EcoHouse – UNIV 3820: UConn Almanac

Semester: Fall 2015
Time: Mondays 4:40-5:30
Location: EcoHouse Sprague Classroom 18
Instructors: Richard Parnas
    Sarah Munro
Office: EcoHouse Sprague office 123
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description:

EcoHouse Learning Community courses are designed to prepare students for engaged, active citizenship particularly related to environmental issues, environmental stewardship, and the principle of sustainability. This course will examine sustainability and environmental initiatives and programs at UConn and in the local community in order to better understand pressing environmental concerns and their connection to our own lives, our local communities, and our global society.

The course will explore many issues related to the EcoHouse community, including:
▪ **The value of closely observing our environment, recording those observations, sharing those observations with other and studying these over time**
▪ **Thinking about and expressing observations in more literary and poetic ways similar to Aldo Leopold's "A Sand County Almanac" and Henry David Thoreau in "Walden" ▪ Using mapping to locate and record field observations made in the course.**

Learning Goals & Outcomes

This course is a critical element of the EcoHouse experience and will seek to play a part in meeting the EcoHouse central purpose. The goals for the **entire** EcoHouse are:

Goal #1: Understand and utilize personal values, motivations, and passions
Goal #2: Comprehend various local and global environmental problems
Goal #3: Develop an understanding of the impact of individual lifestyles and system actions on the environment locally and globally
Goal #4: Build and maintain interpersonal relationships and positive community
Goal #5: Develop the knowledge and skills essential to effective community engagement
Goal #6: Use knowledge, diverse cultural frames of reference, and alternate perspectives to think critically and address problems
Goal #7: Learn to reflect on how our relationship to the environment, land, and place impacts our lives
Goal #8: Practice hands-on skills that will aid us in developing a deeper awareness of and relationship with our environment.
Goal #9: Learn relationship-building skills that can be applied to everyday lives outside the classroom

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Goal #10: Inspire or encourage others to work toward creating a more humane, just, and sustainable world

Grading

Grading		
94–100% = A		77–79% = C+
90–93 % = A-		74–76% = C
87–89% = B+		70–73% = C-
84–86% = B		60–69% = D
80–83% = B-		<60% = F

This course will be graded based approximately on the following:

Assignments
Participation and Engagement 20 points
Participation in class is vital to a successful course and the quality of each student's participation is considered part of the grade. Class participation is an integral part of what this course is all about. Active participation refers to more than simply class attendance; it means completing any preparatory assignments (may include short reading or writing assignments), making relevant contributions to class discussions and activities by drawing upon both course based content as well as your personal experience, and listening and responding respectfully to the contributions of others.

Course Discussion 20 points
Lead Group Discussion or Activity on Topic of the day. Must fill entire class time. Can be based on one or more of the below suggested readings, current events, personal stories, or whatever strikes you. Meet with Brigid before your discussion for agenda approval. Topics and suggested readings are:

Session I. A Sense of Place
"Living Where You Live" by Hannah Holmes
"The Sense of Place" by Wallace Stegner
"Everybody's Ditch" by Robert Michael Pyle
"The Spirit of Place" by Wade Davis
"In Praise of Hometowns" by Mary Pipher
"My Empty Lot" by Joseph Kastner

Session II. Responsibility to Place "The
Land Ethic" by Aldo Leopold
The Rediscovery of North America by Barry Lopez
"Homeplace," by Scott Russell Sanders
"Notes on Living Simply in the City" by Marilyn Welker

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Session III. Knowing Your Bioregion
"Initiation" by Tom Jay
"Where Currents Merge: The Maritime Northwest" by Steve Johnson
"Valley of the Long Grasses" by Peter Boag
"Sauvie Island: A Remnant of the Old Time" by Florence Riddle
"Geology of Portland" by Marshall Gannett

Session IV. Living in Place
"Bioregionalism: The Politics of Place" by Daniel Coleman
"Speaking for Douglas Fir" by Gary Snyder
"Crafting Nativeness" by Jeff Bickart
"Gardening at the Seam" by Judith Larner Lowry
"There's No Specialization Like Home" by John K. Bullard
"Reweaving Our Soul Connection with Food" by Paul Conrad

Session V. Mapping Your Place
"Mapping the Biosphere" by Gene Marshall
"Mapping the Sacred Places" by Jan DeBlieu
"Raise the Grates!" by Sabrina Merlo

Session VI. Bu ilding Local Community "The
Web of Life" by Scott Russell Sanders
"Home is Other People" by Mary Pipher
"Community-Based Restoration" by Christine Schneider
"A Watershed Runs Through You" by Freeman House
"A Green Architect Falls in Love...with FrogSong Cohousing" by Joseph F. Kennedy
"Help Groups" by Steve Whitson

Session VII. Empowerment
"Making a Difference" by Katrina Shields *The
Power of One* by Sharif Abdullah "Making
the Connection" by Susan Cerulean "Push for
Change" by Ann Sihler
"Facts about Geese" by Angeles Arrien

Session VIII. Celebration
"Celebration of Nature" Photography by Lions Gate CameraClub
"Encourage the Heart" by Kouzes and Posner

Submitting collected data 10 times, 5 points each, 50 points total
Connecting your observation point to the Uconn Almanac google map:
http://goo.gl/maps/uCs1E , track your observations through the point. You can do it
directly on the point, or connect a link with a with blog or website to the point. Your
observations should be supplemented with your thoughts on course readings and
discussion. Be creative with your data collection. i.e. sketches, video blog, soil science
test, etc.

Final Project 10 points

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Be creative! What did you learn from your experiences? Compiling your data and observations from the previous 10 times, have you met your objective for the semester? The final project will consist of a completed observation point on the Uconn County Almanac map, a summary of what you learned/accomplished, and a final reflection of your semester's observations.

Class Schedule

Date	Activity	Assignment Due
W1	Course Overview, Google Maps Introduction	
W2	Pollock experiment	Take Google Maps Interactive Tutorial. Pin point on to course map: http://goo.gl/maps/uCs1E
W3	I- Sense of Place	
W4	II- Responsibility to Place	
W5	III- Knowing Your Bioregion	
W6	IV- Living in Place	
W7	Share Data Collection with Group	5 minute presentation on data collection
W8	V- Mapping Your Place	
W9	Spring Break. No class.	
W10	VI- Building Local Community	
W11	VII- Empowerment	
W12	VIII- Celebration	
W13	Course Wrap Up	
W14	Final Presentations	Present Final Data Collection to Class
W15	Final Presentations	

Student Resources

Resource lists for students can be accessed from the following websites:
Links and Resources: http://web.uconn.edu/uconnconnects/links_students.htm.
University Resource List:
http://web.uconn.edu/uconnconnects/resources/resource_list.htm.
Academic Achievement Center (AAC): http://web.uconn.edu/uconnconnects/AAC.htm.
UConn Connects: http://web.uconn.edu/uconnconnects/program_info.htm.
Academic Calendar: www.registrar.uconn.edu/acadcal.html
ACES *(lots of info):* www.aces.uconn.edu
Arts & Culture: www.uconn.edu/culture *(cultural events)*
Career Services: www.career.uconn.edu

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GPA Calculators**:** www.aces.uconn.edu/informationtools.htm
Events Calendar: www.events.uconn.edu
Learning Communities: www.LC.uconn.edu; http://uconnLC.blogspot.com
Living in CT: www.business.uconn.edu/management/ctliving.htm
Majors: www.career.uconn.edu/majors_and_careers.html
Map: http://admissions.uconn.edu/virtualtour/search
Minors: www.catalog.uconn.edu *(click Minors)*
Student Website: http://go.uconn.edu
UConn Phonebook: http://phonebook.uconn.edu

HuskyCT will also provide links to useful campus academic, social, and wellness resources.

Other Core Policies and Frameworks for Class (available at front of class)

Course and Instructor Expectations
Class Participation
Cooperative Learning
Attendance, Tardiness, and Presence
Classroom Atmosphere Ideals for Learning and Supporting Your Peers
Diversity and Multiculturalism: The World is the Classroom
General Conduct and Maintaining a Respectful Learning Environment
Care and Attention to Work
Personal Responsibility
Paper Format
Late Work Policy
Academic Integrity: University of Connecticut Code of Conduct
Flexibility and Responsiveness
Reasonable Accommodations
Correspondence
Library Liaison
HuskyCT
Technology Application

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Other Core Policies and Frameworks for Class

Course and Instructor Expectations
These expectations will remain the same throughout the term and our class will operate on the principle that you are acquainted with them, the syllabus, and the assignments as written or discussed in class. Not knowing a policy will not excuse you from its enforcement.

Class Participation
Participation is critical to understanding and collaborative learning. Ideal participation (an A grade) is characterized by consistent, active involvement in class, a positive attitude, productive and respectful interactions with peers in class, full preparation for class with assignments, reading, printing, etc. done in advance, no absences or classes missed only for exceptional circumstances, and arriving to class on time and staying for the duration. Grades will reflect the extent to which students meet the criteria of ideal participation.

Cooperative Learning
We see this course learning as a collective process in which we have an opportunity to help each other generate meaning throughout the semester. As instructors, we see ourselves as partners in this learning and expect feedback that may add to the collective process.

Attendance, Tardiness, and Presence
Learning in this course involves, first and foremost, your bodily presence. Thus, attendance is required in all class meetings. Students are responsible for material covered and announcements made in their absence. If an absence is necessary, communication with the instructor or peers to keep up on class activities is expected. It is expected that students will arrive to class on time and stay for the duration. Any other exceptional cases must be discussed with us AHEAD of time or it cannot be counted, thanks. Attendance will also be a factor in determining the course participation grade.

Classroom Atmosphere Ideals for Learning and Supporting Your Peers
Living and participating in a community involves enacting and engaging with multiple viewpoints, backgrounds similar to and quite different from your own, and a variety of other goals and means toward building a connected and supportive community. Here are some general principles, which are only basically defined here, to promote a supportive living and learning environment:

• *Environment of Respect: Controversy with civility and courtesy toward all peers and instructor.* Disagreement and diversity of opinions and ideas are encouraged, and in fact, are real and valuable when engaged in a respectful manner by all individuals. It is expected that in trying to understand differences discussion will always be respectful.

• *Come to class to be in class and without distracting behaviors for peers and instructor.* We expect students to come to class ready to focus. Please turn off cell phones or other devices before class and keep them off for the duration of class. If you use a computer for taking notes, please do not let it be a distraction for yourself or

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others. This strict policy is to ensure that the class stays focused on our project of learning from one another.

• *Come to class prepared to maintain respectful boundaries and have a supportive disposition conducive to your own and others' learning styles and timelines.* Disruptive or offensive behavior has no place in an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Also, realizing that others learn things at different speeds and that you can play a role in helping your peers as well is a core expectation that will also carry into your mentoring. Students engaging in any other unsupportive or disruptive behaviors will be asked to leave and will lose all points for attendance that day.

Diversity and Multiculturalism: The World is the Classroom

On campus, in this classroom, and in the residence halls, you will engage in an ongoing dialogue and participatory process with understanding what it means to live in a multicultural world. We need to operate with great awareness and openness to our own learning in regard to existing and evolving definitions and conversations about race, gender, ethnicity, abilities, class, language, religion, sexual orientation, income status, age, and other social or cultural identities (of which most of us embody and embrace several). It will be important to expand your own awareness accordingly and demonstrate a willingness to learn about yourself and others.

General Conduct and Maintaining a Respectful Learning Environment

We will do our best to cultivate a classroom atmosphere that is based on mutual respect. During our discussions, you may hear statements, opinions, and arguments that you disagree with or possibly even offend you. It is important to remember that students in this class come from diverse backgrounds and bring with them a wide range of perspectives. It is not expected that you agree with everyone else's opinions, only that you listen to and engage them with utmost respect and an awareness that others have also experienced the world uniquely. Also, however, please do not see this as an open invitation to make personally harmful attacks on anyone in the guise of free speech. Strive to use a dialogue instead of an attack perspective. To this end, we will also **not** tolerate disruptions, rudeness, or personal attacks (which should not be confused with serious and meaningful debate and discussion). If you engage in any of these behaviors, you will be asked to leave and you will be marked absent.

Care and Attention to Work

Students are expected to take care with assignments, including neatness, proofreading, and looking up uncertain words or punctuation and grammar rules. If poor writing or sloppiness interferes with a fair reading of the work, assignments may be returned to students for revision prior to grading. Good writing takes practice and effort; we are more than happy to spend extra time with students to help with grammar or writing. Please let us know if you want help.

Personal Responsibility

Students are expected to engage fully in class, to monitor their own learning, and to take action when help is needed. Students who communicate concerns about concepts, assignments, deadlines, or classroom activities help us to help them. You are

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encouraged to communicate concerns while they are fresh so that they can be addressed while they are still workable.

Paper Format
Please note: Page requirement totals include the BODY of the paper only, and any cover or reference pages are always additional. All papers and assignments should be typed and stapled. Separate reference page(s) should be provided in APA or MLA format when applicable. Please use a 12 pt. sized font for readability such as Times New Roman or Garamond. Please submit papers as double spaced with 1 inch margins on all sides. Each paper should have the student name, course title, assignment title, and date in the document header which will ensure that it appears on each page. A header or footer should include page numbers. Assignments may be submitted in person or via email/HuskyCT. If printed, recycled (previously printed on one side) or double-sided paper is fine. If submitted electronically, please be sure the file has one of the following extensions: .doc, .rtf, .txt, or .pdf.

Late Work Policy
This policy is to be fair for all students in class who turn in work on time. All assigned work will be collected in class on the day that it is due. If you are going to be absent on an assignment due date, make sure you arrange to get the assignment to us **BEFORE** the start of class (it can be turned in via email). Late assignments, when accepted, will start at half credit. Late assignments will not be allowed on some assignments. No assignment will be accepted more than one week from original due date. Exceptions are granted only at instructor discretion, and generally only for serious medical emergencies or otherwise dire circumstances (and not usually defined as advising, doctor, childcare/family, work obligations, or other appointments or course meetings, etc.). Students anticipating problems with due dates should contact the instructor in advance to arrange an extension and avoid a penalty. Please remember that the "Incomplete" grade category is reserved for exceptional circumstances.

Academic Integrity: University of Connecticut Code of Conduct
Students are expected to adhere to college policies. Please take special note of policies regarding plagiarism and course withdrawal. *Responsibilities of Community Life: The Student Code* outlines the expectations of UConn students as members of the UConn community as well as the process for addressing violations of the University policy. All students are responsible for knowing and abiding by these policies. The *Student Code* may be found at: http://www.community.uconn.edu/student_code.html.

Flexibility and Responsiveness
Students whose personal, medical, mental, or financial situations may interfere with class should contact us to strategize for successful completion of this course.

Reasonable Accommodations
The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities. Qualified individuals who require reasonable accommodation are invited to make their needs and preferences known as soon as possible. If you require accommodations (e.g. special seating, interpreter, note-taker, etc.), please inform your

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instructor or the Center for Students with Disabilities if you feel you may be qualified immediately. Students with disabilities should register with the UConn Center for Students with Disabilities to document their need for accommodations and obtain support services. We will work with you to arrange the supports you need in this class. Please let us know how we can best support you.

Center for Students with Disabilities
University of Connecticut
233 Glenbrook Rd., Unit 4174
Storrs, CT 06269-4174
Voice (860) 486-
2020 Fax (860) 486-
4412
http://www.csd.uconn.edu/

Correspondence

There are two primary means that will be used for communication in this course:
1. In class in person during class meetings (or in office visits or by phone individually).
2. By email (see below). You MUST check your email regularly for class information.

It is vital that you check your university email address (firstname.lastname@huskymail.uconn.edu) on a regular basis and at least once every other day. Communications about class and assignments may be sent to your university account. You can forward your university email account to another account. Please visit the Help Center of the University Information Technology Services located in the Math-Science Building, Room M037 for further assistance in forwarding your account to a non UConn account.

Library Liaison

Carolyn Mills is the EcoHouse library liaison who specializes in research and resources related to environmental issues or environmental science. If you need assistance locating any books, journals, or other resources related to these topics, please do not hesitate to contact Carolyn Mills.

Carolyn Mills
University Librarian
Library Research Services
E-mail: carolyn.mills@uconn.edu
Telephone: 860-486-1263

HuskyCT

This course is making use of HuskyCT which may be accessed at http://huskyct.uconn.edu. The course syllabus, weekly schedule, readings, assignments and additional information and resources are available on the home page of the course in the WebCT site.

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Technology Application

Achievement of the course objectives will require, in part, application of electronic and digital technologies by students and instructors. Access to and participation on the online course Husky-CT site is part of this course. You should be able to access some of the course readings via Husky-CT. You must have access to the Internet to participate in the online course site. Activities and interactions on the site may include, but are not limited to:

- participating in discussion, downloading file attachments, posting file attachments, accessing reference files;
- communicating and sending/receiving document attachments via electronic mail (email); □ opening MS Word documents and viewing comments inserted by the instructor; and
- searching, retrieving, and reading information and documents from World Wide Web sites.

Please contact instructor(s) if you have any questions about these technology requirements.

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