



Minnesota State University

Fall, 2009

URBS 150: Sustainable Communities: Section 2

Class meets on Mondays 2:00 – 4:45pm in 206 Morris Hall

Instructor: Raymond **Asomani-Boateng**

Office: 106B Morris Hall

Office Hours: Mondays:

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Description & Objectives

This course will be an investigation into sustainability in North America that intends to give a broad overview of the meaning of sustainability, sustainable places, and the future of making memorable, livable, urban places. We will analyze “community” as a concept and as organizing system for promoting sustainability. Current environmental, social, and economic problems facing North American communities will be examined within the context of sustainability. We will incorporate readings, videos, and careful, innovative projects of how to create sustainable communities. Global sustainable issues emphasizing on developing countries will be covered.

Course Requirements

- Thorough engagement with assigned readings prior to class.
- Active participation in class discussions.

Examinations

To give you an opportunity to synthesize the many concepts, issues, and debates covered in the course, there will be a mid-semester examination on and final examination on. These exams will cover lectures, class discussions, class assignments, readings and videos.

Required Texts: (Available at MSU Bookstore)

Timothy Beatley and Kristy Manning (1997). *The Ecology of a Place: Planning for the Environment, Economy and Community*. Island Press, Washington D.C.

Classroom Policies

Entering class late is *strongly discouraged*. However, if you have a scheduling or work related-problem, please talk to the Instructor. Leaving class early, except under special circumstances, or upon completion of an exam, or under a previously approved arrangement with the instructor is against classroom policy.

All students are expected to ask questions and actively engage in classroom discussions. Frivolous conversations between students however *will not be tolerated*.

Grading:

Course grades will be based on the following:

Reaction papers	10 points
Class exercises	50 points
Mid Semester Examination	20 points
Final Examination	20 points
Attendance & Participation	<u>10 points</u>
Total	102 points

Grading Scale:

A+: 97-100

A: 93-96

A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89

B: 83-86

B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79

C: 73-76

C-: 70-72

D+: 67-69

D: 63-66

D-: 60-62

All assignments are due on the assigned date. Please note that late papers will be accepted, but a partial credit will be applied to any papers turned in after the due date. The late penalty for the assignments can be waived only with a written note from a medical professional.

MSU provides students with disabilities reasonable accommodation to participate in educational programs, activities or services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodation to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should first register with the Office of Disability Services, located in 0132 Memorial Library, telephone 389-2825, TDD 711 and then contact me as soon as possible.

READINGS AND LECTURE THEMES

Week 1: Introduction

Monday: August 24

- Course introduction:
- Grading, readings, and requirements.

Class exercise (*5 points*)

Future Visions

Definition of sustainable development

- Review of the concept of sustainable developments

Readings: Ch.1: Ecology of Place

Week 2: Sustainable Places

Monday: August 31

- Envisioning sustainable places
- Ecological Footprint

Class exercise on Ch. 1 of Ecology of Place (**8 points**)

Readings: Ch. 2: Ecology of Place

Week 3: Labor Day (No Class)

Monday: September 7

Week 4: Municipal Solid Waste Management

Monday: September 14

- Solid waste management
- Landfill mining
- Sustainable solid waste management practices
- Mankato Integrated SWM

Week 5: Municipal Solid Waste Management cont'd

Monday: September 21

- Video: *Global Dumping Grounds*
- Discussion of video and current cases of hazardous waste dumping in Africa

Reading: Trans-boundary dumping of hazardous waste@

http://www.eoearth.org/article/Transboundary_dumping_of_hazardous_waste

Week 6: Energy

Monday: September 28

- Conventional energy sources
- Sustainable energy forms
- Video: *The Three Gorges*
- *Reaction paper (5 points)*

Week 7: Greening the City

Monday: October 5

- Urban Green Spaces
- Urban Agriculture in North America

Class exercise: *Based on Ch. 4 of Ecology of Place and Benefits of Urban trees (8 points)*

Readings: *Ch. 4: Ecology of Place, The Benefits of Urban trees*

Week 8: Urban Sprawl & Growth Management

Monday: October 12

- Urban sprawl
- Growth management
- Video: *Subdivide and Conquer*

Readings: Ten things wrong with sprawl

Week 9: Mid-semester examinations

Monday: October 5

- *Mid-semester examinations*

Week 10: Planning and designing sustainable Communities

Monday

- Low impact development (LID)
- Planned Unit Development (PUD)
- Class exercise: Ahwannee principles (**5 points**)

Week 11: Sensitive environments

Monday

- Wetlands
- Flood plains
- Video: *Vanishing wetlands*
- *Reaction paper (5 points)*

Week 12: War and Sustainability

Monday

- Video: Spoils of war
- Discussion of video

Week 13: Urban Form and Sustainability

Monday

- Sustainable Urban Forms

Class exercise: Ch.3 of Ecology of Place (**8points**)

Week 14: Brownfield's

Monday

- Brownfield's & urban sustainability

Movie: Cleveland: Confronting Decline in an American City

Week 15: Civic Community

Monday

- Class exercise: Ch. 6 of Ecology of Place (**8 points**)
- Audit (**8 points**): Due the following week

Week 16: Final exams, review and course evaluation

Monday:

- Review and course evaluation

Final examination