energy use to depict humanity's imprint on large scale, global systems; this imprint is shown to be growing rapidly since the middle of the 20th century (Steffen et al., 2015). These graphs, which have become a symbol of the Anthropocene, elucidate that the impacts of this epoch go beyond geological implications.

The global changes of the Anthropocene beckons different methods for moving forward toward a sustainable future. According to the IPCC 2018 Special Report, this means "strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters; integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning; and improving education, awareness - raising and human and institutional capacity" (p. 74). The following sections of this literature review will address how raising human and institutional capacity can be done through a framework of "sense of place" and alternative pedagogical approaches.

Sense of Place

"Sense of place" lives within complexity and contradictions. It is theoretical and actualized, personal and global, and it exists as a phenomenon. Although most recently the term has been defined by and for academics, sense of place cannot be constricted by a single definition. "Sense of place integrates the physical place with psychological and social elements of creating meaning and attachment, and with political economic dimensions of place engagement

or citizen action” (Solin, 2015). It is personal and shaped by the individual constructing the definition. “We bring to the places we live a whole set of cultural preconceptions that shape the way we respond to the place, and in some measure re-share the place to fit those preconceptions” (Cross, 2001). In the research and conference presentation, “What is Sense of Place?” Jennifer Cross differentiates the conceptual aspects of sense of place as *relationships to place* and *community attachments*. Understandings and uses of sense of place vary between fields of geography, anthropology, environmental psychology, landscape architecture/history, sociology and natural history.

In geography, *topophilia* describes “the affective bond between people and place or setting,” including the aesthetical, tactile and emotional bond (Tuan, 1974). An anthropological understanding of *place attachment* centers the “...emotional and cognitive experience, and includes cultural beliefs and practices that link people to place” (Setha Low as cited in Cross, 2001). Meanwhile the environmental psychology perspective differentiates between *sense of place*, *spirit of place* and *setting* (Cross, 2001). Through landscape architecture and history, sense of place takes a more temporal and event-based meaning. Sociologically, through the lens of David Hummon in *Community Attachment: Local Sentiment and Sense of Place*, “sense of place is inevitably dual in nature, involving both an interpretive perspective *on* the environment and an emotional reaction *to* the environment... Sense of place involves a personal *orientation* toward place, in which one’s understanding of place and one’s feelings about place become fused in the context of environmental meaning.” The transdisciplinary nature of sense of place eludes to the multidimensionality of this phenomenon. Sense of place is complex and personal, and dependent on a number of factors.

As expressed in Table 1 (below), Cross divides the relationships to place through biographical, spiritual, ideological, narrative, commodified and dependent components. While the division of types of relationships to place might be advantageous for teaching purposes, in actuality these forms of relationships are tangled and intersecting. Sense of place is not just the commodified relationship of where one chooses to live, or the happenstance of place based on birth; it is the moral, ethical, familial, mythical, material and cognitive bond with place. Conjecturing sense of place, and place specifically, is not bound to one exact location or space.

TABLE 1 Relationships to Place

Relationship	Type of Bond	Process
Biographical (9)	historical and familial	being born in and living in a place, develops over time
Spiritual	emotional, intangible	feeling a sense of belonging, simply felt rather than created
Ideological	moral and ethical	living according moral guidelines for human responsibility to place, guidelines may be religious or secular
Narrative (9)	mythical	learning about a place through stories, including: creation myths, family histories, political accounts, and fictional accounts
Commodified	cognitive (based on choice and desirability)	choosing a place based a list of desirable traits and lifestyle preferences, comparison of actual places with ideal
Dependent (9)	material	constrained by lack of choice, dependency on another person or economic opportunity

(used with permission from Cross, 2001)

In his doctoral dissertation, *The place of food systems: Exploring the relationship between sense of place and community food systems engagement*, Jeremy Solin (2015) expands upon the multidimensionality of sense of place:

Building on both positivist and phenomenological perspectives, an understanding of sense of place is proposed that includes interrelated dimensions of place, socio-cultural sense of place, individual sense of place, and place action. Sense of place (both socio-cultural and individual) includes affective aspects of identity, belonging, and sustenance and symbolic place meanings. Reciprocity captures the diverse motivations and is the link between sense of place and place action. Reciprocity is the sense of responsibility that people feel to the ecological and social aspects of place and the actions taken to fulfill that responsibility. Taking action, in-turn, strengthens sense of place. (Solín, vi)

Later in the article, Solin connects worldview and sense of place. Perhaps in an obvious manner, the places where we grow up affect our understanding of place itself. These places are not just defined by geography, but by the socio-ecological systems that function and form that space. Sense of place develops from “the attachments and meaning associate with locale” (Larsen & Johnson, 2012). Sense of place can vary between the individual and the collective within a similar place.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is the interpretative study of that which appears. It is the philosophy of consciousness through experience (Buttimer, 1976). “One of phenomenology’s great strengths is

seeking out what is obvious but unquestioned and thereby questioning it” (Seamon & Sowers, 2008). In the 1970s, the geographers Edward Relph and Yi-Fu Tuan “drew upon the philosophical tradition of phenomenology, which focused on the daily, lived experience of the world, and considered what place meant to people” (Sense of Place: In a Nutshell, 2004). This was a fundamental shift in relating human experience to place, and ultimately creating a more anthropocentric understanding of place. Citing Casey, de Certeau, Feagan, Lefebvre, Pelph, Seamon, and Tuan, Solin summarizes that “place and sense of place [are] understood as experience of phenomenon.” Further, “Experience in place deepens sense of place - (which is a reinforcing relationship between sense of place and civic engagement” (Solín, 2015). The jump from sense of place to civic engagement is a logical one. A deeper commitment to stewardship and care follows a more meaningful sense of place.

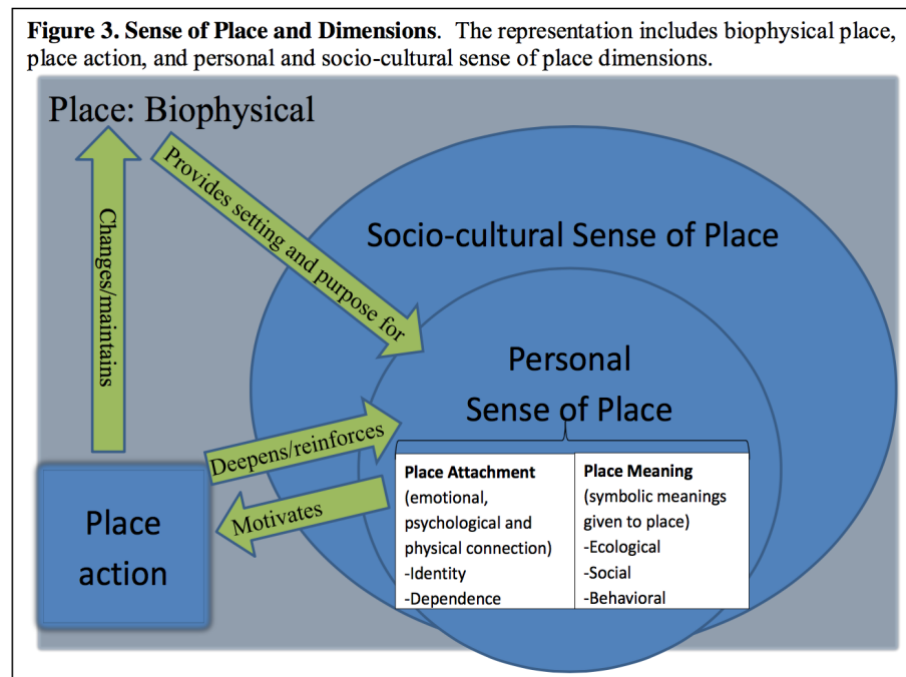
Phenomenology can be used as a lens for critical discussion of sense of place (Buttimer, 1976). Sense of place and phenomenology are linked in their non-doctrinal structure. Neither seek to be scientific but are rather structured through experiences and consciousness. Consciousness and mindfulness within the educational context can enhance place-based pedagogy (Deringer, 2017). This supports a rich learning environment for critical-thought driven dialogue.

Dimensions of Sense of Place

Space is place with human meaning (Tuan, 1977; Cresswell, 2004). “Place cannot exist without someone’s sense of place,” however in contradiction, “place and sense of place are not uniquely human constructs - other perspective beings also function in physical locations creating meaning in those places” (Solín, 2015). Additionally, “place itself does not have a scale,” while “there is a difference in people’s relationship with place based on scale” (pg. 11, Solín 2015). Ultimately, sense of place is self-defined and understood, and differentiates between individual and social constructions.

The widely accepted “four dimensions of sense of place: are the biophysical (the ecological and built physical components), the personal/psychological (individual development of meaning and identity), the socio cultural (social and cultural relationships and the group development of meaning and identity), and the political-economic (engagement with issues and place)” (Solín, 2015; Ardoin, 2014). Citing Ardoin, Solín writes “that each of these dimensions ‘contributes to a robust sense of place, and a robust sense of place contributed back to one’s experience of these dimensions’” (Solín, 2015). This explanation can be expanded to acknowledge historical and current systems of oppression and the connection to sense of place. The places we experience have been impacted by the biophysical, personal, socio-cultural, and political-economic dimensions. These dimensions are affected by the historical implications of events. The land, or place, holds legacy. This could be the legacy of glaciation with a lake basin, or the legacy of slavery and white supremacy with current race relations. The meaning we bring to place has been molded by the meaning they used to hold. In the figure below, Solín visualizes the dimensions of sense of place in relation to to each other. Personal and sociocultural aspects

have been combined to form the “place-action” box in the bottom left. This figure expresses the cyclical complexities of the dimensions of sense of place.



(used with permission from Solin, 2015)

In parallel to the theory of place, there is the theory of placelessness. Stemming from the work of “humanistic geographers” in the early 1970s, Edward Relph wrote *Place and Placelessness*. Seamon & Sowers (2008) report that “in *Place and Placelessness*, Relph steps back to call into question the taken-for-granted nature of place and its significance as an inescapable dimension of human life and experience.” Relph examined how place can be experienced either authentically or inauthentically, claiming that the more authentic sense of place is an experience that expresses genuineness and complexity. The inauthentic experience of place, or placelessness, is “the casual eradication of distinctive places and the making of standardized landscapes that results from an insensitivity to the significance of place (Relph 1976, Preface)” (Seamon & Sowers, 2008). Placelessness arises from “an uncritical acceptance of mass values” (Seamon & Sowers, 2008). Placelessness has been massified through globalization.

In the article “Homeless and the ‘Global Village,’” by Vandana Shiva, she posits that globalization and development are linked to homelessness. “Peter Berger has described development as the ‘spreading condition of homelessness.’ The creation of homelessness takes place both through the ecological destruction of the ‘home’ and the cultural and spiritual uprooting of people and their homes” (Shiva, 1993). This violent and forced homelessness results in placelessness. These “groups of uprooted and alienated individuals (are) searching for abstract identities. That which today is called ecology movements in the South are actually movements for rootedness, movements to resist uprooting before it beings, and those which are generally perceived as ethnic struggles are also, in their own way, movements of uprooted people seeking

social and cultural rootedness. This can be seen in the work of La Via Campesina and the Landless People's Movement. "These are the struggles of people taking place in the ruins wrought by development to regain a sense of selfhood and control over their destinies" (Shiva, 1993). This return to rootedness, or rediscovery of sense of place, is direct action against the forces of placelessness.

Connected to the search for sense of place is the idea of *la querencia*. *La querencia*, a Spanish term which was originally extended upon by Barry Lopez in "The Rediscovery of North America," can evoke one's deepest beliefs and challenges in relation to place. It is "a place from which one's strength of character is drawn... a place in which we know exactly who we are. The place from which we speak our deepest beliefs" (Lopez, 1990). Within disciplined thinking and curriculum, *la querencia* "invites the rediscovery of the meaning of equity as a reciprocal relationship between peoples and the landscapes they inhabit" (Ault, 2008). These findings and perspectives are not rooted in scientific, result-driven work. Rather they hold the opportunity of importance from the personal experience, the phenomenology of place. In the search for rootedness, Lopez concludes, "I would like to take this word *querencia* beyond its ordinary meaning and suggest that it applies to our challenge in the modern world, that our search for a *querencia* is both a response to a threat and a desire to find out who we are. And the discovery of a *querencia*, I believe, hinges on the perfection of a sense of place" (Lopez, 1990).

In the contemporary world, sense of place is both reactionary and resonating. It is a philosophical and personal. The four widely accepted, interconnected dimensions of sense of place are the biophysical, the personal/psychological, the socio-cultural and the political-economic. Our experience to and with place are impacted by the biographical, spiritual, ideological, narrative, commodified and the dependent relationships. While affected by location, sense of place is a phenomenon beyond scale. It is the meaning we bring to place with the historical, present and future legacy of that place.

Pedagogies for the Anthropocene

Will Steffen and colleagues point out that scientific data of the Anthropocene renders this generation the first to be aware of how humans impact Earth Systems, thereby affording a unique "power and responsibility to change [humanity's] relationship to the planet" (2011). Michael Ellis & Zev Trachtenberg (2014) present a synthesis of the public discourse on the "buzz" around the Anthropocene and they, too, argue a moral responsibility to address it. In order to move forward in the Anthropocene, humanity must become aware of its impacts, understand its trajectory and begin to act accordingly; education is a powerful tool to do so (Leinfelder 2013).

Calls for action in the age of the Anthropocene have developed foci on transformation, resiliency, social-ecological complexity and whole systems thinking (Leinfelder, 2013; Reyers et al, 2018; Steffen et al., 2018). These foci have the opportunity to be realized through environmental education that addresses the context of the Anthropocene (Leinfelder 2013). Because many of our current social systems and mindsets were developed in the mindset of the

relatively stable Holocene epoch, to address issues of the relatively unstable Anthropocene effectively, experts have called for new approaches (Steffen et. al, 2011; Ellis & Trachtenberg, 2014; Taylor 2017). This section of the literature review will address the educational approaches to teaching in the Anthropocene of planetary stewardship, common worlds pedagogy, critical pedagogy, ecopedagogy, place-based education, and critical pedagogy of place.

Effective stewardship in the Anthropocene outlined by Chapin et al. (2009) includes the need to “foster innovation and social learning” and a transformation in education to keep up with the rapidity of Earth System changes. Steffen et al. (2011) urge a “planetary stewardship,” which incorporates decentralized and multi-level systems to reconcile the twenty-first century challenges of scale, speed and complexity spurred by global changes in the Anthropocene. This stewardship ideal aims to return the Earth System as close to the relatively-stable state of the Holocene as possible, although Steffen et al. acknowledge that given the trajectory of the human enterprise this is not a likely achievable goal. Using geological and climate data for support and guidance, Steffen et al.’s planetary stewardship calls for the transformation of agriculture, transport systems, natural resource extraction and energy systems to reflect the planetary thresholds they are on a trajectory to surpass. The authors also posit that geoengineering techniques could help to curb climate change trajectories by targeting climate change drivers such as carbon emissions, with the caveat that geopolitics must be heavily considered to avoid further social disruption to already marginalized populations. Planetary stewardship was later defined as an active reshaping of planetary change trajectories with important aspects of human development in mind, including urbanization and resource use (Seitzinger et al., 2012).

In the Environmental Education Research Journal, Affrica Taylor (2017) claims that an environmental education that is up to the tasks dealt by the Anthropocene must go beyond the “humanist” narrative of stewardship, to a “common worlds” pedagogy which decentralizes humans and encourages solutions to living within Earth Systems rather than outside of them. Taylor critiques stewardship as humanist and exceptionalist, claiming that they bolster the nature-human divide concept, which has driven the complications of the Anthropocene in the first place. Taylor challenges the exceptionalist idea that humans can “improve” on nature and exploit its resources. In contrast, a “common worlds” pedagogy acknowledges and examines the complexity and interconnectedness of human agency and its role in ecological and social disruption without removing humans from the system’s consideration. Taylor claims that environmental education is tasked with a paradigm shift to rethink humanity to be in no way separate from the rest of the biosphere, in order to foster pedagogies such as a “common worlds” one.

Taylor’s (2017) common worlds pedagogy is influenced by post humanist and feminist theory, both counter-hegemonic studies. Similarly aimed at overcoming hegemonic and arguably oppressive systems, critical pedagogy has emerged as an approach to teaching in the Anthropocene by applying it to various environmental educations (Gruenewald, 2008; Misiaszek, 2016).

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy rejects that education is apolitical, claiming rather that educational settings should be examined critically to question norms and power structures (Grenier, 2016). Proponents of critical pedagogy, namely Paulo Freire, claim that this results in a comprehensive and transformative “authentic” learning which is not currently upheld by the current marketized and globalized education systems (Freire, 1972; Serrano et al., 2018). In the foundational book of critical pedagogy, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972), Freire outlines the ways in which conventional teaching models feed into oppressive power structures that extend far beyond school walls. He conceptualizes conventional teaching as a “banking” method of education, in which the student is limited to receiving information from the teacher (58). This one-way knowledge delivery prevents students from engaging critically with the world, rendering them unable to “name” their world and unequipped to recognize their human potential and liberate themselves from oppression (60). Freire goes on to propose a transformative pedagogy which liberates the oppressed by empowering students through dialogue, or “the encounter between men, mediated by the world, in order to name the world” (76). Ecopedagogy is a critical pedagogy in the context of the Anthropocene, or a critical environmental pedagogy (Misiaszek, 2016).

The environmental education approach of place-based education is an extensive topic of literature and therefore has its own section in this literature review. In short, place-based education strengthens sense of place by focusing on the value and meaning of one’s physical, social and cultural surroundings (Sanger, 1997). By connecting a student to their community in a variety of contexts, sense of place encourages critical thinking instead of delivering conventions, an important asset in problem solvers of tomorrow in an increasingly globalized world. In combining place-based education with critical pedagogy, the approach of critical pedagogy place comes to be. By merging the analytical lens of critical pedagogy and the sense of place of place-based education, this approach can result in a well-rounded examination of “socio-ecological” systems which are being altered or damaged by the Anthropocene (Gruenewald, 2008).

Other concepts being considered in pedagogical developments include theories of critical race and critical place, which give analytical attention to the underpinnings of racial and spatial contexts, respectively (Miller, 2018; Nakagawa et al., 2015). Additionally, the idea of “public pedagogy” refers to the sphere of knowledge gleaned by the ever-encroaching world of social media, which informs students as much as decidedly academic pedagogy does (Chun, 2018). All of these approaches and concepts include the efforts of educational movement toward systematic thought in the face of the Anthropocene and its accompanying issues which are yet to be reconciled.

While there is much support to be found for each and all of these approaches to educating about the environment in the Anthropocene, there are also valuable objections. For example, there are claims that the simultaneous practice of critical pedagogy and place-based education is unattainable because the former is contingent upon specifically western philosophies and epistemologies while the latter is, by definition, place- and context-dependent and should therefore not be held to a single origin of thought (Bowers, 2008). Critical pedagogy and place-based education hold the common goal of decolonizing education, but to combine them into a

single pedagogical approach runs the risk of undermining local efforts already being made in a particular place.

Although a common goal of critical pedagogy and place-based education is to decolonize education, to universalize this attempt is to overlook the social and ecological diversity across the world and to undermine local efforts already being made in a particular place. Furthermore, there are concerns for the anthropocentric tendencies of critical environmental education, which contradicts the goal of a shifted paradigm away from the human actions that gave rise to the Anthropocene in the first place (Stevenson, 2008). These criticisms heavily consider equity and privilege in environmental studies, which are seminal factors in building comprehensive and effective socio-ecological problem solving.

A key takeaway of these criticisms is that they provide environmental education in the Anthropocene ample opportunity for betterment. The solutions to environmental dilemmas do not lie in one single discipline; it is a truly transdisciplinary task to face an environmental paradigm shift (Taylor, 2017). The root of a shifted paradigm is a rejection of business-as-usual approaches; in the case of environmental education, this becomes a reconstruction of pedagogical approaches to thoroughly consider and work within complex socio-ecological systems. As has been outlined by alternative approaches and the gaps therein, critical and systems thinking is crucial to this reconstruction. An educational paradigm can be built to be continuously transformative and action-oriented. These are tenets of the field of agroecology, similarly laden with transformative and complex social and ecological considerations in the face of a changing climate and widely regarded as a science, a movement and a practice all at once (Wezel et al., 2009). Here lies an opportunity for environmental educators to use the agroecological approach as a framework: to regard pedagogy as a tool for not only the *practice* of education, but also for the *movement* toward a paradigm shift of regenerative thinking in the Anthropocene and for the social *sciences* of critical race, critical place, social justice that such regenerative progress would be incomplete without.

Place-Based Education

Educators and poets alike agree that place-based education can support deeper, transdisciplinary learning experiences, cultural perspective, heightened land stewardship and connection (Ardoin, 2014; Deringer, 2017; Stegner, 1992). Place-based education, as described by Evans, R. T., & Kilin Ç, E. (2013), utilizes “the environments that students live in to teach concepts, these ideas become more applicable in students’ lives; allowing them to be understood beyond a conceptual level and actually applied to issues in their community” (266). As the author of the highly influential book “Beyond Ecophobia: Reclaiming the Heart in Nature Education,” Dr. David Sobel continued on to write the cornerstone book for place-based education through practice and pedagogy: “Place-Based Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities.” This widely referenced and more concrete definition of place-based education is outlined on page 7:

Place-based education is the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum. Emphasizing hands-on, real-world learning experiences, this approach to education increases academic achievement, helps students develop stronger ties in their community, enhances students' appreciation for the natural world, and creates a heightened commitment to serving as active, contributing citizens. Community vitality and environmental quality are improved through the active engagement of local citizens, community organizations, and environmental resources in the life of the school.

Building off of theories and pedagogies, place-based education supports the idea that “knowledge of the nearest things should be acquired first, then that of those farther and farther off” (Woodhouse, 2001). Emerging from this style of learning and teaching is the “pedagogy of place,” which pillars on experiential learning, action-oriented, problem-solving community engagement and reflection (Sobel, 2004). Place-based education differs from environmental education in that it is more broad and inclusive approach to systems thinking.

Research has been conducted and papers have been published connecting the theory of place-based education to the positive outcomes. The theory “Environment as an Integrated Context” (EIC) has been shown to improve student academic achievement in course subjects, but beyond that, “students, teachers and administrators also reported other significant effects including development of problem-solving, critical thinking and decision-making skills increased enthusiasm and engagement in learning; and, gains in summative measures of educational achievement such as standardized test scores and grade point average” (Lieberman and Hoody, 1998, as cited in Sobel, 2004). Further studies have found that classroom discipline rates (number of detentions/office visits) have declined while building connections and transference of knowledge has increased (Sobel, 2004).

The counter argument to these successes is that academic performance is not a true measure of place-based program achievement. As cited in Sobel, fewer studies quantify the correlation between place-based education and shifts in environmental behavior and attitude (33). However, significant, quantifiable results have been found. Children with naturalized schoolyards have a deeper understanding of landscape complexity and botanical knowledge (33). Using pastoralism and human dominance instruments, other studies have found “that children who participated in a school gardening program showed more positive environmental attitudes than peers who did not participate” (34). Additionally, there is a growing body of literature supporting Scandinavian “forest schools” (Harris, 2017) and the interconnection of place-based education, outdoor education and environmental education.

Before concluding with strategies for creating and supporting place-based programs and schools, Sobel introduces “The Place-based Education Evaluation Collaborative.” The Collaborative with other partners proposes a three-legged, dynamic stool for place-based education: academic achievement, social capital and environmental quality (36). In this context, social capital refers to planetary citizenship and altruism. Through defragmenting and community

building, place-based education can act as a “means of inspiring stewardship and an authentic renewal and revitalization of civic life” (Sobel, 2004).

Place-based pedagogy was first coined in the early 1990s by Laurie Lane-Zucker and Dr. John Elder of the Orion Society (Sobel, 2004). While place-based education and theory might be a relatively new, emerging term within the academia of pedagogy, place-based learning and being is nothing new. Learning from the surrounding environment is tied to indigenous knowledge systems and land-place relationships. The revival of place-based education is directly linked, however not always acknowledged or respected, to the decolonization movement. Place-based education, which is inherently connected to sense of place, can be seen in the curriculum of environmental, outdoor and experiential education. While the practices may take many forms, these pedagogues hold a similar philosophy of learning from your local community and environment.

Indigenous Knowledge & Unsettling Education

In a book review of “Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit” by Marie Battiste, Jennifer Brant outlines the need and approach for systemic change in mainstream education. In her book, Battiste speaks to the urgency of the decolonization movement and how it is “a process that belongs to everyone”:

For every educator, our responsibility is making a commitment to both unlearn and learn — to unlearn racism and superiority in all its manifestations, while examining our own social constructions in our judgements and learn new ways of knowing, valuing others, accepting diversity, and making equity and inclusion foundations for all learners. (as cited in Brant, 2013)

Continued in many mainstream forms of education is this idea of cognitive imperialism. Brant explains how the book “identifies the need to eliminate the cognitive imperialism of Eurocentrism, which Battiste advises is based on racism. She describes cognitive imperialism as ‘a form of manipulation used in Eurocentric educational systems’ that is ‘built on damaging assumptions and imperialist knowledge’ (p. 161)” (118). Cognitive imperialism is present in educational systems through subject selection, program execution and whose perspective and voice are given attention and value. It dominates and permeates the educational system. As Rita Bouvier writes in the foreword:

The book represents a formal shift of thinking and writing from a modernistic, expository prose of grand western narratives to a more storytelling manner as a way of uncovering—revealing—a nuanced and balanced perspective of a colonized history and, through it, unmasking the faulty logics of knowing grounded in objectivity and Eurocentric theorizing that have undermined Indigenous peoples’ knowledge systems. (117)

As is present in the title, movement forward is sought through “nourishing the learning spirit.” This process of trans-systemic reconciliation includes “the reclamation of identity, ways

of knowing and being, and the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems within and throughout all levels of the education system” (Brant, 2013).

The article “Land education: Indigenous, Post-Colonial, and Decolonizing Perspectives on Place and Environmental Education Research,” acknowledges and “embraces protocols ‘that are mindful of how Indigenous knowledge has been co-opted and omitted’ (28), including for example expectations that Indigenous peoples lead discussions on land education. This mindfulness of co-option also entails an acknowledgment that Indigenous identities and knowledge are not static, and that non-Indigenous desires for performances of ‘authentic’ Indigeneity are also problematic.” (Tuck et al, 2014, p. 11). Indigenous relationships to land are ungeneralizable and have spiritual, intellectual and emotional dimensions. The article differentiated between land education and place-based education. Land education deconstructs the assumptions of colonization. Land education decolonizes while place-based education resolves the colonizer by employing settler emplacement (Tuck et al, 2014).

Additionally, at the forefront of decolonization in place-based education is the continual present of settler colonialism. Characteristics of settler colonial states and programs are the refusal to acknowledge themselves as such, claiming that colonialism is a thing of the past and an “attempt (and failure) to contain Indigenous agency and resistance” (p. 2). Place-based education holds the obligation and opportunity to address settler colonialism in land connection. “Any form of justice or education that seeks to recuperate and not interrupt settler colonialism, to reform the settlement and incorporate Indigenous peoples into the multicultural settler colonial nation-state is invested in settler futurity” (p. 17).

Place-based education holds potential with this pivotal and necessary approach and action. Tuck, McKenzie and McCoy, however, wipe the slate clean and propose an alternative, land education.

Land education puts Indigenous epistemological and ontological accounts of land at the center, including Indigenous understandings of land, Indigenous language in relation to land, and Indigenous critiques of settler colonialism. It attends to constructions and storying of land and repatriation by Indigenous peoples, documenting and advancing Indigenous agency and land rights. Further land education, as we have constructed it here, emphasizes educational research that engages acute analyses of settler colonialism as a structure, a set of relations and conditions. (p. 14)

More research and continual learning will take place within all sections of the literature review, but especially in regard to the decolonization movement in pedagogies and place-based education. We will continuously acknowledge our identity and role as colonizers.

Methods

Crafting the Course

Ella and Giannina began crafting this course early in the Fall 2018 semester during *ENVS 201: Research Methods*, which is a required class for any ENVS major intending to write a thesis. We had met each other less than a year prior but had connected quickly over the prospect of facilitating a students-teaching-students (STS) course. In the Fall of 2017, Ella and Nell Carpenter (ENVS '18) discussed the potential for a STS course inspired from the Spring 2016 STS course *Envisioning a Just Food System*, facilitated by Claire Wiggin, Leila Rezvani and Olivia Burt. Through the final project of *ENVS 185: Land and Food Justice* with Brian Tokar, Nell and Ella developed a potential STS course around Food Justice in Burlington, Vermont. This rough outline became the basis of Giannina and Ella's intent to embark on an STS thesis project together. A logistical "roadmap" of the STS process can be found in Appendix A.

Defining our Vision

We sat down together in a patch of late-summer sunshine with our notebooks and asked ourselves what we'd like to teach and learn about through a STS course. We had originally thought to focus on food justice, but quickly found that neither of us had studied or engaged in it enough to offer expertise on the subject; further, we realized that we had no interest in being "experts" in relation to our peers that we would be in the STS class. What excited us most about STS was the opportunity to explore a pedagogical framework that was atypical in our university setting and motivating in the face of the "paradigm shift" that our ENVS educations had posed to us as an ultimate solution. We recognized that there is a wealth of knowledge of all forms existing already in our peers, and rather than try to impart more "new" knowledge onto our "students," we wanted to dismantle the hierarchy of a classroom and engage in a community of "co-learners." The subject of Sense of Place (SOP) sprouted up as a way for each co-learner to bring his/her/their personal understandings and experiences to the learning community. To include an element of environmental awareness and action to our vision, we decided to give the course the context of the "Anthropocene," a concept that we have learned much about in the ENVS curriculum but often felt disempowered by. Teaching and learning through a STS course called *Sense of Place in the Anthropocene* resonated deeply with us as a way to bring personal experiences, passions and interests into a collective action.

Creating the Syllabus

With our vision in mind, we put it to paper in the form of a syllabus (see Appendix A). In August and September of 2018, during the formative stages of the process, we looked at syllabi and previous courses for inspiration. This research also confirmed the curriculum gap at UVM for peer-to-peer courses about moving forward as environmentalists. There was no 3-credit, seminar style, upper-level course about sense of place. This is where we became attached to the idea and

potential of a students-teaching-students framework, especially for our critical pedagogy material. Following loosely followed the format of *Envisioning a Just Food System's* syllabus, we agreed on course themes, specific objectives and continual pedagogical threads. We articulated the grade break-down to reflect what we valued most in an STS class: personal reflection and engagement in content. We organized our themes into an “arc” to follow over the course of a semester, and created a reading list to accompany and supplement it (see Appendix B). Creating a course design map - which was a big web - was helpful to express how we hoped all of these factors would interconnect (see Appendix C). We chose readings based on relevance and resonance, drawing from our past readings (personal and assigned) as well as from suggestions from folks as we began to share our syllabus to potential advisors and community partners.

Goals & Objectives

Giannina and Ella designed, proposed and facilitated a students-teaching-students (STS) course titled *ENVS 197: Sense of Place in the Anthropocene* as a capstone project and thesis. We presented our course proposal to the Environmental Program faculty meeting on October 17, 2018. It was approved to be taught as a 3-credit course for the Spring semester of 2019. Our goal was to align our course objectives with the course content and practices. Our course objectives, as seen in the syllabus (see Appendix D) are:

1. Cultivate an understanding of sense of place (theoretical and experiential).
2. Use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift.
3. Recognize social justice as a crucial dimension within environmentalism and our community.
4. Build a community that honors complexity, intersectionality and transdisciplinarity.
5. Support non-hierarchical and alternative knowledge systems.

In order to meet our goals, we created a set of personal objectives for us to complete as facilitators:

1. Effectively collaborate as co-facilitators with a shared vision and communicate to each other with transparency, humility and honesty for the entirety of the project.
2. Create a syllabus (see Appendix A) that includes an overview, course objectives, community culture and expectations, assignments, attendance and participation, assignment descriptions, grading policies, and a course structure that includes readings and weekly activities.
3. Critically examine current discourse surrounding place-based education, alternative pedagogies, sense of place literature, the case for the Anthropocene and decolonizing education, and indigenous land rights. This is not limited to academic literature.

4. Develop course structure to align with our pedagogical framework with weekly class plans that cumulatively meet the course objectives.
5. Select content materials for homework assignments, class dialogue and activities. These materials took the form of academic literature, videos, poetry, fiction, and music.
6. Determine an assessment process for grading, comprehension, reflection and effort.

Methods for Course Objectives

In order to align our course objectives to the class content, we chose seven themes to explore through the lens of sense of place: writing and storytelling, human ecology, bioregionalism, food and farming, land-based spirituality, activism and art.

Much of the course content was delivered through selected readings that aligned with the themes. The content was supplemented by a variety of assignments, including notecards for the majority of readings, bi-weekly self-reflection journal entries, a take-home practice project, an annotated bibliography and a final expression at the end of the semester. The remainder of course content was delivered through presentations from us, “guest pollinators” (community members who are engaged with relevant topics) and field visits. The assignments are outlined and explained below.

Notecards

The notecard assignment was an assisted annotation assignment that was paired with the majority of each week’s reading assignment. The notecard sections were key quotes, connections & sparked ideas to bring to discussion, and questions.

Notecards were graded for completion during journal collection. The notecard assignments were intended to ensure engagement and understanding of the readings and to hold co-learners accountable. The notecards also served as a resource for journal entries, the take-home practice project, and class dialogue.

Additionally, following a tenet of backwards design, the notecards ensured that co-learners were connecting the readings to larger course objectives and themes. A previous STS course within the Environmental Department at UVM from 2016 titled *Envisioning a Just Food System* utilized this educational method of backwards design (Wiggin et. al, 2016). In following this STS course and other ENVS courses at UVM, we decided to emulate this assignment in order to “prioritize goals over content so that students are working towards a forward trajectory rather than just consuming information without contextualizing knowledge” (Wiggin et. al, 2016).

Individuals each filled the role of Co-learner Dialogue Facilitator. During our first class, we decided on the weekly facilitator schedule and held a training in effective and respectful moderating and facilitating (see Appendix E). Coming into the class, our expectations were that the weekly facilitator’s role would vary in expression, but should include moderating dialogue, posing questions and maintaining co-learner engagement.

The co-learner dialogue facilitator role met the 4th and 5th course objective to build a community that honors complexity, intersectionality and transdisciplinarity, and support non-hierarchical and alternative knowledge systems. It also allowed for the training and practice of leadership skills in a peer-to-peer learning community.

Reflections and Journal Prompts

Co-learners kept a journal for the purposes of self-reflection, critical note taking, creative expression, and whatever else we found helpful or inspiring. The journals were collected and graded for content and effort. Journaling activities included (but were not limited to):

- in-class free writes
- in-class notes
- in-class and at-home responses to journal prompts
- creative expression (graded only when applicable)
- active note-taking during guest speakers

The journal gave space for individual co-learners to connect, reflect and grapple with the course content. In allowing various forms of expression to take place (as per objective #4), we supported nontraditional learning processes and more personal involvement and engagement with the content. This was action moving away from the traditional educational model of teacher-centered delivery and “students” as receivers of new information. In the influential words of John Dewey, “we do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience.”

Take-Home Practice-Project

There was one take home practice project in the middle of the semester, due the week after Spring Recess. This was a chance for co-learners to synthesize readings, class discussion and self reflection in a written or creative form. This could have taken the form of attending a city council meeting, cooking dinner with a neighborly stranger, interviewing a community member or writing a letter to your family. The actual practice was paired with a short essay explaining what they chose to do, how it was connected to course themes, and what they learned from it. The learning objectives were to support mid-way reflection, processing and action. Additionally, the take-home practice project provided us with information on how, and in what ways, co-learners were connecting with the content.

Annotated Bibliography

The Annotated Bibliography was an opportunity for co-learners to read, research and write about one theme/idea that is connected to sense of place. It could have been a theme that was brought up in class, or something that they found on their own. The assignment allowed co-learners to explore sense of place, social justice and alternative pedagogy in a landscape of their choosing and support transference to wherever the co-learners felt most “at home.” This was a self-driven way to express a “beginner’s mind.” The vision was at least 6 sources, with a solid paragraph under each. In the writing they should have gleaned main ideas from the pieces and

connected them to their own thoughts. We asked for intentionality with quote usage and correct APA citation.

Final Expression

The Final Expression was a creative project centralized around sense of place. It was an opportunity for individual students to explore and dive into a topic that was either covered in class or was explored outside of the classroom. All of the final expression topics were pre-proposed to Giannina and Ella in a short essay.

Faculty Guidance

Our two advisors were Dr. Amy Seidl and Dr. Karen Nordstrom. Amy has advised previous STS courses and shared her teaching experience and philosophies with us. She has acted as a mentor for the course's content and process. Karen supported us by introducing us to contemplative pedagogy and sharing her experience teaching smaller classes at UVM. Both were wonderfully supportive and available mentors throughout this project!

We received initial guidance and support from Brendan Fisher, who was our professor for *ENVS 201: Research Methods* in the Fall semester of 2018. Soon after we had focused our topic and course title to *Sense of Place in the Anthropocene*, Amy Seidl became our primary advisor. With her guidance, we created a draft syllabus of the course, including a course outline, course objectives, course themes and accompanying readings. In mid-October, we presented our syllabus and course proposal to the ENVS faculty and were approved to move ahead with a 3-credit course, taught on Tuesdays from 1:15-4:15 in the Spring 2019 semester.

We continued meeting with professors and community members throughout the fall semester. We shared our syllabus and received helpful feedback, particularly in our reading assignments and guidance for scheduling guest pollinators and field visits. Karen Nordstrom became our second advisor toward the end of the Fall semester.

We also met with Adrian Ivakiv (UVM ENVS), Trish O'Kane (UVM ENVS), Ernesto Mendez (UVM ENVS), Nick Triolo (Wild Rockies Field Institute), Joe O'Brien (UVM '15, former STS thesis) and Meraz Mostafa (UVM '16, former STS project).

Reading Selection & Compilation

As previously mentioned, discussions and activities were closely tied to the readings. Giannina's concentration within the Environmental Program was Ecological Design and Environmental Education. Her interests include cooperative living, alternative pedagogy and the power of community. Ella's focus was on Community Development and Environmental Justice. Her interests include place-based education, art, food and community. These varying interests and backgrounds supported a transdisciplinary approach to this STS course. A transformative, inspiring course for both of us was Advanced Agroecology with Ernesto Mendez.

Following a transdisciplinary approach, the readings attempted to include a diverse collection of literature. Readings varied from opinion pieces, to peer-reviewed papers to chapters from novels. In finding relevant content, we pulled from previous syllabi, conducted in-depth research through the UVM online database, and sought suggestions from professors in these disciplines. Many of the co-learners brought resources to the class as well.

The themes of the readings varied from larger, theoretical pieces to ones that fit within our specific, weekly themes of human ecology, writing and storytelling, place-based education, bioregionalism, food and farming, land-based spirituality, activism and art. Weekly themes were introduced through place-specific, predominantly Burlington-based, articles, examples and case studies when appropriate. We sought a balance of lofty, denser theoretical readings with experiences and place-specific case studies. The information obtained through the readings acted as the raw ingredients of the course. In order to address various learning styles, engaging information was also assigned through podcasts, videos and music. A copy of the “working” syllabus was printed out for every co-learner before the first class. We held the expectation that the syllabus would be a living document, with additional readings sent out through email and exact dates being shifted as we adapted, changed and moved with the semester. These shifts were greatly influenced by student interest and guidance.

Methods for Facilitators’ Objectives

Our methods for executing our personal objectives were as straightforward as the objectives themselves. We began this capstone project with a series of informal meetings and brainstorming sessions to talk about our visions, and in doing so developed a good foundation to execute our first objective (to effectively collaborate) throughout the entirety of this capstone project. In addition to our work-related relationship, we have a lovely friendship! This was challenging as we continued to work closely on a demanding project which we both cared deeply about. Therefore, this methods section included our efforts to spend non-academic time with each other, to be mindful of needed space, and to check-in regularly and honestly. We continuously annotated our class plans and reflected on each class, then shared our thoughts with each other formally in a weekly post-class debrief.

To complete our second objective, to create our syllabus, we followed a rough outline based on multiple syllabi from past STS and other ENVS courses. From there we collaboratively filled in the blanks, through a tedious yet energizing series of brainstorming and writing sessions. We received edits and feedback from Amy Seidl, Trish O’Kane, and Brendan Fisher before presenting it with our proposal to the ENVS faculty. This feedback was especially helpful in solidifying our course objectives and grading policies, as well as our 5th facilitators’ objective: selecting course content materials.

Our third facilitators’ objective was primarily fulfilled by completing a literature review of place-based education, alternative pedagogies, sense of place literature, the case for the Anthropocene and indigenous land rights. We received feedback on the first two of those sections

by Brendan Fisher as part of *ENVS 201: Research Methods*, which also provided us more opportunity for feedback as we completed this thesis' literature review. At the end of the semester we submitted our entire literature review to Brendan, Amy, and Karen, although it was edited further in the Spring based off of the feedback we received.

As part of our syllabus we decided overall arc of themes for our course, as well as the outlined pedagogical framework. Class time was to be spent in community dialogue, reflection and connecting. Through readings, journaling, assignments, guest pollinators and field visits, co-learners were challenged to make the deeply complex deeply personal. We also created a course design map: a visual representation of the complex web of ways in which our course objectives, themes, assignments, core considerations and outcomes are interconnected (see Appendix C). In order to outline our weekly class plans, we first developed a template to follow, so that each class' structure attempted to be consistent. This template included a time-breakdown of a three hour class session, spaces for specific class goals and connections to course objectives. We made sure to have this class plan filled out at least one week ahead of the class it outlined, as advised by Ernesto Mendez in a meeting with Giannina.

Finally, to complete our 6th and final facilitators' objective, we determined an assessment process for grading comprehension, reflection and effort. With our alternative pedagogical values in mind, we placed the most weight on co-learners' effort on weekly notecards, reflection assignments, and their general participation. This was developed and adapted as we went, and is explained in detail in the Results section.

Advertising the Course

To advertise for the course, before Spring 2019 registration, we wrote a condensed course description (see Appendix F) and created a visual metaphorical representation of our course (see Appendix G). These were sent to the Environmental Program listserv, and presented to *ENVS 001: Introduction to Environmental Studies*, *ENVS 179: Ecofeminism*, *ENVS/PSS 202: Advanced Agroecology* and *ENVS 195: Environmentalism and Spiritual Practice*. We also spread the word through the Slade Ecological Food Cooperative and friend groups, as well as through social media by posting on Facebook and Instagram.

Selecting Students

After advertising the course and spreading the online interest form, we had 20 potential students but only 15 spots! The "application" questions included:

- What is your name and pronouns?
- What is your major? (All majors and people are welcome! We are just curious:))
- Are you available Tuesdays from 1:15-4:15 throughout the Spring 2019 semester?
- What about "Sense of Place in the Anthropocene" resonates with you?
- What are you hoping to get out of this course?
- How do you learn best?

- What is your UVM Net-ID and 95 number?

While the prospect of accepting and denying individuals solely based on typed responses was a daunting one, it ended up being a lot smoother than we had expected. Fifteen individuals were selected based on an alignment of interest and thought-out, meaningful responses. On November 16, 2018, we sent out two emails: one welcoming and offering them a spot, and another expressing gratitude for folks who had expressed interest but were not accepted. Just before our first class in the Spring semester, we were notified that one of the accepted students was no longer able to take the class due to a scheduling conflict. We ultimately decided to keep the total at 14 students, resulting in 16 co-learners total.

Results

This results section will describe the outcomes of this students-teaching-students thesis project, which spanned the Spring 2019 semester. We crafted as much of the course as we could before we began facilitating it, but it was a fluid project since the beginning. We intentionally designed and structured the course to support emergence from our co-learners' interests, experiences and perspectives.

Course Logistics

Including us, our learning community was composed of sixteen individuals, all female-identifying and ranging from sophomore to senior standing. Twelve of us (75%) were Environmental Studies majors and there was clear common interest in art and environmental education. We also felt a common excitement for the peer-to-peer learning framework of an STS class and the emphasis on reflection and dialogue. During the first class, we collectively created a "Community Mxnifesto" (see Appendix H) on the chalkboard and articulated a common desire for a learning environment that supported different styles of learning, upheld compassion when asking difficult questions and taking risks, staying open to mistakes and remaining curious. Ella and Giannina brought two big pots of root vegetable soup to the first class and it was agreed that we "break bread" and share food every class. A weekly snack sharing schedule was created. We also had folks sign up for a day/theme to be the class' student facilitator.

The shared responsibility and experience of student facilitation was a core tenet of our course as a peer-to-peer learning community. This was integral to how alternative pedagogy took shape in our class. During our second class, we held dialogue and brainstormed about how an effective facilitator functions and takes space. In pairs we shared positive and negative learning experiences, and using those memories created some guidelines for what we collectively were expecting from that role. These ideas were noted and stitched together on the blackboard in our classroom (see Appendix E). Ella and Giannina met with the student facilitator(s) the day before class to provide guidance if needed and generally check-in to ensure that we were all on the same page. We truly wanted this to be an opportunity for our peers to create and share alternative ways of learning and discussing, and for us to be able to be involved in a different way.

Class Routines & Structure

We met every Tuesday afternoon from 1:15 to 4:15. Our classroom was 201 Cohen Hall, the newly-renovated creative arts building that was formerly the historic Taft schoolhouse. Weekly we would arrange the desks in a big circle and begin class with a grounding breath - a slow moment of gratitude, grounding and meditation lead by Ella, Giannina or anyone who wanted to. We made sure to write an agenda on the board for everyone to see throughout class. We would warm into class time with "question hat" (an activity we came up with after one co-learner suggested that we make extra effort to get to know each other) for which we all wrote a

question on a little piece of paper and picked a new one each week to read and answer with a partner. The next section of class was typically devoted to student-led facilitation on the theme of the day: often a prompted dialogue and/or activity that would take about an hour. We would then have a fifteen to twenty minute break to stretch our legs, lungs, take a walk and share food (we often wrote it on the board as “mind, body, soul break”). After coming back together, we would hone into more class content either with an activity, guest pollinator or presentation until the end of the class. Class was concluded with a description of the week’s assignments and a heads-up about the following week’s schedule facilitator(s) and snack-provider(s). This information was reiterated in a post-class email that Giannina and Ella would send out (see Appendix I). Before heading our different ways, we would gather for a closing breath. Weekly class plans can be seen in Appendix J.

Since its conception, we had considered our syllabus to be a “living document” so that we could welcome the emergence driven by our co-learners’ interests and experiences. Throughout the semester, as we prepped for each class, we used our original assigned reading list as a reference but often added to or changed homework assignments based on current findings and materials provided by our guest pollinators. It was nice that we afforded ourselves this flexibility but fully recognize the importance of “sticking to a plan,” especially since we value transparency and good communication and our co-learners looked to the syllabus for class expectations. Although each type of assignment was generally summarized on the syllabus, we used weekly emails/Blackboard announcements to articulate specific assignments. We handed out a hard copy of the syllabus on the first day of class but regularly edited the online google doc version, and were not as consistent in updating the syllabus for our co-learners to see as we should have been. This was a piece of feedback we received and responded to in the middle of the semester.

The Big Arc: Schedule of Themes, Guest Pollinators and Field Visits

We designed our theme-arc to front-load the more theoretical concepts that would be more conducive to being inside a classroom while the weather was still cold. The first half of the semester we explored the themes of community building, human ecology, writing & storytelling, place-based education and bioregionalism. After Spring Recess, we began meeting outside of the classroom for “field visits” to support more hands-on and action-oriented themes of land-based spirituality, food and farming, activism, and art. “The big arc” supported a progression of phases and themes: “intra” (beginning and within), “meta” (awareness, self and reflection), “explore” (how these ideas are expressed for community members) and “manifest” (what all of this means for us as students). “The big arc” was essential for zooming out and visualizing larger course themes and threads and how they were sewn together. The document was constantly edited and beautifully messy (see Appendix B). The Class Description Table (Appendix K) shows a brief description of each class period. See Appendix J for each class plan for more details.

Assignments

As expressed under the “Methods for Course Objectives” section, assignments were designed to support processing, reflection, critical thinking and questioning, physical proof of engagement. The weekly themes and assignments can be seen in the syllabus (Appendix D).

Notecards

The notecards served as an annotation tool for co-learners while completing a reading or listening to a podcast. They were also used as a tool to refer to during student-facilitated dialogue. The required sections included key quotes, connections and sparked ideas, and questions. In general notecards had a high completion rate and adequately supported critical thinking and content retention. When we collected journals for grading, we were impressed by the depth and quality of notecard content.

Reflections & Journal Prompts

Journal reflections varied from take-home question prompts to free writes on connected themes or ideas. This was a space that supported reflection in multiple forms of expression (poetry, art, bulleted thoughts and full paragraphs). In January we asked that each person keep one journal throughout the semester to have the majority of all reflection and notecard work compiled in one place. The results were deeply personalized and creative in expression. Some students responded with a combination of sketches and words, while others processed through poetry. The journal prompts supported deep and meaningful self-driven reflection. The expectation rubric can be found in Appendix L.

Take-Home Practice Project

The take-home practice project gave co-learners a chance to synthesize readings, class dialogue and personal reflection in a written or creative form. The practice projects included a bioregional map of sense of place and Abenaki names, three letters to family, attending a student climate march, a biking project about human ecology and gentrification, an interview with a grandmother, a collage essay about whiteness with an interview, returning to a sit spot, an ancestral tree drawing with native plants, a creative writing piece exploring home and self and a drawing about sense of place on native land. Paired with the practice project was a short essay explaining what they chose to do, how it was connected to class themes, and what they learned from it. The take-home practice project created space for mid-semester reflection, processing and action. The practice project expectation rubric can be found in the Appendix M.

Annotated Bibliography

The Annotated Bibliography assignment was as opportunity for co-learners to read, research, explore and write about one theme/idea that is connected to sense of place. It could have been a theme that was brought up in class, or something that they found on their own. The assignment allowed co-learners to explore sense of place, social justice and alternative pedagogy

in a landscape of their choosing and support transference to wherever the student feels most “at home.” Subjects for the annotated bibliography included indigeneity and connection to land, white fragility, place-based education, art and critical pedagogy, food sovereignty within Vermont’s migrant farmer community, watersheds in the west, and sense of place in relation to colonialism, water and microbiome. The quality of the annotated bibliographies varied a lot, which reflected the range of experience people in the class had. While grading them, we realized that we did not lay out clear enough expectations; some folks did not know to alphabetize their sources and some annotations were simply vague summaries and showed no indication of critical thought or connection to a single topic. We responded by providing clearer expectations and giving another week for anybody who wanted a better grade to turn in a second draft. This was an important “teaching moment.” This feedback, as well as the original annotated bibliography expectation rubric, can be found in Appendix N.

Final Expression

The final expression was a creative project centralized around sense of place. It was an opportunity for individual students to explore and dive into a topic that was either covered in class or was explored outside of the classroom. This culmination project allowed co-learners to ruminate on how they are “moving forward” from the class and have a physical thing that represents what resonated the most with them. During our penultimate class we paired up and share ideas “speed dating style,” to help folks get their ideas sorted out. We (Ella and Giannina) checked in with everybody individually to make sure all the projects were action-oriented and connected to the class content. To name a few, they included poetry collections, a photographed bike ride to places in Burlington that hold meaning, a choreographed dance at a special sit spot, a video interview with loved ones, an experimental video-poem about time and sense of place/self, and a collage. We decided to let this be a self-graded project to align with our values of non-hierarchy. We provided a rubric to have co-learners email it back to us, all filled out. The final expression expectation rubric can be found in Appendix O.

Expression of Alternative Pedagogies & Backwards Design

While the UVM Environmental Program titles this capstone option as “students-teaching-students,” we (Giannina and Ella) began this project with a mutual feeling that we would rather it be called “students-facilitating-students.” We wanted to support peer-to-peer, supportive and engaging co-learning through a class in which everyone was simultaneously a “teacher” and a “student.” No one was an “expert” and the objectives were not solution-driven. With our structure, themes and general community culture, we attempted to break educational hierarchies and move away from the traditional “banking” model towards collaborative, critical, reflective and action-oriented co-learning. These sponge-like concepts were expressed through journal free writes, group dialogue, pair shares, listening to podcasts, supporting multiple forms of learning, knowing and expression, class facilitation by peers, guest pollinators and field visits.

Journal Free-Writes

During the first class we asked everyone to keep one notebook or journal to compile all notes and assignments from just this class throughout the semester. Attached to the central thread of alternative pedagogies, we wanted to support the multitudes of knowing and expressing. Journal free-writes were often prompted by questions created by the facilitators but ended up serving as thought-sparks. We supported journal reflections in the form of poetry, drawing, songwriting and anything in between. As per our Community Mxnifesto (Appendix H), we were attempting to move past binaries by blurring the lines between personal and academic. While journal free-writes and reflections were originally going to be assigned biweekly, they were more frequently completed during class time.

Dialogue versus Discussion

In the spirit of supporting some of the overarching themes in our Community Mxnifesto, such as “support risk culture/be open to mistakes,” “compassion for ourselves and our community” and “remaining curious,” we were very intentional about the difference between dialogue and discussion. This also supported our fourth course objective: to “build a community that honors complexity, intersectionality and transdisciplinarity.” One of our advisors, Karen Nordstrom, provided a wealth of knowledge and resources to help us transfer this theoretical distinction into our classroom practices. Whereas we view discussion as a solution-oriented approach to reaching a universal consensus, we view dialogue as an exploratory approach to deep listening, reflection and broadening our personal perspective. This was especially important in light our “pedagogical thread” of social justice. At first we attempted to foster dialogue as we all sat in one big circle, but we soon realized that our community was not yet comfortable with open-ended dialogue in a 16-person group. We adapted to this by splitting off into smaller groups and making sure not to dive in to group work too quickly. We moved toward pair-shares for most of our dialogue-driven activities, which took multiple forms: pairing up in the classroom, pairing up for a “walk and talk” around outside, and peer-editing each other’s writing.

Contemplative Practices

Contemplative pedagogy is a field of literature and set of practices that we learned about after we started facilitating the class, although much of what we had already planned and implemented already fit into the theory. The specific practices that we used that are considered “contemplative” were: sitting in a circle, opening and closing class time with a “grounding breath,” encouraging an awareness of power dynamics and actively divesting from them, honoring silence, dialogue rather than discussion, body movement, deep listening, and using reflection, journaling, art and storytelling as tools for authentic learning.

Supporting Multiple Forms of Knowing, Expression & Learning

Our fourth course objective was to “build a community that honors complexity, intersectionality and transdisciplinarity.” The fifth objective was to “support non-hierarchical and

alternative knowledge systems.” Sense of place is an inherently and intrinsically intimate subject, and so were many of our other themes and central threads. It was important that our practices and assignments mirrored this truth. Those practices included listening to podcasts (subjects ranging from ancestral healing to white supremacy), validating expression in art form (in weekly journaling, the take-home personal project and the final expression) and cultivating community outside of the classroom (art-session at Slade Ecological Food Cooperative and potluck at Ella’s home).

Co-learner Dialogue Facilitator

Critical and alternative pedagogies were put to practice with our collaborative structures. During our second class, we talked about and shared experiences of good vs. bad facilitation in previous learning experiences and communities (momentarily functioning with the good/bad dichotomy). We collectively wrote on the blackboard the qualities of a good facilitator in positive learning environments (see Appendix E). Those included being accessible and open, supporting critical thought and space for heavy topics, responding in real time and being flexible, moving with dialogue and silence, awareness of voice balance, using respectful language, preparing adequately, open question asking and using compassion. After this activity, co-learners chose which week/theme they wanted to facilitate. A part of experiential learning is being pushed out of comfort zones, and this weekly structure did that for many members of the community. Additionally, this space supported co-learner facilitators in having full reign on whatever they wanted to bring, content and activity wise. It also allowed us to step-back from facilitation and engage wholly as a peer.

Guest Pollinators & Field Visits

Guest pollinators and field visits were central to putting action behind the ideas of experiential learning and alternative pedagogies. Our guest pollinators included Marie Veafagnant (UVM Rubenstein Assistant Dean & PhD dissertation *Sense of Place and Ways of Knowing: The Landscape of Experience for People Of Color*), Betsy McGavisk (UVM student & co-president of UVM Progressives), Katherine Elmer (UVM lecturer & co-founder of Railyard Apothecary), Corie Pierce (Bread & Butter Farm), Ren Weiner (Miss Weinerz Bakery & Food Fight VT) and Susan Teare (Vermont-based land artist). Since the beginning of the process, we believed that community involvement and engagement was essential. In the formative stages we considered having the class be a service-learning course, but soon realized how unsustainable, and potentially detrimental, short-term community engagement can be. The language behind “guest pollinators” stemmed from our original garden drawing, which depicted plants and pollinators holding a reciprocal relationship. This is the philosophy that we wanted to bring to the landscapes we visited and the interactions we had. Additionally, the field visits actualized sense of place through engagement with the community. Our first course objective was to “cultivate an understanding of sense of place (theoretical and experiential).” This course was about how we, as students and community members, move forward with personal agency and global awareness --- supporting the continuum of awareness and action. How do we partake in the resistance and the

revolution? We got to hear from community member who are participating in place-based art, research, activism, herbalism and businesses and being! Our third course objective was to “recognize social justice as a crucial dimension within environmentalism and our community.” Each guest pollinator shared with us what role sense of place has in their work and life, and how social justice is present in what they do. Our guest pollinators and field visits embodied what it means to live and practice in the Anthropocene.

Ella & Giannina Co-facilitation

Class Planning

Ella and Giannina spent nearly every Sunday of the spring semester together, planning ahead for class on Tuesday. In the early stages of this project, one professor had recommended that we stay 2 weeks ahead on our class plans and we did so with success. Class planning included creating a time breakdown class plan (see Appendix J), being in contact with upcoming guest pollinators, meeting with our co-learner facilitators for that week, finalizing our readings and assignments and generally making sure that the two of us were on the same page. We did our best to print out any assigned readings so that everybody could have hard copies and ultimately assemble a “class reader.”

An essential part of class planning was contacting and meeting with guest pollinators, typically two weeks prior to collaboration. Often times this would take place on Thursday afternoons when both of our schedules were devoted to thesis-related things. In these meetings we would share visions and expectations between us (Ella and Giannina) and the guest pollinator to organize the logistics of the visit. We expressed our hopes for reciprocity and exchanged ideas about how it could take form. It was helpful to be familiar with their ideas, philosophies and stories prior to their “pollinations” in our class space. We also asked each guest pollinator to share any resources (articles, podcasts, videos, etc.) that they wanted the class to be familiar with prior to their visit. This was another way to make the syllabus truly collaborative. The pollination of these community members blossomed into a vital part of our learning environment.

Post-Class Debrief

Every Tuesday after class, the two of us would debrief about class for at least an hour. First, we gave ourselves feedback in the form of “pluses and deltas,” or “+/ Δ ,” for positive and constructive reflection and feedback. Then we would draft an email to our co-learners, reiterating assignment descriptions and giving a heads up for the following week (see Appendix I). Generally, our +/ Δ feedback would revolve around class flow, our activities and our co-facilitator dynamics. We turned our feedback to actions by consulting them during the formation of the next class plan, as a way to self-audit. For example, in Week 6, we felt a loss of engagement during a presentation that went longer than expected. While planning Week 7, we included more actively engaging and physically mobile ways of sharing new content. Having these direct structures of feedback allowed for adaptability and fluidity. After +/ Δ we would review how that week’s practices aligned with our course objectives, which is summed up in our

Objectives Fulfilment Table (see Appendix P). We reflected on how each objective was reflected and integrated in the class. Some classes aligned with certain objectives more than others, but we did try to implement all objectives into all of our classes. This practice ensured that we were constantly shifting our scopes and lenses from overarching themes (“big picture”) to weekly classes (“present moment”). At the end of our debriefs, we would occasionally write a haiku on the blackboard summarizing how the class went, or dance in celebration and appreciation of what just took place!

Meetings with Advisors

Every other Thursday from 11:45-12:30, Giannina and Ella would meet with Amy Seidl to check-in about anything and everything thesis-related. We met with Karen Nordstrom every few weeks as well. The subjects of these meetings ranged from challenges that arose within the class, to specific thesis questions, to asking for resources related to the weekly themes, and generally remaining on the same page. These meetings were essential for much needed and appreciated mentorship and guidance.

Grading

Before any graded assignment, we made time during class to introduce it. This was an effort to make space for input, questions and clarifications. In effort to “support non-hierarchical and alternative knowledge systems” (our fifth course objective), we made a point to verbally welcome input and alterations from our co-learners. All assignments were also listed and described in the syllabus that was handed out on the first day of class. In effort to keep our expectations straightforward and fair, we created guideline rubrics for each grade (see Appendices L, M, N & O). These rubrics articulated each section of the assignment that was to be graded as well as indicators for effort/intention. When grading, we would follow these guidelines directly. We both read and gave feedback to every assignment. It was up to the first person who read the assignment to assign and record a grade, unless there was any ambiguity over whether or not the guidelines and expectations were met, in which case we would assign the grade together. While we handed all grades back (in journals, on assignments, through email if applicable), we did not post grades online until the end of the semester.

Feedback

Before starting the class, we knew that continual feedback would be essential to the class culture that we were hoping to support and the nature of a one-time college course. Some of our originally outlined ideas for “Community Culture and Expectations” were: “This is a community of peer-to-peer learning. We are all facilitators. We are all learners.” “The community will encourage all members to hold beliefs lightly in the spirit of growth and knowledge from challenge” and “transparency, vulnerability and humility are core values.” Feedback directly supports these ideas.

Co-learner Mid-semester Feedback

While feedback was requested and supported throughout the semester, we wanted to create a space for anonymous and potentially more intentional feedback. This took the form of a Google Form. The questions and responses can be seen in Appendix Q.

Overall, feedback was extremely positive, reinforcing and illuminating. Repeated positive feedback included appreciation for ample reflection/introspection time (both individually and collectively), the guest pollinators and readings, the non-hierarchical/shared facilitation, focus and exposure to new and critical ideas (especially related to indigenous communities and social justice), opening and closing breath, the comfortable yet challenging class culture and the open ended nature of the course. One co-learner wrote that the class was like “one great big journal prompt!”

Themes with the constructive feedback included updating the syllabus online more regularly, more active dialogue and sharing of personal reflections, and more movement. For question 4, Class Objectives 2, 3, and 4 were the only ones that were not checked off by everyone (12/13 students marked each of these objectives as “addressed”).

After reviewing the feedback, we recognized emergent themes (see the bottom of Appendix Q). With the constructive feedback we discussed how each point could be addressed, either right then, or in our remaining class plans. These takeaways and actions were referred to before each remaining class, to guarantee that we were truly listening with open ears and acting upon with earnest hearts.

Co-learner End-of-semester Feedback

On our penultimate class, we had the co-learners complete an anonymous end-of-semester feedback google form. Questions were similar to the mid-semester feedback form but included more overarching questions about the semester and how students were “moving forward.” The questions and responses can be seen at Appendix R.

Constructive feedback varied from co-learner to co-learner. When asked what they would change if we did it again, one response was,

I loved the STS format. I personally don't love sharing with the entire class as a way to show what I've taken away, so I would implement some end of class maybe wrap up writings that we could hand in to be read or not, but a way to show we've taken something from the class without having to speak that to everyone.

Another wrote:

I would want to see more teaching coming from you, even though I know you wanted it to be everyone learning from each other, I feel like you both had a lot of knowledge I haven't gotten yet that would've been nice to learn from. I really liked to no-stress environment and having discussions in multiple ways while being accommodating to everyone. It was a great space for reflection and expression and that really worked for me.

Some commonalities in the constructive feedback were to have more structure with class plans, more informational content delivered from us two as co-facilitators, and for assignments to

be introduced and talked about with more clarity. Objectives 2, 4 and 5 were not felt to be “addressed” by 100% of the co-learners (78.5%, 86.7% and 92.8%, respectfully).

The most consistent positive feedback was how much everyone loved the classes with field visits and guest pollinators. There was also a common appreciation for the structure that supported reflection, different ways of expression, and multiple forms of engagement. Folks appreciated how the interconnection of themes, threads and methods was consistent in the community, and that the class culture balanced focus and energy while maintaining non-hierarchy. Considering the course threads as a “distillation of the class,” one co-learner wrote, “I think the biggest theme that resonated with me was the idea of a sense of place being an interconnected web of flowing ideas and parts, and that it encompasses all of us.” The interconnected and tangled nature of the class was well received and understood by many co-learners: “Sense of place was consistently woven through the class material readings and reflections... There was a lot of discussion of social justice and how that goes hand in hand with environmentalism. Alternative pedagogies were also woven in.”

Imparting final feedback was overall very hopeful and heartwarming. One co-learner wrote, “I feel a new sense of empowerment and intellect about the world around me. I think this class really lit a fire under my belly and I am excited to see where it takes me.” Another wrote about feeling “grounded, humbled, and connected. I feel noticeably more full of knowledge and have acquired alternative ways of thinking and new views on certain topics. I have always had a pretty solid personal awareness, but I feel a more intimate connection to myself.” Receiving the anonymous feedback affirmed that the co-learners felt as positive and inspired about this experience as we did.

Discussion

Before we started co-facilitating *ENVS 197: Sense of Place in the Anthropocene*, we recorded this expected outcome:

We expect heartening and novel (to us, at least) contributions from our fellow students and from ourselves, as a result of this non-traditional peer-to-peer learning environment. We expect deep reflection and a basketful of new questions. We expect tensions to arise and we expect to resolve them promptly and respectfully. We expect heavy loads of work (grading, preparing, planning, studying, etc.) and we expect a sense of accomplishment and gratification in having completed it. Although this optimism will surely waver under the stresses of teaching a class about something we're passionate about, we expect to maintain this feeling of excitement and pride in the fact that we are spending our final undergraduate semesters learning by teaching.

We think that this expectation was accurate. With an emphasis on reflection and a bottomless basket of questions, we moved forward in the Anthropocene. To us, moving forward is founded on acknowledging the global socio-ecological circumstances of the Anthropocene, recognizing its complexity, and retaining a realistic optimism throughout the process. With the information that we have been taught, what do we do now? It is choosing how we want to take action. It is the opposite of the debilitation that so often accompanies grasping the reality of environmental problems.

The following Discussion has three sections: Discussion of Literature Review, Discussion of Emergent Themes and Concepts, and Discussion of Personal Reflections.

Discussion of Literature Review

The Case for the Anthropocene

While the Anthropocene as a geological term may still be in question, our class accepted the term within its geopolitical and socio-ecological implications, as another word for “these times” or “current state of the world.” The Anthropocene, with its grand and interconnected nature, supported a complex understanding, or at minimum, an ongoing dialogue of our role as a class and as individuals within the Anthropocene. Upon the first proposal of the term in 2000 by Paul Crutzen and Eric Stoermer, the idea referred to the expanding impact of humankind (Crutzen & Stoermer, 2000). As stated in our Literature Review section, the IPCC 2018 Special Report called for “strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters; integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning; and improving education, awareness - raising human and institutional capacity” (p. 74). We had proposed that raising human and institutional capacity could be done through a framework of ‘sense of place’ and alternative pedagogical approaches. We now understand - through the lived experience of our class, rather than speculation - resilience and adaptation to be upheld by community, learning from our peers, and processing through personal reflection and

dialogue. These actions toward resilience and adaptation are part of how we moved forward - not toward, but within the Anthropocene.

The outcomes of this framework and approach ended up being much more personal than we had expected. Working with a common understanding of the Anthropocene, we supported each other in the personal reckoning and reflection that comes with understanding the full implications of an era defined by human action. Sybil Seitzinger, executive director of the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, wrote that “the Earth system operates within and across all temporal and spatial scales” (IGBP, 2015, p. 9). What does this actually mean? What does it mean as an individual to be a part of this? What are other community members doing to work against injustices and towards justice? We approached these questions through dialogue, reflection, guest pollinators and field visits, and often found ourselves holding opposing cards in one hand (contradictory but coinciding concepts). Although it may still be an uncomfortable position, it is one that we have become familiar with. In the process of institutional education, it can be easy to throw around words like “complex systems,” “paradigm shifts” and “dichotomies,” but we think that the peer-to-peer environment supported the breakdown of these learning facades, or at least the pretense that learning is about sharing what you know, rather than exploring what you do not. In our class, the Anthropocene was much more than just a geological timescale; it was a common understanding of the gravity of our topics, the messiness of scale, action and intent - the reality we are facing as environmentalists, artists, justice-oriented community members, and university students. Most importantly, it was critical that as co-facilitators we did more than just acknowledge the Anthropocene or even pretend that we were moving towards it. We simply accepted the reality of living *within* the Anthropocene. To the entire community, the Anthropocene held a quiet presence as an omnipresent, accepted and unspoken truth. Within our class culture and topics, “moving forward” in the Anthropocene was exemplified through the work of our guest pollinators. During reflection, many co-learners expressed how hopeful it was to see the guest pollinators doing passion-driven work that was in and of itself a response to the Anthropocene. With this presence, we as co-facilitators began to push the boundaries of the term’s definition.

Personally, my (Ella’s) views of the Anthropocene have drastically shifted, and I think its role was changed for many in the class as well. Just as with the feminist movement, if actions against the Anthropocene are not practiced with intersectionality, then they run the risk of perpetuating systems of oppression and causing irreversible harm. Acknowledging the interconnected, nested nature of categorizations, “intersectionality” was coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in relation to black feminism. “The Anthropocene” should not just be a term for geologist or environmentalists, but for all systems thinkers who wish to act with a compassionate connection. For example, environmental education cannot attempt to simply “reconnect kids with nature,” without acknowledging and acting against settler, racial and gender power dynamics, indigenous land loss, nature inaccessibility and the human/wilderness dichotomy, amongst many other things. Holding our community within the context of the Anthropocene allowed for a vagueness and muddiness that truly illuminated the knotted threads of our themes, without causing overwhelming paralyzation. In relation to the acceptance and

usage of “the Anthropocene,” I question its purpose and meaning given that as a term - or even school of thought - it did not stem from the people that are most disenfranchised from the realities of its outcomes. This realization stemmed from my learnings of “sustainable” community development and the centrality of grassroot movements in development, such as La Via Campesina and the Landless Workers’ Movement. Our key takeaways were simply more questions: If the Anthropocene is not coming from the people, can it fully support, or even speak for the people? What relevance does the Anthropocene have beyond our minds?

Sense of Place

The complexity of Sense of Place theory and literature was mirrored in our class’ practices and personal understandings of the concept. Our individual senses of place were diverse, multidimensional, and ranging in depth and purpose. Theoretical definitions and categorizations of sense of place such as Jennifer Cross’ (2001) differentiation between *relationships to place* and *community attachments* as well as Nicole Ardoin’s (2014) four dimensions of sense of place: *biophysical*, *personal-psychological*, *socio-cultural* and *political-economic*, were helpful to introduce concepts and jumpstart dialogue and reflections. However, we were quick to move away from concrete, externally-sourced answers and toward our personal interpretations of sense of place. This sentiment was emboldened in Week 5, when Marie Veau-Fagnant joined our class as a guest pollinator and spoke about the wisdom that resides in our bodies. Jeremy Solin’s (2015) break down of the multidimensionality of sense of place to integrate social, political and historical elements with place attachment began to embody what we saw and felt in our classroom: each student’s personal experience curated a unique sense of place. Rarely could our senses of place be fitted into one category; they transcended specificity, existing largely in the realms of feeling, emotion and memory, which is fluid and often wordless. This trend of honoring and utilizing a personalized understanding became a cardinal strategy to the ways in which we approached most of the information we brought into the classroom. This is not to dismiss the value of the literature we reviewed in preparation for this course; it would have been impossible to begin these conversations without first immersing ourselves in the published thought. However, the topic of sense of place lends itself to other forms of knowledge as well, and we took this opportunity to dive into “non-academic” epistemologies and embrace them fully. It aligned with our pedagogical beliefs to do so and led many of our co-learners to a deeper understanding of their own senses of place.

After a semester’s worth of exposure and reflection, a few students in the class remained unsure whether or not they had a sense of place at all. The theory of placelessness is something that we researched in preparation for this semester but did not necessarily tie into class content. We began to approach it through a social justice lens when we read Barry Lopez’s excerpt that focused on *la querencia* from his book *The Rediscovery of North America* (1990), Robin Wall Kimmerer’s chapter titled “Becoming Indigenous to Place” from her book *Braiding Sweetgrass* and Huanani-Kay Trask’s chapter titled “From a Native Daughter” from her book *The American Indian and the Problem of History*. Each of these pieces critiqued colonization for many reasons, but specifically for its drive to create a sense of place for a settler at the cost of indigenous senses

of place, safety and sovereignty. As a learning community, we began to wonder if having a sense of place is a privilege only afforded to some, and to think deeply on what it means to identify with a sense of place on stolen land. For some, these questions became a call to action; one student defined her bioregion using traditional Abenaki names for local landmarks, and another decided to show the class an animation of an Abenaki creation story for her time as dialogue facilitator. Again and again, we were confronted by the fact that these threads of social justice and sense of place are irrevocably tangled. The course's third thread, alternative pedagogy, provided a way to weave through these tangles - not in an effort to resolve them but to dig deeper into the intersectionality of the concepts.

Pedagogies for the Anthropocene

We have been using the term “alternative pedagogy” throughout this capstone project to describe all “non-traditional” teaching and learning models. In our minds, traditional models are based upon one-way knowledge transfers, in which packages of information are delivered by teachers and received by students. Paulo Freire conceptualizes these models as “banking” methods of education, in which students and teachers each have specific and rigid roles and information is controlled by the teacher (Freire, 58). We believe that most of our classes at UVM have been within these traditional models. Even while some classes encouraged critical thought and deep reflection, fostering the opportunity for us as students to come to our own conclusions, they still upheld the assumption that professors/teachers are the dominant source of information and therefore can control the extent of students’ learning. By leaving these models out of our classroom and using “alternative” pedagogies, based on the idea that everyone in the classroom was equally a teacher and a learner, we found that education occurred, nonetheless.

Our intention behind our use of alternative pedagogies was to acknowledge these power dynamics associated with knowledge hierarchies within a classroom, and then deconstruct them. We very intentionally referred to the other students in the class as “co-learners” and never “our students.” As our Community Mxnifesto (Appendix H) shows, some tenets of classroom non-hierarchy that we were looking for included voice balance, compassion for community, call-in (versus call-out) culture, curiosity and trust. On top of this, we (Ella and Giannina) made a point to continuously remind ourselves and others that we were not “teachers” in the traditional sense of the word, just peers that created a learning community. Moreover, we had the co-learner dialogue facilitator structure in place to give everybody a chance to take ownership over a portion of class each week.

Although these principles were agreed upon with enthusiasm in the beginning of the semester, it was difficult to embody the non-hierarchy we were after. Most, if not all of us, had been taught and conditioned as students within “traditional” models of education for more than a decade. Even after we collectively defined our goal to co-create a learning environment without hierarchy, folks still often looked to us for answers and direction. The two of us, as the creators of the class, had the responsibility to lead and direct the course and provide a scaffolding for the peer-to-peer learning to take place in. While meeting this responsibility with competency and passion (through class planning, content organization and communication with guest pollinators),

we used this phrase a lot: “Your education is what you make of it.” This reminder that we were not in control of our co-learners’ experiences within the structure of our class was one way that we consistently embraced non-hierarchy.

Reflecting on the following statement from our “pedagogies for the Anthropocene” section of our literature review: “calls for action in the age of the Anthropocene have developed foci on transformation, resiliency, social-ecological complexity and whole systems thinking,” we found that our class’ central thread of alternative pedagogies embodied whole systems thinking more than it concentrated on specific goals of transformation, resilience and social-ecological complexity. However, in the second half of the semester with our “guest pollinators,” these conceptual complexities were alluded to with the work they are all doing as community members.

Planetary stewardship, as defined by Steffen et. al (2011), is an approach that fully acknowledges the socio-ecological implications of the Anthropocene and aims to restore Earth systems to the stability of the Holocene. In terms of education, this was not an approach that we utilized in our class, namely because we did not have a goal of returning to pre-Anthropocene circumstances. Rather, we comprehended the Anthropocene as a socio-ecological context to live and move forward within. Affrica Taylor’s (2017) “common worlds pedagogy” comes closer to the ideology that directed our learning environment in that it embraces complexity and interconnectedness by rejecting anthropocentrism. However, both planetary stewardship and the common worlds pedagogy are most relevant when conceptualizing the Anthropocene, and our class did not spend much time doing so. We presented an introductory slide show on the topics of sense of place, the Anthropocene, and critical pedagogy during our second class and it became clear that everybody had a baseline understanding and acceptance of the Anthropocene. Our intent behind contextualizing the class in the Anthropocene (through our course title) was to use the circumstances of human impact as a starting point and to move forward from there; in practice, this became an obligation to systems thinking and a call for a regenerative learning environment, which we pursued through “alternative pedagogies” and non-hierarchy in the classroom.

More so than the other “pedagogies for the Anthropocene” referenced in our literature review, critical pedagogy provided guidelines for us to deconstruct knowledge hierarchies. We actively differentiated between discussion and dialogue: the former is oriented toward presenting ideas and the latter is oriented toward broadening perspectives. Discussion seeks an answer or solution, while dialogue embraces ambiguity and paradox. As Freire theorized, critical pedagogy employs dialogue as a means to empower learners to define the world for themselves (Freire, 78). This was especially appropriate to our classroom, since individual senses of place were at the core of each co-learner’s explorations and allowed for us each to come to our own conclusions through exploration-driven dialogue.

“The root of a shifted paradigm is a rejection of business-as-usual approaches; in the case of environmental education, this becomes a reconstruction of pedagogical approaches to thoroughly consider and work within complex socio-ecological systems” is a statement in our literature review that we feel was actualized in our classroom. For example, we intentionally expanded our ideas of what counts as valid knowledge and forms of learning and centered non-

hierarchy. Students-teaching-students as a framework inherently rejects business-as-usual education models and in this way, it was a key component to our work as humans moving forward within the Anthropocene.

However, it must be noted that our emphasis on non-hierarchy and reflection left us all with more answers than questions. Compared to most classes at a university, the learning outcomes of this class were more difficult to define. What we each learned was personal and dependent on individual senses of place and experiences. As co-facilitators, we asked ourselves: should we have adapted to the desire (of some co-learners, not all) to have more structure and concrete answers for the comfortability and familiarity? Our answer was no. The ambiguity was exactly what we hoped to become comfortable with, in the name of systems thinking and honoring complexity.

Place-based Education

While place-based education was not a pedagogical thread of our course, it held significant relevance throughout the semester. This was present with Week 6's theme of "place-based education," as well as the semester-long threads of alternative pedagogies and sense of place. During their dedicated class sessions, the dialogue facilitators explored the differences between outdoor, environmental and place-based education. We also held dialogue around the practices of land-based education, an alternative that further acknowledges the resistance and movement of indigenous peoples.

As co-facilitators, we employed "pedagogy of place" and place/land-based education as an educational undercurrent. "Pedagogy of place" is founded on experiential learning, action, problem-solving community engagement and reflection (Sobel, 2004). Experiential education was implemented when we got our hands in the soil at Bread and Butter Farm with Corie Pierce, created art at Susan Teare's land art installation, drank tea that was locally harvested by Katherine Elmer and held storytelling space with Marie Veia-Fagnant. The importance of experiential education was augmented after accepting the idea that our bodies hold wisdom and knowledge. When we learned something "by doing," we gave our whole bodies the chance to engage in the learning, as opposed to when we only learned through intellectual or cerebral means, which only gave one part of our bodies – our brains – a chance to engage in the material. Also in line with Sobel's (2004) "pedagogy of place," we learned of the action and community-oriented practices of our guest pollinators and were pushed to find our own through the Take-home Practice Project and the Final Expression. The self-directed nature of both of these assignments gave the opportunity for folks to dig deeper into personal definitions of place and define their own actions in order to explore it. Looking back on the semester, we were able to recognize that our methods of experiential learning and deep reflection align closely to Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory. This theory shows a cycle of learning through *concrete experience*, *reflective observation*, *abstract conceptualism* and *active experimentation* (McLeod, 2017). Place-based education held the role and significance that we were expecting and hoping for it to hold, especially in terms of experiential education.

Indigenous Knowledge & Unsettling Education

The original title of the last section of our literature review was “Indigenous Knowledge and Decolonizing Education.” While we still whole-heartedly agree that the process of decolonization belongs to everyone and that we must act with solidarity in the movement and process of learning and unlearning, we have come to recognize our misuse of the word “decolonization.” This oversight comes from the pervasiveness of our own cognitive imperialism and biases. The work of decolonization must be defined by those who have been colonized, not the colonizer; it is indigenous sovereignty, land restoration, and other reparations led by indigenous groups and peoples. This class, *Sense of Place in the Anthropocene*, in design and intent, did not hold the true definition of decolonization at the center. As individuals who identify as non-indigenous, white and/or hold settler privilege, it was not appropriate to label our methods, actions or intent as “decolonizing.” In the well-known paper *Decolonization is not a Metaphor*, Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang wrote:

Because settler colonialism is built upon an entangled triad structure of settler-native-slave, the decolonial desires of white, non-white, immigrant, postcolonial, and oppressed people, can similarly be entangled in resettlement, reoccupation, and reinhabitation that actually further settler colonialism. The metaphorization of decolonization makes possible a set of evasions, or “settler moves to innocence,” that problematically attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity. [Abstract]

While our objectives and methods attempted to “decenter settler perspectives,” they were “incommensurable with decolonization” (Tuck & Wayne Yang, 2012). Our methods included sharing resources on the subjects of white fragility, ancestral healing, indigeneity and place, plant wisdom, white supremacy, food sovereignty and colonization in education. We attempted to decenter traditional, western educational methods through supporting all forms of knowledge and expression in our pedagogy. We acknowledge that “the work” had (and has) no end point, and more intent could have been put in to center, amplify and share the voices and actions of individuals doing the work. This was echoed by us all in the learning community. We are on the non-linear path of continual learning. Upon reflection and learning, we as co-facilitators chose to change the literature review section title to “Indigenous Knowledge & Unsettling Education.”

In class, with relation to sense of place, race and colonization, white guilt was often a common emotional response. We prompted reflection and dialogue about the importance of acknowledging feelings of guilt without letting it inhibit us to the point of inaction or complicity. These topics had the added complexities of being considered within an institutional context - a paradox that was hard to wrestle with. Although the University of Vermont is on stolen land, it rarely acknowledges or counters its role in settler colonialism, actively invests in fossil fuels, practices rampant greenwashing, and did not fully respond to the demands of NoNames for Justice – a student-run group fighting for equity and inclusion for marginalized peoples on UVM’s campus. During our class with the weekly theme of activism, the dialogue facilitator of the day explained the difference between organizing and activism, and the different ways to show up as an activist and ally. Toward the end of the semester, we were joined by guest pollinator Ren Wiener, who shared her story of Antifa (anti-fascist) work with Food not Bombs and her current

business, Ms. Weinerz and her online network, Food Fight VT. Her visit covered the concepts of sense of place, colonization within food systems, access to virtual communication and ecological resilience. She spoke about the necessity of “self-auditing”: checking in with ourselves to see if our actions are aligning with our values and constantly incorporating feedback. Moving forward, we hope to hold ourselves to continually work and act against performative allyship, and that everyone involved in the class will do the same.

Discussion of Emergent Themes & Concepts

Contemplative Pedagogy

Although we did not research contemplative pedagogy before our course began, we used contemplative practices from the start. As reported in our Results section, these practices included sitting in a circle, opening and closing class time with a “grounding breath,” encouraging an awareness of power dynamics and actively divesting from them, honoring silence, dialogue rather than discussion, body movement, deep listening, and using reflection, journaling, art and storytelling as tools for authentic learning. We received positive feedback on all of these components in both the mid-semester and end-of-semester feedback forms (Appendices Q & R). The ample reflection time, specifically, was repeatedly appreciated by our co-learners as ways to help weave concepts together - not just our weekly themes, but the central threads of social justice, alternative pedagogies and sense of place too. To thread social justice through the class, we took the time and space to contemplate and reflect was integral to grasping concepts and to articulate a path forward. Our alternative pedagogies, specifically in terms of being non-hierarchical and valuing different types of learning, were embodied through many of these contemplative practices. Sense of place, as an inherently personal topic, required the slow and contemplative approaches in order to evolve into a deeper understanding, and if applicable, action.

Non-hierarchy

Through alternative pedagogy, specifically critical pedagogy, we designed our course to attempt non-hierarchy. We quickly realized that while we could attempt to practice this through the dialogue facilitator position, reflection-driven learning and our co-facilitator approaches, there was still inherent hierarchy present despite the structure of a students-teaching-students class because we were the ones who created it. The title itself falsely indicates that we were the ones doing the “teaching.” Throughout the thesis process we were very intentional about the language used, especially in terms of power dynamics. Not necessarily with a negative connotation, the hierarchy was upheld by us being the ones doing the grading and planning the big arc and week-to-week schedules. To bring light and work against these power dynamics, we were clear and consistent to bring decision making to the group. As often as possible we would reiterate our intent of non-hierarchy and how we were equally on the learning path and never speaking from expertise. However, our learning community created the space for everyone to bring in their own knowledge and interests.

As a class community, the process of unlearning education hierarchies was a bit slow to fruition, and folks were not comfortable opening up dialogue as one big group. We quickly adjusted to support dialogue by breaking up into smaller groups instead. While our design, process and outcomes was not as non-hierarchical as it could have been, this style of learning greatly supported meaningful, critical reflection and learning from a place of compassion and humility. On March 30th, Giannina attended Edcamp Vermont's "Unconference" in Winooski, Vermont. In 2012 and 2013, Ella attended the National Challenge Course Practitioners Symposium in Boulder, Colorado. These sorts of "unconferences" practice non-hierarchy through participant creation, peer-to-peer knowledge exchange and collective agenda and content decision making. Both of these experiences were highly impactful and affirming. The philosophy behind these models were part of the inspiration for this STS capstone. After the Edcamp, we discussed how our class would have taken form if it had followed the practices of an unconference, with the common theme of sense of place in the Anthropocene. While the feasibility of these models might be difficult with the students-teaching-students model, they offered inspiration for what we were attempting to do. With flexibility and honest and constant communication, we were able to undertake our role as the "gardener's hand" as facilitators more than we expected (see our Garden Drawing, Appendix G) However, we do think we were able to strike a balance between being the gardener and the learning, thriving plant. In fact, one takeaway from our end-of-semester feedback form (Appendix R) was that a few co-learners felt that we embraced non-hierarchy too much. One response was "I appreciate the focus on eradicating the teacher-student hierarchy, but I felt that it made you both hold back a bit. A lot of us wanted to take this class because you two were teaching!" In hindsight, we recognized that our strong focus on non-hierarchy translated into a default to simply let co-learners reflect on their own, rather than provide new information to digest.

Validation of different forms of knowledge

As we alluded to in the previous sections on alternative pedagogies, we had the opportunity to dive deeply into the experience of validating different forms of knowledge. The significance of indigenous knowledge, utilized and honored in tandem with scientific knowledge, is the thesis of Robin Wall Kimmerer's book *Braiding Sweetgrass* and the topic of our dialogue and reflection in Week 5, themed "Writing and Storytelling." Through our class assignments for the rest of the semester, we were able to give our co-learners the opportunity to honor knowledge that is found and cultivated outside the walls of traditional academia. First and foremost, reflection as a valid way of learning became principle; other ways of learning were through our bodies, through storytelling and art-making.

This begins to touch on the paradox of our thesis (which is expanded upon below), in the fact that a thesis is a traditional format of displaying knowledge, yet much of this thesis' content was focused on the claim that validation of knowledge should extend to other formats - formats that are not necessarily accepted by academia as "proof" of learning.

Reflection on Course Outcomes

In the formation of this STS course, our desired outcomes were to (1) encourage environmental stewardship, (2) support action-oriented community engagement, and (3) inspire critical consciousness. These three outcomes developed from our beliefs on the potential held by our threads, themes and methods. While they were integrated weekly, their relevance took more of a subdued role, and were not referred to beyond the first class. We accepted how this unfolded because the outcomes felt more like a projection of our expectations, rather than the desired outcomes of our co-learners. To encourage personal intention-setting and envisioning, our first assignment was a letter to ourselves to be revisited at the end of the semester. This aligned with our hopes to break the teacher/student dichotomy and honor the knowledge, expectations and hopes of the class collectively.

Discussion on Personal Reflections

We are proud of ourselves for the work, grateful to the Environmental Program for supporting students-teaching-students courses, and above all else, heart-warmed by the individuals and community that made up our classroom. The opportunity for reflection both in the class and in writing this thesis has given us the space for our hearts and minds to coincide in a deeply meaningful way. Though we never doubted that we would be impacted by our capstone project, we had no way of knowing exactly how or to what extent. We wanted this capstone to be “fuel for the heart-fire” - we wrote that statement before realizing the power that this sentiment would hold. The remainder of this discussion section is comprised of the topics that arose over the course of this capstone which prompted personal reflection and will continue to have relevance as we move forward from our undergraduate educations.

Gender Dynamics

Every student in the class was female-identifying. All but one student was either studying art, environmental studies, or both. Overall, we think this contributed to an especially supportive environment, a space that can be hard to come by in academia. This dynamic, while unintentional but incredibly wonderful, did lead to some interesting reflection and questioning. What role did gender play in the convergence of our learning community? Was it the topic that drew female-identifying people, or our dynamic and image as co-facilitators, or just a coincidence? Is there something about the topic of sense of place that is inherently gendered? Or perhaps it was the format of students-teaching-students course and the emphasis on reflection and dialogue? These are questions that we have not come to, or plan on arriving to with a set conclusion or answer. Rather, they hold the potential of alluding to the socially-accepted and perpetuated concept of “gendered” topics - something that is present culturally and within the University of Vermont, as shown by the higher proportion of males studying Environmental Science versus the higher proportion of females studying Environmental Studies. We strongly disagree with the idea that technical or “hard” science topics are somehow inherently masculine while the more intra-personal, reflective studies (oftentimes and unfortunately labeled “soft”) align more with the feminine.

Early on in the semester, when community dynamics were still forming, one co-learner remarked to us that we were like “the moms” of the group. This was something that we received it different ways:

I (Giannina) have been described as motherly by my peers and friends for a long time. I took being jokingly referred to as “mom” in the class as an indication of trust and friendship between us all as co-learners. For me, being “motherly” did not suggest holding authority; it suggested being considerate, helpful and kind and that is precisely how I hope to show up for my friends and co-learners.

I (Ella) received the compliment with a bit more hesitation. While there is absolutely nothing wrong with motherhood, I questioned the intent behind the statement. A student would most likely not call a male in our position “dad.” While the comment could allude to familiarity and comfort, it also spoke to the unfamiliarity and discomfort we collectively have with centering personal emotions and reflections in academic settings. I want education to be able to hold these topics without familial power dynamics. For me, it felt limiting with the role I was trying to take.

Our different - not better or worse - reactions led to insightful conversations with our thesis advisors about the emotional labor that is often expected with being a female educator. In the case of our class, we were happy to fill the role of supporting the co-learners, academically and emotionally. However in different circumstances, this could easily become a gendered burden. Female identifying individuals can, and should be able to hold positions of leadership without being pigeon holed.

“Alternative Yet Institutional”

The paradox of our learning community was that it was both alternative and institutional. It was alternative because of its STS format and the non-hierarchy we based it on, as well as its heavy emphasis on learning through reflection. It was institutional because it occurred through the funds and infrastructure of the University of Vermont and awarded grades and credits toward an undergraduate degree. In many ways, we believe this paradox fueled its importance.

Institutions such as UVM have a responsibility to provide support for a multitude of learning styles and trajectories. Our STS course exposed many individuals to a style of learning and range of approaches that they may not have otherwise had the opportunity for. Because the course occurred in an institutional setting, it was not entirely alternative; yet if it had been in a non-institutional setting then it would have had different outcomes. The opportunity for both components of the “alternative yet institutional” paradox was unique and illuminating because it started to break down the dichotomy between the two. To touch on the idea of “pedagogies for the Anthropocene” again, it is important that educational efforts begin to embrace complexity.

However, navigating this paradox was not without its challenges. In practice, we had to walk the line between holding true to non-hierarchy and holding our co-learners accountable to a university-level class’ rigor. We had to find a way to respect for individuals’ learning approaches while simultaneously preserving a clear expectation for levels of proficiency, particularly when it came to turning things in on time. Our flexibility with lateness was entirely contingent upon whether or not folks communicated with us beforehand.

The dance between being adaptable to the specific tides of our learning community and to holding ourselves and each other accountable to a well-planned curriculum held both tensions and possibilities, and we believe the key to its success was our belief that students will take what they want from their educations no matter how much structure is provided. Folks who want to learn, will learn. Educators can surely help light the way and provide inspiration, but the work must be done by the learner. In the spirit of Paulo Freire's "authentic learning," we trusted that our co-learners would embrace the recurring phrase, "your education is what you make of it."

Students-teaching-students as High Impact Learning

For both of us, this STS Capstone has been one of the richest learning experiences at UVM. A common phrase that was repeated to us in our pre-class phrase was, "the best way to learn is to teach." However, we also believe that the best way to learn is through experience followed by reflection. Conducting this thesis enhanced our learning within the university context because the students and institution trusted us with providing a worthwhile and meaningful 3-credit course, which strengthened our time management and communication skills, and gave the opportunity to explore topics through both theory and practice. Connecting back to critical pedagogy, for all co-learners involved in the class, this thesis gave us the opportunity to take control of our own education. This thesis was a process guided by mentorship, research, collaboration and intuition. For us, holistic learning was embodied by guiding a start-to-finish process. We only did this once, and we wanted the experience to be as high-impact for the co-learners as it was for us. While perhaps they were small-scale, our methods felt relevant and radical in real-time. Time- and subject-wise, what we were doing felt important... But perhaps that is just the nature of an undergraduate thesis project. It could easily be interpreted that this capstone was the pinnacle of our time in higher education; however, for us it was just the start.

Co-facilitator Dynamics (Ella and Giannina)

Both of us could not have imagined doing this type of thesis capstone with anyone else. We believe that our success as co-facilitators was rooted in completely equal dedication and compassion for the work, honest and frequent communication and mutual understanding of intent. Our ability to work well together stemmed from a friendship and blossomed into a partnership. Our teaching, learning and processing styles overlapped and differed with a deep, mutual respect and love as a constant. Giannina's nature tended toward flexibility and trust, and balanced insight with questioning (airy aquarius). Ella's nature tended toward critical thought and systems thinking and was skillful at recognizing when to challenge ideas and when to let ideas develop on their own (grounded taurus). We had a good balance of non-judgement and healthy criticism.

One person's feelings never forced out another's. On top of that, we were really good at reading each other and knowing when there was an unspoken unbalance or miscommunication. When challenges arose, we would pause thesis-related work and center our friendship. This was not always easy but thankfully it was always prioritized by the both of us. Additionally, because this thesis was fueled by our "heart-fires," it was easy to support each other in all areas of life

throughout this project. We were warned about the challenges of co-facilitation and never expected to bypass them without trial, but they ultimately only strengthened our partnership and friendship. An integral force behind the success of our co-facilitation was our mutual dedication and openness to emergence.

Personal Reflections & Takeaways

My (Ella's) thoughts around these topics and capstone project felt like a mental murmuration that will change and shift through time and memory. These reflections can be roughly and intertangledly be thought of in two ways - takeaways as an educator and as a learner. As a co-facilitator before every class I would ask myself, "What type of educator do I want to be?" While Giannina and I both continue to hold dissonance around the word "teacher," we wanted to support inspiration and intuition and compassion driven learning in a peer-to-peer environment. I still question what the word "success" means in relation to our class. Ultimately, we wanted to spark heart-fire, and I think we did this. As an educator and learner, I continuously returned to the utter challenge of holding opposing cards in one hand. This interplayed with my thoughts on balance and embodiment. I can agree with complexities and systems thinking, but to truly believe, speak and "teach" from a place that holds these truths, is working against everything society and culture has formed me to believe. We questioned where we would be now if we had been introduced to systems thinking (the natural way of thought) at the age of 5, rather than having it stripped away from us by the traditional education system.

As an educator, I was repeatedly reminded of the central role of our co-learners' knowledge, experiences and perspectives. While we had designed to allow for emergence driven by our co-learners, I was ignorant to the power they would bring. On a weekly basis, my opinions and perspectives were shifted and illuminated by the community. As a human on the continual, lifelong learning journey, I am awakened by the work and studies of decolonization, phenomenology and non-hierarchy. These are the directions that I am most excited to follow in the non-institutional education setting that lies ahead, post-graduation.

Throughout this process we have been driven by the sentiment of "moving forward with the Anthropocene." Although I hold no expertise, or real feeling of preparedness, with this action, I hold the experience and affirmation that we are all in this together. I am inspired by the universality of sense of place and the power of intentional peer-to-peer learning. My community supports me, and I embrace back. This process gives me hope as I continue to lean into discomforts, live from humility and compassion, and continue to learn, reflect and evolve as a facilitator, community member, artist, and above all a human in full.

What has struck me (Giannina) more than anything else throughout this experience is the importance of reflection in any learning process. Sense of place was a wonderful topic to realize this through because it is an inherently personalized concept, and it is arguably more obvious that in order to build upon something personal, one must reflect upon it. However, it is my opinion (developed through this concrete experience) that the necessity of reflection extends to all concepts, even the most scientific and "objective" ones. Even after a data-driven scientific discovery, the discoverer's true measure of its use is in answering the question, *where is this*

knowledge applicable? I argue, too, that in this age of highly-consequential human action, we must ask ourselves, *how is this moving us forward toward a more just future?* As humans in the Anthropocene, we cannot afford to do things without considering its implications through a means that is personal and contextualized.

At the risk of sounding a bit crude, I think about rumination versus regurgitation of information. I think critical thinking is a part of the rumination process, and not the regurgitation process. In the case of cows, rumination means to chew food into cud, chewing and chewing until the foodstuff is broken down and digestible enough so that it may be utilized by the body. In the case of humans, we can ruminate on our thoughts, reflecting on new information until it is churned into thought-cud. The result is digestible, personally understood and able to be built upon. Compare this to the act of regurgitation: information comes in, and then it comes out again, with no evidence of personal understanding or critical thinking. If a person does digest information, how is it helpful? How can that person know where and how to apply the information? Most importantly, how is it moving the person forward? These are the questions that I did not feel were answered by most of my classes at UVM. Some of my ENVS classes led me as far as to ask them but left it up to me to answer them. My answer, in part, was to co-create a learning community that centered those questions because I value the power of collective thinking and processing - rumination on a larger scale, so to speak.

Discussion on Co-learner Feedback

A heartening take-away from our group reflection was that this learning community fostered a sense of optimism. When we asked what might have been a better or more descriptive name for the course, one co-learner suggested something along the lines of *“The ENVS Class You Go To That Doesn’t Make You As Sad As The Other Ones.”*

Just as it was important to give ourselves a foundation of knowledge in preparation for this course by reading and reviewing published literature, it is important for ENVS students to take some of those “sad” classes. The harsh realities of the environmental circumstances must be taught, communicated, displayed and understood, so that any movement is rightfully informed. However, when it comes to environmental problems, the conversations cannot end there. This was the foundational idea behind this STS course: that the doom-and-gloom reality of the environmental circumstances must be met with systems thinking and action, not just case studies and examples. This sentiment carried through until the end; we know this because we have no more “big” answers than we did before.

We spent a part of our penultimate class doing some “big picture” reflection dialogue, at first in three groups and then coming together as one group. We wanted to give everyone a structured chance to “zoom out” and think about sense of place and/in the Anthropocene in relation to the overarching threads and themes. Our 2nd course objective, to “use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift,” was focused on the least throughout the semester and we wanted to hear how co-learners were tying all of this together. We (Ella and Giannina) asked how folks felt the Anthropocene was addressed and what “moving forward” means for them.

In this dialogue, it was agreed that the Anthropocene was a given reality, so relevant that it nearly went unspoken. Our generation of environmentalists does not demand proof for the Anthropocene. Rather, we are concerned about responding to it. The Environmental Program at the University of Vermont has done a more-than-adequate job at introducing the concept and presenting some of the subsequent challenges to Earth systems. We did not need more proof, or even an elaboration on how ecology and society is crumbling under the systematic pressures of the Anthropocene. As a class, we already understood the realities of this epoch, and instead focused on the actions and thought that community members are taking in response. This was used as inspiration and food for thought on how we, collectively and individually, want to be responding to the Anthropocene.

To us, “moving forward” means knowing the facts without losing hope. It requires a continual cycle of reflection followed by action, followed by reflection again. It is self-auditing and critically analyzing society while evolving with new learnings. To individual co-learners, interpretations of “moving forward” varied. Some responded emotionally with questions like, “What am I doing with myself?” and some responded literally, “What am I doing after I graduate from UVM?” Equally for us, the co-learners truly valued the presence of guest speakers and field visits, in part because it was impactful to see that these community members are actively thinking about and acting upon the subjects we were thinking and reflecting about all semester. We saw how these themes and questions lived beyond the bubble of the university by exposing the learning community to the lived experiences of passion-driven community members. For many people, this was a rare and hopeful interaction within their environmental studies education. These interactions were more than case studies or panels of professionals in the field. We got to hear the guest pollinators’ stories, and more often than not share their spaces too. We practiced reciprocity through weeding their greenhouses, engaged with place through drinking their tea, and explored place through interpreting their art. The guest pollinators supported natural learning exchanges that brought immense inspiration and hope, something that is unfortunately not often experienced in higher education.

The feedback that we received in the end-of-semester feedback form (Appendix R) was deeply important to us to go through and absorb. While it was positive over-all (matching our own feelings as co-facilitators), there were also some key constructive criticisms that we will keep in mind as we move forward as educators. There was a balance to be struck between aligning with our beliefs of the emergent educational power of non-hierarchical learning environments and providing enough structure and instruction for folks to feel like they were in a rigorous educational setting. Some co-learners reported that the balance was just right, and others wished for more structure. For us, Ella and Giannina, this makes us consider our priorities as educators. Is it to make students feel welcome and valued in the learning environment? Is it to ensure that students glean as much information as possible and to push them to do so? For us both, our answer is a combination of the two: to provide a learning environment that is comfortable enough that students push themselves.

Neither of us are comfortable delivering information in an authoritative role nor do we think it is the most effective way to teach. Perhaps too quickly, we dismissed the idea of

providing instruction because it only felt like a means for authority. In retrospect, we recognize that it is entirely possible to provide structure and instruction without being authoritative. Additionally, the intent behind non-hierarchy could have been strengthened through more structure, i.e. giving more consistent space to dialogue facilitators and more opportunities to learn directly from each other. The variance in feedback about the course structure and content mirrored the variance of co-learners' experiences and expectations of this learning community. For example, some co-learners thought that sense of place was connected to everything that we talked about, and others felt like it was forgotten about at times.

We feel strongly that this feedback should be considered by future STS projects. In response to the feedback that there could have been more informational content delivered by us, we realized that we only gave ourselves the opportunity to do so in the beginning of the semester, when we were still finding our footing as facilitators. For example, when we presented powerpoints about the Anthropocene, dialogue vs. discussion, etc., we were stepping into a "teacher role" but did so timidly because we were still getting comfortable with the STS framework and holding ourselves tightly to the idea of non-hierarchy. Our advice to future STS projects is to design for the uncertainty of becoming a peer-teacher, no matter how much you aim for non-hierarchy. We also strongly advocate for the power of non-hierarchy in learning communities, and for the opportunity for students to pursue it through STS.

Our group dialogue and the feedback forms illuminated how our co-learners appreciated the practice of being okay without an answer. Or, in the spirit of systems thinking, that there are many answers, depending on where and how deeply you look, and that those answers are ever-evolving. This is something we will all carry forward, personally and academically. One co-learner shared a sense of "equal learning of self and topics," which certainly resonated with us (Giannina and Ella) as well. Further, it was important to have a class that was not focused on the delivery of new information. As university students, most of our classes had clear learning goals that are able to complete this statement: *by the end of this course, you will know what [blank] means and/or how to [blank]*. This class was not about filling in the blanks, but it was about ruminating on all that we have already learned and experienced. With this focus, new information, opinions and feelings emerged, nonetheless.

It was challenging and rewarding to work together so closely on something that was very conceptual and ambiguous yet actualized through the class. Personally, we questioned if we were embodying our mutual visions and ideas to the fullest, and if they were being received by the co-learners in the ways that we were expecting. This was another powerful way that emergence allowed for humility. Overall, the formal and informal feedback and our group dialogue affirmed that our co-learners valued the community and much as we did.

Conclusion

Upon finishing up the course, we wondered whether or not we would have named this course something other than *Sense of Place in the Anthropocene*. Our answer is no; in fact, we think the title resonated beautifully with the course content. Our central threads were alternative pedagogy, sense of place and social justice. The complete title, *A students-teaching-students course: Sense of Place in the Anthropocene*, captures it all. Students-teaching-students describes the alternative pedagogy we used. Sense of place was a key central thread. The Anthropocene was accepted by our learning community as a socio-ecological term requiring a lens of social justice in order to contemplate.

Our alternative pedagogy, based upon non-hierarchy in the classroom, was an attempt to liberate the learning process from the confines of one-way information transfer that is embodied by traditional teacher-student dynamics. We actively dismissed our potential for authority and control over others' learning by using the term "co-learner" instead of "student," centering reflection in the learning process, focusing on dialogue instead of discussion, and giving every co-learner in the community a day to facilitate dialogue. Looking back to our garden drawing, which displays the idea of a thriving system due to its individual components as well as the interconnections between, we conclude that this learning community was a successful complex system. It supported the growth of individuals which, in turn, strengthened the health of the learning environment (the soil).

Sense of place provided an opportunity for folks to use their personal experiences to root themselves and consider their path forward. It transferred from personal agency to global awareness through the idea that sense of place is often much more than just location-oriented. It encompasses memory, history, time and culture - which are all aspects of identity that sustain systems of oppression, thereby rendering sense of place a matter of justice. As something felt and often wordlessly understood, sense of place was also a tool for us all to bring our personal reflections into our learning.

Moving forward and responding to the Anthropocene was exemplified by our guest pollinators. They were activists, artists, community herbalists, farmers and PhD candidates who are on the path of continual learning and self-auditing in relation to self, cultural and social awareness and action. They were role models to us, and their work elucidated the fact that learning can, and should, continue to bloom beyond the university. We now hold the ability to shoulder the weight of the reality of the Anthropocene and act with awareness because we have seen others do so. We have seen the powerful commonality of heart-fire among the community members in our class and with the guest pollinators. This gives us hope in moving forward.

Here are our findings from a semester-long journey in co-learning: the Anthropocene is an accepted reality and must be responded to with action. Sense of place, an inherently intimate concept, can be utilized in the response to invoke place-based and passion-driven work. It is personal and fluid, and empowered through community. Reflection and community engagement thrives through alternative pedagogies. Peer-to-peer learning fosters critical thinking and

meaningful rumination. However, it should not be considered a silver-bullet solution. We are grateful to the University of Vermont's Environmental Program for supporting this learning format and urge institutions of higher education to embrace alternative knowledge systems and social justice for change.

Sense of place is a concept that lends itself to deep personal reflection. Contextualized within the Anthropocene, it can be a tool for us all to consider socio-ecological implications on both local and global scales. In our peer-to-peer learning community, a class titled *Sense of Place in the Anthropocene*, we were able to see how sense of place is inextricably tied to social justice, and to approach it with pedagogical methods alternative to that of a typical university setting.



Our co-learning community at Susan Teare's land-art installation in Essex, VT (not pictured: Molly Perry)

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Appendices

Appendix A: STS Logistics Roadmap

The Environmental Studies department at UVM offers its students the option to pursue a senior capstone in the form of a students-teaching-students (STS) course. If students can identify a gap in the ENVS curriculum, they have the power to fill it in for themselves and teach an undergraduate-level course to their peers for credit, given that they are approved by the department faculty. While the STS framework has been criticized by some who think it inappropriate or impossible for a college education to be fulfilled, in part, by peer-to-peer learning, we firmly believe that STS is precisely the framework that supports a just and regenerative environment for learning, thinking and solution-building. We have written this “roadmap” to not only light the way for future students to feel empowered to pursue an STS capstone, but also to elucidate the amount of effort, competence and value that renders it a beautiful and viable way to support higher education.

Step 1 or 2: Decide that STS is the path you want to pursue

This should be at least 1 entire semester prior to when you intend to teach your STS course. Planning it and getting it approved takes months! It is also likely more than a 1-person job. Consider finding a partner or two to embark on this project together.

Step 1 or 2: Identify a gap in the ENVS curriculum

Your STS class needs to be unique to other classes at UVM. What learning opportunity have you not encountered that you wish you had?

Step 3: Begin crafting the course

What do you want to teach? What do you want to learn? What is your pedagogical approach?

Step 4: Find faculty support and advisors

Be ready to answer the “who, what, when, how and why” questions! You are required to have at least two faculty advisors. Once you have secured at least one faculty advisor, coordinate with the ENVS department to schedule a bloc of the monthly faculty meetings to present for approval.

Step 5: Create a syllabus

This should include a course overview, objectives, assignment descriptions, grade breakdowns, required readings and a general schedule. This will likely be a “living document” until the end, but it is important to have a structure to stick to.

Step 6: Present to ENVS faculty (*no later than by halfway through the semester prior to the semester you plan on teaching*)

Have as much of your course prepared as possible so that you can give the ENVS faculty as detailed of a picture as possible. They will decide to approve your course based on your presentation skills, preparation, ability to answer questions and “defend” your topic as necessary. Keep in mind that some parents and faculty do not agree that their students should be able to receive credit from other students and do not think STS courses should exist. You need to justify the necessity and validity of your course!

Step 7: Advertise course

Congratulations on being approved to teach! Now you must get the word out - use email, social media, word-of-mouth, class presentations, anything you can think of. Create a visual that can be shared around and a “course blurb” to explain what it is all about. We chose to have a google form “application” to gauge interest and select students based off of responses.

Step 8: Select students

The UVM Registrar won’t allow students to sign up directly for the course. You need to select your students ahead of time, collect their 95-numbers and have your faculty advisor override them into the course. The course will be listed as *ENVS 197: Student Designed Course* under the name of your faculty advisor.

Step 9: Fill in the details of your semester teaching plan

This could include further thought around assignments, readings, guest speakers, activities and field visits. Be sure to think about what you appreciate and dislike as a student.

Step 10: start teaching!

While you’re teaching, here are a few tips that we recommend for the class-planning process:

- When creating class plans, stay 2 weeks ahead ~ really! This will help immensely.
- Practice zooming in *and* out (from weekly classes to “big picture”). Something that can help with this is creating a visual arc of the semester to refer to.
- Debrief with your co-facilitator after each class (we used to plus/delta evaluation model).
- Be open and responsive to feedback (from your co-learners, your co-facilitator, your advisors, etc.).
- Create a structure for receiving formal feedback and create a culture for receiving informal feedback.
- Plan to meet with your advisors every other week, if possible.
- Plan dedicated “thesis days” to really dive into writing.
- Spend time with your co-facilitator through designated non-thesis times.
- Reach out to previous STS facilitators!

Here are some tips to support natural flow in the classroom:

- Establish class norms early and do it collectively. This helps with community commitment and showing (not just saying) that you want to create a supportive learning environment.
- You have the power to foster any type of learning space you would like to. Depending on your pedagogical philosophy, it will be a challenge and perhaps even a shock to exist and learn in a classroom without a definitive “teacher.” Give yourself time to ease into it.
- A students-teaching-students framework is inherently counter-hegemonic in the university system and our advice is to embrace it fully. Students taking the class will have to adjust to the change in power structure, but for us it was ultimately an alignment of belief and practice.
- Actively adjust to the styles and needs of the people in your class. For example, we started out trying to have full group dialogue sessions, but quickly discovered that most people felt uncomfortable sharing out in this setting. We shifted to pair shares, smaller group dialogue sessions and personal journaling activities. This provided a much smoother means to a very similar outcome.
- Read the group! No one can sit still for 3 hours straight. If you are tired, the likelihood that others are feeling the same is high.
- Share food and move around! At the beginning of the semester we made a food-sharing schedule, so each person brought a snack for everyone once or twice during the semester. We also had midway- and end-of-semester potlucks.
- Have dance breaks! Let someone lead a yoga/stretch break!
- If it is a beautiful day, move outside. Be flexible! Find your balance between planning ahead and adapting in real time.
- Set clear expectations with everything that is graded, for yourself and the other students.

Here are some tips for writing your thesis (more relevant if you are doing it with a partner):

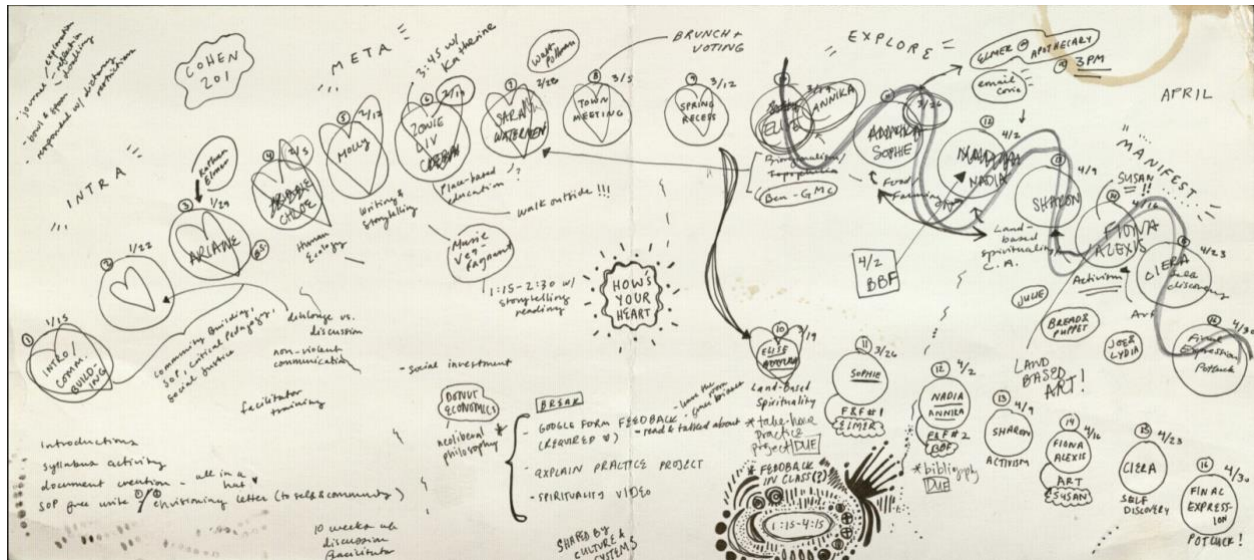
- Start early! Follow a regular schedule to avoid cramming as much as you can.
- Begin with a general outline and specify as you go.
- Before writing a section, brainstorm together on what you want to be included.
- While the whole thing is co-written, decide who is spearheading each section or sub-section based on interest.
- Edit your own writing, then edit your partner's, and then edit everything together. Reading out loud is incredibly helpful!
- Find good playlists and bring chocolate.
- Recognize and respond to when you are "braindead" and no longer putting out solid work (this comes with scheduling enough time so you can actually stop working when you need to).
- Utilize the university library resources to make sure your references and citations are all in order! When you upload your final thesis to UVM's Scholarworks, you are essentially publishing your work and you must be meticulous about copyright infringement and proper APA formatting.

Finally, some general tips:

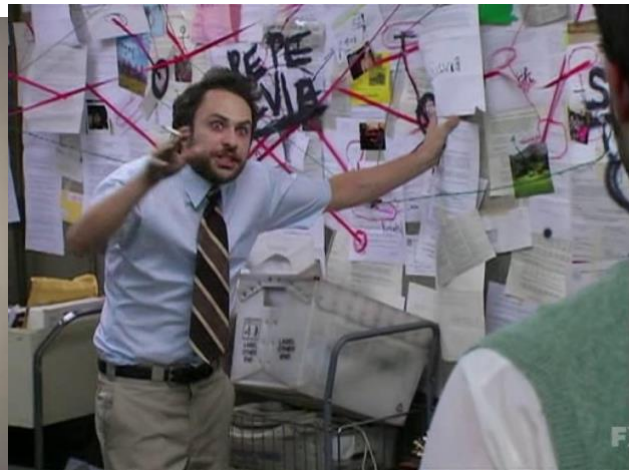
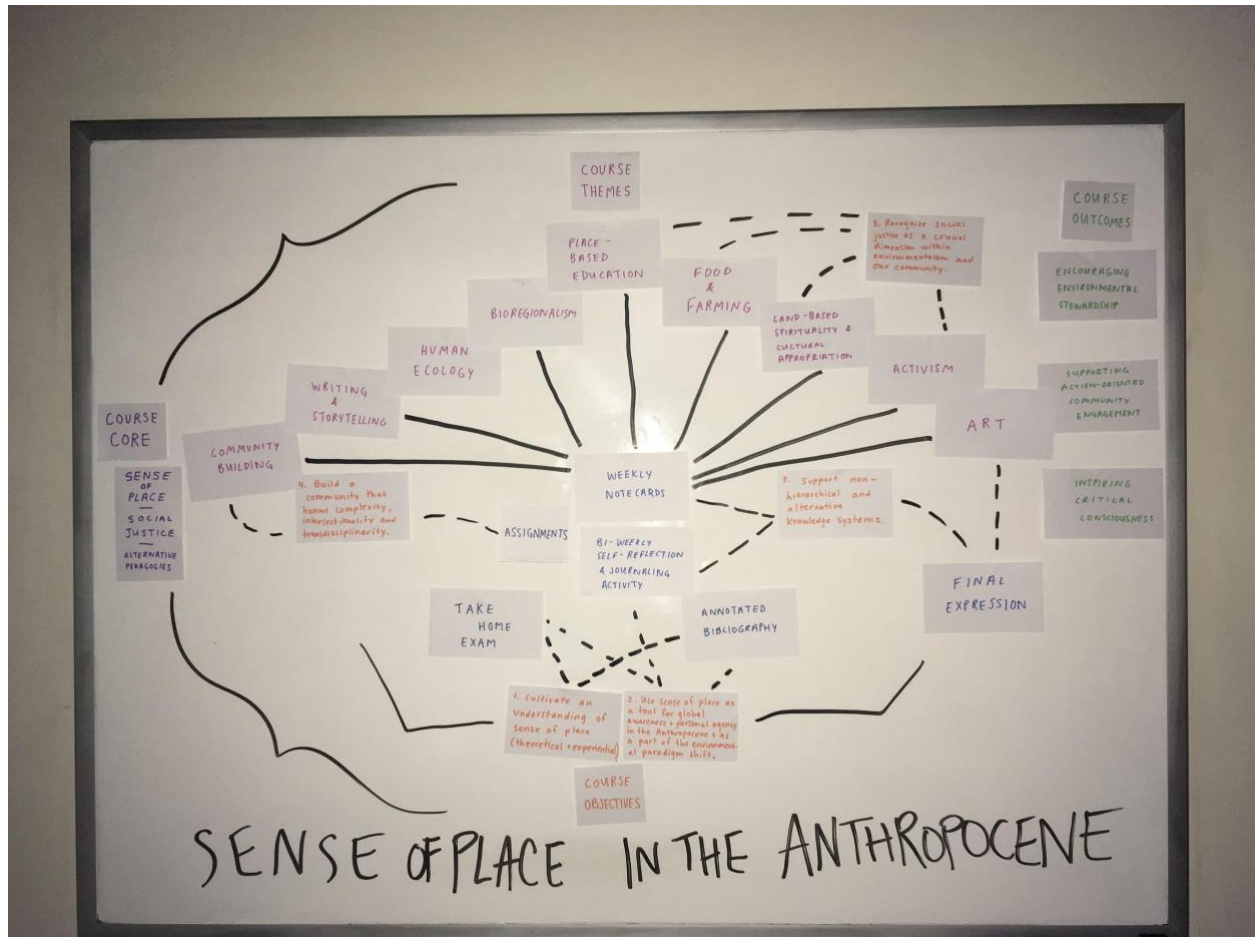
- The possibilities are endless! STS can truly be whatever you make of it.
- Center your relationship with your thesis partner over the other parts of your capstone.
- Make sure to pause and communicate when you are feeling an imbalance or disconnection.
- Make time for check-ins before starting a work session.

Best of luck on your STS journey! What you are pursuing is a beautiful example of taking ownership over your education.

Appendix B: "The Big Arc"



Appendix C: Course Design Map



Appendix D: Syllabus

Working Syllabus
ENVS 197: Students Teaching Students
Sense of Place in the Anthropocene
Spring 2019
Tuesdays 1:15-4:15, Cohen 201

Facilitators: Ella Mighell & Giannina Gaspero-Beckstrom

Contact: emighell@uvm.edu, ggaspero@uvm.edu

Overview

‘Sense of Place’ is a deep, multidimensional reverence for place. With reverence comes reciprocity. Sense of place is a theory and a practice that when combined creates a framework. It can be rooted in wilderness connection and nature exposure, but it can also develop from any community in any landscape. In this time of grand challenges - environmental catastrophes, dualistic politics, systemic injustices and general disconnection, what role can sense of place have in our understanding of the Anthropocene?

Environmental action within the Anthropocene calls for a paradigm shift. Conventional practices are being challenged in agriculture, design and political organizing. The students-teaching-students framework is an alternative educational approach that supports the values and practices of the environmental studies department, and a paradigm shift.

This course will cultivate a sense of place that encourages environmental stewardship, supports action-oriented community engagement and inspires critical consciousness. Sense of place supports a paradigm shift. Through the lens of sense of place, we will explore themes of writing and storytelling, human ecology, bioregionalism, food and farming, land-based spirituality, activism and art. We will attempt to harness the power of sense of place, which is both reactionary and resonating, and use it as a hybridized tool of personal agency and global awareness.

Sense of place is not apolitical. It is vital to the goals of this course, and the environmental movement itself, to recognize and respect social justice, especially in relation to indigenous history and rights. Intersectionality and social justice will be used in our critical analysis of sense of place. What does it mean to receive a higher education on stolen land?

Class time will be spent in community dialogue, reflection and connecting. Through readings, journaling, assignments, guest speakers and field studies, students will be challenged to make the deeply complex deeply personal. This is a class that will be pushing past words like “paradigm shift” and “complex systems.” Our intention is to encourage critical thought, self reflection and open dialogue for awareness and action. This course is about students as individuals and as community members, as environmentalists and learners, in Burlington, Vermont in the Anthropocene. It is about how we engage with the world as thought-provokers while holding compassion and intention and remaining rooted in place.

Course Objectives

1. Cultivate an understanding of sense of place (theoretical and experiential).
2. Use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift.
3. Recognize social justice as a crucial dimension within environmentalism and our community.
4. Build a community that honors complexity, intersectionality and transdisciplinarity.
5. Support non-hierarchical and alternative knowledge systems.

Community Culture and Expectations

- This is a community of peer-to-peer learning. We are all facilitators. We are all learners.
- Come to class with the readings and assignments completed and prepared for dialogue, reflection and engagement.
- By registering for this course, you are agreeing to show up with presence and respect.
- The community will encourage all members to hold beliefs lightly in the spirit of growth and knowledge from challenge.
- Transparency, vulnerability and humility are core values.

Assignments, Attendance and Participation

The bulk of homework will be readings and accompanying notecard assignments. A compiled reader with a plastic coil binding and a cardstock cover will be provided for every student upon the first class. A space in the reader will be provided for the notecard assignment after every reading.

Assignments will include: notecards for every reading, bi-weekly self-reflection journal entries, a take-home exam, an annotated bibliography and a final expression at the end of the semester.

Attendance is mandatory for each class session. All absences will result in a point deduction from the final grade. In the event of an unexcused absence, students may not make up these points. Excused absences will be determined on a case-by-case basis and is contingent upon the student's communication with Ella and Giannina. In the event of an excused absence, students will be given an opportunity to make up lost attendance points.

Participation is crucial to the goal of this course to build a regenerative space for a community of mindful thinkers, feelers and actors. We recognize that participation can (and should) come in many forms: contributing to class dialogue, writing reflections, facilitating notecard discussions, critical note-taking and general theme engagement. All hold value.

Assignment Descriptions

I. Weekly Notecards

The notecard assignment will be a single open page at the end of each week's reading assignment. The sections to be filled out on the notecards are:

- Key quotes
- Connections & sparked ideas to bring to discussion
- Questions

Each week there will be one alternating student to facilitate discussion around the assigned readings. The weekly facilitator schedule will be decided during the first class. The notecard will be completed every week by every student. A moderating training will take place at the beginning of the semester. The weekly facilitator's role may vary in expression, but should include:

- Moderating discussion
- Posing questions
- Maintaining student engagement

II. Bi-Weekly Self-Reflection and Journaling Activity*

Co-learners will keep a journal for the purposes of self-reflection, critical note taking, creative expression, and whatever else they find helpful or inspiring. This journal will be checked and graded for content and effort.

Journaling activities will include:

- in-class free writes
- in-class notes
- in-class and at-home responses to journal prompts
- self-reflection in relation to weekly course theme
- creative expression (graded only when applicable)
- active note-taking during guest speakers

III. Take-home Practice Project

There will be one take home practice project in the middle of the semester, due the week we return from Spring Recess. This will be a chance for co-learners to synthesize readings, class discussion and self reflection in a written or creative form. This could take the form of attending a city council meeting, cooking dinner with a neighborly stranger, interviewing a community member or writing a letter to your family. The actual practice will be paired with a short essay explaining how the co-learners came to decide what their individual practice project is. This is a space for mid-way reflection, processing and action.

IV. Annotated Bibliography

The Annotated Bibliography is an opportunity for co-learners to read, research and write about one theme/idea that is connected to sense of place. It could be a theme that was brought up in class, or something that you've found on your own. The assignment allowed co-learners to explore sense of place, social justice and alternative pedagogy in a landscape of their choosing and support transference to wherever the student feels most "at home." This can be a self-driven way to express childlike curiosity! The envisionment is at least 6 source, with a solid paragraph under each. In the writing you should glean main ideas from the pieces and connect them to your own thoughts. Please be intentional with quote usage and correct APA citation.

V. Final Expression

The Final Expression is a creative project centralized around sense of place. It is an opportunity for individuals to explore and dive into a topic that was either covered in class, or was explored outside of the classroom. All of the final expression topics will be pre-proposed to Giannina and Ella in a short essay due in week 14. Roughly 15 hours will be spent on each project.

Grading

- Weekly Notecards - 25%
- Bi-Weekly Self-Reflection and Journaling Activity and general participation - 25%
- Take-home Practice Project - 10%
- Annotated Bibliography - 10%
- Final Expression - 20%
- Attendance - 10%

Student Learning Accommodations

In keeping with University policy, any student with a documented disability interested in utilizing accommodations should contact ACCESS, the office of Disability Services on campus. ACCESS works with students and faculty in an interactive process to explore reasonable and appropriate accommodations via an accommodation letter to faculty with approved accommodations as early as possible each semester. All students are strongly encouraged to meet with their faculty to discuss the accommodations they plan to use in each course.

Contact ACCESS: A170 Living/Learning Center; 802-656-7753; access@uvm.edu

Religious Holidays

Students have the right to practice the religion of their choice. If you need to miss class to observe a religious holiday, please submit the dates of your absence to us in writing by the end of the second full week of classes. You will be permitted to make up work within a mutually agreed-upon time.

Academic Integrity

The policy addresses plagiarism, fabrication, collusion, and cheating.

<http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/acadintegrity.pdf>

Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities

www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/studentcode.pdf

Course Structure

Readings and assignments are due the day they are listed, unless they are specified otherwise. Due dates and readings are subject to change, co-learners will be notified well ahead of time through a post-class email.

<i>Week & Date</i>	<i>Themes & Dialogue Facilitator(s)</i>	<i>Class Activities</i>	<i>Readings & Ruminations (ready on the day)</i>
Week 1 January 15th	Introductions, Community Building & Foundations	- land acknowledgement - get to know each other! - syllabus review & activity - community document creation: class norm articulation -sense of place free write	N/A
Week 2 January 22nd	Community Building, Sense of Place, Critical Pedagogy, Social Justice	- alternative pedagogies - facilitator training - SOP definitions - dialogue vs. discussion	<u>Notecard:</u> Michael Eric, Foreword in “White Fragility: Why It’s so Hard for White People to Talk About Racism.” <u>Notecard:</u> Meadows, D. (1994). Envisioning a Sustainable World. http://donellameadows.org/archives . <u>Assignment Due: Envisioning Letter</u>
Week 3 January 29th	Community Building, Sense of Place & Critical Pedagogy, Social Justice (Ariane Goldsmith)	- Dancing With Systems read-out-loud & activity - talk bout’ colonization -podcast & journal at Slade Queer Witch Podcast “Ancestral Healing”	<u>Notecard:</u> Lopez, B. (1992). Rediscovery of North America. <i>Orion Magazine</i> , Summer. Healing Culture Podcast #2: Making Peace with Our Heritage with Lyla June <u>Assignment Due: Journal Reflection on “la querencia” & Lyla June & Ancestral Research</u>
Week 4 February 5th	Human Ecology (Chloe Kirk)	- Community dialogue - creating an “anchor” - Human Ecology research exchange	<u>Notecard on 1 of the 3 resources below:</u> Healing Culture Podcast #17: Working With White Fragility, with Dr. A. Breeze Harper Healing Culture Podcast #19: Confronting White Fragility with Dr. Robin DiAngelo

			<p>Meadows, D. (2001). Dancing With Systems. <i>The Whole Earth Review</i>.</p> <p><u>1st Journal Collection</u></p>
<p>Week 5 February 12th</p>	<p>Writing & Storytelling</p> <p>(Molly Perry)</p>	<p>- <i>Guest Pollinator: Marie Vea-Fagnant</i></p>	<p><u>Notecard</u>: “Becoming Indigenous to Place” from <i>Braiding Sweetgrass</i> by Robin Wall Kimmerer</p> <p><u>Notecard</u>: “From a Native Daughter” by Huanani-Kay Trask, from <i>The American Indian and the Problem of History</i></p>
<p>Week 6 February 19th</p>	<p>Place-based Education</p> <p>(Zowie Caouette & Liv Stafford)</p>	<p>- write & share activity - peer editing activity - <i>Guest Pollinators: Katherine Elmer (Herbalism, Place & Tea), Betsy McGavisk (Local Politics)</i></p>	<p><u>Due</u>: expanded creative writing assignment with SOP and storytelling & 3 pts of support/ 3 pts of critique towards place-based education</p>
<p>Week 7 February 26th</p>	<p>Bioregionalism</p> <p>(Sarah Boatner)</p>	<p>- NoNames for Justice Rally 4.0 (2PM in Waterman)</p>	<p><u>Notecard</u>: Barnhill, D. L. (2003). <i>Introduction to Bioregionalism</i>.</p> <p>“Living by Life: Bioregional Theory & Practice” - Jim Dodge</p> <p><u>Assigned</u>: Journal reflection on Rally 4.0, including ‘assigned’ POVs and actual POVs</p>
<p>Week 8 March 5th</p>	<p>TOWN</p>	<p>MEETING (explain feedback form and take-home)</p>	<p>DAY (voting & class potluck)</p>
<p>Week 9 March 12th</p>	<p>SPRING</p>	<p>RECESS</p>	<p>!!!</p> <p><u>Mid-semester feedback</u> (required Google form)</p>
<p>Week 10 March 19th</p>	<p>Land-based Spirituality & Cultural Appropriation</p> <p>(Elise Schumacher)</p>	<p>- mapping activity</p>	<p><u>Due</u>: Take-Home Practice Project</p>
<p>Week 11 March 26th</p>	<p>Food & Farming Part 1</p> <p>(Sophie Berg)</p>	<p>- <i>Guest Pollinator: Katherine Elmer @ the Apothecary</i> - Herbalism & SOP</p>	<p><u>Notecard on 1 of these 3 podcasts</u>: <i>Healing Culture Podcast #9: Guido Mase</i> <i>Healing Culture Podcast #13: Katherine Elmer</i> <i>Thrive with Morella: Tapping into the Wisdom of Plants with Katherine Elmer</i></p>

			<p><u>Notecard:</u> Saad, Layla F “I need to talk to white spiritual women about white supremacy (part 2) & Notecard</p>
<p>Week 12 April 2nd</p>	<p>Food & Farming Part 2 (Nadia Kamel & Annika Ruben)</p>	<p>- <i>Guest Pollinator: Corie Pierce</i> - Field Study @ Bread & Butter Farm</p>	<p><u>Due: Annotated Bibliography & 2nd Journal Collection</u></p> <p><u>Notecard:</u> <i>Educational innovations in agroecology: learning-centered open-ended cases</i> Ferguson, R. (2019).</p> <p>Additional Readings: “Why We Can’t Separate Justice and Sustainability in the Food System.” <i>Union of Concerned Scientists</i>. Haspel, T. (2017). “Why small, local, organic farms aren’t the key to fixing our food system.” <i>The Washington Post</i>.</p>
<p>Week 13 April 9th</p>	<p>Activism (Sharon Webster)</p>	<p>- <i>Guest Pollinator: Ren Weiner</i></p>	<p><u>Read:</u> “Your cotton tote is pretty much the worst replacement for a plastic bag” https://qz.com/1585027/when-it-comes-to-climate-change-cotton-totes-might-be-worse-than-plastic/?fbclid=IwAR2FHZHojsmGLFECeRggVRnxGobQ0npWOKY4IFh7I-UjLn2mjywOznstHGo <u>Listen:</u> TedTalk “Doughnut Economics” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BHOflzxPjI <u>Reflect:</u> on the ideas from our past few weeks (cross-pollinations from Katherine & Corie): ~ knit together some of our pedagogical threads and themes (social justice, sense of place, food and farming in the Anthropocene) ~ what surfaces for you? ~ looking to our 2nd course objective, to “use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift,” how do you see your sense of place impacting your global awareness and your personal agency?</p>
<p>Week 14 April 16th</p>	<p>Art (Fiona McCarthy & Alexis Martinez)</p>	<p>- <i>Guest Pollinator: Susan Teare - Land Art in Essex</i> - Final Expression Introduction</p>	<p><u>Due: 2nd Turn-In of Annotated Bibliography</u></p> <p><u>Please Watch in order (from Susan):</u> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mv7Vp3NPKw4 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STW0eZDsKVg https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5f6KowAYxPQ&t=5s https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVGAxMo-kiw&t=4s</p>

Week 15 April 23rd	Self-discovery & research (Ciara Fagan)	- video “Rise: From One Island to Another” - End of semester feedback - Culmination & Reflection Dialogue	<u>Due: Final Expression Explanation</u>
Week 16 April 30th	Community Potluck & “Final Expression” Sharing	- celebratory last class !	<u>Due: Final Expression</u>

Continued Resource List

Articles:

Kingsworth, P. (n.d.) Axis and the sycamore. *Orion Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://orionmagazine.org/article/the-axis-and-the-sycamore/>

Smith, M. (n.d.) By land made kin. *Emergence Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://emergencemagazine.org/story/by-land-made-kin/>

Books:

A. Smith & S. O’Connor. (2018): *Hearth: A global conversation on community, identity and place*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions

Dunbar-Ortiz, R. (2015). *An indigenous people’s history of the United States*. Boston: Beacon Press

Kimmerer, R. W. (2013): *Braiding sweetgrass*. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions

Essays:

Meadows, D. (1994), Envisioning a sustainable world *Academy for Systems Change*. Retrieved from <http://donellameadows.org/archives/envisioning-a-sustainable-world/>

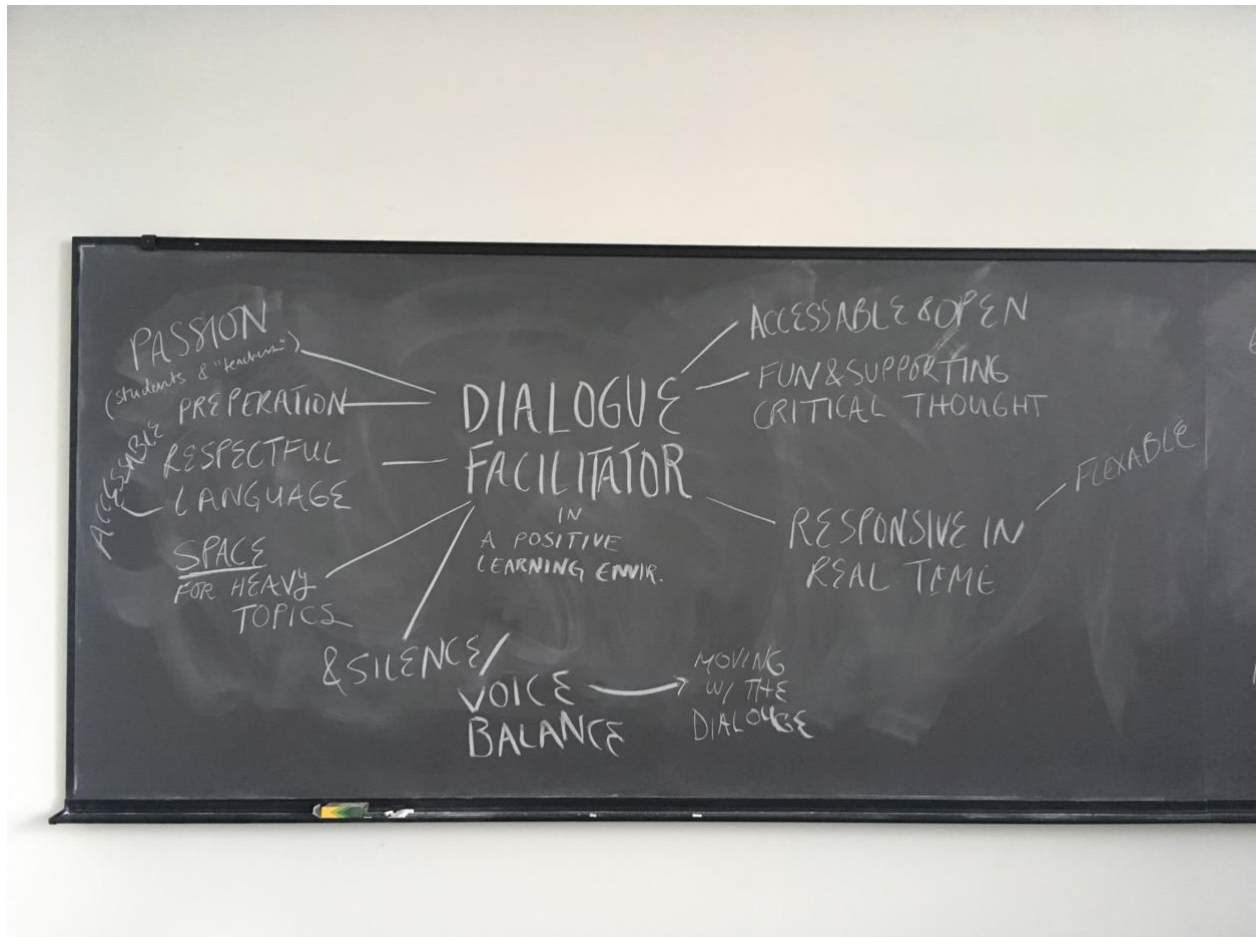
Other authors & sources:

Native Authors: Winona Laduke, Rosanna Deerchild (*Calling Down the Sky*)

Magazine/website: Emergence <https://emergencemagazine.org/>

- Authors: Martin Shaw, David Abram
- Project: Zuni Mapping Project
- Leath Tonino (young voice from VT)

Appendix E: Dialogue Facilitator Guidelines



Appendix F: Course Description (for advertising)

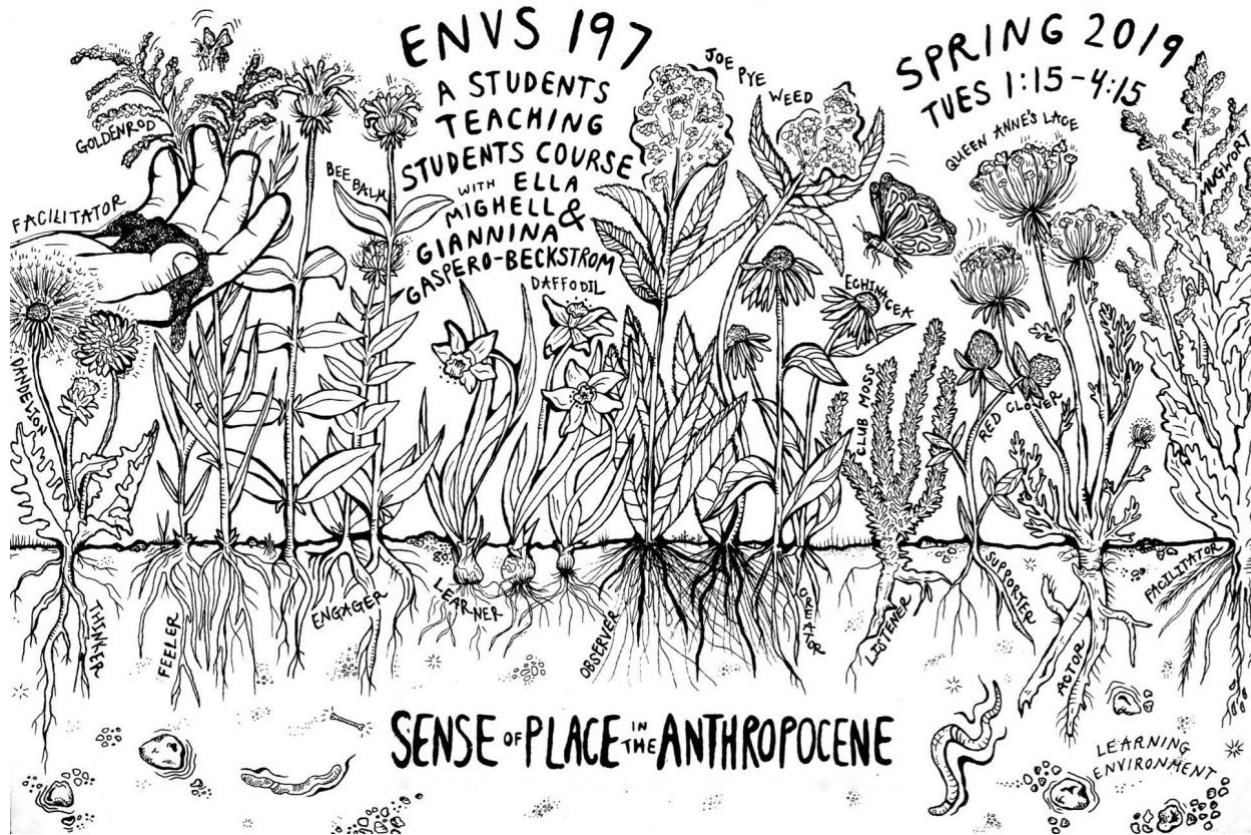
ENVS 197: Students Teaching Students
Sense of Place in the Anthropocene
Spring 2019 ~ Tuesdays 1:15-4:15

Facilitators: Ella Mighell & Giannina Gaspero-Beckstrom

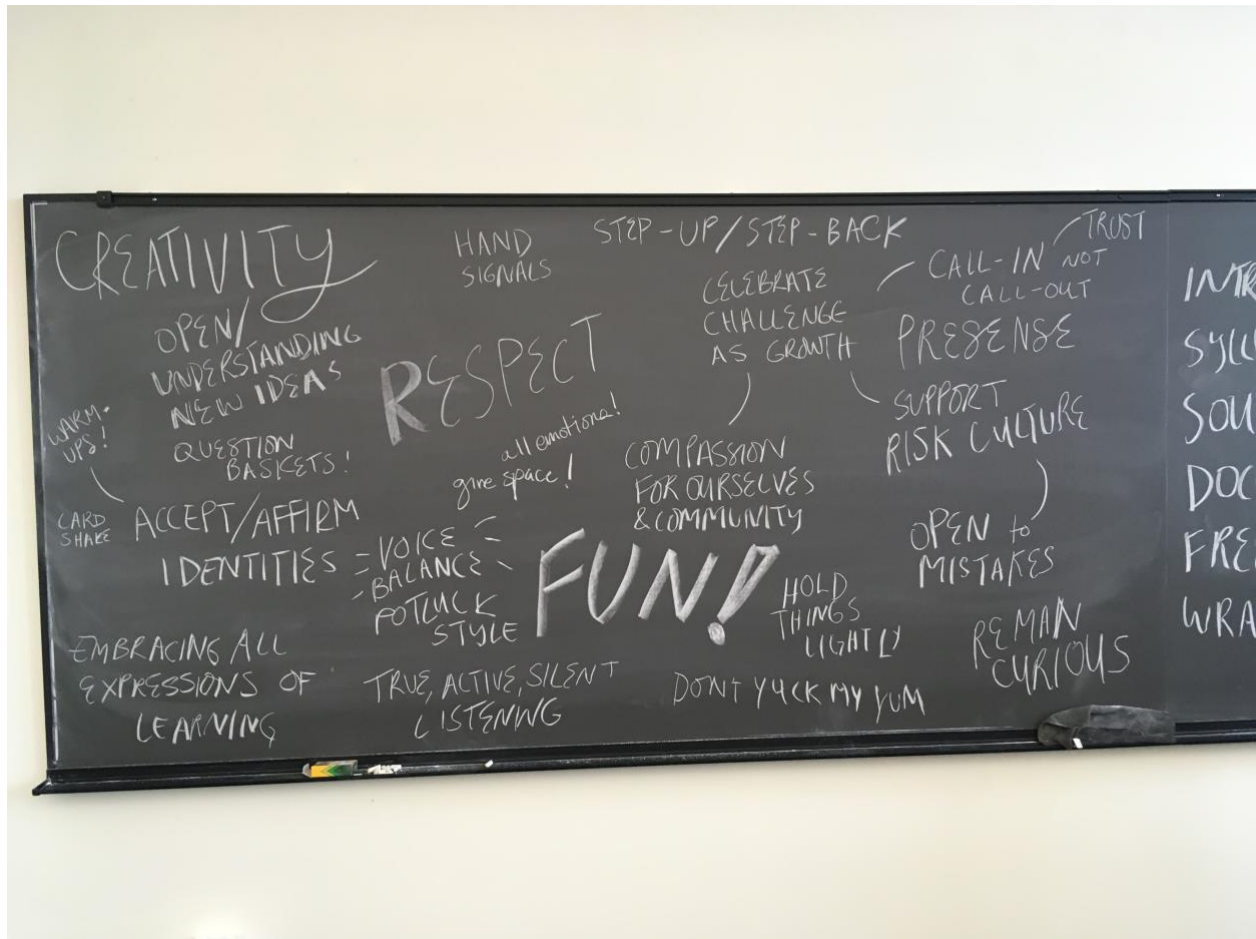
Contact: emighell@uvm.edu, ggaspero@uvm.edu

ENVS 197: Sense of Place in the Anthropocene is a students-teaching-students course facilitated by Giannina Gaspero-Beckstrom (ENVS '19) and Ella Mighell (ENVS/CDAE '19). This course will cultivate a sense of place that encourages environmental stewardship, support action-oriented community engagement and inspire critical consciousness. This peer-to-peer learning environment will be both academically and personally rigorous, centering social justice, experiential learning and meaningful dialogue for awareness and action. Through community dialogue, creative expression, field visits and guest speakers, students will explore themes of writing and storytelling, human ecology, bioregionalism, food and farming, land-based spirituality, activism and art. This course is about how we move forward and engage with the world as thought-provokers while holding compassion and intention and remaining rooted in place.

Appendix G: Course Garden Drawing



Appendix H: Community Mxnifesto



Appendix I: Weekly Blackboard Announcements

January 13, 2019

Hello everyone !

Giannina and Ella here. We are so excited to meet all of you on Tuesday! Please bring a bowl & spoon; we're planning on making a vegan/gf soup ~ but if you have any other dietary restrictions let us know through email. Please also bring a journal that will specifically be used for this course (exploration, reflection & creative expression!).

See you all Tuesday 1:15 pm in Cohen 201!

January 22, 2019

Hi hi hi hi

Rumination (noun): a deep or considerate thought about something OR the action of chewing cud (moo)

Rumination (your assignment for next week): Read Barry Lopez's *The Rediscovery of North America* and listen to Eric Garza's HCP #2: Making peace with our heritage with Lyla June. Both can be found in Course Materials > Week 2. Please complete a note card **just** for Lopez's reading. In addition, reflect in your journal on the following prompt: What connections do you see between *La Querencia* and what Lyla June has to say?

We've uploaded the powerpoint from today, also found in Course Materials > Week 2. I added a paragraph on what critical pedagogy is, taken straight from our lit review, to add to what we introduced in class.

Food bringers next week are Ariane and Sophie! Ariane, you are also the dialogue facilitator. You can find the dialogue facilitator schedule and our facilitator guidelines under Course Materials.

ALSO here's our COLLABORATIVE SPOTIFY PLAYLIST LINK:

<https://open.spotify.com/user/gianninagb/playlist/1KXtfb8y19Rh7XvKjOsILZ?si=1zxQdghTSuyh7TjKpS0FFw>

add songs to your heart's content!

We're going to make an effort to move our bodies more next class. :) Maybe a field trip to the greenhouse? a snowball fight? just stretchin in the classroom? we shall see!!!! bring ideas!

That's all for now !!! See you next week ~ don't forget that there's free coffee all week from 10-2 in the Davis Center ;)

<3 Gi and Ella

January 29, 2019

Hello helo

Thanks for making the Slade living room so cozy with your warmth today!

Rumination for next week: Choose 1 of the following pieces to listen to/read/delve into:

- Healing Culture Podcast # 17: Working With White Fragility, with Dr. A. Breeze Harper
- Healing Culture Podcast # 19: Confronting White Fragility with Dr. Robin DiAngelo
- Dr. Donella Meadows' Dancing With Systems reading

Please use the notecard as a guide to take notes on whichever you choose. Chloe, as dialogue facilitator, you can focus your questions/activity on just one of them, but hopefully we can intertwine everyone's into our group dialogue! And of course you can delve into more than one of these if you want, but it's not required :)

ALSO, do some research about your ancestry! In the spirit of decolonizing the educational paradigm that narrowly defines research, feel free to glean knowledge and wisdom and insight about your ancestors in any which way feels most productive and engaging to you. Use the internet! Use your intuition! Use an alter! Use the phone to call your relatives and ask questions! Ask your dreams to guide you toward answers! So excited to see what folks find and how they found it. Ariane can you post the podcast link to our facebook group so folks can reference that if they would like to?

*We're collecting journals next week. These will be graded, but know that all we are looking for is intentionality and effort in your reflection and processing.

*Syllabus updates: Marie Veia-Fagnant is joining us on 2/12! We're attending Rally 4.0 at Waterman on 2/26! We're going to Bread and Butter Farm on 4/2!

Next week's food bringers are Elise and Ciara.

Next week's facilitator is Chloe ~ don't forget to post your questions in the discussion board by Monday!

See you sooooooon! <3

~Giannina and Ella

February 4, 2019

Dearest fellow explorers of brainspace, and adventurers into the wisdom of other parts of the body:

Captain Bb speaking. Happy Monday! As we descend into Tuesday, please be reminded that:

- we are collecting JOURNALS tomorrow! We have provided a guide in Course Materials so you can see what we're checking for, because this is graded.
- Bring a BOWL and SPOON ! Elise and Ciara are bringing food!!
- Make sure you handed in your envisioning letter !!!
- Please have read/listened to at least one of the pieces assigned last week. :) Chloe will be facilitating for the first part of class.
- We will be doing some in-class research in the second part of class, so consider bringing a laptop as well.

Ok that is all. See you tomorrow!

<3 Gi & Ella

February 6, 2019

Hi !!! Sorry this is a bit delayed.

Ruminations this week: Read *Becoming Indigenous to Place* from Braiding Sweetgrass and *From a Native Daughter* and complete a notecard for both. Since we have your journals, you can write it on the hard copies we handed out in class. ! I don't have an electronic version of the Braiding Sweetgrass reading so it's not on blackboard but if you need access to it again, please text/email and we'll get you another hard copy :)

Marie Veia-Fagnant is joining us next week! She's the assistant dean for student services in Rubenstein, and she's working on a dissertation called *Sense of Place and Ways of Knowing: The Landscape of Experience for People of Color*. She has asked that you all "bring an image (from anywhere) that reflects their sense of place (infinitely defined) and relationship to Land (again whatever that means personally). We will share these in class as a jump off point for dialogue."

So bring that too!

And bring a bowl and a spoon!

Next week's facilitator is Molly, and food-bringers are Nadia and Alexis.

STAY SAFE OUT THERE IT'S REAL ICY

<3 <3 <3

Gi & Ella

February 12, 2019

HAPPY SNOWFALL !!

Thanks for class today, lovely humans. The energy felt a bit heavy, just like the snow-stuffed clouds above us might have felt before they let loose those beautiful snowflakes I see outside the window right now. I hope there are snowflakes of thought floating through your body and settling down in a blanket of knowingness deep in your being!

Ruminations this week: Do your own research to familiarize yourself with place-based education (PBE). Take notes! In your journal: outline 3 aspects of PBE that move us forward toward a more sustainable and just Anthropocene (3 positive points), then outline 3 drawbacks or places for improvement (3 points of critique). If you're feeling stuck, take a look at the literature surrounding "critical pedagogy of place," "common worlds pedagogy," and "land-based education" for the points of critique. Please cite your sources as well.

Also, write a story! Type this out and please bring a printed copy to class for our peer-editing exercise. Guidelines for stories: After asking so many questions in this class, let this be an opportunity to anchor down in something you know. And in the spirit of decolonizing education, consider your stories a valuable source of knowledge and information (bodily, emotional, spiritual and intellectual knowledge!) You can write from a family story, a dream, or creatively with your vision. Whether this is nonfiction, fiction, or anything in between, this is a space to support your vision. This is a space to serve you as a full being! As shared by Marie, think about what we are leaving at the "academic door," and try to invite it in with you.

More specific prompt topics, if you need:

- a story about *your* sense of place
- a story about *your* relationship to land
- a story about learning lessons from the land/your place/a place

Next week, Betsy McGavin is joining us for the first lil chunk of class to talk about voting in the upcoming town meeting. At the end of class, Katherine Elmer will come with a tea blend from BTV herbs for us. Bring a mug! We'll try to get a hot water situation going.

Next week's theme is place based education, facilitated by Liv and Zowie.

Next week's food bringer is Sharon! Sharon, since you're the only one signed up, just text me (Gi) if you wanna come to Slade and I can help you cook up something' good :) <3

If you have questions about your journals/our comments, let us know and we can find a time to meet if ya want!

ok! !! enjoy the snow and stay safe out there!

~Gi & Ella

February 19, 2019

Hello!

Please read Intro to Bioregionalism and do a notecard in your journal. We will post another reading on Blackboard tomorrow - please read this and complete a notecard for it as well, as it is relevant to the NoNames for Justice Rally 4.0 at Waterman which we are going to as a class next week. We apologize for not having hard copies ready for you today - if you'd like a hard copy please text Ella and we can meet up and give that to you! Sarah is going to post another reading as well (on our facebook page). Please read, but no note card needed.

Thank you for bringing a piece of yourselves through the story assignment this week. These won't be graded except for completion, so either post it on the discussion board or tuck it in to your journal so we can check it off next time we collect and grade journals.

And thank you for being engaged in our hodge-podge class today, in which we went from local politics to education to anderson .paak to herbalism ... hopefully it all connected to sense of place for you somehow, but we're also thinking that next week's theme on bioregionalism will illustrate the common thread between all this :) what is anderson .paak's bioregion???? answer: my heart

Next week's facilitator is Sarah!

Next week's food bringers are Fiona and Nadia! Keep in mind that we'll only be in the classroom until a little before 2, then we're walking to Waterman.

Also, if anybody knows or finds out more information on the Rally, please share! It's important to know what you're showing up for.

ENJOY THIS SUNSHINE!!! you deserve it on your cheeks ! see you next week <3

<3 <3 <3 Gi & Ella

February 24, 2019

Hello friends!

Attached below is the article "Living by Life: Bioregional Theory and Practice" by Jim Dodge forwarded by this week's facilitator, Sarah. Read before class~ no notecard is needed due to the late notice, but please be ready to refer to. I also posted a few local newspaper articles in relation to UVM student activism and racial justice/history on the FB page~ let's show up as informed students/activists to Rally 4.0!

Clarifier: a notecard is due for the "Intro to Bioregionalism" article that was handed out in class.

Thanks y'all!

Ella

[Dofge - Bioregionalism .pdf](#)

February 26, 2019

Heya!

Super glad we went to the rally today ~ thanks, everyone, for being flexible with our class time. And thank you Sarah for your facilitation in the short time we had!

Here's the assignment for the week:

- The journal assignment for this week is a reflection from Rally 4.0 and bioregionalism. Below is the number with the point of view (POV) pairing.
 1. As the incoming president
 2. Full tuition, out-of-state paying parent

3. Student organizer / self-identified activist
4. A student who “doesn’t see race” / believes we are in a post-racial society

For the assignment please first address the reflections/takeaways from your assigned POV. Then reflect from your personal POV. We go to a school with ~10,000 undergraduate students, why were there not more students at the rally (in general and compared to last year)? In your reflection consider race, consider your identity(s). Again, we would like to say that we went to the rally with this class and community in support, not just as observers, or showing up for an opportunistic learning activity.

- How do you see all of this tied to bioregionalism? Do you?
- How can we give power to the practices of bioregionalism? What practices do you follow?

No formal class on Tuesday, March 5th for Town Meeting Day & City Council Elections! BUT! In *fun* and *casual* and *home-y* fashion, we are gonna host a brunchy/lunchy potluck at Ella’s house. Please [vote on the poll on our facebook page](#) to decide what time!!! ! ! ! !

We’ll also have more information about the take-home practice project to give you all then, so that you have all of Spring Break to complete it and hand it in on Tuesday, March 19th. For now, there’s a bit of info on that in the syllabus. Ella shared the working syllabus on google docs with everyone, too!

This week, next week, and nextnext week is a bit of a lull in terms of class time so please use the extra space as you need. Perhaps it’s a chance to get ahead/on top of assignments (we’ll provide more info and materials so it’s possible to get ahead), or a chance to process what we’ve learned, or both!

Ella and I are sitting in Muddy's right now, and we just found a note in the wall that said "preventing racist violence is more important than maintaining social peace".... just ruminating on the work that's yet to be done in this place of ours. <3

OKAY STAY WARM OUT THERE !!!

~Gi and Ella

March 10, 2019

hi hello hey hoopdydoopdy hoolahoopin hey

Hope y'all have had a sweet start to your spring break :) Thanks for a nice potluck last week! To those of you who didn't make it, we went over a big assignment that is due the first day of class after break (3/19).

As stated in our syllabus: *There will be one take home practice project in the middle of the semester, due the week we return from Spring Recess. This will be a chance for co-learners to synthesize readings, class discussion and self reflection in a written or creative form. This could take the form of attending a city council meeting, cooking dinner with a neighborly stranger, interviewing a community member or writing a letter to your family. The actual practice will be paired with a short essay (1-2 page paper) explaining how the co-learners came to decide what their individual practice project is. This is a space for mid-way reflection, processing and action.*

Answer these questions in your essay:

- What was your practice project?
- What was your thought process in choosing this practice?
- What did you learn from it?

Please connect it back to our class material (sense of place//any of the topics i.e. bioregionalism, storytelling etc...//critical pedagogy//contemplative pedagogy//anything you've been pondering this semester !)

For example, here's what Ella and I are doing our practice projects on: Ella is finishing the book *White Fragility* and writing a letter to her parents about the concept. I don't totally know what I'm going to do yet, but I want to explore language as an environment (something I started thinking/reading about during our Human Ecology class).

You will hand in the essay for grading, and if it's applicable, a tangible manifestation your practice project (i.e. an art piece, a letter, etc.).

Please please pleeeeee reach out (text/call/email/facebook/insta-dm/u-name-it) to us if you have any questions or are hoping for some more guidance. Again, this is a space for mid-way reflection, processing and action!!! Your education is what you make it. Also note that this project is worth 10% of your final grade!

These past few weeks have been a bit of a lull in our class, and we hope that the extra space has been helpful for you as thinkers and feelers attending school in a dreary wintery timespace (for now!), without losing steam or interest. <3 We're really excited to see what sprouts from all our beautiful brains.

Happy break!

With love,

Giannina and Ella

March 17, 2019

Hi everyone !

Hope your spring breaks have been sweet n good n invigorating ~ we've got less than half a semester to go! :-o

Reminder that your take-home practice projects are due this Tuesday 3/19 in class! Ella and I have outlined some specific expectations and grade breakdowns, which you can find in Course Materials > Grading / Expectations > Practice Project Expectations.

This week in class we will be exploring the theme of Land-based Spirituality. We didn't prepare any readings to complete beforehand, but come to class ready to do some free-writing and whatever our facilitator Elise has in mind!

Elise is also our food person this week! thanks Elise hehe and let us know if you need help with that :)

OKAYYYYY see you all very soon! reach out with any questions concerns poems recipes etc. <3

~Gi & Ella

March 19, 2019

Hello lovely sunny people!

Thanks for an engaging and dynamic class today. I'm so happy about the amount of sunshine my cheeks absorbed :-)
Also, about the amount of inspiration I absorb by being around all of you! Ella's words of appreciation today at the fountain were eloquent and lovely and I must say that I second everything she said.

For next week:

- Listen to and complete a notecard on one of the 3 podcasts that Katherine Elmer provided. 2 are from the Healing Culture Podcast, and one is from "Thrive with Morella" on her facebook page. Links are in Course Materials > Week 10.
- Read and complete a notecard on the 2nd part of Layla F. Saad's letter: I need to talk to white spiritual women about white supremacy. Links to both part 1 and 2 are also in the Week 10 folder.
- If you haven't handed in a physical copy of your practice project essay, please email it to us by tonight or else it will be late (unless we talked with you having about extra time) !

And here's just a bit about the upcoming Annotated Bibliography assignment ~ an expanded version of what's in our syllabus:

The Annotated Bibliography is an opportunity for co-learners to read, research and write about one theme/idea that is connected to sense of place. It could be a theme that was brought up in class, or something that you've found on your

own. The assignment will allow co-learners to explore sense of place, social justice and alternative pedagogy in a landscape of their choosing and support transference to wherever the student feels most “at home.” This can be a self-driven way to express childlike curiosity! The envisionment is at least 6 sources, with a solid paragraph under each. In the writing you should glean main ideas from the pieces and connect them to your own thoughts. Please be intentional with quote usage and correct APA citation.

Reach out with any questions!!!

We're going to the Apothecary next week to meet with Katherine. Ella will drive her car so the folks who are on a time constraint will have a ride back to campus afterward :-). Let us all meet at the Bittersweet as close to 1 as possible so the rest of us can walk down together!! If it's bad weather, I'll drive my car too and we can squeeze in. <3

In finding honor in the final day of wintertime and finding hope in the coming springtime.... pass on our love onto you all :)

Warmly,

Ella & Gi

March 26, 2019

Hope you enjoy the rest of this sunny Tuesday!!

For next week:

Read and complete a notecard on the *Educational innovations in agroecology: learning-centered open-ended cases* article. There is a link on Blackboard if you lose your copy.

Hand in your annotated bibliography ~ hard copy at beginning of class period (4/2)

- (see last week's email or google doc syllabus for blurb/expectations)

We'll be meeting at Bittersweet as close to 1 as possible!!! We're driving to Bread and Butter Farm in Shelburne! We need one more person to drive but we'll post on facebook about that. We will also post two links on the page that we highly recommend reading, but don't want to overwhelm ya'll with.

We're going to collect journals next week (4/2) and we will post an expectations/guidelines document that consolidates all required notecards and prompts week by week. This will be posted in the next couple of days, but can also be seen in previous announcements.

- Nadia & Annika ! Start brainstorming for facilitation next week. We'll be in contact over the weekend.

Thank you all for joining in at the Apothecary today. It is such a beautiful space filled with magic and science. What Katherine was saying about herbalism as a tool for cultivating sense of place really resonated with me, and how we talked about how spirituality can hold a similar power.

The interconnections are happening!

~Ella & Gi

April 4, 2019

Hi all,

Thanks for a lovely day at Bread and Butter Farm! We're buzzing with the beauty of place-based conversation about farming (sitting in a greenhouse, listening to a farmer talk about her journey), of engaging in reciprocity (that first greenhouse got cleaned up real fast with our 32 hands on deck), of getting out of the classroom and into the fresh air. Also a new and deep appreciation for yellow spinach~~~

Next week's facilitator is Sharon ~ theme is ACTIVISM! with guest pollinator Ren Weiner of Miss Weinerz (donuts and other delicious baked goods- tuesday is not a delivery day so she will not have her goods :(but we highly recommend supporting her when available - sundays/wednesdays all around town ~ they are quick to sell out :)).

Ruminations for the week!

- Read this article Your cotton tote is pretty much the worst replacement for a plastic bag: <https://qz.com/1585027/when-it-comes-to-climate-change-cotton-totes-might-be-worse-than-plastic/?fbclid=IwAR2FHZHojsmGLFECeRggVRnxGobQ0npWOKY4lFh7I-UjLn2mjiywOznstHGo>
- Listen to this TedTalk about "Doughnut Economics": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BHOflzxPjI>
- Reflect on the ideas from our past few weeks (cross-pollinations from Katherine & Corie): knit together some of our pedagogical threads and themes (social justice, sense of place, food and farming in the Anthropocene)
 - what surfaces for you?
 - looking to our 2nd course objective, to "use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift," how do you see your sense of place impacting your global awareness and your personal agency?
 - (Write/type/draw/video-record/audio-record/paint/dance out your answers to be either pasted into your journals when you get them back, or sent to us via the worldwideweb!)

No notecards this week! But the above reflection will be a part of the final journal collection grade.

Also just a heads up: we'll be talking about the final reflection next week, but do feel free to look at the syllabus to get your juices flowin!!!

Our apologies for the belated post-class announcement.

<3 Hope this finds you well on this sunny Thursday!!!

~Ella and Gi

April 7, 2019

Hiya!

There's been a variety in the quality of the annotated bibliographies! In our minds, and from feedback we have received, a good annotated bibliography elucidates how different sources feed a central idea or theme, either in support or in critique of it. It should be the foundation of a well-researched understanding of a topic. It is crucial that you either have a claim that can act as a guiding question, or a solid and consistent "footing" relating back to your topic in each source annotation. Find threads! Go more deeply than a simple summarization. Provide your insight, perspective, questions, and connections.

Here are some bulleted points of feedback:

- Organize sources in alphabetical order
- Check grammar/spelling
- Don't cite a book unless you read the whole book
 - You can cite the article that summarizes the book, or the specific chapter
- Annotations should be more than just summarizations!!!
 - Show connections! what are some points of agreement between sources? points of disagreement?
 - What relevance does this have to your claim?
 - What new dynamic does it introduce?
 - How does your source help you pursue a deeper understanding of your topic?
 - What do you think about it?
- You can give yourself a guiding question(s) to help you delve deeper than just a topic
 - make sure to answer the guiding questions in each annotation

We apologize if these expectations were not fully fleshed out in the Expectations document that is on Blackboard. We will be returning the annotated bibliographies on Tuesday, and highly support people working on it a little bit more and turning it back in on April 16th for potential full credit. If you choose to do this, please resubmit your Annotated Bib in print, attached to your first copy.

Being able to write a comprehensive annotated bibliography will be a helpful tool in future classes! It is our goal to support you all to be able to write a good solid super awesome annotated bib and to crush your future research assignments <3<3

Ella & Gi

April 9, 2019

HIHI everyone ~ thanks so much for stickin around and staying engaged during Ren's guest pollination today. So much information and inspiration ! We acknowledge that it was a lot of sitting time, and thank you for going with it. SO grateful to have a human like Ren come to our class and show us a little bit about how she "humans" :)

NEXT WEEK we are going to Essex to be with Susan Teare in her outdoor exhibit. Theme is art! Facilitators are Fiona and Alexis! We'll be outside, wandering and looking, then gathering and reflecting, mud stompin' and listenin' to the landscape and Susan.

For next class:

- Mud boots! Warm layers! We will be outside
- Are people ok with Kayhl Cooper filming? He and Susan are collaborating on a documentary about her exhibit and would like to get some shots when we are there. Please reach out to us if you would be uncomfortable with this. (this is his pretty cool website <http://www.kayhlcooper.com/>)
- **!!We need one other driver!!**
- watch all of the videos below in the order

REMINDER that we are all invited to a free screening of a new documentary about land-based artist Andy Goldsworthy **tomorrow (Wed, 4/10) at 6:30 at the Contois Auditorium (inside Burlington City Hall on Church Street)**. Please make an effort to come along and meet Susan (next week's guest pollinator/artist behind the land art we will be spending time in) and see a cool doc that'll get the juices flowin about place-based art! **Also American Flatbread hor devours at 6pm! We will be there :))**

ASSIGNMENTS: WATCH IN ORDER! This seems like a lot, but really it's just 4 videos to watch. These are annotations from Susan. :~)

"I hope these are all in the right order! People should watch Susan Kozel first, then the Land Art video, then Juhani Pallasmaa and lastly, the muppets. It will make better sense to watch them in this order.

I think Susan Kozel does a great job describing phenomenology and how it pertains to the body, senses, elements and movement. I felt it was very much in line with the emotive and embodied experience I have looked for in my site installation. The video is less than 30 minutes so I think everyone will be able to sit through it (!) and hopefully get something out of it.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=mv7Vp3NPKw4

Then, this next video that I have sent before on land art is really the best description I have seen and heard, without going too far into different types of land art. I think it gives a good base for what you will want to discuss around the work I have done at the site.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=STW0eZDsKVg

Next, I had to squeeze in a very short video with Juhani Pallasmaa! I mentioned him to you at our meeting and I have watched his videos over and over for the past 18 or so months. I realized that the emphasis on architecture may be too strong for what you are studying. I love this 4 minute video because he talks about how important art is in the world. He is my hero and I would love for everyone to experience his wisdom. He's 82 and he may not be on this

planet for too much longer. Also, some of his more recent lectures are still really great, but his speech is slowing down. My husband cannot stand being in the room when I am listening and watching the videos! Lol

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5f6KowAYxPQ&t=5s>

And last of all, the muppet video:) I will be showing it at school for my presentation. My professor suggested it! It will be a good way to wrap up all of this info because it is tough to understand and discuss. There are different theories on phenomenology and it can be general and abstract or more focused in certain areas. This will be important for everyone to understand.”

www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVGAXMo-kiw&t=4s

Based on our feedback, please feel free to revise your Annotated Bibliography for potential full credit. This will be due on the 16th. Please email, text, call us if you have any questions or wanna meet up (more suggestions/feedback on previous BB announcement).

ella & gi

April 14, 2019

Hello ! hope everyone has been enjoying the warm weekend :))

We totally spaced and realized that we had your journals on week 4 when the 2 notecards ("Becoming Indigenous to Place" and "From a Native Daughter") were assigned. To receive the credit for these notecards in the 2nd journal collection total, please just email us a picture of them.

See ya at 1pm on Tuesday @ Bittersweet <3<3<3 & hope you are enjoying the videos from Susan !

Ella & Gi

April 16, 2019

Hello dear sweet humans, hope you're enjoying smelling like a campfire :-) What a lovely class! (.... i think i still don't know what phenomenology is and that is ok)

We only have 2 classes left! Next week is themed “self discovery” with Ciara as facilitator. The following week (4/30) will be a celebration of ourselves, our community, our work - namely, our final expressions - over a potluck. With that in mind, we have exactly 2 weeks to give to our final expressions. We introduced it today in class by the fire and will include everything we said below. This is a big chunk of your grade ~ 20% ~ so please devote some time and energy to this. It's designed to be something that is invigorating and personal, not as something to weigh you down/stress you out !!! Your education is what you make it. <3

The only thing due by next week is a brief email or voice memo expressing your idea of what you'd like to do for the final expression. Please feel free to do this sooner rather than later so you can get started :)

GUIDELINES: THE FINAL EXPRESSION! <3

From syllabus:

The Final Expression is a creative project centralized around sense of place. It is an opportunity for students to explore and dive into a topic that was either covered in class, or was explored outside of the classroom. All of the final expression topics will be pre-proposed to Giannina and Ella in a email/voice memo. Roughly 15 hours will be spent on each project.

Some questions to get you started:

- What has this class process/experience brought you to?
- What are your takeaways of the past 16 weeks with/in this community?
- How are you moving forward? Personally? Emotionally? Locally? Globally?
- How are you participating in the Anthropocene?
- Touching one, if not multiple of our threads
 - Alternative pedagogy
 - Social justice
 - Sense of place
- Our course “outcomes” were to
 - encourage environmental stewardship
 - support action-oriented community engagement
 - inspire critical consciousness.

Were these your personal “outcomes”? What are your outcomes?

- This is the (big) baby of the annotated bibliography & practice project
 - baby got more of the practice project’s genes
- Must be an action of some sort ~ can’t just be a thing in your mind
 - Potential to include/reach out to guest pollinators & community members
 - Remember! Creative expression is knowledge, is knowing, is expression

Some examples we came up with:

- Choreographed dance video
- Organizing community event
- Write a book
- Collection of poetry
- Interviews
- Painting, drawing, sculpture, film
- Dumpster diving
- Expanded personal mxnifesto

Please explain it to us with a brief email or voice memo

You’ve gone through this process! What is something that you want to be able to share and show?

Grading

This final expression will be primarily self-graded. We will provide a rubric, but you get to fill it out. It is worth 20% of your final grade. Your education is what you make of it!

Maple pineapple & walnuts,

Gi & Ella

April 24, 2019

Hi sweet pals, apologies that this is coming a day late! I’m happy to report that my cheeks got a little sunburnt yesterday from our class time outside ~ spring has truly sprung :’)

Also, hearing all your ideas for your Final Expressions yesterday was so invigorating!!! CAN’T WAIT TO SEE / FEEL/ EXPERIENCE ‘EM IN THEIR FINAL FORM

Here’s what we’ve got for ya, from now til Tuesday, our Final Class/Potluck!!!

Please **complete your Final Expression** so that you may have something to share on Tuesday. The extent to which you share is entirely up to you ~ some of you are taking on some beautifully personal projects ~ but do make sure you have something to show for. This Final Expression is, after all, an attempt to come away with this class with a tangible thing crafted by you, your reflections, your actions and passions ! <3

Also, please grade yourself **BEFORE CLASS!!!** We wanna have all your coursework wrapped UP!! The grading rubric is in Course Materials > Grading/Expectations. You can email this to us both anytime before Tuesday.

We realized there are actually no notecards that need grading so **we will not be collecting journals. BUT!!! We will be grading your reflection that was due week 13 (April 9th)**, which we assigned while we had your journals for grading ~ so please either have that in hard copy on Tuesday or send it (to our emails) before then. Here's the prompt again!

- Journal Reflection: on the ideas from our past few weeks (cross-pollinations from Katherine & Corie):
 - knit together some of our pedagogical threads and themes (social justice, sense of place, food and farming in the Anthropocene)
 - what surfaces for you?
 - looking to our 2nd course objective, to “use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift,” how do you see your sense of place impacting your global awareness and your personal agency?

Please **bring along a dish**/snack/jug of juice/pint of ice cream for the potluck. You're welcome to drop it off at Slade earlier in the day/week if that works better for you! And if bringing something is too much of a burden, no problemo ~ please shoot us a text and we can make something extra to make sure there's enough for everyone :)

CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU // NOT THINKING ABOUT HOW IT'S THE LAST CLASS AT ALL // WE'RE FINE // DON'T WORRY
Giarrony & Elbows

Appendix J: Weekly Class Plans

CLASS PLAN WEEK 1

Theme: Introductions & Community Building

1:15-2 Introductions

- Grounding breath: land acknowledgement / acknowledging that acknowledgment isn't sufficient
- G & E first, who we are / why we are doing this
- Name, pronouns, what drew them to the course

2-2:30 Syllabus Activity

- Common threads (SOJ, SOP, AP)
- Week to week themes
- Arc
- This is a collective, we are more than hoping for everyone's influence/opinions/perspectives & shifts

2:30-2:45

- Flow into course structure
- What the weeks will look like

2:45-3:15

- Mingle & eat soup !!
- Food plan ! sign up sheet

3:15-3:45

- Document creation: class norm articulations / agreement / community contract
 - All in a hat activity
- Collectively come up with a better name

3:45-4

- SOP free write: what is your SOP? what constitutes it? what is the role of SOP?
- This is something that we will return to / revisit / see how our perspectives change throughout the semester

4-4:15

- Envisioning letter assignment in journal (creativity encouraged always !)
- Wrap - up

Materials to bring

- Readings: *White Fragility* foreword; Meadows, *Envisioning a Sustainable World*
- Syllabus
- Syllabus activity materials: thread, cards w/ themes on them
- Soup

CLASS PLAN WEEK 2

Theme: Introductions, Alternative Pedagogies, Social Justice

Dancing with Systems read-out-loud / activity

Walk around campus - greenhouse maybe

1:15-1:40 Check-ins

- grounding breath
- Question Box - everybody writes a question! draw from the box for the rest of semester
- choose 1 & pair share (20 minutes) also maybe eat?

1:40-2 Reroup

- Last week free write (YOUR senses of place, what constitutes it, what's its role?) sharing

2-2:30 E & G present

- What is the Anthropocene?
- What is Sense of Place?
- *check in with class about syllabus updates*

2:30-2:45 brain break/stretch body/ eat !

2:45-3 dialogue vs. discussion

- alternative pedagogies

- contemplative practices

3-3:30 facilitator training

- Question framing
- Send us 2-3 questions/ activity or idea before tuesday based on the reading to bring to class - YOU are the main facilitator
- Brief research on authors / give us some context !
- Make a schedule - based on our general arc ~ things may not line up exactly

go to greenhouse for rest of class? (class decides)

3:30-4 talk about the readings!

- Ella & Gi facilitate

Dancing with Systems read out loud activity

- end w snowball fight on waterman green? ???

Materials

- readings: Lopez, *The Rediscovery of North America*

CLASS PLAN WEEK 3

Theme: Community Building, Alternative Pedagogies, SOP, Social Justice

- Dancing with systems
- Go outside !! move around !
- Social justice activity
- Colonization
- Feb 26 Waterman rally

1:15-1:40 Checkin' in

- Grounding breath
- Question hat!
- Elise - 5 min yoga
- read that instagram post

1:40-2:30 Student facilitated dialogue

- Ariane leads

2:30-2:50

- Walk to slade !

2:50-3:15 body mind soul break

- eat food ! drink tea !

Dancing With Systems activity

- read out loud, move around !

3:15-4 <https://soundcloud.com/thequeerwitch/episode-11-ancestral-healing>

- Podcast !
- Journaling & art making

4-4:15 Wrap up

- check in about Feb. 26th rally (Noname for justice! We should be there !)
- Collecting journals **next** week
- update syllabus: Marie Veà Fagnant on 1/12, Bread and Butter on 4/2
- Personal ancestry & the practices they use
- Would you rather read or listen to a podcast
- <http://donellameadows.org/archives/dancing-with-systems/>
- How'd a podcast feel? Easier than reading? How do yall feel about it? The two white fragility ones !
- next week's facilitator: Chloe
- next week food: Ciara and Elise

CLASS PLAN WEEK 4

Theme: Human Ecology

- Go outside !! move around !
- introduce an “anchor”: a personalized (private? or not necessarily vocalized) sense of place that can be continuously revisited in terms of the different themes each week

1:15-1:30 Checkin’ in

- Grounding breath - Black History Month
- Question hat!
- Read general letter ideas/statements

1:30-2:30 Student facilitated dialogue

- Chloe leads
- Organized by what reading - discuss and then share with group (agreements & critiques/challenges)
- Intentionally smaller groups - talking with just one other person, maybe groups of three

2:30-2:50

- brain body soul break
- Gi does a headstand
- eat food ! drink tea !

2:50-3:20

- Human Ecology Research thing !
- Stretch break !

3:20-4

- Creative presentations

4-4:15 Wrap up

- collect journals
- check in about binders/folders
- Marie Ve Fagnant on 1/12, Next week !!
- Rumination: Read *Becoming Indigenous To Place & From a Native Daughter* - notecard on separate paper!
- next week’s facilitator: Molly
- next week food: Nadia and Alexis

CLASS PLAN WEEK 5

Theme: Writing & Storytelling

- Peer editing !
- reintroduce anchor
- Check-in w/ sarah

1:15-1:30 Checkin’ in

- Grounding breath
- Question hat!

1:30-2:30

- Marie time !
 - Dialogue w/ picture
 - Some sort of writing prompt

2:30-2:50

- brain body soul break
- eat food ! drink tea !

2:50-3:20

- Student facilitated dialogue: Molly leads!
 - video

3:20-4

- Peer-editing?
- Reintroduce anchor
- Brainstorming?

4-4:15 Wrap up

- Pass back journals !
- next week’s facilitator: Zowie & Liv
- next week food:

- Place-based education - Centennial woods walk around ? waterfront ?
- Ruminations this week: no readings assigned!
- ~reflection upon anchor? Nonfiction-fiction-anything in between! (circular ! yes ! also try to have a storyline ! a rock ! an anchor !)
- There are endless questions and systems and interconnections ! share with us something you.

CLASS PLAN WEEK 6

Theme: Place-based Education (Zowie & Liv)

- place-based ed: local vs. global, staying responsible to both
 - 1:15 Betsy
 - Check-in with sarah about next week (bioregionalism)
- 1:15-1:30 Checkin' in
- Grounding breath
 - Question hat!
- 1:30-1:45
- Betsy talks POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT
- 1:45-2:30
- Student facilitation: Zowie & Liv
- 2:30-2:50
- brain body soul break
 - eat food !
 - dAnce bby
- 2:50-3:30
- peer editing exercise
- 3:30-3:45
- next week's facilitator: Sarah
 - next week food: Fiona & Nadia
 - Bioregionalism/topophilia & rally next week!!
- 3:45-4:15
- Katherine Elmer comes to class with tea!

CLASS PLAN WEEK 7

Theme: Bioregionalism (Sarah)

- 2PM: NoNames for Justice Rally 2.0 at Waterman
 - history of activism at UVM / critical pedagogy w/in the University
- 1:15-1:20 Checkin' in
- Grounding breath
 - No question hat !
- 1:20-1:50
- Student facilitation: Sarah
- 1:50
- walk to Waterman for Rally 2.0
- POV
- As the incoming president
 - Full tuition paying parent
 - Student organizer / self-identified activist
 - A student who "doesn't see race" / believes we are in a post-racial society

CLASS PLAN WEEK 8 - TOWN HALL MEETING DAY POTLUCK

CLASS PLAN WEEK 9 - SPRING BREAK

CLASS PLAN WEEK 10

Theme: Land-based Spirituality and Cultural Appropriation (Elise)

- Bring tea !

- Collect Personal Practice Essay
- Explain bibliography project
- *MAKE TIME FOR FEEDBACK FORM*

1:15-1:20 Checkin' in

- Grounding breath (g)
- Question hat ! (e)

1:20-2:20

- Student facilitation: Elise
- transition with journal reflection (g)
 - How can we engage in land-based spirituality without appropriating indigenous cultures?
 - How does sense of place inform your spirituality (current, or how you were raised)?

2:20-2:40 body brain soul break!

2:45-3:00 optional share-out about personal practice project (e&g)

3-4 Class activity

- read out loud: *I need to talk to spiritual white women about white supremacy* by Layla F. Saad [Part 1](#) & [Part 2](#)
- spread out, get cozy, doodle while listening <3
- 4-4:15 Wrap Up
- Next week: Apothecary field visit / talk with Katherine
- listen to one of these podcasts & **complete notecard**
 - [Healing Culture Podcast #13](#): Plant Medicine and Place-Based Healing, with Katherine Elmer
 - [Healing Culture Podcast #9](#): Better Living Through Phytochemistry, with Guido Masé
 - [Thrive with Morella live video-podcast with Katherine Elmer](#) (this format is a live video on facebook, so scroll her 'posts' page until you find the one with Katherine!)
- **complete notecard** for part 2 of Layla Saad's letter (link both parts)
- if you haven't emailed you practice project, do so by tonight, if not late
- Annotated Bibliography - 10% **due 4/2**

CLASS PLAN WEEK 11

Theme: Food and Farming part 1 (Facilitator: Sophie)

- visit to Railyard Apothecary
- Drivers to BBF next week?

1-1:15

- meet at Bittersweet !

1:20

- Sophie facilitates/leads us wherever
- be at RYA by 2:30

2:30-4 Guest Pollinator: Katherine Elmer

- mini tour of Apothecary
- presentation

4-4:15 disperse

- Ella drives people who have class back to campus

Next Week:

- Print out reading w/ notecard - Agroecology Paper
- Highly recommended readings to be posted on facebook
- <https://blog.ucsusa.org/rafter-ferguson/why-we-cant-separate-justice-and-sustainability-in-the-food-system?fbclid=IwAR3e2yGhKnnl0TIPdQoWc8DHRbPCsOgE9fN7yaLPYE6xz5aB7fTU68V65w>
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/food/why-small-local-organic-farms-arent-the-key-to-fixing-our-food-system/2017/09/21/146f72b2-9e4d-11e7-8ea1-ed975285475e_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.8362c6867a9b
- Annotated Bibliography is due 4/2 (see last week's email or google doc syllabus for blurb/expectations)
- Alexis, Molly, Ciara, Nadia (turn-in Practice Project !)
- Next Week Facilitators: Nadia & Annika

CLASS PLAN WEEK 12

Theme: Food and Farming part 2 (Annika and Nadia)

- visit Bread and Butter Farm !

1:15

- Leave Bittersweet

1:30-2:30

- Brief introductions & jump in with farm chores
 - Weeding hoop house 3, feeding pigs, folding covers

2:30-3:45

- Corie's talk in hoop house 1! Her sense of place, practices & philosophies

3:45-4

- Student facilitated dialogue - partner walk 7 share

4

- Drive back to campus!

CLASS PLAN WEEK 13

Theme: Activism (Sharon)

- Ren Weiner comes to class
- talk about Final Expression !!!
- "Leaning into the Wind" Wednesday showing ! this will be a great intro to land-based art / opportunity to meet Susan
 - April 10, 2019, 6:00PM - 8:30PM @ Burlington City Arts
 - Contois Auditorium: City Hall, 149 Church Street

1:15

- grounding breath
- Annika & Nadia lead their partner drawing activity

1:30

- Sharon facilitates!

2:00

- Ren comes along

4:00

- wrap up

CLASS PLAN WEEK 14

Theme: Art (Alexis and Fiona)

- go to Susan Teare's outdoor art installment in Essex!

1-1:15 Meet at Bittersweet

1:15 Depart for Essex

1:45-2 Meet Susan at top of the trail

- Susan gives brief introduction

2-3:45 Explore, discuss, create, etc.!

- explore on our own for ~15 minutes
- Susan speaks about SOP, art
- Alexis and Fiona facilitate dialogue/activity
- make charcoal art

3:45 Depart for UVM

- be back by 4:15, if not earlier!

CLASS PLAN WEEK 15

Theme: Self-discovery (Ciara)

1:15 Meet @ Cohen!

- Opening breath/circle

- Question hat
- https://vimeo.com/289482525?fbclid=IwAR1FUc_rj42RCmA2DjLE78kq3NliFR5w0UaqPcxTFApfZWl-biWhsXj7nP0
- 15 mins for End of semester feedback form
- Open up into dialogue

2-3:15 Move to the green!

- Share tea!
 - Ciara as D.F. activities
 - Tying loose thread - personal agency & global action (g)
 - Syllabus intro
 - Course objectives
 - What does all of this mean in “moving forward?”
 - Idea rounds for final expression (e)
- Collecting journals next week
 - Next Ella bring letters
 - Check in with ciara about practice project

CLASS PLAN WEEK 16

Theme: Final Expression

1:15 Meet @ Slade!

- Opening breath/circle
- Eat food! Drink tea!
- Pass back letters to self from the beginning of the semester

2-4 Share Final Expressions

Appendix K: Class Description Table

Week & Theme	Class Description
Week 1: Intro, Community Building & Sense of Place (SOP)	We began our first class with a grounding breath and land acknowledgment to the Abenaki. We also shared how acknowledgement must be followed with other actions of support. We then went around the circle and introduced ourselves by names, pronouns, majors and what drew us to the course. We handed out the syllabus and went through it briefly, then launched into an activity to demonstrate our “pedagogical threads”: social justice, sense of place and alternative pedagogy. We defined our expectations for notecards. We ate soup. We collaboratively created a “Community Mxnifesto” on the chalkboard, signed up for student facilitation days, and ended with a free-write about our personal senses of place. The free-write questions were: “What is your sense of place?” “What constitutes your sense of place?” and “What is the role of your Sense of place?” Before the end of class, we asked everyone to write a letter which outlines what they envision in an ideal learning environment - an exercise based off of Donella Meadows’ essay <i>Envisioning a Sustainable World</i> , which was also assigned as homework reading.
Week 2: Community Building, Alternative Pedagogy & SOP	Ella and Giannina gave a powerpoint presentation to go over and define the concepts of sense of place, the Anthropocene, dialogue vs. discussion, alternative pedagogies and contemplative practices. We provided a brief “training” for dialogue facilitation, followed by setting an example by facilitating a dialogue on the assigned readings.
Week 3: Community Building, Alternative Pedagogy, SOP & Social Justice	Elise led us in a yoga stretch at the start of class. Ariane facilitated a dialogue about the assigned readings and brought an episode from The Queer Podcast called “Ancestral Healing as Political Activism” for us all to listen to together. We walked to Slade Ecological Coop (where Giannina lives) and crowded into the living room to listen to the podcast as we drank tea, ate snacks and doodled/made art.
Week 4: Human Ecology	We centered our grounding breath on acknowledging our first class in Black History Month (February) and emphasizing that awareness must be followed by action, then shared an instagram post by activist and author Ericka Hart. Chloe facilitated a dialogue on the assigned readings for which we split up into smaller groups to share. Giannina and Ella gave a brief presentation about human ecology and introduced the wide breadth of the field’s subtopics. As an activity, we each choose one subtopic to research individually for ~40 minutes. Then we circled up in two concentric circles so that each person was paired with someone in the other circle, and for 2 minutes everybody shared with their partner everything they had researched and learned. We then rotated in the circle, and switched partners until everyone had shared with everyone in the other circle, then we shared with everyone in their own circle as well. We also collected journals for grading.
Week 5: Writing & Storytelling	Our first guest pollinator, Marie Vea-Fagnant, joined us for the first half of class! She introduced her dissertation, titled <i>Sense of Place and Ways of Knowing: The Landscape of Experience for People Of Color</i> , then facilitated dialogue about our personal senses of place, land connection and what constitutes it. We shared photographs of place where we feel this strongly and shared words about what these places mean to us. After a short break, co-

	<p>learner Molly showed a video depicting the Abenaki creation story and facilitated another dialogue on the assigned readings. We passed back journals, and checked in with everybody about attending the student activist group NoNames for Justice's Rally 4.0 at Waterman the later in the month, which would take up most of our class time (everyone was in agreement that this was the right thing to do with our class time!).</p>
Week 6: Place-based Education	<p>Betsy McGavisk (co-chair of UVM Progressives) joined us for the first half hour of class to talk about local politics and the upcoming election on Town Meeting Day. She handed out voter registration/early ballot forms and talked about the importance of involvement in local, community politics. Liv and Zowie gave a powerpoint presentation about place-based education and facilitated a dialogue. Then we partnered up and exchanged the stories we wrote for homework for some peer editing. For the last half hour of class, Katherine Elmer (UVM lecturer & co-founder of Railyard Apothecary) joined us to introduce a custom tea blend she concocted for our class, using herbs from UVM campus, the Intervale and Shelburne Farms. She spoke a little bit about place-based herbalism and wellness sovereignty, served us the tea and left us the rest of the blend to drink throughout the rest of the semester! At the end of class we reminded everyone about the upcoming NoNames for Justice Rally 4.0.</p>
Week 7: Bioregionalism	<p>Sarah facilitated a brief mapping activity on our personal bioregions using definitions from a reading she brought to the class from her semester at the Wild Rockies Field Institute. Before walking to the Waterman building for the Rally 4.0 we assigned everybody one of four points-of-view to think critically about: 1. the incoming UVM president; 2. a full tuition, out-of-state paying parent; 3. a student organizer/self-identified activist; 4. a student who "doesn't see race"/believes we are in a post-racial society. We dispersed after the rally.</p>
Week 8: Town Meeting Day & City Council Elections	<p>This was Town Meeting Day so there was no formal class. Instead, we held a cozy potluck at Ella's House to foster some non-academic bonding. Not everyone, but most of the class came. We ate delicious food, listened to music, hung out and talked. We exchanged ideas related to the City Council election happening. Before everyone left, we introduced the Practice Project which was to be done over the course of the next two weeks.</p>
Week 10: Land-Based Spirituality & Cultural Appropriation	<p>For our first class after our 3-week lull (due to the Rally 4.0 and, Town Meeting Day and Spring Break), Elise facilitated a brainstorm about the differences and similarities between religion and spirituality. Then she had us partner up with someone we were less familiar with and take a walk around outside (it was a beautiful day) to share our personal religious and/or spiritual contexts. Once back inside, we took some time for personal journal reflection connecting what we had just shared with our partners and our senses of place. For the last chunk of class, we walked outside and sat on the fountain on the Waterman Green to soak up the sun and share what we did for our Practice Projects. Then we read part 1 of Layla F. Saad's letter titled <i>I need to talk to spiritual white women about white supremacy</i> and assigned the part 2 for homework.</p>
Week 11: Food & Farming Part 1	<p>This was our first "field visit" class, so we met at the Bittersweet and walked down to Perkins Pier at the waterfront together. We found a sunny spot on one of the docks to sit down in a big circle and Sophie facilitated a brainstorming activity about buzzwords in sustainable agriculture. Then we walked over to the Railyard Apothecary to meet Katherine Elmer, who gave us a presentation on her work as a community and clinical herbalist and place-based herbalism.</p>

Week 12: Food & Farming Part 2	On our second class, themed Food & Farming, we visited Bread & Butter Farm in Shelburne, VT. We helped out with farm chores - weeding in one of the hoop houses and feeding the pigs. Then we sat with Corie Pierce, the farm owner, and heard her story of sense of place through farming and the philosophy behind the work she does. After this, Annika and Nadia facilitated a pair-share walk around and chat about questions they had prepared.
Week 13: Activism	Sharon facilitated a informational presentation about the difference between community organizing and activism, and the different forms action can take. After this, Ren Weiner of Miss Weinerz & Food Fight VT joined our circle in the classroom. She shared her interconnected stories of Antifa activism work, ecological resilience and misogyny in local food systems, as well as what lights her “heart-fire.”
Week 14: Art	On our last “field visit” of the semester, we visited the land-based artist Susan Teare, at her installation site in Essex, VT. We began with a brief introduction and then were able to explore the site - a cleared patch in the woods - on our own. Her installation included around a dozen printed silk fabrics hanging from trees and lines. After this we sat around the fire and sipped and snacked on food she had prepared. Susan shared her journey with land-based art, what the installation means to her, and the role of phenomenology and sense of place in her work. After this, Alexis and Fiona shared questions they had prepared that prompted us to think about the interconnections and importance of art in environmental work. While mulling over these questions, we explored around the site and made art with walnut oil inks and charcoal that Susan had gathered for us.
Week 15: Self-discovery	During our last “real” class of the semester, we attempted to tie up loose ends and bring a bit of closure - not closure with learning, but with our specific community. After opening circle and question hat, Annika shared a presentation on Huertas, a community-based food security project with Latino migrant farmers that she has been interning for. Then we watched a poetry art video titled “Rise: From One Island to Another.” After this, Giannina and Ella left the room while the co-learners filled out the end-of-the-semester feedback google form. We debriefed their thoughts by breaking up into three groups and chatting about what really resonated with everyone, how they are “moving forward,” what the Anthropocene means to them and general thoughts on the semester. During our halfway break, we transitioned to the Waterman Green sun and shared the tea that was made for us by Katherine Elmer at the beginning of the semester. Ciara, the co-facilitator of the day, led a pair share about self-discovery, place and identify, and astrology. As our final activity, we had two concentric circles (the same format as the human ecology activity) and shared our ideas for the final expression project.
Week 16: Final Expression	Our last class was a celebratory potluck held at Slade Ecological Coop. We ate food, drank tea, and had “mini presentations” on what each person had chosen to do for their final expression. The project sharing varied from passing around art, to projecting the videos to reading poetry.

Appendix L: Journal Collection Expectations & Rubric

Journal Collection #1: February 5th

Guide

Hi! We're just looking for intentionality and effort. In concrete terms, this means checking that you've completed what's been assigned, outlined below.

We're also using this opportunity to check in to see if we're being effective navigators/facilitators.

As two avid doodlers, we're always excited and inspired to see inked creativity leaking into reflective expressions... but in no way is that required.

If there's anything in your journal that you don't want us to see/read, make a note or cover it with a sticky note and we'll respect that 1000000%. <3

Ruminations assigned thus far

Week 1 (5 points)

- notecard - White Fragility
- notecard - Envisioning a Sustainable World

Week 2 (5 points)

- notecard - The Rediscovery of North America
- reflection - Connect *La Querencia* and Lyla June's ideas in HCP #2

Week 3 (5 points)

- research - YOUR ancestry!
- *notes - either HCP #17, HCP #19, or Dancing with Systems

*not directly assigned, so not required, but this is how you can show intentionality and effort past the boundaries of what we assign!

Effort & Intentionality (5 points)

TOTAL POINTS: 20

Journal Collection #2: April 2nd

Guidelines

In order for us to give you full points on notecard assignments, please follow the notecard template! This includes title, key quotes, sparked ideas, and questions in distinct sections.

If there's anything in your journal that you don't want us to see/read, make a note or cover it with a sticky note and we'll respect that 1000000%. <3

Ruminations assigned since last collection

Week 3

- notecard - either on *Dancing With Systems*, HCP #17 or HCP #19 (minimum one of them)

Week 4

- notecard - "Becoming Native to Place" chapter from *Braiding Sweetgrass*
- notecard - *From a Native Daughter*

Week 5

- research/notes - 3 positives and 3 critiques of place-based education

Week 6

- notecard - Intro to Bioregionalism

Week 7

- reflection - assigned point-of-view of the Rally 4.0

Week 8

- nothing ~ 'twas our Town Meeting Day potluck :)

Week 9

- nothing ~ 'twas Spring Break !

Week 10

- notecard - one of the three podcasts (HCP #9, HCP #13 and Thrive with Morella)
- notecard - part 2 of Layla F. Saad's letter *I need to talk to white spiritual women about white supremacy*

Week 11

- notecard - *Educational innovations in agroecology: learning-centered open-ended cases*

Journal Collection #3: April 30th

Week 12

- Journal Reflection: on the ideas from our past few weeks (cross-pollinations from Katherine & Corie):
 - knit together some of our pedagogical threads and themes (social justice, sense of place, food and farming in the Anthropocene)
 - what surfaces for you?
 - looking to our 2nd course objective, to “use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift,” how do you see your sense of place impacting your global awareness and your personal agency?

Appendix M: Take-Home Practice Project Expectations & Rubric

Take-home practice project expectations - DUE 3/19/19 (Week 10)

Description (from syllabus)

There will be one take home practice project in the middle of the semester, due the week we return from Spring Recess. This will be a chance for co-learners to synthesize readings, class discussion and self reflection in a written or creative form. This could take the form of attending a city council meeting, cooking dinner with a neighborly stranger, interviewing a community member or writing a letter to your family. The actual practice will be paired with a short essay explaining how the co-learners came to decide what their individual practice project is. This is a space for mid-way reflection, processing and action. This is worth 10% of the final grade.

Learning goals

- **Reflection:** synthesize readings, class discussions, reflections and all materials from the course so far
- **Action:** act upon a personal practice project to supplement the reflection from the semester so far
- **Processing:** write a short essay to explain the personal practice project

Deliverables/Grading

1. short (1-2 pages) essay explaining what the practice project is, answering the following:
 - What was your practice project? (2 pts)
 - What did you learn from it? (2 pts)
 - How does it connect to our class material? (2 pts)
 - sense of place
 - critical, contemplative and/or any 'alternative' pedagogy
 - any weekly theme
 - any of your ponderings thus far
 - Satisfactory reflection (2pts)
 - Satisfactory effort (2pts)
2. (if applicable) a tangible manifestation of your project!
For example:
 - art piece
 - letter to your family
 - photos

GRADING TOTAL: 10 pts

Appendix N: Annotated Bibliography Expectations, Rubric & Feedback

Description (from syllabus/Bb announcement)

The Annotated Bibliography is an opportunity for co-learners to read, research and write about one theme/idea that is connected to sense of place. It could be a theme that was brought up in class, or something that you've found on your own. The assignment will allow co-learners to explore sense of place, social justice and alternative pedagogy in a landscape of their choosing and support transference to wherever the student feels most "at home." This can be a self-driven way to express childlike curiosity! The envisionment is at least 6 sources, with a solid paragraph under each. In the writing you should glean main ideas from the pieces and connect them to your own thoughts. Please be intentional with quote usage and correct APA citation. This is worth 10% of the final grade.

Learning Goals

- Explore self-driven research
- Use academic writing skills
- Support transference between the academic and personal

Deliverables/Grading

- At least 6 sources (6 pts)
- Annotation paragraph for each source (6 pts)
 - Annotations should be more than just a summary of the document! Include how it connects to the greater idea or theme that you are exploring.
- Making connections between sources and to greater ideas (4 pts)
 - i.e. starting to "tie it all together"
- Satisfactory effort (4 pts)

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 20

Feedback from Ella and Gi after grading

There's been a variety in the quality of the annotated bibliographies! In our minds, and from feedback we have received, a good annotated bibliography elucidates how different sources feed a central idea or theme, either in support or in critique of it. It should be the foundation of a well-researched understanding of a topic. It is crucial that you either have a claim that can act as a guiding question, or a solid and consistent "footing" relating back to your topic in each source annotation. Find threads! Go more deeply than a simple summarization. Provide your insight, perspective, questions, and connections.

Here are some bulleted points of feedback:

- Organize sources in alphabetical order
- Check grammar/spelling
- Don't cite a book unless you read the whole book
 - You can cite the article that summarizes the book, or the specific chapter
- Annotations should be more than just summarizations!!!
 - Show connections! what are some points of agreement between sources? points of disagreement?
 - What relevance does this have to your claim?
 - What new dynamic does it introduce?
 - How does your source help you pursue a deeper understanding of your topic?
 - What do you think about it?
- You can give yourself a guiding question(s) to help you delve deeper than just a topic
 - make sure to answer the guiding questions in each annotation

We apologize if these expectations were not fully fleshed out in the Expectations document that is on Blackboard. We will be returning the annotated bibliographies on Tuesday, and highly support people working on it a little bit more and turning it back in on April 16th for potential full credit. Is you choose to do this, please resubmit your Annotated Bib in print, attached to your first copy.

Appendix O: Final Expression Expectations & Rubric

Description from syllabus:

The Final Expression is a creative project centralized around sense of place. It is an opportunity for students to explore and dive into a topic that was either covered in class, or was explored outside of the classroom. All of the final expression topics will be pre-proposed to Giannina and Ella in a short essay. Roughly 15 hours will be spent on each project.

Some questions to get you started:

- What has this class process/experience brought you to?
- What are your takeaways of the past 16 weeks with/in this community?
- How are you moving forward? Personally? Emotionally? Locally? Globally?
- How are you participating in the Anthropocene?
- Touching one, if not multiple of our threads
 - Alternative pedagogy
 - Social justice
 - Sense of place
- This is the (big) baby of the annotated bibliography & practice project
 - baby got more of the practice project's genes
- Must be an action of some sort ~ can't just be a thing in your mind
- Potential to include/reach out to guest pollinators & community members
- Remember! Creative expression is knowledge, is knowing, is expression

Some examples we came up with:

- Choreographed dance video
- Organizing community event
- Write a book
- Collection of poetry
- Interviews
- Painting, drawing, sculpture, film
- Dumpster diving
- Expanded personal manifesto

Please explain it to us with a brief email or voicemail

You've gone through this process! What is something that you want to be able to share and show?

Grading Rubric

This final expression will be self-graded. We will provide a rubric, but you get to fill it out. It is worth 20% of your final grade. Your education is what you make of it!

Learning Goals

Reflect! Ruminare. Chew yer cud. The cud is the assignments, guest pollinators, reflections, etc. we exposed ourselves to this semester.

Synthesize! We went over a lot this semester. How is anything fitting together for you?

Act with passion! Use this chance to *move forward* with the Anthropocene. So excited to see how you do it!

Grade Breakdown

Effort (did you spend as much time on this as you were expecting/wanting to) - 5 pts

Handing it in on time (Tuesday 4/30 by 1:15PM) - 5 pts

Connecting to one or more threads (SOP, alternative pedagogy, social justice) - 5 pts

Depth of reflection (did ya dig deep?) - 5 pts

TOTAL: 20 pts

Appendix P: Course Objectives Fulfillment Table

Week/Theme (Rows) Course Objectives (Columns)	<i>1. Cultivate an understanding of sense of place (theoretical and experiential).</i>	<i>2. Use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift.</i>	<i>3. Recognize social justice as a crucial dimension within environmentalism and our community.</i>	<i>4. Build a community that honors complexity, intersectionality and transdisciplinarity.</i>	<i>5. Support non-hierarchical and alternative knowledge systems.</i>
Week 1: Intro, Community Building & Sense of Place (SOP)	n/a	- wrote personal definitions/understandings (intentionally steered away from definitions)	n/a	- Syllabus web activity presented the complexity, intersectionality and transdisciplinarity of our chosen themes and common threads	- opening/closing circle (Contemplative Pedagogy) - journaling / self-reflection as a form of knowing
Week 2: Community Building, Alternative Pedagogy & SOP	n/a	n/a	n/a	- concept overview included background information on the Anthropocene, Alternative Pedagogies, and history/lenses of SOP	- opening/closing circle - co-created understandings/expectations for dialogue facilitation
Week 3: Community Building, Alternative Pedagogy, SOP & Social Justice	n/a	n/a	- podcast themes were ancestral healing, colonization and social justice	- the podcast spoke from an awareness of these ideas	- SFD breaks down the “student” & “teacher” roles - opening/closing circle - Art as a form of knowing - Contemplative Pedagogy
Week 4: Human Ecology	- explored connection of SOP & Human	n/a	- introduction of white fragility w/ podcasts	- Human Ecology circle activity showed	- SFD working against knowledge

	Ecology		- 1st class in Black History Month (dialogue held)	transdisciplinary	hierarchies - circle/speed dating supported quick knowledge exchanges - opening/closing circle
Week 5: Writing & Storytelling	- Marie's 1st activity was a personal free write/reflection on SOP & Land Connection (class shared pictures!)	n/a	n/a	n/a	- supported multiple forms of knowing (head, body, spirit) - Contemplative Pedagogy
Week 6: Place-based Education	- SOP through local politics/community involvement - SOP through tea made specifically for our community from plants harvested on campus, the Intervale and Shelburne! - SOP through place-based education	- place-based education a global movement cultivating land/place connection! What does this mean? (community dialogue)	- relevance/necessity of social justice in place-based education - place-based education vs. land-based education	- hodge podge of a class ! a times these ideas can feel lofty and seperate, but they are interconnected !	- routine & structure supports this (SFD, opening/closing breath, circles, various forms of sharing opinions, thoughts & questions)
Week 7: Bioregionalism	- through personal map drawing/research/reflecting on Bioregionalism	- Bioregionalism (scale bottom-up potential) & Direct Action Student Power	- attendance at student-organized rally (co-liberation across clubs, campus and greater Burlington)	- Point of View activity - virtue of bioregionalism as a subject	- routine & structure supports this (SFD, opening/closing breath, circles, various forms of sharing opinions, thoughts & questions)
Week 8: Town Hall Meeting Day & City Council Elections	- sense of place through university political action	n/a	n/a	n/a	- routine & structure supports this (SFD, opening/closing breath, circles, various forms of

					sharing opinions, thoughts & questions)
Week 10: Land-Based Spirituality & Cultural Appropriation	- SOP through personal spirituality (what does this mean for you) - journal reflection prompts	- Saad's piece addressing self, place & white supremacy	- Letter read aloud & podcast assignments	- personal practice sharing (how we each are manifesting our learnings)	- routine & structure supports this (SFD, opening/closing breath, circles, various forms of sharing opinions, thoughts & questions)
Week 11: Food & Farming Part 1	- class connection with Lake Champlain! - how SOP is ingrained with Katherine's community, passion and profession	- two scales of community herbalism (personal and societal)	- herbalism & privilege, connection to colonization & white supremacy	- two sided coin (science & magic) - SFD activity exploring facets of expression w/in food & farming	- routine & structure supports this (SFD, opening/closing breath, circles, various forms of sharing opinions, thoughts & questions)
Week 12: Food & Farming Part 2	- Farming ! doing a little bit of reciprocity in the greenhouse - Farm animals ! wonder associations with piglets - thinking about food and place ~ content of Corie's story	- Personal food choices & decisions	- Systematic problem / systematic solution / heavy weight should not be put on the farmers - Where is the responsibility falling within the food system	- BBF education, food, farming, land management, community, business	- routine & structure supports this (SFD, opening/closing breath, circles, various forms of sharing opinions, thoughts & questions) - Doing and then learning /experiential education/ and then reflecting - Learning from the land
Week 13: Activism	- food, activism, anarchy (hear about Ren's sense of place) - place-	- agency and activism - anarchy - people need to be doing the	- misogyny - the whole cross pollination	- literally everything ren does embodies systems thinking	- routine & structure supports this (SFD, opening/closing

	specificity SO important in ANY organizing work	place-specific work in the actual places			breath, circles, various forms of sharing opinions, thoughts & questions)
Week 14: Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very experiential - giving initial time to root in the landscape - Provided ample space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Phenomenology - Personal agency > global awareness - Land connection / land art / layers of self & memory & space 	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General threads of self, phenomenology and sense of place through art-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - routine & structure supports this (SFD, opening/closing breath, circles, various forms of sharing opinions, thoughts & questions) - art expression as valid knowledge - receiving knowledge from a community member and life-long learner
Week 15: Self-discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through identity - how they intersect and morph together, or do not - Sharing ideas of final expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connecting the guest pollinators role with this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The video ~ indigenous call to action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ciara's dialogue questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - routine & structure supports this (SFD, opening/closing breath, circles, various forms of sharing opinions, thoughts & questions) - art as valid reflection
Week 16: Final Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - through the sharing of final expression projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agency through creativity and reflection - the final expression is action oriented 	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nature of final expression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - routine & structure supports this (opening/closing breath, circles, various forms of sharing opinions) - self-grading - validating creative knowledge systems

Appendix Q: Co-learner Mid-semester Feedback & Takeaways

Co-learner Responses to Feedback Form

Question 1: What are you enjoying about the class? This could be relating to structure, content, culture, etc..

1. I'm enjoying the open ended aspect of everything. Also the class just flows nicely, smoothly, and well.
2. I am thinking so much more!!! This can at times feel overwhelming but in a good way. I'm glad to feel so much and to be channeling feelings in a positive way through this class. This class feels like a great big journal prompt for me to evaluate my life thus far (and I love journal prompts). I also love getting to spend a few hours feeling grounded and spending time with amazing womyn and love that we get to share food, space, and community.
3. I'm enjoying the looseness in the structure of the class. The conversations we have are really intriguing and eye opening which I really appreciate.
4. I'm enjoying the structure of discussion facilitation and ample reflection/introspection time, as well as all the guest speakers we've had. I've also really enjoyed the readings we've been assigned.
5. I am enjoying the time/space for internal and personal reflection in the class. I appreciate that there are times set aside for quiet reflection on the material. I have also appreciated the focus and exposure to ideas surrounding indigenous people and grappling with our individual and collective identity through acknowledging stolen native lands.
6. I love that this is a space where I am able to critically reflect about myself, our class topics, the current world we live in... Really anything. I also like the content we have covered as it pertains to everyone's interests. The class culture is also nice- I am comfortable in the space.
7. I love the structure and how close I feel like i've gotten to people in the class. It makes learning so much better when you know everyone in the class and feel comfortable enough to share your thoughts/ideas. I also like how active the class is and how we break up class time so we are not sitting in a seat the whole time.
8. I really like having the opening breath/moment--it's calming and brings me into the space. I feel comfortable in the space and like having discussions with the group and getting to talk to individual people as well. I have really liked the content so far and have been getting a lot out of it.
9. I like moving and hearing from different facilitators. Potluck was lovey dovey and I wish we could all get together outside of class more.
10. I love the structure, different frameworks for sense of place each week really seems to work. I think each facilitator has done an amazing job deepening understanding of the material. I think the content is super interesting, and I feel safe and supported in this class. I also really appreciate writing the day's schedule on the board.
11. I love the physical structure of the classroom. Coming into class and arranging our bodies and minds into a circle (oval, sometimes) is soothing and collecting. The keystone concept of critical pedagogy has been very eye-opening and influential in state of mind. Having it introduced has allowed me to engage in this class (and my other classrooms) with a certain ferocity.
12. Generally speaking, I am extremely interested in just about every topic we have and will be covering over the course of the semester. I appreciate the fact that Gi and Ella have removed the teacher - student hierarchy, and that we are all viewed as equals and have knowledge to contribute to this course, they reinforce this by having different discussion facilitators each week. When it comes to each class, I appreciate starting with a grounding breath, having just enough break time, and by also having a schedule present on the board during class! It keeps the class flow going and students engaged, at least in my opinion. I sincerely look forward to this class every week because of the space that has been created and the because of the people I get to share this space with. I look forward to this time of learning, discussion, and reflection.

13. I really enjoy the direct discussion and peer led way the classroom is set up. It seems structured but fluid enough that there is not a parallel to typical classroom setting.

Question 2: What parts of the class could be improved? How would you suggest improving them?

1. Maybe something other than the same type of reading/notecard every week. Maybe mixing it up with another style of assignment that isn't the same notecard format every week.
2. I at times wish that discussion felt more active and that we had more time to get to know each other and "socialize" to whatever extent.
3. I think some of the facilitating is lacking. I realize everyone is doing this for the first time. However, sometimes I feel like the conversations go off topic from the main purpose and stem into a different dialogue.
4. It's hard to suggest improvement because this class is so divergent from a typical structure. The classes are dynamic in that we talk about academic content and about ourselves, we move and stretch sometimes, we hear from outside voices, etc. All of the things this class does already are the things I suggest for traditional classes.
5. More dancing! I think a little bit of silliness and movement could help set a stage for openness and vulnerability. I also I think opening up space for whatever is interesting each individual in the class would be interesting. I often specific thoughts or questions bubbling to my consciousness in a given week or month. Opening some sort of forum driven by what folks are reading, writing or listening to would be another great way to cross-pollinate ideas.
6. Really not much, only that I have noticed some students do not put as much effort in/do not appreciate it as much. You only get out of it as much as you put in, I suppose.
7. I've been feeling lost as an environmental studies student and unsure of how I want to combine my interests in social and environmental justice. I feel as though this class would be a good space to discuss how we see what we have learned fitting into our future role as environmentalists. I would love if we left some room to talk about how people see social justice fitting into careers as environmentalism (i just think this class could be a really good resource!)
8. I really enjoy the facebook page as a source of shared resources--maybe we could have more of that, more sharing of resources. More movement would be good too, which will be easier once the weather starts to get nicer and we can go outside! [It] could be nice to have more smaller group conversations and random questions at the start of class!
9. Hmmm I think there's an updated syllabus online? I'd like to know what major assignments are coming up so I know how to prepare my brain/schedule.
10. It's hard to integrate all the learning doing it as one topic per week, but the reflections and project we've done have been really working to mesh everything together. I wish we could do more stuff out of the classroom, I 100% understand the lack of funding and previous weather barriers to that. I also think we should switch us partners more! Maybe for the hat questions we could do random partners, I tend to sit near the same people and talk to them more.
11. Improvement could be beneficial surrounding ????? (can not think of anything to put here)
12. I am honestly blown away by how smoothly this class has been going, given the fact that it is a student teaching students course (I have heard some of some "eh" times from peers who have taken other STS classes). Gi and Ella are always prepared, and noticeably put their heart and soul into this class. The only suggestion I can think of is more frequently collecting notecards..?
13. Possibly having more time to go over topics/concepts that maybe not everyone would understand/flow to allow more time for this!

How is the non-hierarchical/shared facilitation working for you? How could it work better?

1. It is going well! I wouldn't have facilitated a class discussion without the initial push of everyone participating, but I'm glad I did.

2. It's going very well!!! I love getting to see a new person lead and add their take on things every week.
3. It works great for me!
4. A dream. It relieves so much pressure and performance from the learning that happens. I feel like I can be a human being in this class and the learning is richer because of the structure.
5. It is working well!
6. It is working very well for me.
7. I really love being in a class that is student directed. It is incredibly refreshing and I feel like I have learned more in this class than I have in other classes where I have been forced to do meaningless assignments. I have found however, that its been hard to prioritize work for this class (even though this is the work that I really want to be doing). I think this is because my other classes are more strict about grading with assignments and I feel like this is stopping me from delving into topics that are of interest to me that we discuss in this class... i'm not totally sure how to change this though.
8. I makes me feel more comfortable in the learning space--sharing or not sharing. I feel like I am a valued part of the space which has made the work more fulfilling.
9. Shared facilitation is awesome! I like how the discussion leader and snack managers help build the class experience every week.
10. I think it's going really well. Everyone so far has done an amazing job coming up with activities and discussion questions that deepen my understanding of the topics. I'm nervous for my turn because such a high standard has been set.
11. I fucking love the shit out of it!!!!!! Having a different dialogue facilitator each week is so extremely helpful to comprehending the concepts that are spoken to each week. <333333 The idea that each facilitator is able to create her/their own structure of discussion is inviting and has enabled me to gather a very well-rounded understanding of the core topics. It has made me often sit and think about how I would benefit from peer discussion/facilitation in my other classes (such as BIO 002... peer facilitated study sessions are what gets me through the class).
12. Hehe didn't even see this question before I made my comment above... To reiterate, I think this is the healthiest learning I have been in thus far during my time at UVM. It is understood from day one and through the most recent practice project that you get out what you put into this course. Just about everything is of interest to me, and I value and look forward to learning from my peers. The opportunity to hear a variety of people present and discuss and reflect on information I feel gives me a more rounded understanding of the topics.
13. I LOVE it- not sure how it could work better.

Question 4: Going back to our syllabus, which course objectives do you feel are being addressed? Please leave any comments relating to the objectives in the "Other" checkbox area.

1. Cultivate an understanding of sense of place (theoretical and experiential).
13/13 (100%) identified this as "addressed".
2. Use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift.
12/13 (92.3%) identified this as "addressed".
3. Recognize social justice as a crucial dimension within environmentalism and our community.
12/13 (92.3%) identified this as "addressed".
4. Build a community that honors complexity, intersectionality and transdisciplinarity.
12/13 (92.3%) identified this as "addressed".
5. Support non-hierarchical and alternative knowledge systems.
13/13 (100%) identified this as "addressed".
6. Comments: "I'm not sure whether we've really covered the global awareness aspect of #2 yet, but it's probably coming"

Question 5: The central threads of this course are sense of place, alternative pedagogies and social justice. Do you feel they have been effectively and consistently woven throughout the class?

1. absolutely!
2. Yes I am thinking more about accessible place-based education now than I ever have
3. I think in some classes they have but for others they have distanced off into a completely unrelated topic.
4. Yes!
5. I think social justice (mostly vocabulary) could be integrated more into the class content
6. Definitely!
7. I have really enjoyed how this class has been able to touch on a number of different topics. I don't feel like we have really gone into depth on any one category but y'all have definitely left room for self directed learning and room for further exploration on topics that interest us. So.. yes! I do think they have been effectively and consistently woven throughout the class.
8. These themes have definitely been interwoven in this class, especially through our journal reflections and class discussions. I feel it all coming together.
9. Yes definitely! I notice myself thinking a lot more...when on facebook or overhearing conversations in the dining hall or out and about downtown.
10. hells yeah
11. Absolutely. Within each core topic that we touch upon each week I am able to grasp a solid understanding of these three central threads within their context.
12. Yes, I feel these central threads have been present throughout just about every week, especially SOP and SJ.
13. 100%!

Question 6: This is a space for additional comments/feedback/suggestions !

1. You both are incredible <3
2. I am feeling an intense amount of gratitude and love for this space and the people in it <3
3. You ladies are doing great!!
4. Thank you for creating this space!
5. I look forward to class every Tuesday! As the weather becomes nicer, time outside will help me continue to positively anticipate this time
6. This has been a wonderful class and I am so happy to be a part of it <3 you have both done a wonderful job creating an atmosphere/space where we can be our raw, authentic selves. It is so nice to have that space within the busy hectic school life which often shuts out and limits individual healing and growth, since it's not being "productive". I look forward to the rest of the semester
7. You both are awesome and super great leaders:)))) thank you for really putting in the effort to create a safe learning environment!
8. I've loved the structure of the class and how welcoming it is. It feels like meaningful work we are doing. I like getting different perspectives from people who are studying different things than I am, and I am able to broaden my knowledge.
9. I know I didn't have very many suggestions but I love this class! It's a breath of fresh air and something I look forward to every Tuesday. I wish I could give more of my time to projects and essays. I'd like to start working on a final project pretty soon because I know the end of the year is so hectic and I often need more time stewing in the topics we cover in class.
10. hey hi ummmmm i f*cking love u guys u r amazing this class is gr9 stay cool my coconutty co facilitators
11. You guys are rocking it. This class has introduced a multitude of topics/modes of study that I have not come across in my work with environmental studies at UVM thus far.
12. Thank you, Gi & Ella, for being such lovely and wonderful human beings! I enjoy and value learning with and from you!!!
13. I LOVE Sense of place and the passion you put into the class! It is so beautiful and refreshing to be taught by my peers and to share ideas and ideologies with fellow classmates :-)

Takeaways/actions

△ deltas: constructive feedback

- ❖ Update the syllabus online - giving people more time in advance
- ❖ Encourage more resource sharing on the facebook page
- ❖ Talk about how social justice can/will
- ❖ Make space for talking about how social justice and environmentalism are connected
 - How they can inform each other moving forward
- ❖ Do the human ecology activity again
- ❖ More active dialogue/one-on-one with new people
- ❖ More dancing; silliness and movement can lead to openness and vulnerability
- ❖ Getting more personal ! what does all of this mean to you
- ❖ Forum to cross-pollinate ideas (final expression brainstorm)
- ❖ Go outside ! cross- pollinate !
- ❖ More support for facilitators to keep us on track
- ❖ Other assignment styles other than notecard
- ❖ Social justice vocabulary
- ❖ Revisiting objectives #2, #3, #4
- ❖ Wanting more in depth content
- ❖ ^^ emphasize this with annotated bibliography

+ plusses: positive feedback

- + Open ended aspects
- + Overwhelming but in a good way
- + “One great big journal prompt”
- + Looseness in structure
- + Ample reflection/introspection time
- + Enjoying guest speakers & readings
- + Focus and exposure to ideas on indigenous rights/people
- + Grappling with individual and collective idea through acknowledging stolen, native land
- + Critically reflecting on ourselves, topics and our world
- + Comfortable Class culture
- + Breaking up class time well
- + Opening, closing breath
- + non-hierarchical/shared facilitation
- + Feeling valued/seen in the space
- + Relieving the pressure of performance
- + Being pushed out of comfort zones !
- + Central threads -
- + Emphasizing that we get out what we put in

Appendix R: Co-learner End-of-semester Feedback & Takeaways

Co-learner Responses to End-of-Semester Feedback Form

Question 1: What classes did you enjoy most out of the semester?

1. I enjoyed this one.
2. The class at the Railyard Apothecary and the class at Bread and Butter Farm
3. I really enjoyed the farm visit to Bread and Butter, Storytelling, and out on the dock with Sophie.
4. When we met Susan Teare and sat around a warm fire and did art and talked and had an incredible time
5. Miss Weiner's, Essex at the land art installation with Susan
6. Exposure to new ideas-- specifically surrounding indigenous identities and perspectives within the context of SOP
7. Going to Bread and Butter Farm
8. Land art, bread & butter
9. I really enjoyed the classes where we were able to meet people in their places. The apothecary, the farm and the art installation. I also really enjoyed the classes where we had Ren and Marie come speak. I think it's so valuable to be able to hear from so many people!
10. Ren's visit, Bread and Butter tour, Susan's art installation
11. I loved our visit to bread and butter farm and our visit with Susan last week. I liked the classes that got us outside the most.
12. I really enjoyed doing field-trips--especially the art themed week when we met with Susan and talked with her, sat around a fire, and shared ideas. It felt really inclusive and inspiring.
13. I enjoyed going to Bread & Butter Farm and working with Corie, listening to Ren's stories, and visiting Susan and seeing her beautiful art installation.
14. the ones with guest pollinators or the ones that took us outside!

Question 2: What resonated the most with you? (themes, threads, guest pollinators, assignments, etc..)

1. Environmental art and justice
2. I loved the various chosen themes for the class and each of the guest pollinators.
3. I think the biggest theme that resonated with me was the idea of a sense of place being an interconnected web of flowing ideas and parts, and that it encompasses all of us.
4. the whole theme of belonging and self identity as a part of everything we've learned about and heard
5. ancestry work, finding oneself through spiritual work/reflection
6. 1) Corrie's perspective on connection to the land, and what it means to truly be a steward to it 2) Katherine's ideas about individual wellness connected to the wellness of the earth, and how consuming medicinal herbs can connect us to our SOP 3) Ren's thoughts on consistently auditing yourself on various levels, and acknowledging the systems that exist all around us
7. Ren Weiner, Cori
8. umm all of it? Ren Weiner, Marie Veia Fagnant, everyone. It all tied in perfectly
9. Again, the guest pollinators really resonated for me. I love hearing about why people choose a certain place to anchor themselves, and we got many different perspectives on that. The annotated bibliography was my favorite assignment because it felt really exciting to have agency in what I was studying. I so rarely am told to pick a topic of interest and read a book about it for my own learning and it felt really affirming.

10. I was very interested in alternative pedagogies and all of the guest pollinators captivated me. I especially feel like I learned a lot in terms of differentiating environmental education and place-based education and the values of an integrative and communicative education/curriculum. This made me evaluate education systems and my own role as an educator a lot and I'm excited to continue to explore this.
11. I have been thinking a lot about food these days and how disconnected I am from the land so I guess the theme of FOOD resonated with me. I also really loved seeing how my definition/idea of sense of place has evolved over the semester.
12. I really resonated with Susan and the art themed week, doing land based art and using that as a way to find sense of place. I also loved the talk with Ren, and really resonated with some of her ideas about activism and food justice, being an anarchist, her sense of humor, etc.
13. I felt as though I really connected with Corie at Bread & Butter farm. Listening to her talk about her own history, how she got to where she is, her ethics and morals regarding food... It hit home. I also thought Ren was a total hoot! I admire her storytelling, how open she is, and how hard she has worked to get where she is. I admire her sense of awareness and place and how she incorporates that into her business. I also really enjoyed the personal take home assignment over Spring Break.
14. Sense of Place, art and activism, Ren, readings from a Native Daughter and storytelling from Kimmerer, white fragility—to name a few!

Question 3: If we were to do this students-teaching-students class again, what would you change? How did the STS format work for you?

1. Use more concrete lesson plans. A lot of the time the learning space seemed a bit jumbled and unclear in our discussions.
2. The format of the class was helpful for connecting threads of thought with that of others in the class, but I often found that I was not sure how much substance I was getting out of the class other than just reflection.
3. I think sometimes the flow of the class could be worked out better possibly? Most of the time it was good but there were definitely a few classes that could have gone better/if we had more time for our discussions.
4. I loved the STS format. I personally don't love sharing with the entire class as a way to show what I've taken away, so I would implement some end of class maybe wrap up writings that we could hand in to be read or not, but a way to show we've taken something from the class without having to speak that to everyone
5. I would hope that more people would take the class and content more seriously, it would add more to the course
6. I would create more opportunities for students to share/teach each other, like the structured facilitations
7. I would not go through our journals.
8. Some days, time for facilitation was long but other days, people didn't really do anything and the limited time felt rushed and awkward.
9. perhaps... idk I can't think of anything
10. I honestly don't know if I would change anything...? Maybe some more structure variability in the first few weeks of the class.
11. I enjoyed the informal setting and the opportunity to learn from everyone in the class, it felt like a good platform for everyone to bring their own unique interests and talents forward and for us to learn from one another.
12. I loved the format of this class and really felt like everyone was on an equal playing field which is sadly so uncommon in academia.

13. I would want to see more teaching coming from you, even though I know you wanted it to be everyone learning from each other, I feel like you both had a lot of knowledge I haven't gotten yet that would've been nice to learn from. I really liked to no-stress environment and having discussions in multiple ways while being accommodating to everyone. it was a great space for reflection and expression and that really worked for me.
14. I thought this class was very well organized and thought out, not just for an STS class, but really any class. Hands down one of the most productive, enjoyable, and meaningful classes I have taken here at UVM. Perhaps the only thing I would have changed is making sure that the student facilitation was more organized. Some students didn't have time to present.
15. I loved it! I felt like an equally engaged member/co-creator of the learning environment. Especially in the beginning, it felt like a date at times and wanting to make a good first impression, not wanting to step on anyone else's toes, etc. But then you relax and just be yourself and it all falls into place. If I could change anything, maybe just have more explanation on the big assignments. Maybe even a walk-thru on an annotated bib could've helped. The journaling felt like free flow and I enjoyed it immensely.

Question 4: A space for feedback on Giannina and Ella's co-facilitation (constructive and positive)~~

1. I feel like you guys have a lot of knowledge and have so much to share! But a lot of the time it seemed like it wasn't shared and instead relied through discussions and guest lectures.
2. Both of you ladies are very intelligent and I very much enjoyed all of what each of you had to say throughout the semester.
3. You guys are a dynamic duo and I LOVE the way you teach and allow for an open space of dialogue and support in any form. You really allowed room for both to facilitate and I think you guys did an amazing job this semester.
4. I thought you both did a lovely job and worked so well together. I think I've taken a lot from this class and the people I've grown to know so well and I appreciate that with my whole heart.
5. Gi and Ella provided a space for students to think critically about the topics presented, but reflect and do work in their own, creative way. This helped incorporate all learning styles which is much appreciated, especially for a student who is not as comfortable speaking in front of the entire class (better in small groups).
6. Great!!! You did a wonderful job balancing the role of energized and focused
7. There is a weird disconnect between being casual and turning in assigned work. Also, it feels condescending when you keep saying your education is what you make of it as if we aren't taking our educations seriously.
8. Really good job stepping back and going with the flow of the class and also making sure everything gets done that needs to. Not an easy balance
9. You are both so warm and open and your co-facilitation was gr8 :) You work off each other well and are different enough humans that your perspectives brought new thoughts to my brain throughout this semester.
10. You are both such lovely humans and I feel so lucky to have learned from you both throughout the semester. I appreciated the organization and thoughtfulness put into your co-facilitation and the sense of comfort that I could feel as a student in this course.
11. You worked so well together and I thought you did a good job not having one person dominate discussions. You both are also so patient and great listeners which is sooo important! I really can't think of any constructive feedback.

12. I would want to see more teaching from you! Not in a super formal way, but just more solid information and note taking along with our discussions and activities. I think you created a really great space for learning but I feel like I would have benefitted from a little more structure or direction. I really liked how we got to be in the class and outside of it, learn from guests and each other while being exposed to so many cool and important sources around Burlington.
13. You two are so wonderful!!! Your friendship and love for one another without-a-doubt helped break the ice and create this beautiful and comfortable space, whether or not we were in the classroom. Since I met the two of you in previous classes, I had always wanted to learn from you both. I appreciate the focus on eradicating the teacher-student hierarchy, but I felt that made you both hold back a bit. A lot of us wanted to take this class because you two were teaching! :-)
14. Oohlala very engaged, committed and compassionate. I could tell there was so much prep and planning behind every lesson plan. Soulful ladies that I would easily take another class with. Ella has a radiant genius that she uses to empower others and Gi has a spark that brings the conversation to life and welcomes us out of our student shells and into a more participatory learning space. An iconic duo.

Question 5: Going back to our syllabus, which course objectives do you feel were addressed? Please leave any other comments relating to the objectives in the "Other" checkbox area.

1. Cultivate an understanding of sense of place (theoretical and experiential).
14/14 (100%) identified this as "addressed".
2. Use sense of place as a tool for global awareness and personal agency in the Anthropocene and as a part of the environmental paradigm shift.
11/14 (78.6%) identified this as "addressed".
3. Recognize social justice as a crucial dimension within environmentalism and our community.
14/14 (100%) identified this as "addressed".
4. Build a community that honors complexity, intersectionality and transdisciplinarity.
12/14 (85.7%) identified this as "addressed".
5. Support non-hierarchical and alternative knowledge systems.
13/14 (92.9%) identified this as "addressed".
6. Comments: *I am still figuring out what sense of place means for me but this class definitely got me thinking about all this stuff (from 1 co-learner)*

Question 6: The central threads of this course are sense of place, alternative pedagogies and social justice. How, if at all, do you feel they were effectively and consistently woven throughout the class?

1. I think social justice was involved in our class. But I think the concept of alternative pedagogies was more of a conversation than a full on learning path.
2. I think that each thread was well addressed. However, sense of place sometimes got pushed underneath the rug and forgotten about during discussion.
3. They were very effectively woven in and out of the class. These ideas were constantly brought up in all of our classes, and there seemed to be a tie in at the end of class with each of these topics.
4. I thought sense of place was a part of everything we talked about, whether it be ancestral history, current location, where we feel most us, I thought about my sense of place in everything we did.
5. sense of place was looked at in almost all classes, which helped tie the semester together though there were many topics we covered. alternative pedagogies were looked at, such as place-based ed and especially deconstructing the hierarchy that is typically present in a classroom. social justice was also addressed well,

- as we were consistently looking at our impact on the land that was not originally ours, and what we can do to move forward, mitigate the problem and learn from it.
6. These were effectively and consistently woven through the class by reference in course content. All of the assigned readings etc. addressed a different (or multiple) thread
 7. I think they were a part of every topic we explored, even if it wasn't explicit
 8. I feel like we talked about all these topics in every class we had out of necessity. It's hard to talk about the topics that we have without acknowledging these central threads. I think those three threads are a distillation of this class.
 9. Sense of place will always be a working definition or entity for me. I think throughout each week I learned about how I could find my sense of place in many different ways. Additionally, I learned about new ways to learn and a way to integrate sense of place into education all through a working social justice lens.
 10. I think it is always difficult to have discussions about race in a class of mostly/all white identified people. I appreciate you not straying away from these ideas as they are so incredibly important but I always struggle with this concept since there are so many voices being left out of this narrative. I do, however, think that the other themes were effectively woven in throughout the class.
 11. Sense of place was consistently woven through the class material readings and reflections. I think each theme had an idea, even abstract or distant ideas, about sense of place and how the ideas could help one develop sense of place. There was a lot of discussion of social justice and how that goes hand in hand with environmentalism. Alternative pedagogies was woven in, maybe not every week, but in a few classes where we learned about other systems of learning while also practicing these other ways of learning, like hands on, reflection and creative-based.
 12. Sense of place in particular was successfully incorporated to just about every class, alternative pedagogy was evident through the different ways of learning through readings, videos, podcasts, field trips, and guest pollinators. Social justice was also evidently woven into the back of just about every topic. It was something we learned to be aware of in just about everything we discussed.
 13. I think there was so much intention behind the readings and guest speakers that it naturally evoked personal exploration and rumination on the above themes. Alternative pedagogies is not something I think about every day so that was brought to my awareness. There's a lot that happened between writing a manifesto and taking off shoes and sharing food that really transforms classroom space into learning space.

Question 7: How do you feel you are "moving forward?"

1. I consider more.
2. This class taught me the importance of remaining in balance and maintaining acknowledgement of my sense of place in order to grow.
3. I feel a new sense of empowerment and intellect about the world around me. I think this class really lit a fire under my belly and I am excited to see where it takes me.
4. I am moving forward by taking the steps I need to take to make positive healthy changes in my life. This semester, specifically from your class, I began to see myself and who I am and how I feel about who I am currently in a different light than before. This class has helped me realize I want to feel that sense of place, that sense of belonging where I am and in who I am. So I am moving forward by taking the steps towards progress and getting better and even though it is a slow process, it's moving in a good "forward" direction :)
5. I am moving forward as a much stronger individual. This class provided me a space to start unpacking "baggage" that I have let accumulate and weigh me down throughout college. This was the first non

traditional classroom setting that I have been a part of, and I believe more classes should be like this! It will provide a space for students to learn more about themselves through exploration of these deeply reflective topics.

6. Increased personal and global awareness!!! Of systems, histories, differences in experience and exposure to ideas regarding how to live in this complex, somewhat broken world.
7. Getting more connected with my food, getting more involved with the Burlington community.
8. I'm challenging myself to explore different ways of cultivating relationships with place
9. I think this class has helped me find more "space" in my academics. I feel more encouraged to put myself into projects and research and consciously stop leaving parts of myself at the door of a classroom. I feel refreshed heading into my last semester with the optimism that I can make my education what I need it to be.
10. I've done a lot of reflection about myself, my career goals, my learning style, and my mental health throughout this class. I feel like I was pushed to think a little bit deeper than I frequently do about things that maybe I avoid prioritizing. I think this course helped instill a greater sense of self-responsibility in me and in many ways reminded me to take care of me. There are so many things that I love to do and want to do with my life and if there was a common thread from each guest pollinator it was definitely to not try to pour from an empty cup. I have to nourish myself in order to nourish the world and these frequently go hand in hand.
11. Continuing to educate myself about the land I live on, sharing stories with my peers, resisting the status quo (i'm trying but it is so hard especially when in college), continuing to do lots of art/reflective writing, and continuing to figure out what things i am truly passionate about.
12. I think this class opened me up to a lot of new resources and people that I feel connected to and that I would want to work with and think about more in the future. These ideas have helped me continue to develop a sense of place, and while I don't completely know what that is/means yet, I feel like I am on my way to developing a more concrete sense of place--and hearing about those ideas from others really helped.
13. Grounded, humbled, and connected. I feel noticeably more full of knowledge and have acquired alternative ways of thinking and new views on certain topics. I have always had a pretty solid personal awareness, but I feel a more intimate connection to myself.
14. Moving forward: two important, powerful words when put together. I feel like I am slowly learning to take more time. haha! I have a habit of steamrolling through my education but now I am inspired to let some of the seeds from this class germinate a little longer. Some are sprouting into new ideas and exploring sense of place in the physical body. Some are still under the ground. That's okay. Decolonizing the mind is a long and arduous project that this course has helped me with. Rather than ripping everything out from this harvest, and packing down the soil, preparing for a new semester in the fall...I am trying to sit with these ideas more and explore them this summer. I've returned home to CT (spoiler this is no longer anonymous haha). I've started healing some family wounds in this lifetime. Speaking of alternative pedagogies—I'm challenging a system that says I need to be in class to get credit when that does not always support my brain and body. Aaaaand I'm looking forward to my final expression, writing poetry, and starting a compost project at home.

Question 8: This is a space for any needed additional comments :))

1. Thanks for a great semester! :-)
2. I LOVE YOU and wish you both nothing but the best in your futures! You are such wonderful humans:-)

3. I am so grateful for you and this class and I appreciate your passions and hearts so very much!
4. I had a wonderful time in this course!
5. <3 thank you for all of the hard work you both put in to make this such a positive experience!! there were so many big topics addressed, I feel steadier in my understanding of MY place, here
6. u folks rock like a sailboat
7. This class was a dream! Thank you for putting your hearts into this <3
8. Thank you so much for such a wonderful semester. You both are such rockstars and are going to do amazing things post-college.
9. I loved having a open atmosphere where it was safe to share ideas...and knowing that we should be doing that in this classroom, taking our stories with us instead of leaving them behind the classroom door. While I think the class structure was a little to relaxed sometimes, I feel like I gained a lot from being in the environment every week. Thank you for creating this for us!
10. Thank you both for being you and for making this class possible! Easily the highlight of my academic week.

Takeaways

△ deltas: constructive feedback

- ❖ More structure with the class plans
- ❖ More informational content / directly from us as co-facilitators
- ❖ Introducing and talking about assignments more
- ❖ Being really clear about expectations so that folks can retain self-driven agency, without too much pressure
- ❖ The objectives 2, 4 and 5 were not felt to be “addressed” by all of the co-learners

+ plusses: positive feedback

- + Everyone LOVED the guest pollinators and field visits
- + Appreciation for the structure that supported reflection and different ways of expression
- + How themes/threads/methods were interconnected
- + Everyone agreed that sense of place and social justice were addressed constantly
- + How we actually supported multiple forms of engagement
- + Informal, co-learning, nonhierarchical community was felt
- + Provided space for critical thinking & self-driven learning
- + Balance of focus and energy !
- + Co-learners thought that we as co-facilitators worked really well together (we agreed!)