

Urban Studies 360: Green Cities: Urban Agriculture, Sustainability, and Environmental Justice

Fall 2017 Syllabus: Online Course on D2L, 3 credits

Instructor: Kat Kocisky

Office/Hours: Bolton 792/online, or in person by appointment

Email: kkocisky@uwm.edu

Course Overview & Purpose

As our world becomes increasingly urbanized, cities face growing social, economic, and environmental challenges that pose the questions: “what does a green city really look like?” and “for whom are they designed?” In this course, students will have the opportunity to explore conflicts of environmental social inequality in cities, including the uneven distribution green space, access to and governance of sustainable infrastructure, gentrification, and food injustice.

The purpose of this course is to help us critically evaluate the concept of sustainability from an urban perspective. *Sustainability* is not something that most people would be opposed to, but that does not make it unproblematic. To uncover the key political, social, environmental, and economic challenges of sustainability, we will examine urban environmental topics from the City of Milwaukee’s sustainability plan as well as case studies of U.S. and international cities from both scholarly journal articles and the required course book. Looking at the topic of green cities from a critical perspective, this course will examine how neoliberal policies impact who has access to green amenities and healthy, affordable food sources, while exploring efforts by cities to create more just, sustainable urban communities. Finally, the course will touch on our own relationships to the built and natural environments, the characteristics that we think a green city should have, and the larger meaning and significance of urban environmental sustainability.

A common theme that you will get from readings and videos throughout the course is that although cities are the source of many problems, they are also the solution. It may be tempting to want to avoid the less than hopeful news about the environment today, but I believe that by facing these issues, we can start moving toward solutions. Over the course of the semester, I look forward to learning more about you, your interests and thoughts on these topics.

UWM Social Science General Education Requirements engages the study of human behavior, human cultural and physical variation and evolution, and the organization, development, and consequences of human activity, both past and present. The course also incorporates the UW System Shared Learning Goal of individual, social and environmental responsibility including civic knowledge and engagement (both local and global), ethical reasoning, and action. USP 360 counts as a required course for the Urban Studies Program certificate and major degree program.

UW Shared Learning Credit and Social Science Credit

This is a Social Science course that fulfills part of the General Education Requirements (GER). The course will address the following GER Social Science learning objectives through a variety of assignments and assessments detailed below:

UW System Shared Learning (SL) Goals Assessed:

- A) Effective Communication Skills including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and information literacy.

GER Social Science (SS) Goals Assessed:

Students will be able to:

- A) recognize and analyze intrapersonal, interpersonal, and/or socio-cultural factors associated with individual behavior, collective action, or societal development; and
- B) identify and critically evaluate the function, structure and development of human collectivities, organizations, institutions, and cultures, their infrastructures and interrelationships
- C) critically evaluate and apply alternative theoretical frameworks that have been used to offer meaningful explanations of social phenomena.

UW System Shared Learning Goals	Social Science Learning Objectives
Develop and refine critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills	Students will be exposed to readings drawn from the social sciences, urban environmental history, and urban planning that detail global participation as well as local support for and contestation of urban sustainability efforts.
Develop and refine written and narrated presentation skills	Students will identify and critically evaluate the function, structure and development of both top-down & bottom-up urban environmental governance, and its effect on populations of varying socioeconomic backgrounds.
	Students will identify and evaluate competing theoretical frameworks from which to view opportunities and challenges related to urban sustainability to offer meaningful explanations of urban environmental problems and change.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to...

1. **recognize** and describe the concept of urban sustainability;
2. **explain** the gaps between the theory and practice of sustainability using case studies of different urban environmental issues;
3. **compare and contrast** the different approaches cities and researchers have used to talk about and measure urban sustainability;
4. **understand** the ways in which urban sustainability initiatives may be contested by different stakeholders;

5. **evaluate** different forms of urban environmental governance in cities, and its effect on populations of varying socioeconomic backgrounds;
6. **apply** the concept of sustainability to an urban environmental issue of interest through reflection assignments and a final project to argue for a specific approach to sustainability.

Course Expectations

The instructor will:

- support and provide a respectful and professional learning environment,
- encourage use of general discussion section for the class,
- respond to email during the week within 24 hours, or by Monday morning for weekend emails,
- read all discussion posts and provide clarification or comments as necessary on the D2L news tab.

The student will:

- conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner,
- consume (watch, listen, read, etc.) all assigned material for the week unless it is marked optional,
- participate in discussion and reflections within the assigned deadlines (this includes initial posts, comment posts, and the reading of all posts within your assigned group. Late posts and assignments will not be accepted as each segment builds upon the previous one),
- check their UWM email regularly for emails from the instructor.

Desire2Learn (D2L)

This course will function fully online through the D2L site. Students must have access to the Internet. Inadequate Internet access will not be accepted as an excuse for a late assignment. Assigned readings, lecture materials, and videos will be posted on D2L under the week in which they are assigned. If you have trouble with D2L or have not used it yet, please see the following information on accessing and navigating D2L. Please contact the UWM Help Desk, as described below, if you have questions about these requirements.

To find and browse the D2L course web site:

- 1) Go directly to the D2L login page: <http://d2l.uwm.edu/?target=%2fd2l%2fhome> OR from the UWM home page: www.uwm.edu & click on the D2L tab
- 2) Click on the button that says “UWM ePanther” to access D2L using your UWM ePanther account.
- 3) On the Desire2Learn Welcome screen, type in your ePanther Username (your ePanther campus email, but without the “@uwm.edu”) and Password. Then hit “Login.”
- 4) On the D2L MyHome screen, go the dropdown menu (“Select a course”) at the top of the screen. You’ll see your active courses here. On D2L, this course is titled Perspectives on Urban Scene, but its full name is Urban Studies 360: Green Cities, Urban Agriculture, Sustainability, and Environmental Justice.

- 5) Click on the course title to see the Course Home page. Click “Content” in the navigation bar to begin exploring the site.
- 6) If you have difficulty getting into the course web site, please close your web browser completely and open it up again. Then, try logging on again using the instructions above. If you do not know your ePanther username or password, please get help as indicated below.
- 7) When you are finished looking around your D2L course sites, always click on “Logout” which can be found in the dropdown menu under your name in the top right corner of the screen. This is especially important if you are in a computer lab. Otherwise, the next person who uses the machine will be using your D2L account!

What to do if you have problems with Desire2Learn (D2L):

If you have any difficulties with D2L, including problems with your login (e.g., you forgot your password, or if you just can’t get on), please contact the UWM Help Desk by doing one of the following:

- Call the UWM Help Desk at (414) 229-4040 or toll free at 1-877-381-3459
- Call the CETL Learning Technology desk at (414) 229-4319

Course Material, Structure, & Assessments

Course material:

There is one required book for this course available for purchase or rental through UWM’s Virtual Bookstore, or elsewhere. A copy will also be on reserve at the library.

- Sze, J. (2015). *Fantasy islands: Chinese dreams and ecological fears in an age of climate crisis*. Univ of California Press. (ISBN: 978-0-520-28448-7)

We will also be reading extensively from the City of Milwaukee’s 2013 Sustainability Plan: ReFresh MKE. This will be available digitally as a PDF file on D2L. Additional required content will be available digitally on the course D2L site.

Course structure:

There is required content to complete each week, but we are not required to be online at the same time. New course content will open each week on Monday at 12:00 AM. Due dates will be listed within the assignment, but in general discussions are **due Wednesday and Friday at 11:59 PM**, and assignments for that week close **Sunday at 11:59 PM**. Future weeks’ content will be hidden until the previous week has ended, much like if we were meeting in real time.

****Please note:** The course schedule below is not a complete list of required weekly content, but represents key readings. This schedule is subject to slight modifications.

Week	Start Date	Topic	Readings
1	9/5	Overview of sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarr, J. (2014). Urban environmental history (pp. 72-89). In F. Uekoetter (Ed.), <i>The turning points of environmental history</i>. University of Pittsburgh Press. Roseland, M., & Spiliotopoulou, M. (2016). Converging urban agendas: Toward healthy and sustainable communities. <i>Social Sciences</i>, 5(3), 28. (pp. 1-11).
2	9/11	Sustainability discourses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caprotti, F. (2014). Eco-urbanism and the eco-city, or, denying the right to the city? <i>Antipode</i>, 46(5), 1285-1303. Agyeman, J., Bullard, R. D., & Evans, B. (2002). Exploring the nexus: Bringing together sustainability, environmental justice and equity. <i>Space and polity</i>, 6(1), pp. 77-90.
3	9/18	Measuring sustainability Reflection #1 due 9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milwaukee (MKE) ReFresh Sustainability Plan 2013 (pp. 1-12) Pearsall, H., & Pierce, J. (2010). Urban sustainability and environmental justice: evaluating the linkages in public planning/policy discourse. <i>Local Environment</i>, 15(6), 569-580.
4	9/25	Food Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MKE ReFresh (Food Systems) pp. 29-34 Alkon, A. H., & McCullen, C. G. (2011). Whiteness and farmers markets: Performances, perpetuations... contestations? <i>Antipode</i>, 43(4), 937-959. Agyeman, J. (2013). <i>Introducing just sustainabilities: Policy, planning, and practice</i>. Zed Books Ltd. (Ch.2 pp. 59-72 required; pp. 73-95 optional)
5	10/2	Land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MKE ReFresh (Land & Urban Ecosystems) pp. 41-48 Checker, M. (2011). Wiped out by the “greenwave”: Environmental gentrification and the paradoxical politics of urban sustainability. <i>City & Society</i>, 23(2), 210-229. De Sousa, C. (2005). Policy performance and brownfield redevelopment in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. <i>The Professional Geographer</i>, 57(2), 312-327.
6	10/9	Water Reflection #2 due 10/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MKE ReFresh (Water) pp. 61-67 Reckien, D et al (2017). Climate change, equity and the Sustainable Development Goals: an urban perspective. <i>Environment and Urbanization</i>, 29(1), 159-182. Goodling, E., & Herrington, C. (2014). Reversing complete streets disparities: Portland’s community watershed stewardship program. <i>Incomplete Streets: Processes, Practices, and Possibilities</i> (pp. 176-201).

7	10/16	Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MKE ReFresh (Mobility) pp. 49-54 • Golub, A. (2014). Moving beyond Fordism” “Complete Streets” and the changing political economy of urban transportation. In Zavestoski, S. & Agyeman, J. (Eds.) (2014)., <i>Incomplete streets: Processes, practices, and possibilities</i> (pp. 36-53). Routledge. • Chronopoulos, T. (2014). Urban spatial mobility in the age of sustainability. In Zavestoski, S. & Agyeman, J. (Eds.) (2014)., <i>Incomplete streets: Processes, practices, and possibilities</i> (pp. 54-76). Routeledge.
8	10/23	Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MKE ReFresh (Resource Recovery) pp. 55-60 • Chs. 1 & 5 in Pellow, D. N. (2002). <i>Garbage wars: The struggle for environmental justice in Chicago</i> (p. 6791). Cambridge, MA: Mit Press. (pp. 1-19 & pp. 101-130)
9	10/30	Energy Reflection #3 due 11/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MKE ReFresh (Energy) pp. 21-28 • Introduction & Ch.1 Sze, J. (2015). <i>Fantasy islands: Chinese dreams and ecological fears in an age of climate crisis</i>. Univ of California Press. (pp. 1-54)
10	11/6	Green buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MKE ReFresh (Buildings) pp. 13-20 • Ch. 2 & 3 in Sze, 2015 (pp. 55-102)
11	11/13	The making of eco-cities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 4 in Sze, 2015 (pp. 103-129) • Caprotti, F. (2014). Critical research on eco-cities? A walk through the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco-City, China. <i>Cities</i>, 36, 10-17.
12	11/20	THANKSGIVING WEEK	N/A
13	11/27	The making of eco-cities Reflection #4 (Project First Draft) due 12/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ch. 5 & Conclusion in Sze, 2015 (pp. 130-163)
14	12/4	Peer Review Peer Review due 12/10	N/A
15	12/11	Final Project Final Project due 12/17	N/A

Course assignments:

Here is a brief overview of all assignments. See individual assignment guidelines on D2L for details.

Online Discussions (45% of total grade)

There are nine discussion posts throughout the course, including the Introduction post during the first week of the course. The purpose of weekly discussions is to prepare students for reflection essays that

will build up to a final paper and presentation. The instructor will provide specific prompts or questions to respond to for each week's discussion post. Students are required to cite material from the required reading or reference required videos from that week in their discussion posts. Specific instructions and rubrics will be provided.

Initial Post (200 words, minimum): Due on **Wednesday at 11:59 PM.**

Comment Posts (2 different comments, 150 words each): Due on **Friday at 11:59 PM.**

Students will read all discussion posts and comments within their group by **Sunday at 11:59 PM.**

Reflections (20% of total grade)

There is no midterm or final exam for this course. Instead, students will submit four reflection essays (worth 5% each) throughout the semester that will act as preparation for a final project worth 30% of the final grade. These reflections will take on the qualities of "midterm" assessments in that they will require students to synthesize information learned in the previous weeks' content. To do this, students will select an urban environmental issue of interest and apply knowledge gained from the readings and videos to critically examine sustainability discourses, measurement approaches, stakeholder perspectives, and how social equity factors into their issue.

Final Project (30% of total grade)

Following a peer review activity, the final project will tie these four reflections together into one cohesive paper and online presentation. Detailed instructions & rubrics will be provided on D2L.

Credit Hours & Course Workload

Urban Studies 360 is a 3-credit course. Based on federal and university expectations, students should prepare to spend a minimum of 144 hours of class time on preparation and work related to the course. Taking into consideration that the number of hours demanded of students outside of class will fluctuate based on the scheduling of key assessments, students should anticipate investing approximately 10 hours per week on the course.

Course work load	Hours
Time reading, listening, watching and absorbing required content (includes instructor overview)	70
Time spent preparing, posting, reading and responding to discussion posts (9)	30
Time spent preparing & writing project reflections (4)	30
Time spent preparing final project & presentation (includes peer review)	14
Total	144

Course Grading & Percentage Distribution

Assessment	Percent
Discussions (9 @ 5% each)	45%
Reflections (4 @ 5% each)	20%
Peer Review	5%
Final project (includes topic of interest survey)	30%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

A	93-100%	C	73-75%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	86-89%	D+	66-69%
B	83-85%	D	63-65%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	76-79%	F	59% and below

Extra Credit

There will be two opportunities for extra credit during the Fall 2017 semester. To receive points, students must attend one or both events (below) and submit a written essay. Partial credit will not be given (e.g. attending the lecture, but not submitting an essay). **Both lectures are important opportunities to learn more about relevant topics discussed in this course, like urban development, gentrification, housing, and environmental justice!** Please make an effort to attend if your schedule allows.

- 1) Urban Studies Program Fall Lecture on **Friday, September 15 at 2:00 pm** in Greene Hall. Lecture Info/Speaker: “When and Why Do We Overbuild? Lessons from Chicago” with Rachel Weber, Professor of Urban Planning & Policy at the University of Illinois at Chicago
- 2) Henry W. Maier State of Milwaukee Summit, **Thursday, November 16 at 4:30 pm.** “Far from the American Dream: Milwaukee’s Fair and Affordable Housing Crisis.”

More information about these opportunities will be provided later during the semester.

Academic Conduct

You are expected to do your own work in this class and properly cite any ideas or quotes from other sources. Citations should follow a generally accepted format (APA, MLA, Chicago). Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct will be dealt with in accordance to the guidelines of the university. Academic dishonesty includes failing to cite published work or someone else’s ideas,

purchasing a paper from another student or online, using another student's work as your own, directly copying from a source without quoting the author, submitting your own work from another class, etc. Submitted material may be randomly run through plagiarism detection software.

Any student caught engaging in plagiarism will receive a failing grade for this course, and will automatically initiate the university's procedure and policy on plagiarism and academic integrity. This can be viewed at: http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2015/02/misconduct_flowchart.pdf

University Policies

The Secretary of the University maintains a web page that contains university policies that affect the instructor and the students in this course, as well as essential information specific to conduct of the course. The link to that web page is: <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/SyllabusLinks.pdf>

1. **Students with disabilities.** Verification of disability, class standards, the policy on the use of alternate material and test accommodations can be found at the following: <http://uwm.edu/arc/>
2. **Religious observances.** Policies regarding accommodations for absences due to religious observance are found here: <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm>
3. **Students called to active military duty.** Accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty are found here:
Students: <http://uwm.edu/active-duty-military/>
Employees: <https://www.wisconsin.edu/ohrwd/download/policies/ops/bn9.pdf>
4. **Incompletes.** A notation of "incomplete" may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond the student's control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work.
https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_31_INCOMPLETE_GRADES.pdf
5. **Discriminatory conduct (such as sexual harassment).** Discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated by the University. It poisons the work and learning environment of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff. Policies regarding discriminatory conduct may be found here:
https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discrimina_duct_Policy.pdf
6. **Academic misconduct.** Cheating on exams or plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, including failing a course or even suspension or dismissal from the University. Policies for cheating/plagiarism may be found here:
<http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/>
7. **Complaint procedures.** Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy.
https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discrimina_duct_Policy.pdf
8. **Grade appeal procedures.** A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow the established procedures adopted by the department, college, or school in which the course resides or in the case of graduate students, the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective

department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School.

<http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm>

9. **LGBT+ resources.** Resources that support inclusivity of students who identify as LGBT+ in the learning environment may be found here: <http://uwm.edu/lgbtrc/>
10. **Final examination policy.** The final exam requirement, the final exam date requirement, etc. <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S22.htm>