

Department.: Plant Science

Course number: PLSC 290W

Title: Environmental Planning & Landscape Design

Credits: 3

Contact Person: George Elliott

Catalog Copy: - PLSC 290W Environmental Planning & Landscape Design Second semester. Three credits. Two class periods and one discussion period. Open only with consent of instructor. Prerequisite: ENGL 110 or 111 or 250.

Schwab Theories, concepts and methods for sustainable design of the land to balance the needs for conservation and development. Topics include land use planning, ecological design, and cultural & natural landscape assessment at a variety of scales and settings.

Course Information: For revised PLSC 290W:

a. Course description, goals and objectives: This course covers theories, concepts and methods for sustainable design of the land to balance the needs for conservation and development. The content is delivered through a combination of lecture and reading from a wide range of multidisciplinary literature; engaging and evaluating the student is accomplished primarily through writing, both formal and informal. Goals are for the student to gain an understanding of and interest in the course content through instruction, written analysis and interpretation, interactive discussion, and original applied research.

b. Course requirements: Thirteen weekly readings of 12-25 pages each; one-page weekly writings that respond to assigned question about the current reading (evaluated); a two-part term paper (15 pages total) that begins with a general exploration of the natural and cultural resources of the students home town, and then develops a more in-depth look at a current environmental issue in the community and possible design & planning approaches to this issue.

The student cannot pass the course without passing the W component .

c. The course is divided into three units: The first establishes a general understanding of the planning and design professions and the emergence of ecology, environmentalism and sustainability as major influences on these disciplines. The second explores contemporary environmental problems and their cultural origins, addressing topics such as suburban sprawl, the decline of cities, loss of open space, & natural resource degradation. The third proposes a variety of sustainable planning & design approaches to these problems, such as context-sensitive transportation design, smart-growth, new urbanism, and ecological design methods & technologies.

W Criteria : - 1. The writing assignments for PLSC 290W enable and enhance learning the content in the following ways: One component of the writing in this course is a weekly 1-page

response to a question about the reading for that week. These writing prompts are designed to require the student to synthesize the reading and to relate it to ideas/information presented in the corresponding lecture. Their responses are then used to initiate in-class discussion. The second writing component for the course is a term paper (15pp. total of referenced, revised, edited writing) which is produced in two parts over the course of the semester. The first part is a descriptive piece in which the student examines the natural and cultural environment of their home town; the second part is a position paper in which the student presents a current environmental issue of concern in their hometown and suggests possible planning and design approaches to this issue. This assignment enhances the learning of the content areas by giving the students a familiar context and a real problem on which to apply the theories and concepts introduced in class.

2. The primary modes of writing instruction are: formal instruction to the class through exercises & examples; in-class discussion of the writings used for the readings; peer evaluation of writing (on weekly writing prompts); written commentary on both the weekly prompts and the paper drafts. 3. Opportunities for revision of the term paper are built into the class schedule through the use of incremental submissions and draft due dates as noted in the syllabus. The drafts are returned to the students with comments well before the final papers are due, and opportunities for individual conferences are offered for additional help. Specific instruction and expectations are given regarding the revision process.

Role of Grad Students: If available, a graduate student could assist with the writing instruction and evaluation portions of the course, which would require them to have ample knowledge in this area. I would supervise them through weekly briefings on the course content, schedule and tasks.