

Sustainability Freshman Inquiry - Spring 2009 Syllabus -



Course information

Course: UNST 173C (CRN 65183)
Classroom: 225 Cramer Hall
Class meeting times: 15:30 - 16:45 pm, M, W
Mentor sessions MW in Cramer Hall 249
17:00 (CRN 65188), 18:00 (CRN 65189), or 19:00 (CRN 65190)

Professor

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Peer Mentor

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Inquiry-based general education

Welcome to the third and final term of Freshman Inquiry, the first course in your general education program at Portland State University. 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. 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.

Course description

In spring the emphasis will be on exploring solutions to sustainability problems. This will necessarily involve taking a critical look at how cultural, economic, and political traditions shape our relationship to the natural world, including how the human relationship to nature is understood, the ways economic well-being and satisfaction are measured, and how terms such as “sustainability” and “green” are used in the media, by interest groups, organizations, and constituents. Please see fall term syllabus for a more general course description.

Throughout the course students will be encouraged to read and research widely on these issues, report on their findings, participate actively in discussions, and develop a deeper sense of responsibility for their own habits and choices. While we explore the sustainability theme, we will also be developing the skills that college graduates need for success and good citizenship, such as critical thinking, clear written and spoken communication, awareness of other viewpoints and cultures, and thoughtful reflection on ethical issues.

Required texts and supplies:

1. Steffen, A. (Ed.). (2006). *Worldchanging: A User's Guide for the 21st Century*. New York: Abrams.
2. Bergland, D., et al. (2008). *Ways of Writing: A Guide to College Composition* (2nd ed.). Portland, OR: Portland State University Writing Center. (Ask at the PSU bookstore.)
3. Online Materials (available at campus computer labs if you do not have access at home)
Online updates to text: www.worldchanging.com
Online style guides (free of charge):
 - APA (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>)
 - MLA (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>)Course website: www.sysc.pdx.edu/~jeff/courses/sust0809 (most course materials will be here).
Blackboard website: bb.pdx.edu (here you can check on your grades and link to course website)

4. Additional readings, audio recordings, or videos may be assigned and/or made available online or through the PSU library reserve.
5. You will also need a USB flash drive, a planning calendar, and a stapler.

Brief descriptions of course assignments (subject to change, with warning):

Assignment	Points	%	Brief Description
Mentor Lab participation	50	10	“Participation” refers to your contribution to mentor lab activities, discussions, and any assignments conducted during the lab. (2.5 points per session, 5 points per week)
Main Section participation	50	10	This includes quality and growth of contributions to class sessions and effort given to the completion of informal class assignments. (2.5 points per session, 5 points per week)
Attendance	25	5	Main class periods and mentor sessions count equally and separately (missing both in one day counts as two absences). 0 - 3 absences = 25 points; each 0.5 absence (or portion of) above 3 reduces attendance score by 2.5 points; 7 or more = AUTOMATIC COURSE FAILURE . Absences due to <u>unusual hardships</u> need to be cleared with instructor before they occur.
Homework	100	20	Complete assignments related to readings, assigned films, news items, or other relevant topics.
This I Believe Essay	75	15	With multiple revisions and a revision plan.
Video Presentation	100	20	Working in teams students will plan and make a short video presentation on a particular products total life-cycle. There will also be an individual research piece to this project.
e-Portfolio including final reflective essay	100	20	Design and implement final e-portfolio
TOTALS	500	100	

Extra Credit

1. Attend an out of class event (e.g., lecture, film, workshop, protest) and write a 2-page reflection making connections between your experience and course material. The event **MUST BE** approved by me beforehand. Only one per term, per student (max 8 points; due by **June 1** in class).
2. Visit the writing center and review an assignment for this class with a writing tutor. Bring written evidence of the tutor session including the tutor's name, date and time you visited the center, and your notes from the session. (max 1 points per visit, up to five visits for a total of 5 possible points; due by **June 1** in class).

Portfolio: During Spring term you will produce an electronic portfolio of the work you have done this year. The two fold purpose of the portfolio is to give you a place to assemble and reflect upon your course work and to give me a means to assess your engagement with your learning throughout the year. **Be sure to keep an electronic copy of everything you do for this class so that it may be included in your portfolio! Keep these copies on your H drive at PSU and on your USB flash drive.**

Final Grades: Final grades will be assigned according to the following table:

Grade	Total Points	Minimum % of possible points	Grade	Total Points	Minimum % of possible points
A	500-463	92.5	C	382-363	72.5
A-	462-448	89.5	C-	362-348	69.5
B+	447-433	86.5	D+	347-333	66.5
B	432-413	82.5	D	332-313	62.5
B-	412-398	79.5	D-	312-298	59.5
C+	397-383	76.5	F	297 or below	Below 59.5

Main Session, Mentor Session, and Assignment Details: Details about what we will cover each day of class and in mentor session will be posted on the course website on the daily log page. This page will serve to preview the plan for upcoming topics and assignments as well as to record what we actually did. If you miss a class, check this page as well as consulting your classmates about what you missed.

University Studies learning objectives:

Inquiry based student learning is the cornerstone of the University Studies' Freshman Inquiry courses. The goals are to develop those skills that will be crucial to your academic success and beyond. The four major learning goals of University Studies are:

- **Inquiry and Critical Thinking:** Learn various modes of inquiry through interdisciplinary problem-posing, investigating, and conceptualizing to become active, self-motivated, and empowered learners.
- **Communication:** Enhance your capacity to communicate in various media (writing, reading, visual, and oral), convey and understand quantitative information, and to work effectively in groups.
- **The Variety of Human Experience:** Appreciate and understand the 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:** Understand the impact and value of individuals and our choices on society, both intellectually and socially.

The full goal statements and grading rubrics used by instructors to evaluate if students have met these goals can be found at: <http://www.pdx.edu/unst/goals.html>

SUSTAINABILITY: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

These policies apply equally to both the main session and mentor sessions!

These policies may be modified in if agreed to mutually with students and instructors.

Make sure you are looking at the latest version of the syllabus on the course website.

Course policies: The central goal of these policies is to foster the trust and respect necessary to build a strong learning community.

Attendance: Learning in this course involves, first and foremost, your bodily presence. Thus, attendance is **required** in BOTH main class and mentor lab and attendance will count toward your grade. **If you miss 7 or more class meetings, you will automatically fail the course.** Also, do not arrive late to class or leave class early (two late arrivals or early departures will equal an absence). You are late if you arrive five minutes after the class period begins. Please do not rely on PSU clocks for timekeeping. They are unreliable. Finally, come to class prepared to stay for the entire period (e.g. go before you go). Do not disrupt class by leaving and returning during the class period.

Benefit of the Doubt: Practicing the learning goals of University Studies requires that we address sensitive or controversial topics and ideas in new ways. As when trying anything new, people will make mistakes. In this class we will give each other the benefit of the doubt. So if someone says something that offends you, it is your responsibility to not assume that it was said with the intention of offending you. However, it is also our responsibility to speak up. If you find yourself offended, either raise the issue at the time in class or discuss it privately with me or your mentor after the class. This policy implicitly requires that you not intentionally offend someone else. **No one in this class should ever feel threatened or harassed.** If you do feel this way, please speak to me or your mentor immediately.

Confidentiality: The content of discussions, whether in class or in mentor section, are **CONFIDENTIAL**. This means you can talk about what we're learning in the class, but you are not to talk about personal details that fellow students reveal in or outside of the class and mentor lab.

Email: For your own benefit, do not expect to reach your professors 24/7. If you have a question or missed class, ask a classmate and consult the Daily Log on the course website. You will receive emails from me with information regarding the class and extra credit opportunities so check your account regularly. If you prefer to use a non-PSU email account, **be sure your school email account (pdx.edu) is forwarded to the account you use.** Your mentor can help you do this.

Late work: All assigned work will be collected at the beginning of 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 me **BEFORE** the start of class. Homework exercises, quizzes, and in-class activities cannot be turned in late (except for very unusual circumstances and with my permission). For major assignments (excluding group presentations and the last reflective essay which must be on time) late work will be discounted 10% per 24 hour period or portion thereof. You will be allowed one late day (one 24 hour period) per term without penalty. **These deadlines/discounts will be adhered to except in cases of compelling emergencies in which you make a good faith effort to contact me before the deadline.**

Listening: Whether it is during small group work, a full class discussion, or a lecture, when someone else is talking, you are not.

Student Conduct/Plagiarism: The following constitutes conduct as proscribed by Portland State University for which a student or student organization or group is subject to disciplinary action: *All forms of academic dishonesty, cheating, and fraud, including but not limited to: (a) plagiarism, (b) the buying and selling of course assignments and research papers, (c) performing academic assignments (including tests and examinations) for other persons, (d) unauthorized disclosure and receipt of academic information and (e) falsification of research data.*

We expect that the writing you do for this course will be your own work. You violate this ethic if you copy materials 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. If you are not sure whether a particular action violates these expectations, ask your mentor or professor.

The full Code of Student Conduct and Responsibility can be found at <http://www.pdx.edu/media/c/o/CodeofConduct.doc>. Student work resulting from plagiarism or cheating will receive no credit and all expectations of the student conduct code will be strictly enforced in this course (including mentor sessions).

Technology etiquette: In addition to the above, there is a zero-tolerance cell phone policy (including texting). When you enter the class your phone is set on silent or turned off and put away. Failure to follow this policy will result in an automatic absence for the day. Similarly, laptops and other hand-held devices are not to be used during class. These rules apply in mentor session as well. In mentor sessions only use the classroom computers as instructed by mentor. Do not check email or use the Internet unless instructed to do so by your mentor. These strict rules are to ensure that the class stays focused on our project of learning from one another.

Policy Enforcement: If you are found disregarding any of these policies in class or in mentor lab, you will be warned once. If you choose to continue the behavior, you will be dismissed from class or mentor lab and the day will count as an absence. You will not be allowed to return to class or mentor lab until you have discussed your behavior with me.

Disability Resources: If you have a disability and require assistance obtaining resources at PSU, please see me. We will be happy to accommodate you as best we can. You will also need to register at the Disability Resource Center in Smith 435 (503-725-4150 or <http://www.pdx.edu/iasc/drc.html>).

Writing Resources: The Writing Center (<http://www.writingcenter.pdx.edu/index.php>) - 188F Cramer Hall, 725-3570. The Writing Center is available for PSU students needing relatively minor or specific help with a piece of writing. The Writing Center can also give students advice on citing sources, avoiding plagiarism, etc. If you find that you need additional practice in developing your writing skills, there are courses you can take concurrently with Freshman Inquiry. Please see me for more details.

Final Note: We are here because we want you to succeed and learning to ask for help when you need it is important to your success. If you are having problems with the course, with time management, or with your freshman year in general, PLEASE discuss it with me or your mentor so that we can address the issue.

Acknowledgements: Materials and sage advice from previous FRINQ instructors has been very helpful in designing this course. A special thanks to Jones Estes, Ann Fallon, Jeff Gerwing, Cody Jones, and Tim Sheard, as well as to current instructors Barbara Brower and Candace Gossen.