PS 491-220/ENS 300-220: Urban Sustainability in North America: Canada and vs. the United States
6-Week Summer Session—June 20-August 1, 2013

Introduction
The specter of global warming and climate change and an Earth populated with 10 billion people in sprawling, teeming cities have kindled the dream in North America and around the world of building sustainable cities working in harmony with nature.

In this course, we will explore the evolution of blueprints for sustainable cities in Canada and the United States. Along the way, we will focus our attention on the meaning of sustainability, the challenge of growth-oriented economic national politics and policies, the promotion of local and national sustainability policies, the fledgling efforts by towns and cities to institute local sustainability programs, and the stakes and prospects for achieving sustainable development. The course’s overriding questions will be: What has been the overall record of urban sustainability efforts in North America? Can we get from here (unsustainable cities) to there (sustainable cities)? If so, how? If not, why not? It will draw upon recent fieldwork and case studies in Canada and the United States that brings the research incorporated into the course virtually up to date.

Sustainable Cities in Canada and the United States/Urban Sustainability in North America will originate from the University of Kentucky, use the UK Blackboard server and electronic library reserves, and be supervised by Ernest J. Yanarella, Professor of Political Science, and co-taught with Mr. Jordan Leising, Political Science Graduate Student, at UK. After you register for this course, purchase your textbooks at the UK Bookstore. If you have UK Blackboard-related questions, contact Claire Carpenter, UK Blackboard Coordinator, at claire@uky.edu or (859) 257-8272, ext. 250.

Course Texts:


Required Assignments: The course requires that each student complete three assignments and mid-term and a final examination. Check the Assignments and Exam Calendar on blackboard for due dates.
Grading Scale: The five assignments total 100 points such that: 90-100 constitutes an A; 80-89+ is a B; 70-79+ equals a C; 60-69+ is a D; below 60 will constitute failing grade of an E.

Exams: Check the Assignments and Exam Calendar on Blackboard for due dates.

Learning Outcomes:

--Students will be able to differentiate between environmentalism and sustainability, weak and strong sustainability, and the relationship between sustainability and resiliency.

--Students will be develop a strong grasp of the major constituents of strong and successful urban sustainability programs in the United States and Canada.

--Students will learn and be able to evaluate the favored policy tools used by policy makers and change agents in advancing an urban sustainability agenda

--Students will learn key idiosyncratic features of urban sustainability approaches in the United States vs. urban sustainability approaches in Canada.

--Students will gain an appreciation of the key role of political power in the making of sustainable cities and the role of key city and state players in shaping the scope and limits of those local sustainability initiatives.

Boilerplate on plagiarism and other course policies will be found in Blackboard Content section.

Syllabus Outline/Readings

I. Introduction: June 20-26
   A. Globalization and the Fate of the Earth
   B. Ecological Scarcity and Global Warming
   C. Sustainability and the Window of Opportunity
   D. The United States and vs. Canada

Readings:

  Mark Roseland, *Sustainable Communities*, introduction.
  William Rees and Mathis Wackernagel, *Our Ecological Footprint*, introduction and ch. 2 (pp. 31-38).
  Yanarella and Lancaster, *Getting from Here to There*, Introduction.
  Sustainability 301 PowerPoint—See Course Documents.

II. Origins and Metaphors the City: June 27-July 2
A. Mumford and the origin of the city: cemeteries and the sacred
B. The city as magnet and container
C. The city and utopia
D. True urbanity and the medieval city
E. The city in contemporary science fiction

Readings:

Ernest J. Yanarella, *The Cross, the Plow, and the Skyline: Contemporary Science Fiction and the Ecological Imagination*, chs. 5 and 6. See Course Documents

Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, pp. 12 (Anastasia), 32-33 (Fedora), 51-52 (Chloe), 75 (Octavia), 109-110 (Eusapia), 114-116 (Leonia), 150-151 (Andria), 159-160 (Theodora), and 161-163 (Berenice).

Assignment # 1: Calvino’s Cities and Sustainability

Choose one of Calvino’s cities and explore how it illuminates one or more facets of the idea of sustainability or ecology in a positive or negative sense. In other words, show how his description of that city either clarifies one or more tenets or principles of sustainable practice or points to one or more characteristics of wasteful, unsustainable practice that is leading to the city’s or the environment’s or ecosystem’s ruin. You are encouraged and will be rewarded to search the Internet for hints, cues, or interpretations of the city you select. Your essay should be up to 750-1000 words in length. It is worth 10% of your final grade.

*First Assignment Due by June 22, 11:59PM*

III. Ecology-Sustainability-Sustainable Development: July 3-7

A. The Roots of Ecology
B. What is Sustainability?
C. What is Sustainable Development?
D. What Sustainability is Not: Smart Growth or The Natural Step

Readings:

Roseland, *Sustainable Communities*, ch. 13.


Background—

http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca/AboutUs/SGPrinciples/tabid/133/Default.aspx

IV. Sustainability and the Issue of Scale: Think Globally, Act How? July 10-12

A. Think Globally, Act Locally (Roseland and AtKisson)
B. Think Locally, Act Locally (Wendell Berry)
C. Think Locally, Act Globally (Kennedy)
D. Think and Work Locally and Regionally, Decouple Globally (Levine and Yanarella)

Readings:
Roseland, *Sustainable Communities*, ch. 1.


Assignment #2: My Hometown’s Sustainable City Program

Imagine that your hometown undertook the task of converting itself into a sustainable town or city. On the basis of your knowledge of the community, write a plausible newspaper article describing how it strove to become a sustainable town or city. Describe: its impetus (you or some organization you head could be the catalyst); the guiding framework informing its design; the political process it underwent to develop a vision and set of policies to found the sustainable city project; the tools that are being used to advance urban sustainability; the positive and negative features of its history; and its current state and promise. Make it as plausible and realistic as you can. Length: around 1000 words. Weight: 15% of final grade.

Second Assignment Due by July 6, 11:59PM

V. Tools of Sustainability: Indicators, Ecological Footprints, Sustainable Area Budgets: July 8-11

A. The Promise and Limits of Sustainability Indicators
B. Ecological Footprints
C. Sustainable Area Budgets and Earth Fairshares

Readings:

Roseland, *Sustainable Communities*, chs. 3 and 14.


Rees and Wackernagel, *Our Ecological Footprint*, chs. 2 (pp. 40-57) and 3 (pp. 61-91).
VI. National Sustainability Policies: U.S. and Canada: July 12-18
   A. Global Sustainability Programs from Local Agenda 21 to the Aalborg Charter
   B. The PCSD: U.S. Sustainability Policy in the Clinton Administration
   C. Canadian Sustainable Policies from NTRE to

Readings:
   United States (Clinton Administration) sustainable development policy:
   http://clinton2.nara.gov/PCSD/
   Henry Lamb, “Sustainable Development is Not Sustainable,” The Eco-logic Powerhouse” (a project of the rightwing Environmental Conservation Organization, Inc.)-- http://www.enterstageight.com/archive/articles/0801/0801sustainable.htm
   David V.J. Bell, “Sustainability in Canada,” (audio file)-go to:
   http://www.yorku.ca/ycas/
   then click on audio files and click on broadcast # 11.
   http://www.utoronto.ca/envstudy/sustainabletoronto/resources/StratosFinalNovember24corrected.doc

VII. Sustainable Cities I: the United States: July 19-25
   A. It All Began (and Ended) with Chattanooga
   B. Richmond's S.U.R.E.: a Successful Failure
   C. Oakland Ecopolis
   D. Civano

Readings:
   Hugh Bartling, “Chattanooga: Is This Sustainable?”—
   http://www.uky.edu/Classes/PS/776/Projects/chattanooga/chatnga.html
   Yanarella and Lancaster, “Richmond, Indiana and SURE, Incorporated,” *Getting from Here to There?*—See Course Documents.


Yanarella and Lancaster, “Civano: Tucson’s Suburban Sustainability Showcase Or Magnet for Continued Sprawl?” Getting from Here to There?

VIII. Sustainable Cities II: Canada: July 26-July 30
   A. Hamilton-Wentworth's VISION 2020
   B. Bamberton: A Holistic Failure Leads to a Looming Success
   C. Sustainable Okotoks: Taking Water and Sustainability Seriously
   D. Vancouver: Sustainability in a World City?

Readings:

Assignment #3: Critique of Canadian Sustainable City Program
   Using predominantly Web sources, develop a critique of one Canadian urban sustainability project. In formulating this critical portrait of this sustainable city or community program, be sure to highlight its:
   --origins;
   --underlying principles and philosophy of sustainability;
   --commitment to public participation;
   --the tools employed to advance urban sustainability;
   --key achievements to date;
   --prevailing impediments and weakness;
   --and recommendations for improvement.
   Your analysis may incorporate materials in the syllabus, but must go beyond a mere reiteration of information therein to include new material discovered through your internet research. The sources of your critical analysis must be appropriately cited either
as in-text citations and a concluding bibliography of references or through endnotes (i.e., footnotes at the end of your presentation. Since it is a critique, make sure you underline any weaknesses and be especially sure to offer recommendations for improving the program. This assignment counts 25% of your final course grade and should be approximately 1100-1250 words in lengths (excluding references).

Third Assignment Due by July 28, 11:59PM

IX. Conclusion: The Way Forward: July 31
Readings:
   Roseland, *Sustainable Communities*, ch.15.
   Rees and Wackernagel, *Our Ecological Footprint*, ch. 5.
   Yanarella and Lancaster, “Conclusion, *Getting from Here to There*?

Final Exam: Begins July 31, 9:00AM, Due by August 1, 11:59PM