Sustainable Development and New Urbanism
PLG 497/597

School of Architecture, Landscape Architecture and Planning
University of Arizona
Fall 2009, Tuesdays 3:30pm - 6:00pm, CALA 304C

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:00 – 2:00 and Thursdays 3:00pm – 5:00pm
A303H CALA Building

Course Overview:
This course is designed to expose students to selected concepts and content associated with contemporary sustainable development. In so doing, the cornerstones of sustainability (environment, economics, and equity) will be explored in detail. These components will be discussed in depth as they apply to the concept of new urbanism within the planning discipline. Students will be immersed in a variety of literature and real world examples upon which they will begin to formulate a working definition of sustainability as it pertains to planning and their specific areas of individual interest. Students will be engaged in evaluating the built environment through a sustainable lens and will be called upon to critically and systematically evaluate the current state planned communities and a variety of designed environments. Additionally, students will generate a semester long working checklist of implementable planning and design alternatives to be incorporated into their own future work.

Course Goals and Objectives:
1) Develop a comprehensive understanding of the tenants of sustainability as they apply to planning and other disciplines.
   a) Inventory historical concepts which make up the foundation of present day sustainability.
   b) Explore in detail the interaction of environmental, economic, and equitable systems as they converge in contemporary planning.
   c) Formulate a working definition of sustainability and the mechanisms by which it can be integrated into the student’s future work.

2) Cultivate critical thinking skills in evaluating natural, built, and designed systems.
   a) Expose students to present day sustainable design guidelines and best management practices.
   b) Develop a methodology for evaluating these systems within a sustainable design context.
   c) Conduct a performance appraisal which rates several real world planned communities or designed landscapes on the tenants of sustainability.
3) Develop a working toolkit of implementable planning and design alternatives which can be applied in future scholarly and professional work.
   a) Build a checklist of planning and design alternatives.
   b) Explore how these components can be better integrated into the discipline.
   c) Evaluate to what extent the practice of new urbanism addresses and integrates the tenants of sustainable development in practice.

Course Format:
This course will utilize a combination of lectures, seminars, discussions, labs, and outside readings in order to convey the broad spectrum of materials being covered. This is designed to be an adaptive means of utilizing the best conveyance media possible for each topic and to fully engage the students in a variety of ways. Student contributions and involvement are paramount to the success of this course. As the course relies on student initiative and interest, students are encouraged to share their own experiences, understanding of the material and constructive commentary with the class.

Course Attendance and Grading:
Students are required to be on time and attend each class session. As this course meets once a week, missing even a single session results in a large disconnect of content and continuity.

An unexcused failure to attend a scheduled class session will result in an automatic 5% deduction from your final course grade. Excused absences must be discussed with the instructor, in writing, prior to missing the class. Excused absences are only those which are outlined by official U of A policy.

Additionally, students should expect to work a great deal out of class in order to assure appropriate mastery of the material and assigned work. Your grade will be based upon your overall participatory willingness/attitude, performance in class exercises, assignments, exams/quizzes and the final project/paper.

The following criteria will be used:

- **Attitude:** Overall willingness to perform the required work and a healthy respect for the professors, classmates, and all invited guests

- **Understanding and Application:** Grasp and integration of the issues at hand

- **Process and Effort:** Diligence in performance of assigned tasks

- **Craftsmanship:** a sign of care, interest, and skill in adding to course material and contributions
The relative value of course requirements will be apportioned as shown below. These are subject to change as the course schedule is finalized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude, Attendance, and Preparedness</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readings and Exercises</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams and Quizzes</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project/Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>35%</td>
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</tbody>
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The following standards will be used:

- **A=Excellent (90-100)** The work reflects significant depth of understanding of the assignments, to their full potential. The problems have been both fully developed and communicated exceedingly well in written, graphic, or other media. This means outstanding work.

- **B=Good (80-89)** Work shows an above-average depth of understanding. The problem solutions demonstrate an attention to detail and a consciousness of good craft. This means above-average work.

- **C=Fair (70-79)** All the requirements of the assignments have been met and the problems have been solved adequately, but the solutions lack depth of understanding and development. The overall work demonstrates skills barely appropriate for this level. This means average work.

- **D=Poor (60-69)** The work is extremely weak and lacks full resolution of the stated problems. Craft is weak. Skills appropriate to this level have not been demonstrated. This means poor work.

- **F=Failed (0-59)** The work is incomplete and/or poorly portrayed. The solutions to problems evidence a lack of understanding and skills appropriate to this level, and a general lack of effort in fulfilling assignments. This mean unacceptable work and the student must repeat course to get credit.
Course Materials:
There will likely be two required texts for this course. In an effort to minimize costs to the students however, texts are currently being reviewed to assure that they are indeed valuable resources to you in this class and in the future. A complete reading list is also being compiled and will be distributed during the next class.

In addition to the required texts, digital literature in the form of excerpts from other texts, professional documents, and journal articles will be posted on D2L on a weekly basis. This content will be posted at least 4 days prior to class period in which it will be discussed. It is the requirement of all students to have read this supplemental material fully, and be able to discuss in a critical way, the content and concepts of this material during class.

Prerequisites:
There are no prerequisites for the course. All majors and disciplines are strongly encouraged to enroll. The course is designed to be heavily interdisciplinary and will benefit from having a diverse group of participants.

Academic Integrity:
Your conduct in this course is a reflection of your professional integrity. All materials presented in this course are subject to proper citation; this includes all data, images, text, ideas, concepts, etc. You will NEVER be reprimanded for citing materials; you will however receive a failing grade for the course for plagiarizing other’s work or cheating.

The official University of Arizona Code of Academic Integrity states:

“Integrity and ethical behavior are expected of every student in all academic work. This Academic Integrity principle stands for honesty in all class work, and ethical conduct in all labs and clinical assignments. This principle is furthered by the student Code of Conduct and disciplinary procedures established by ABOR Policies 5-308 through 5-404, all provisions of which apply to all University of Arizona students.”

Accommodation for Special Needs:
Special needs will be accommodated for based on official U of A policy. If you require any assistance on this matter whatsoever please contact me immediately and we formulate a plan for addressing your needs and moving forward.

Open Door Policy:
I have a vested interest in your personal and professional success, I want nothing more than for you to succeed and excel both in this course and beyond. My door is always open to discuss course materials, your personal and professional interests, and anything else to which you feel I may be of use. I will make every effort to get to know you better and I am truly excited to be working with you in this course and in the future.