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# Syllabus: Sustainable Cities/Community Development

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**ENVIRDES 591b (232) Sustainable [Cities] Community Development: Spring 2015**  
*Urban Regeneration Beyond Subsistence vs. Superabundance* TTh 11:30-12:45, French 209  
Mark Hamin [mhamin@larp.umass.edu](mailto:mhamin@larp.umass.edu) 545-6608, 108 Hills N Office Hours: T 10-11am  
TAs: Catherine Bryars [cbryars@student.umass.edu](mailto:cbryars@student.umass.edu), Brandon Gibbs [bgibbs@larp.umass.edu](mailto:bgibbs@larp.umass.edu)

**Goals:** ‘Sustainability’ is a concept and approach that has become more prevalent in ecological, economic and equity discussions over the last several decades, yet its historical and cultural roots are far more extensive than is generally recognized. This course aims to examine + evaluate the core *principles* and *practices* identified by advocates as well as adversaries of sustainability, and address a range of questions related to sustainability: the appropriate spatial and temporal *scales* of sustainable planning and design; the full *scope* of which systems and standards are best suited for achieving sustainable outcomes; the relative *roles* of ‘high’ vs. ‘low’/‘hard’ vs. ‘soft’ science and technology paths; expertise ↔ efficiency ↔ equity; individual vs. collective *responsibilities*; and the *interdependence* of ecology, economy, empowerment/engagement in civic revitalization.

**Course Readings** (available at Amherst Bookstore, 8 Main St., or on limited reserve in LARP)

Stephen Wheeler and Timothy Beatley, eds. *The Sustainable Urban Development Reader*.

3<sup>rd</sup> ed. NY: Routledge, 2014 [*also noted as W&B, eds. for Part 7 exercises; see below*]

Mark Roseland, *Toward Sustainable Communities: Resources for Citizens and Their*

*Governments*. Stony Creek, CT: New Society Publishers, 2012 (4th ed.)

**Evaluation** of student work will rely upon the following weighted criteria:

10% for attendance, preparation and participation (reading, discussing, in-class work)

60% for weekly exercises completed outside of class (12-14 exercises, up to 5 pts. each)

30% for self-designed final project (6 pts. proposal, 9 pts. progress report, 18 pts. final)

Given the importance of each of these criteria for evaluating students’ course work, anyone who needs to miss a class meeting, turn in an assignment after deadline, or request other arrangements must address such matters with the instructor as far in advance as possible. Only urgent reasons or unusual circumstances will receive consideration in such cases. Please familiarize yourself, if you have not already, with university policies regarding plagiarism, disability, health issues, etc.

[www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/downloads/CodeofStudentConduct.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/downloads/CodeofStudentConduct.pdf)

The University of Massachusetts is committed to providing equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or other learning disability on file with UMass Disability Services <http://www.umass.edu/disability/>, you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations to help you better succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me at the start of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

It is expected that all students will abide by the Student Honor Code and the Academic Honesty Policy (available at the Academic Honesty Office (Ombud's Office) or online at [http://www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/) <http://www.umass.edu/ombuds/honesty.php/>

Sanctions for acts of dishonesty range from receiving a course grade of F, probation or suspension for a period of time, or dismissal. Students have the right of appeal through the academic honesty board.

We are all responsible for maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning and discussion. In order to assure that we all have the opportunity to benefit from our time in class, please fully review and respect these standards for creating a reciprocally responsible learning environment.

- The instructor and students will recognize and respect each other.
- Respect may include appropriate humor, enjoyment, or other indications of a comfortable and pleasant classroom community.
- We will be on time for class: no late arrivals and no packing up early.
- We will avoid disruptions during class such as loud noises, private conversations, reading newspapers, speaking on cell phones or texting, using a laptop for something other than current classroom work, and, of course, sleeping.
- We will avoid negative language that is considered racist, sexist, homophobic, etc. or in other ways may exclude or disrespect members of our campus and classroom community.

Attendance is not mandatory, but is factored into the participation grade. The instructor reserves the right to give an incomplete or F for any student with over four unexcused absences, and will make exceptions only for medical and family emergencies or other pre-approved reasons. The letter grade equivalents to the numerical scores are:

> 94 = A; 90-94 = A-; 87-90 = B+; 83-87 = B; 80-83 = B-; 77-80 = C+; 73-77 = C;  
70-73 = C-; 63-70 = D; <63 = F

Although you will be evaluated for the overall quality of your work, involvement and engagement with class readings, and assignments, here is a basic breakdown of what will be expected of you in order to do well in the course (116 potential points total, grade out of 100):

*Attendance, preparation and participation (10%):* There are 26 class meetings over the course of the semester. You will basically get ½ point for each class you attend, for a potential total of 13 points overall, so you have a cushion toward the 10%. Attendance will be marked according to the assignments you turn in or pick up. We will circulate an attendance sheet for the meetings when no assignment is due; be sure to look for that in class. Because this is ‘low-hanging fruit’, it can help raise your grade overall if you attend regularly and turn in work on time.

*Weekly exercises (60%):* Part 7 of the Wheeler and Beatley, eds. collection has 14 different exercises, varying in scale, scope and focus of work involved. A number of them *as written* are intended to require extensive research, several phases, teamwork during class time, etc. Because of the size and organization of this course, you will **not** do these exercises **strictly as written**; we will adapt them to be completed individually as 1-2 page assignments completed mostly outside class roughly once or twice a week. You can basically earn up to 5 points for each assignment, for a potential total of 70 points overall, so you have a cushion toward the 60%.

*Self-designed final project (30%):* This is your opportunity to take initiative and to pursue work on sustainable practices based on your own interests and goals. You will select a topic/thematic focus, either from a list provided by the instructor, or your own choice with instructor approval. The focus of your project research is to identify and address key sustainability issues related to our course readings and lectures. You will then write a 1-2 page proposal detailing your project strategy in terms of genre (e.g., case study, comprehensive review, critical analysis, correlated comparison), format/medium (e.g., paper, slideshow, storyboard, portfolio, map, model, multi-media), audience, and goals. Grades for the assignment will consist of three parts: a potential 6 points for the proposal; 9 points for a progress report, prototype, draft or outline of the project several weeks later; 18 points for the final product you submit -- a potential of 33 points overall, so you have a cushion toward the 30%. ***Please aim for your project development process and product to be transformative and integrative relative to your understanding of sustainability!***

**Part I Introduction and Orientation**

<b>Week 1</b>	1/20/15	<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Groundrules and Guidelines</b>
	1/22/15	<b>Representations</b>	<i>[video excerpts]</i>
	Readings:	Roseland, Ch. 2; Howard, Calthorpe (Part 2) in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.	
<b>Week 2</b>		<b>Determinations</b>	<b>What Is (Not) Sustainability?</b>
	1/27/15	<b>History</b>	
	Readings:	Lewis Mumford, Ian McHarg in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.	
	1/29/15	<b>Culture</b>	
	Readings:	Jane Jacobs, Allan Jacobs in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.	
	Assignment:	<i>Cognitive Mapping Exercise due (see W&amp;B, eds., Part Seven)</i>	
<b>Week 3</b>	2/03/15	<b>Principles</b>	<b>Theories, Frameworks, Definitions</b>
	Readings:	Roseland, Ch. 1; Meadows et al., WCED, UN Rio in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.	
	Assignment:	<i>Definitions of Sustainable Development Exercise due (W&amp;B, eds.)</i>	
	2/05/15	<b>Practices</b>	<b>Tools, Techniques, Metrics</b>
	Readings:	Roseland, Ch. 16; Maclaren, Wackernagel/Rees, Hsu in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.	
	Assignment:	<i>Sustainability Indicators Exercise due (see W&amp;B, eds.)</i>	
<b>Week 4</b>	2/10/15	<b>Ecology</b>	
	Readings:	Leopold, Spirn, Beatley (Part 2) in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.	
	2/12/15	<b>Economy</b>	
	Readings:	Roseland, Ch. 12; Frank, Daly in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.	
	Assignment:	<i>Economic Development Exercise due (see W&amp;B, eds.) Based on one of these readings: Daly, Pearce and Barbier, Korten, or Renner et al. in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.</i>	

**Part II**      **Systems and Standards**

**Week 5**      [2/17/15      *University Holiday; Monday schedule followed; no class meeting]*

2/19/15      **Expertise and Experience**

Readings:      Roseland, Ch.3; McKibben, Bulkeley et al. in W&B, eds.

**Week 6**      2/24/15      **Energy**

Readings:      Roseland, Ch. 7;  
Girardet, Brown, Leonard in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.

Assignment:      *Personal Footprint/Household Audit Exercise due (see W&B, eds.)*

2/26/15      **Waste**

Readings:      Roseland, Ch. 6;  
Lyle, Pacala and Socolow in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.

**Week 7**      3/03/15      **Water**

Readings:      Roseland, Ch. 5; Riley, GliECK in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.

Assignment:      *Waterway Mapping Exercise due (see W&B, eds.)*

[3/05/15      *LARP midsemester studio presentations: no class meeting]*

**Week 8**      3/10/15      **Air and Land**

Readings:      Roseland, Chs. 9, 13;  
Gehl, Wheeler (Part 2) in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.

3/12/15      **Food**

Readings:      Roseland, Ch. 4; Pollan, Shiva in Wheeler and Beatley, eds

Assignment:      *Firsthand Environmental Analysis Exercise due (see W&B, eds.)*

[3/16-20/15      *University Spring Recess; no class meetings]*

<b>Week 9</b>	3/24/15	<b>Transportation</b>
	Readings:	Roseland, Ch. 8; Cervero, Newman and Kenworthy in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.
	Assignment:	<i>Self-designed project proposal due</i>
	3/26/15	<b>Housing and Construction</b>
	Readings:	Roseland, Ch. 10; Eisenberg and Yost, USGBC, Sharp in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.
	Assignment:	<i>Ecological Site Plan Exercise due (see W&amp;B, eds.)</i>
<b>Part III</b>	<b>Scale and Scope</b>	
<b>Week 10</b>	3/31/15	<b>Green Design and Architecture</b>
	Readings:	Roseland, Ch. 11; McDonough, Vale and Vale, Steiner in W&B, eds.
	4/02/15	<b>International Comparisons</b>
	Readings:	Solecki et al.; and Part 4 (choose one reading) in W&B, eds.
	Assignment:	<i>International Development Exercise due (see W&amp;B, eds.)</i>
<b>Week 11</b>	4/07/15	<b>Building or Site Scale; Neighborhood or District Scale</b>
	Readings:	see Part 6 in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.
	Assignment:	<i>Neighborhood Planning Exercise due (see W&amp;B, eds.)</i>
	4/09/15	<b>City and Regional Scale</b>
	Readings:	see Part 6 in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.
	Assignment:	<i>Regional Vision Exercise due (see W&amp;B, eds.)</i>
<b>Part IV</b>	<b>Security and Sovereignty, Virtue and Vision</b>	
<b>Week 12</b>	4/14/15	<b>Ecology/Economy/Equity/Engagement: Place Matters</b>
	Readings:	Perlman and Sheehan, Shuman in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.
	4/16/15	<b>Ecology/Economy/Equity/Engagement: Place, Race, Class, Gender, Generation, Ability, etc. Matters</b>

Readings: Bullard, Hayden in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.  
Assignment: *Self-designed project progress report due*

**Week 13**      4/21/15      **Ecology/Economy/Equity/Engagement: Marketplace Matters**

Readings: Hawken, Roseland with Soots in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.  
Assignment: *Role Playing Exercise due (see W&B, eds.)*

4/23/15      **Reconstructing Community and Democracy**

Readings: Roseland, Ch. 14, 17; Svedin et al in Wheeler and Beatley, eds.  
Assignment: *Mapping Your Own Block Exercise due (see W&B, eds.)*

**Week 14**      4/28/15      **The Future(s) of Sustainability**

Readings: Roseland, Ch. 18;  
Callenbach, Le Guin, Wheeler (Part 5), Wheeler and Beatley, eds.  
Assignment: *Future Visions Exercise due (see W&B, eds.)*

**Week 15**      5/05/15      **[Optional TBD] gallery display and discussion of final projects**

Assignment: *Self-designed final project submissions due*