

CIRP 4320 Sustainable Communities

Tuesday 3:00-5:50pm, University Hall Room 8

Instructor

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Teaching Assistant

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Course Description

This course explores broad environmental and social issues in sustainable communities. Through weekly service learning activities, the course serves as a laboratory for working with governmental and non-governmental organizations in the DFW area and developing issue-based, action research projects to solve real-world problems in our communities. Potential topics include urban water management, food and resources, wildlife conservation, native landscaping, waste management, green building, renewable energy, housing diversity, alternative transportation and sustainable community planning and design. This course combines lecture, discussion, site visits and collaborative team work for service learning projects.

Learning Outcomes

- Understand broad environmental and social issues in building sustainable communities
- Identify and analyze a specific problem of interest in our communities and design action research projects
- Acquire an effective problem solving ability and an ability to develop implementation strategies through various hands-on activities and service learning projects
- Increase one's environmental literacy and sense of environmental stewardship
- Enhance one's social responsibility and civic engagement

Textbook

[Required]

- Roseland, M. 2012. *Toward Sustainable Communities: Resources for Citizens and Their Governments*, 4th Edition. Gabriola Island, Canada: New Society Publishers. (Reserved in the Central Library, 3 hours Library Use Only, Call Number: HT169.C2 R67 2012)

Additional readings will be distributed by instructor and will be available on course's Blackboard.

Descriptions of major assignments and examinations

Grades will reflect class participation, individual reflection essays and a research group project. Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels.

• Class Participation (30%)

Participation is the key of this course. Students are expected to attend class, actively participate in class activities and the service learning projects, and consistently demonstrate that they have completed the readings through weekly response papers.

- Attendance & in-class participation (10%): In case of absence due to an illness or emergency related reasons, the attendance could be substituted up to three times by completing additional assignments given by the instructor.
- Class preparation (10%): For each lecture (totaling 10 topics, see the course schedule on page 3), students are expected to submit a brief written response (about a paragraph or two no longer than a half page) to the assigned weekly readings by 11pm Monday via Blackboard, (a day prior to each class.) This brief response must contain what you newly learned from the reading and at least one question for discussion.
- Peers' & Host organization's evaluation of one's contribution to the service learning project (10%): At the end of the semester, a community supervisor and each student will evaluate their individual group members' contribution to the project.

• Individual Reflection Essays (35%)

Student must submit four reflection essays: three essays on the class topics and one essay on the service learning experience. Students are expected to submit three written reflection essay on class topics discussing the interrelations between the topic and the literature that was assigned for that class. In addition to topic essays, students must submit one written reflection essay on their service learning experience (the guideline on BB). All essays should be written in single spaced.

Reflections on classes

- Essay 1 (10%, 1.5 page, due: September 27): Lecture #1,2, and 3 (W3 to W5)
- Essay 2 (10%, 2 pages, due: November 1): Lecture #4,5,6, and 7 (W6 to W10)
- Essay 3 (10%, 1.5 page, due: November 20): Lecture #8,9, and 10 (W11 to W13)

Reflection on service learning

- Essay 4: (5%, 1 page, due: November 22): personal service learning experience for the whole semester

• Group Action Research – Service Learning Project (35%)

Throughout the semester, each group will conduct an action research project collaborating with local organizations related to the assigned topic. After students sign up for the group based on their interests on September 4th, each group will have weekly group meetings in class to report individual's progress on the previous week, discuss the next steps, and assign individual work for that week. Additionally, each group will work with the community partner on-site one hour

per week on average. Deliverables of the project are: a 10-minute midterm progress presentation, a 10-minute final presentation with a two-minute documentary film that fosters public awareness of the assigned topic and a 4-6 page (single spaced) final paper(additional graphic communications such as maps, figures, charts, etc., are highly recommended as an attachment). Students' contribution to this project is evaluated by group members and a project advisor from the local organizations. The final paper must be submitted to SafeAssign in Blackboard in order for students to view and correct any evidence of plagiarism.

- Midterm progress (10%, October 14): a 10-minute midterm progress presentation;
- Final Presentation (10%, December 2): a 10-minute final project presentation and a two-minute documentary film that fosters public awareness of the assigned topic.
- Final 4-6 page paper (10%, Initial Due - November 26 and Final Due - December 9): Each group must submit their completed paper (not a draft) by November 26 and will receive feedback from the instructor by December 2nd. Each group must edit their paper by incorporating comments and submit the final paper by December 9.

*** Incomplete grading "I" or extensions are not available in this class unless severe illness or documented extenuating circumstances justify it.**

Schedule

Week	Dates	Schedule	Readings (BB=available on Blackboard)	Major Assignments Due
1	8/26	Class Overview		
2	9/2	Introducing community partners and projects	Roseland Ch. 1; Condon Ch. 1 (BB)	Sign up for groups
3	9/9	1. Urban Hydrology and Water-conserving Landscape	Roseland Ch. 5	Essay 1 (Sept. 27)
4	9/16	2. Urban Agriculture	Roseland Ch. 4	
5	9/23	3. Wildlife Conservation & Environmental Stewardship	TBA (BB)	
6	9/30	4. Solar Energy & Green Building	Roseland Ch. 7 & 11	
7	10/7	5. Resource & Waste Management	Roseland, Ch. 6	
8	10/14	Mid-project review		
9	10/21	6. Field Trip: Fort Worth Water Treatment	TBA	
10	10/28	7. Field Trip: Arlington Landfill	TBA	Essay 2 (Nov. 1)
11	11/4	8. Affordable & Diverse Housing	Roseland Ch. 10; Condon Ch. 6 (BB)	Essay 3 (Nov. 20) Essay 4 (Nov. 22) Final Paper Initial Submission (Nov. 26)
12	11/11	9. Alternative Transportation	Roseland Ch. 8; TBA (BB)	
13	11/18	10. Sustainable Community Planning & Design	Roseland Ch. 2 & 9	
14	11/25	Final project draft check-up		
15	12/2	Final project presentation		

			Final Group Presentation (Dec. 2) & Final Paper Submission (Dec. 9)
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**As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course.*

Other General Notes

Attendance Policy: At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. As the instructor of this course, I have established the attendance policy described on page 2. Students have the responsibility to fully participate. This participation includes, but is not exclusive to, attendance, class discussions, the individual evaluating and sharing of research that is relevant to their own future career interest as it relates to sustainable communities, and preparing for and participating in team presentations. As a rule, undergraduate students should expect to spend three to four hours preparing for each hour spent in class (i.e. for a three hour class each week, 9 to 12 hours of preparation). If a student does miss a class, they need to contact the instructor ASAP to determine what, if any impact there is to his/her final grade.

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/ses/fao>).

Americans with Disabilities Act: The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Title IX: The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.

Academic Integrity: All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code: *I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence. I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

Instructors may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University.

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as lecture, seminar, or laboratory shall be directed to complete a Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located down the hall to the right and across from our classroom. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist handicapped individuals.