Sustainable Living: Senior Capstone Spring 2016 Instructor: Minato

T/TH 10:00 – 11:50 CRN 64085-  – UNST 421-529- Six Credits  389 Neuberger

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**Course Description**

In light of looming environmental crises, what can individuals do to change direction?  In this course we collectively examine our society to determine which cultural and personal values support, and which inhibit, sustainability. Students engage in lifestyle discussion groups and experiment with socially responsible personal change. In partners, students create and facilitate sustainable living activities for local youth.

**Community Partners**

Northwest Earth Institute (NWEI) and the Center For Earth Leadership (CERL), are local non-profit organizations that empower individuals and organizations to transform culture toward a sustainable and enriching future. We use materials from NWEI and work with participants in the CERL eco-school network, a group of green team partners in local schools.

Center For Earth Leadership, 319 SW Washington #400, Portland, OR Contact: Erika DeJong [**Erika@earthleaders.org**](mailto:Erika@earthleaders.org) 503-227-2315

**Class Activities**

This course includes study, reflective writing, at home practice of lifestyle changes and class discussion on the first two books in the Northwest Earth Institute series, Voluntary Simplicity and Choices For Sustainable Living. In addition, students meet 3 to 4 times with a youth group to facilitate sustainability activities.

Each student will create and lead an eco-activity for youth based on a topic of their interest (i.e. food, transportation, energy) and that utilizes their skills (i.e. art, writing, teaching, multimedia, building, gardening) as applied to the teaching of sustainability principles. Capstone designed youth curriculum will be made available online to parents and teachers through both community partners. Each student will keep a reflective journal on course readings, in-class work and green activities. Brief reports of their selected outside readings, films and events, will be presented at the last class.

AttendanceCapstone classes depend on regular attendance for the group process to work and for individual student success. Constructive participation in discussions and class activities requires that you come to class on time and ready to contribute to discussion, planning sessions and prepared for team and class work sessions. Each student has one excused absence (instructor contacted by email prior to class). It is your responsibility to make up work missed in class.

**Required Texts**

1. NWEI  Discussion Course on Choices For Sustainable Living

2. NWEI Discussion Course on Voluntary Simplicity

**Grading Criteria**

**Attendance & Constructive participation: 20% of grade**

**Youth Work/Field Work: 20% of grade .** *Criteria for assessment:*

\* Preparation for session

\* Effectiveness of facilitation

 \*Constructive record-keeping

**Response Journal: 15% of grade.** *Criteria for assessment:*

\*Completion of assigned reflections

\*Reports on weekly activities

\*Connections to course themes

**Eco-kit: 15% of grade*.*** *Criteria for assessment*

\*Deft translation of course material

\*Incorporation of youth appropriate material

\*Effective graphic design

\*Compelling age appropriate activity

**Community Project/Eco-change - 20% of grade.** *Criteria for assessment*

\*Meaningful interaction with local group

\*Written and oral report on relevant film and literature

**Assessments (study sheets) 10% of grade.** *Criteria for assessment:*

\* percentage of correct answers

**Points deducted for late work & absences.**

**Knowledge-based learning objectives:**

 1. Define sustainability in an environmental, economic, social and personal context. (critical thinking)

2. Understand the factors that inhibit sustainability both socially and personally. (critical thinking)

3. Explain various methods of attaining the different types of sustainability (social and ethical responsibility)

4. Describe the variety of human values and perspectives that contribute or detract from sustainable practices. (diversity)

5. Explore the connections between environmental, economic, social and personal sustainability (critical thinking)

6. Examine the role of personal choice in affecting change toward a sustainable future (social and ethical responsibility)

7. Analyze the efforts of local individuals and agencies to move the Portland community toward sustainability. (social and ethical responsibility, critical thinking, diversity)

8. Apply communication, organizational, and research skills to design of a final product for our community partner (communication, social and ethical responsibility)

Skill-based learning objectives:

1. Foster community outreach strategies.

2. Develop group facilitation skills

3. Apply graphic design principles to…

4. Organize information into a lesson plan for youth.

5. Design an educational activity focused on sustainability. Develop mentoring skills effective for fostering civic action among youth.

6. Understand developmentally appropriate educational approaches for youth.

**Classroom Etiquette**

Capstone courses require regular interaction between classmates and the community. How you carry yourself has a greater impact than in a traditional lecture course. Your actions will help determine how successful these partnerships will be. Strive to be respectful and responsible while representing our class. If you miss a class session, partner planning session or community visit please get note, verify assignments, check on deadlines, collect materials from class, stay current with your work and communicate with your partners, community contacts and instructor.

**Student Code of Conduct**

Please read the Student Conduct Code (see http://www.pdx.edu/dos/conduct.html).  It details your rights and responsibilities as a member of the Portland State University community .If you are a student registered with a documented disability and/or you need physical or other accommodation, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (435 Smith Center, 503-725-4150 [voice] and 503-725-6505