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Office Hours: Tues. 5-6, Wed. 1-5 (other times by appointment)

Course Purposes and Learning Outcomes:
“Green pastures and lush forests, strong and friendly neighborhoods, prosperous businesses and family-support jobs, good schools and a healthy environment these are the qualities we all want for now and generations to come.” This quote is from Maryland’s Governor Parris Glendening when he launched the state’s Smart Growth initiative which has been nationally recognized for its sustainability policies. What is “sustainability?” It is a concept that sounds more difficult than it really is. What it comes down to is:

• What is the quality of life for all members (human and non-human) of a community now?
• How does the quality of life compare to life in the past and in the future?
• How do we measure quality of life?
• Do people have good jobs that pay for their basic needs?
• Is environmental quality a top concern?
• How involved are people in making their community a better place to work, play, and live?

Creating sustainable communities requires the we understand how our needs and desires are intertwined: a healthy economy helps to make housing affordable; environmental quality affects human health; well educated workers are necessary for a healthy economy, etc. There are five purposes for this course including:

• To give each student a common understanding of sustainable communities;
• To help students see how your professional and personal concerns are linked to other issues in ways you may not have considered before;
• To show students the many ways a community can move toward sustainability;
• To provide students with materials and information that they can use in helping their community achieve sustainability; and
• To provide students with examples of how other communities are working on issues of sustainability.

In addition to the above course content objectives, the course will offer students the following knowledge and skill development learning outcomes:

• To identify and analyze spatial and socioeconomic patterns in relation to sustainable communities;
• To assess critically a community’s capacity to achieve and maintain a sustainable environment, economy and society;
• To assess and propose alternative solutions to the problems that inhibit sustainability;
• To learn and employ research methods and theory that investigate the realtionship between human development and sustainability;
• To develop communication skills, both written and oral; and
• To improve your ability to work and interact with others in a team approach.
URSI 150 Syllabus (p.2)

Course Requirements
This course is a survey of the issues involved in achieving sustainable communities. The course format will include lectures, student presentations, group discussions and exercises, educational videos, exams, reading and writing assignments.

Each student will submit the following products:

1. **Chapter Summary Reports** – In each class meeting, students will discuss and submit one page summary of each chapter of assigned readings. This is due on the date the chapter is discussed in class. Late papers will not be accepted. The topic of these papers should be a highlight of main issues raised in the chapter and your perceptions of the assigned chapter (you may agree or disagree with the author). Each one page chapter paper is worth two points or a total of 30 points.

2. **Analytical Paper on Sustainable MSU** – Each student will write one 5 page, double spaced paper and participate in an oral team presentation. In this assignment you will take the Sustainable Community Building Blocks described in Chapters 4-12 of the Roseland text and apply them to the Mankato campus and the campus community (e.g. students, faculty, staff). The emphasis of this paper will be on observation (including a campus walking tour) and creative analysis of the sustainability issues facing the campus. In your paper you should respond to the following points:
   a. Issue identification: Identify 3 campus sustainability issues or problems that you observed.
   b. Remedies: Identify at least two strategies for addressing each of these issues or problems.
   c. Challenges: What are the implementation challenges involved in implementing each of the strategies you listed in b above? Specifically, discuss cost, safety, time, convenience, student, faculty, staff reaction.
   d. Mitigation: What are possible mitigation procedures to minimize challenges identified in c above (e.g. education for students, faculty, staff, lower cost of remedies).
   e. Recommendations: What is your sustainability strategy for MSU? Identify the issue that you would address first and the strategy you would employ? Explain rationale for strategy.
   f. Total number of points possible is 30 points. In addition to the report, an in-class exercise will require students to join a team and produce a common presentation of findings.

3. **Three in-class examinations.** Total of 75 points (or 25 points per exam)
4. **Extra Credit** – Extra credit can be obtained by completing and submitting in-class exercises (1 point per exercise).

Grade Breakdown: The final grade will be determined based on the total number of points earned over the course. The maximum number of points possible are 135 points (excluding extra credit) which will be distributed as follows: 3 Tests=75 pts., Analytical Paper=30 pts., Chapter Summaries=30 pts.

Accommodations
Every attempt will be made to accommodate students with qualified disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability, please see me as early as possible to discuss the necessary accommodations, and/or contact the Disability Services Office at (507)389-2825 or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY).
Supplemental Readings/Web Sites
If you wish to further explore topics and issues raised in your textbook, the following books and websites may be helpful:

Books
OUR ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT by Mathis Wackernagel and William Rees. 1996.
G. Haughton and C. Hunter. SUSTAINABLE CITIES. 1994
D. Reid. bSUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. 1995

Web Sites
See Appendix in Toward Sustainable Communities textbook (beginning on page 216).
Some of the most significant sustainability websites are: www.un.org/esa/sustdeve (United Nation’s sustainable development website), www.sustainable_doe.gov (U.S. Dept. of Energy’s sustainable development website), www.worldbank.org/poverty/scapital (The World Bank’s social capital website)
For Minnesota web sites, see:
www.me3.org (Minnesotans for Energy Efficient Economy), www.misa.umn.edu (sustainable agriculture),
www.mpdp.state.mn.us (Minnesota Sustainable Development Initiative), www.nextstep.state.mn.us - (Minnesota Sustainable Community Initiative), www.sustainabledesignguide.umn.edu - (sustainable architecture), www.moea.state.mn.us (Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance)

COURSE SCHEDULE

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Required Readings:
All required readings are found in the course textbook which is available for purchase from the University Bookstore. The textbook is TOWARD SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES by Mark Roseland.