

Sustainability

UNST 124g Fall 2011

<http://web.pdx.edu/~chulbe/COURSES/SUS>

lecture section:

M and W 9:30 to 10:45 am room: Cramer Hall 201

mentor sections (UNST 124h):

MW 11:00 to 11:50 am; MW 12:00 to 12:50; MW 13:00 to 13:50 room: CH 165

final:

Tuesday, 6 December 8:00 to 9:50 am

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office hours: M and T 12:00 to 14:00 (or by appointment)

mentor: Whitney Garcia Jacobson

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1 overview

People have been interacting with and modifying Earth's environment for millennia. While we tend to think of modern technology as separating us from natural world, our most basic needs such as nutritious food to eat, clean air to breathe, and clean water to drink depend on the health of the natural systems of which we are a part. In this course we will explore the idea of sustainable relationships between human communities and the natural world. We will explore the interconnectedness of global systems, including physical, ecological, cultural, and economic.

2 University Studies

This Freshman Inquiry class is the first step in your general education program at Portland State University. When you complete this year long course, you will have completed the equivalent of four credits in the humanities, four credits in the social sciences, four credits in the natural sciences, and three composition credits. The purpose of this course is to help you succeed in college and beyond by exercising your abilities to integrate information, consider diverse points of view, articulate your positions, and see the consequences of your thoughts and actions, as stated in the four University Studies Goals

- **Inquiry and Critical Thinking:** Students will learn various modes of inquiry through interdisciplinary curricula—problem-posing, investigating, conceptualizing—in order to become active, self-motivated, and empowered learners.
- **Communication:** Students will enhance their capacity to communicate in various ways—writing, graphics, numeracy, and other visual and oral means—to collaborate effectively with others in

group work, and to be competent in appropriate communication technologies.

- The Variety of Human Experience: Students will enhance their appreciation for and understanding of the rich complexity of the human experience through the study of differences in ethnic and cultural perspectives, class, race, gender, sexual orientation, and ability.
- Ethical Issues and Social Responsibility: Students will expand their understanding of the impact and value of individuals and their choices on society, both intellectually and socially, through group projects and collaboration in learning communities.

More information about inquiry, cluster, and capstone courses can be found at at the University Studies website: <http://www.ous.pdx.edu>

3 university services

If you are a student with a documented disability and registered with the Disability Resource Center, please contact me so that we can arrange whatever academic accommodations you need.

If you are a Veteran and have questions about University services or need assistance with your transition from military to campus life, please contact Chris Goodrich, Coordinator of Veterans Services at the Office of Veterans' Services, SMSU room 425.

4 course resources

4.1 general

Sustainability is a broad theme, requiring us to think critically about the ways in which cultural, economic, and political traditions shape our relationship to the natural world, including how the human relationship to nature is understood, the ways economic wellbeing and satisfaction are measured, and how terms such as sustainability are used in the media, by interest groups, by individual organizations, and by individuals. We will begin in fall term by focusing on human perception of “the environment” and the ways in which human societies both shape and are shaped by those perceptions. As the year progresses we will consider how those frameworks shape and are shaped by our responses to environmental challenges. Throughout the course students will be encouraged to read and research widely on these issues, report on your findings, participate actively in discussions, and develop a deeper sense of responsibility for your own habits and choices. In addition to assigned books, we will use online and library resources that are freely available to everyone.

4.2 required texts for fall term

Required texts may be purchased at the PSU Bookstore or another vendor. The reference book *A Pocket Style Manual* will be of use in all three terms of this class and in many other courses you take at PSU.

1. Moore, Alan. (1987). *Swamp Thing Vol. 1: Saga of the Swamp Thing*. New York: DC Comics/Vertigo. ISBN 0930289226
price on 4 September 2011: \$13.95 at Powell's Books
2. Moore, Alan. (2002). *Swamp Thing Vol. 5: Earth to Earth*. New York: DC Comics/Vertigo. ISBN 1563898047
price on 4 September 2011: \$10.95 at Powell's Books
3. Hacker, Diana (2010). *A Pocket Style Manual 5th ed.* New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.
price on 4 September 2011: \$28.40 at Powell's Books

4.3 Millar Library electronic reserve required readings

- Flores, Dan. (1998). *A sense of the American west*. Spirit of place and the value of nature in the American west (pp. 31-40) J.S. Sherow (Ed.). University of New Mexico Press.
- Foley, Jonathan. (2005). Global consequences of land use. *Science*, 309, 570-574.
- hooks, bell. (2009). *Teaching critical thinking: Practical wisdom*. Democratic education (pp. 13-18). New York: Routledge.
- Krech, Shephard. (2005). Reflections on conservation, sustainability, and environmentalism in indigenous North America. *American Anthropologist*, 107 (1), 78-86.
- Leopold, A. (1949). *A Sand County Almanac: And Sketches Here and There*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Marmon Silko, Leslie. (1996). *Yellow woman and a beauty of the spirit: essays on Native American life today*. Interior and exterior landscapes: The Pueblo migration stories (pp. 25-47). New York: Simon and Schuster.

4.4 other required reading

- Mann, Charles. (2002, March). 1491. *Atlantic Monthly*, 41-53. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/03/1491/2445>.
- Menand, Leland. (2011). Live and Learn. *The New Yorker*, 6 June, 11 pages. Retrieved from http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2011/06/06/110606crat_atlarge_menand.

4.5 other online resources

- course webpage <http://web.pdx.edu/~chulbe/COURSES/SUS>
- mentor session webpage <http://www.sustainabilityfrinq.weebly.com>
- Purdue Online Writing Lab <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

4.6 Portland Art Museum

We will visit the Portland Art Museum at least once this term and once you go, you may well wish to return. The PAM offers an annual college student pass for students 18 years and older for \$10. This is an exceptional value and is less expensive than the single admission cost for college students. You can purchase a pass when you present your PSU student ID at the Museum box office—the desk just inside the main doors. The pass is valid from September 1, 2011 to August 31, 2012. You will be asked to show both your PSU ID and the college student pass whenever you visit the PAM.

5 written work

5.1 guidelines

Unless you are instructed otherwise, all assignments should be typed and printed on white paper. Please print double-sided pages if possible. Written assignments should

- be double-spaced with one inch margins (you may need to check these settings in your word processing software),
- include a “header” with your name, the class, date, and page number at the top of each page,

- use a standard serif typeface (such as Times) at 12 point,
- use complete sentences, correct paragraph structure, correct spelling, and correct grammar,
- include a complete list of properly formatted references together with appropriate citations in the text,
- NOT include the assignment sheet unless requested specifically, and
- NOT be burdened by a cover sheet or other enclosure, although multiple pages should be stapled together.

Please use the APA style for citations and references. You will find examples of this style in Hacker (2010) and at the Purdue Online Writing Lab, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>. **Save everything you write in electronic format in two different places.** You will return to some assignments for ideas and as you build your electronic portfolio.

5.2 plagiarism

The writing you do for this course should be your own. You violate this ethic if you copy materials without acknowledging the source, present specific information without acknowledging the source, present a slightly rearranged wording of source materials as your own, or submit a copy of a paper identical to that submitted by another student. Plagiarism will result in a zero grade for the assignment and possibly lead to more severe academic consequences. A second offence will earn you a failing grade for the class. If you are uncertain about anything, ask your mentor or professor.

5.3 late work

All assigned work is due at the beginning of class on the day it is due, unless otherwise specified as part of the assignment. The questions assigned with class readings are for your benefit, both to help you read the article and to prepare for the classroom discussion. You may or may not be asked to turn these in at the end of the discussion time. Late work turned in by the beginning of the next class meeting will be worth a maximum of 50% the original value. Late work will not be accepted beyond this time, except in the case of documented emergencies. It is your responsibility to know the due dates and the ensure that your work is turned in on time. Please be certain that multiple sheets of paper are stapled before class.

6 electronic portfolio

Developing an electronic portfolio (an “ePortfolio”) is an integral part of the freshman inquiry process. The portfolio contains examples of your work throughout the course together with reflections on that work, organized according to the four goals of University Studies. While most of the construction effort will come in winter and spring terms, fall is the right time to start contemplating your work in the context of those goals. Our first short essay assignment asks you to state a personal belief regarding the environment and to discuss how that belief is shaped by the culture in which you grew up. The assignment is relevant to communication, clearly, but also to the variety of human experience, inquiry, and perhaps also to ethical issues and social responsibility. However, when you reflect upon the assignment, you may see that where *you* were most affected by the process of writing, receiving a critique, and revising, was improving your communication skills or in understanding why it makes you nervous to see mountains so close (or so far).

The electronic portfolio must contain a specified set of elements and its evaluation will form part of your final grade in spring term. The elements are a reflective essay on your work throughout the year in the context of the University Studies goals and at least eight different assignments completed during the year.

Those eight work samples should be chosen to help you express your understanding of the four goals and one must be the Heritage Trees of Portland project. Beyond that, the portfolio construction is up to you. If you are a graphic artist, you may wish to use illustrations to guide the reader—and viewer—through your portfolio. If you are interested in business marketing, think about how you want to sell your ideas in the electronic medium. The University Studies program provides a variety of resources to assist you in this endeavor at the website <https://sites.google.com/a/pdx.edu/eportresources/>, including a showcase of portfolios from years past and templates that may help you get started.

7 evaluation

Your grade will be based on a combination of classroom presentations and discussion, written assignments, participation in the mentor section, and in-class writing. Recall that attendance is required and a poor attendance record will reduce your grade automatically. The relative weights of these activities are:

mentor section participation	10%
reading responses and discussion	30%
essays	25%
presentations	10%
short research paper	10%
in-class writing	15%

Grades will be assigned according to total scores as follows: 95% or higher = A, 90 to 94.9% =A-, 87 to 89.9% =B+, 83 to 86.9% =B, 80 to 82.9% =B-, 77 to 79.9% =C+, 73 to 76.9% =C, 70 to 72.9% =C-, 67 to 69.9% =D+, 63 to 66.9% =D, 60 to 62.9% =D-, less than 60% = F.

8 conduct

8.1 classroom atmosphere

Our goal at all times should be to cultivate a classroom atmosphere of mutual respect, both in the main and mentor sessions. You may hear statements, opinions, or arguments that differ significantly from your own ideas or that make no sense from your point of view. It is important to remember that students come Portland State University from diverse backgrounds and bring with them a wide range of perspectives. It is not necessary that you like other peoples opinions or that they like yours. It is necessary for you to listen to and engage others with respect. To this end, we will not tolerate disruptions. If you are disruptive, you will be asked to leave and you will be marked absent for the day.

You should do your best to come to class ready to engage with the material for the day and with everybody else in the room. Engagement requires attention. Please do not distract yourself or others by eating in the classroom, checking your phone or other electronic devices, leaving to use the restroom, or by starting to gather your papers, zip up your backpack, or otherwise begin “checking out” until the class is excused. When you enter the class your phone should be set on silent or turned off and put away. If you take out a laptop you will be asked to close it and put it away. Please do not check your email or use the internet during mentor sessions, unless you are instructed to do so by your mentor. Failure to follow these rules will result in an automatic absence for the day.

8.2 attendance

Learning in this class, and most other university classes, requires your attendance and participation. You are required to attend both the main class and the mentor section. Absences will affect your grade adversely.

- If you miss a total of five main or mentor session classes over the course of the term, 10% of the total possible points will be removed from your class total. That is, your mark will be reduced by one letter grade. If you miss more than eight main or mentor session classes, you will fail the course.
- Late arrivals are disruptive to the classroom environment. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you will be marked absent.
- This policy means that you have four excused absences to use as you wish. Put another way, a day you miss because you prefer not to attend is equivalent to a day you miss due to illness. It is up to you to keep track of those four excused absences and use them wisely. It is your responsibility to be both a good citizen (stay home if you are sick) and a good student (come to class when you are not). However, if you do encounter exceptional circumstances, inform me ahead of time so that we can accommodate them.

8.3 code of conduct

As a member of the Portland State University faculty, I “strive to ensure that the highest ethical standards of professional behavior are realized within the University,” as established in the *Faculty Code of Conduct*. As a member of the PSU student body, you are bound by a *Student Code of Conduct*. It is your responsibility to be familiar with the code of conduct, which can be read at the Dean of Students website <http://www.pdx.edu/dos/codeofconduct>.

9 Schedule

<i>date</i>	<i>theme</i>	<i>activity</i>	<i>assignment</i>
9/26	introductions	reading: Menand, <i>Live and Learn</i> hooks, <i>Democratic Education</i>	reading questions: Menand and hooks complete by 10/3
9/28	the essay form	listening and reading: http://thisibelieve.org/ Joy Harjo, Margaret Mead	essay 1: beliefs about the environment due on 10/3
10/3	spirit of place	discussion: goals of higher education . reading: Flores, <i>Spirit of Place</i>	reading questions: Flores complete by 10/5
10/5		discussion: Flores, <i>Spirit of Place</i>	essay 2: beliefs about the environment due on 10/10
10/10	spirit of place	viewing: meet at 9:30 am at Portland Art Museum front steps	prepare group presentations: visions of landscape at PAM for presentation on 10/17
10/12		Portland Art Museum . reading: Marmon Silko, <i>landscapes</i>	essay 3: synthesis due on 10/31
10/17	spirit of place	in-class presentations: visions of landscape at PAM . reading: Moore, <i>Saga of Swamp Thing</i>	reading questions: Moore complete by 10/26
10/19		in-class essay wrtiting	

<i>date</i>	<i>theme</i>	<i>activity</i>	<i>assignment</i>
10/24	culture/nature	Are you thinking what I'm thinking? . reading: Mann, <i>1491</i>	reading questions: Mann complete by 11/2
10/26		discussion: Moore, <i>Saga of Swamp Thing</i>	research: popular meanings of "sustainability" discussion materials 11/21 paper due on 11/28
10/31	culture/nature	human civilizations and environmental change . reading: Moore, <i>Swamp Thing: Earth to Earth</i>	reading questions: Moore complete by 11/9
11/2		discussion: Mann, 1491	
11/7	culture/nature	human civilizations and environmental change . reading: Krech, 2005	individual presentations: Heritage Trees presentations start 11/28
11/9		discussion: Swamp Thing <i>Earth to Earth</i> reading: Foley et al., 2005	
11/14	sustainability	The Future of Food	reading questions: Foley + Future of Food complete by 11/21
11/16		The Future of Food	reading questions: Leopold complete by 11/23

<i>date</i>	<i>theme</i>	<i>activity</i>	<i>assignment</i>
11/21	sustainability	discussion: “Sustainability?”	
11/23		environmental justice and sustainability	
11/28	culture/nature	in-class presentations: Heritage Tree project	
11/30		in-class presentations: Heritage Tree project	