PLSC 289i - Greening Cities: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Who Cares

Lecture/Discussion/Laboratory: Tuesday/Thursday 5:00pm--6:15pm Spring 2010
Revised February 16, 2010

Instructor: Dr. Marla McIntosh, Professor of Urban Forestry, Department of Plant Sciences and Landscape Architecture
Office: 6117 Plant Sciences Building
Phone: 301-405-1323
E-mail: send all related class e-mails via Blackboard to guarantee their receipt. My e-mail address is: mmcintos@umd.edu but these e-mails may get lost in cyberspace.
Teaching Assistants: Joanna Calabrese, Bob Hayes, Jesse Yurow

Course Description
Can people, plants, and animals coexist in cities? If people only think of their own immediate needs, what happens to their cities? This course guides you to discover ways that cities work.

Students will learn about cities as urban ecosystems. The relationships between people (residents, commuters, government officials, politicians, environmentalists, developers, etc), trees and associated plants and animals (the urban forest), natural resources (soil, water, and air), and the built environment (buildings, roads, utilities, parking lots, etc.) will be explored for each student to develop their own understanding of cities and their global significance.

I-Course:
1. *investigate* significant *issues* with *imagination* and *intellect* with a belief that they will *inspire* future *investigation* and provide concrete mechanisms to *implement* innovative ideas.
2. challenge students to wrestle with the Big Questions
3. offer students new intellectual domains to explore and new ways to think about contemporary problems and age-old dilemmas like ecological sustainability.
4. promote critical thinking, effective communication skills, media literacy, technology fluency, and humane understanding.
5. **Students will take responsibility for their learning** and for demonstrating their mastery of the material in their course work.
6. Students must be willing participants/subjects in an experiment to help develop this course to meet expectations for future students.

Interdisciplinary and Emerging Discipline CORE Course: Urban Ecology

1. teach students how the principles of ecology apply to cities;
2. engage students to learn from real life examples of the vision and dedication of a diversity of ordinary citizens and skilled professionals who have worked to introduce “green” to their cities;
3. use a controversial case study to apply the student’s knowledge and experience to collaboratively develop land use plans related to campus sustainability initiatives.
COURSE MATERIALS
Because the course involves “emerging and interdisciplinary studies”, no single text is suitable for the course. The required course readings will be assigned and available on Blackboard.

BLACKBOARD-ELMS
Students are required to check Blackboard for class announcements, homework assignments and readings. Unless a student has an excused absence, late assignments will not be accepted.

CLICKERS
Clickers are required and will be used to facilitate and record student class participation. Information on how to obtain clickers and their alternatives is at: http://www.clickers.umd.edu/students/index_students.html

EXAMS:
Exams will be mostly short answer and essay. The final exam will be cumulative and “take home”. If you have a conflict of a substantial nature, please contact me ASAP to request alternate arrangements. Requests will only be approved if the conflict is unavoidable.

GRADES:
Quizzes: 5 X 30 Pts = 150 Pts
Student Blogs: 10 X 15 Pts = 150 Pts
Discussion Forum: 0-15 Pts/Posting = 150 Pts,
Clicker Responses: 150 Pts
Case Study: 250 Pts
Final Take Home Exam: 150 Pts

GRADING SCALE:
A = 90% and above; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%; F = 59% or less

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Attendance is required to achieve a satisfactory grade because 1) much of the course content is not available outside of class and 2) class participation is a major component of your grade. If you will be absent from class, e-mail your TA before class to request an excused absence.

LEARNING DISABILITIES:
Students with documented disabilities who wish to receive academic accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor within the period of schedule adjustment to arrange for recommended accommodations and before you encounter problems with the course.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:
The University of Maryland policy of academic honesty must be followed for all courses at UMD (http://www.shc.umd.edu/code.html). Any violation of the honor code will be reported to the University Honors Board for investigation.