ENST 225.01: Community and Environment

Brianna M. Ewert

The University of Montana, ewert@post.harvard.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation
http://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/1365

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Course Syllabi at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mail.lib.umt.edu.
All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts... The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land. —Aldo Leopold

No real public life is possible except among people who are engaged in the project of inhabiting a place. —Daniel Kemmis

Purpose and Overview:
This course provides a social science introduction to environmental studies with a focus on the community level. We begin by studying several core concepts: community, place, citizenship, and sustainability. We will then use these concepts as we turn our attention to several local and global resource issues that people in this particular place and elsewhere are grappling with. We will consider Bill McKibben’s argument for a “deep economy,” which is the challenging notion that society needs to move beyond “growth” as the ultimate goal and turn more towards a localized economy in order to address our environmental predicament. We will also look at what cities (including Missoula) are doing to address problems such as energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and then conclude with discussions about hope in hot times.

Specific Course Objectives:
1. Develop students’ understanding of core concepts and the localization movement through an exam and writing assignments.
2. Develop students’ analytical skills through critical reflection on and synthesis of course material.
3. Develop students’ written communication skills through periodic essays and other assignments, and oral communication skills through participation in class discussions.
4. Encourage students’ sense of exploration through several research exercises.

Course Readings and Materials:
Please purchase a pack of 3x5 cards and bring one to each class you attend (see below).

There is one required text:
All other reading materials on this syllabus are on the Moodle site for this course. It is organized by week.

**Class Participation and Attendance:** Hopefully, you will find it instructive to attend all class sessions. To encourage you in this, you will receive one point for each session you attend (40 of 42 sessions). Please come prepared – you will get so much more out of the course if you have done the reading and engaged with it.

During each class, you will write a one or two sentence comment or question pertaining to the content of the lecture or to the reading assigned for that particular day. Write your comment/question on a 3x5 card; please purchase a pack for this purpose. Write your name at the top of the card. At the end of class, deposit your card on the front desk. These comments help us know what questions you have, which issues you are thinking about, and that you attended class.

If you are sick or have an emergency, please take care of yourself. There is no way to make up for missed attendance.

My teaching style is quite interactive, which means I urge you to speak up and share your questions and ideas in class. I understand that this is not easy for everyone, but I encourage you to try. I may give you a little extra credit at the end of the term if you are an active participant.

**Exam and Analytic Essays:** There will be an exam on the concepts covered in the first unit of the course and an analytic essay for each of the other two units. The exam will be designed to ensure your understanding of the concepts introduced at the start of the course, and we will then use these concepts as we proceed. The purpose of the essays is to help you think critically about what you read and hear in lectures, and to synthesize the material we are covering in each section of the course. In lieu of a final exam, the third and final essay will ask you to pull together themes from throughout the course, with particular emphasis on the third unit of readings and lectures.

Consistent and careful reading of all of the assigned materials is essential to engaging fully in this course. In addition, lectures and guest speakers will supplement the readings, so taking detailed notes during class is important.

At least two weeks before the essays are due, I will distribute the question(s) that I want you to cover. These papers should be five pages (plus references), typed, and double-spaced with normal margins and fonts. Please convey your ideas concisely and clearly. Grading will be based on your demonstration of engagement with the relevant course materials and content, as well as your ability to support your argument with evidence. In addition, your writing will be evaluated based on how well organized, grammatically correct, and completely referenced it is. More specific guidance will be provided. These papers must be produced individually. See note on plagiarism below.

**Exercises:** During each section of the course, you will have an opportunity to learn by doing research and/or exploration on your own. You will write up your results and reflections in short papers. Instructions for each exercise will be given around the start of each section.

**Late Papers:** You each have two opportunities to “get off the hook,” which permits you to submit any written assignment late, except for the final essay. If you do not turn in an essay or exercise assignment on time for whatever reason, you may turn it in as much as one week late – but no later than that – and receive five fewer points for the essays and three fewer for the exercises than you would have had it been turned in on time (see grading below for what this means in the long run). For example, if your essay would have normally received a B, you will receive a C. This option does not apply to the extra credit
papers or to the final essay assignment due during the exam period on Dec. 10.

**Extra Credit:** You may attend one or two public lectures relevant to our course and receive extra credit for it by writing a 1-2 page, double-spaced reaction paper. Options will be announced in class, along with the due date for the reaction paper (typically two class sessions after the public lecture). If you would like to propose one that you know of, please ask Neva whether it will qualify in advance and let others know about the opportunity. In your reaction paper, you might do one or more of the following: (1) discuss why the talk inspired you or shifted your thinking in some way; (2) critically analyze the main argument(s) of the talk; (3) relate the talk to things we have read or discussed in class; (4) explain why you disagree or agree with something that was said; and/or (5) discuss errors or contradictions you discovered. In grading these papers, we will look simply to see whether you grappled in a meaningful way with the ideas presented.

**Plagiarism:** Academic honesty and integrity are essential. The student code of conduct expressly forbids plagiarism, the representation of another person’s work as your own. Any student whom I suspect of plagiarizing will be subject to the procedures and consequences described in the code.

**Writing Center:** Writing is a critically important skill. I encourage you to seek help from the tutors at the writing center, 144 Liberal Arts Building. Take the assignment instructions for each essay with you! Check out: www.umt.edu/writingcenter for more information. You will probably need to schedule an appointment to meet with them, so be sure to build that into your plans.

**Advising:** If you need assistance, Sydney, Stephanie, Melissa, and I encourage you to come see us during our office hours, listed at the top of the syllabus. To meet with Brianna during office hours, please sign up for a meeting time on the sheet across from her office in Rankin. Please make an appointment with us only if our regular office hours are impossible for you.

**Grading:**
- Exam on concepts (up to 50 points) 50
- Two analytic essays (up to 50 points each) 100
- Four exercises (up to 20 points each) 80
- Class participation and attendance (one point per class) 40
- Extra credit – reaction papers on public lectures (up to 5 each) 10 possible extra

Thus, there are a total of 270 possible points. Final grades will be assigned as follows, although slight adjustments upward may be made for strong class participation:

A = 260-270 (96%+); A- = 243-259 (90-95%); B+ = 235-242 (87-89%); B = 227-234 (84-86%);
B- = 216-226 (80-83%); C+ = 208-215 (77-79%); C = 200-207 (74-76%); C- = 189-199 (70-73%);
D+ = 181-188 (67-69%); D = 173-180 (64-66%); D- = 162-172 (60-63%); F <162

Please note that EVST requires all majors to receive at least a C- in this course in order to have it count towards the major requirements. Please check with HHP to find out what is required for Community Health majors.
COURSE SCHEDULE
Subject to Change as Necessary. Additional Guest Speakers May Be Added.

I. CORE CONCEPTS

WEEK ONE
Mon., Aug. 25 – Introduction to the course and to each other

Wed., Aug. 27 – Environmental crises and waves of change

Supplemental:

Fri., Aug. 29 – Reconstructing Environmentalism’s Diverse Roots (and A world of wounds)


WEEK TWO
Mon., Sept. 1 – LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

Wed., Sept. 3 – Citizenship and the building blocks of community


Fri., Sept. 5 – Inhabitation and Rootlessness.

http://www.hen.org/articles/a-word-in-favor-of-rootlessness/article_view?b_start:int=1&C=

http://research.calacademy.org/calwild/1999fall/stories/mushroom.html
WEEK THREE
Mon., Sept. 8 – EXERCISE # 1 DUE.

Wed., Sept. 10 – Bringing the land into our concept of community.

Fri., Sept. 12 – Seeking sustainability


WEEK FOUR
Mon., Sept. 15 – What is a sustainable community?

Supplemental:

Wed., Sept. 17 – Where are we at? Coming in to the Clark Fork watershed


Fri., Sept. 19 – Review Session

WEEK FIVE
Mon., Sept. 22 – EXAM

II. COMMUNITY AND THE POLITICS OF PLACE
Wed., Sept. 24 – Stuff
Pp. 1 to section break on top of p. 18 in *Deep Economy*

Fri., Sept. 26 – The growth economy: Production, consumption, commodification
Finish Chapter 1 (pp. 18-45) in *Deep Economy*
WEEK SIX
Mon., Sept. 29 – Globe-trotting food
Chapter 2 (pp. 46-94) in Deep Economy

Wed., Oct. 1 – Coming home to eat...or should we?


Fri., Oct. 3 – Local purchasing power and the UM Farm-to-College Program.


WEEK SEVEN
Mon., Oct. 6 – All for one or one for all?
Chapter 3 (pp. 95-128) in Deep Economy

Wed., Oct. 8 – The wealth of communities
Chapter 4 (pp. 129-176) in Deep Economy

Fri., Oct. 10 – Building “the durable future”
Chapter 5 and Afterword (pp. 177-232) in Deep Economy

WEEK EIGHT
Mon., Oct. 13 – EXERCISE #2 DUE


Fri., Oct. 17 – Our Missoula

Our Missoula FAQ.

Supplemental: Read about the World Health Organization’s health indicators for sustainable development goals: [http://www.who.int/hia/health_indicators/en/](http://www.who.int/hia/health_indicators/en/). Be sure to read the sections on “Key messages,” “Agriculture, food and nutrition security,” “Sustainable cities” and one more of your choosing.

**WEEK NINE**

**Mon., Oct. 20 – Living large: Understanding sprawl**

**Wed., Oct. 22 – Open space, Conservation Easements and Other Strategies**


**Fri., Oct. 24 – EXERCISE #3 DUE**

**WEEK TEN**

**Mon., Oct. 27 – Losing Ground**

Frank, Matthew. 2010. Common ground: Developers and farmland advocates have disagreed over how best to preserve Missoula’s remaining prime soil, but now they seek solutions both can dig. *Missoula Independent*, April 8.

**Wed., Oct. 29 – To be announced**

**Fri., Oct. 31 – Review/Work Session**

**WEEK ELEVEN**

**Mon., Nov. 3 – ESSAY #1 DUE**

**III. ENERGY, CLIMATE, AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

**Wed., Nov. 5 – Climate change: Is it too late?**


(For more details, see the complete version of the original article “The End of Sustainability.” *Society and Natural Resources* 27(7): 777-782.)

**Fri., Nov. 7 – Sustainable cities**
Cambridge: The MIT Press.

WEEK TWELVE
Mon., Nov. 10 – Missoula’s carbon footprint and responses

Wed., Nov. 12 – Missoula’s GHG and green energy initiatives.
1. Learn about US Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement:
   http://usmayors.org/climateprotection/agreement.htm

Fri., Nov. 14 – Individual action and behavior change


WEEK THIRTEEN
Mon., Nov. 17 – EXERCISE #3 DUE. Climate action.
Check out these sites:
• Montana Audubon at www.mtaudubon.org and go to Issues and Actions link to learn about their energy and global warming work
• ICLEI – local governments for sustainability -- http://www.iclei.org/
• Clean Air, Cool Planet: http://www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/for_communities/index.php
• Smarter Cities: http://smartercities.nrdc.org/articles/american-cities-get-smart-about-energy

Wed., Nov. 19 – Climate change denial.

Fri., Nov. 21 – Collective action
http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/143/ [Note: This is the third in a triptych (3 part series) on the open space of democracy. You can link to the first two pieces from this website.]

Hawken, Paul. 2007. To remake the world. Orion May/June. Available at:
http://www.orionmagazine.org/index.php/articles/article/265/

Abrams, Lindsay. 2014. “The real secret to beating the Koch Brothers: How our broken political system can still be won,” Salon. Retrieved from:
http://www.salon.com/2014/04/29/the_real_secret_to_beating_the_koch_brothers_how_our_broken_political_system_can_still_be_overcome/

WEEK FOURTEEN
Mon., Nov. 24 – To be announced

Wed., Nov. 26 and Fri. Nov. 28 – THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY. NO CLASS.
WEEK FIFTEEN
Mon., Dec. 1 – America the possible?


Wed., Dec. 3 – On hope


Solnit, Rebecca. TBA.

Fri., Dec. 5 – Work Session and pulling the themes together

Tuesday, Dec. 9 at 1:10-3:10. ANALYTIC ESSAY #2 IS DUE AT START OF FINAL EXAM PERIOD. LATE PAPER POLICY DOES NOT APPLY.