



COURSE OUTLINE
SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Lectures: Mon, Wed, Thur 10:00-13:00 (online)

Office Hours: By appointment (online)

Contact: camo@uvic.ca (lead instructor) & sharondias@gmail.com (teaching assistant)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes as its starting point the urgent socio-ecological challenges facing contemporary cities. However, in the midst of great anxiety, cynicism, and pessimism, it adopts a critically optimistic tone, focusing on identifying promising pathways towards more ecologically responsible, livable, resilient, and socially just urban futures, while recognizing the significant barriers in the way. Topics include: sustainable land use and transportation planning, green building, urban agriculture, and the pressing challenge of urban resilience in the context of the climate emergency and COVID-19 pandemic.

SPECIAL NOTES ON COURSE FORMAT

Given the current situation and need for physical distancing, the course will be delivered remotely online and will involve a mixture of self-directed activities and online live video lecture and discussion sessions. The course is also delivered in a 4-week time frame covering the material usually considered in a full 13-week course. Because of its online delivery and condensed format there might be some additional challenges for you as a student.

Please read the following carefully and keep in mind for the course:

- Much of the course will be delivered “live” from 10:00-13:00 M, W, Th through the Zoom platform, while there will also be self-directed learning components. Important materials will be posted on [CourseSpaces](#).
- Before class, you will be sent a link through which you can easily access Zoom. Please ensure you frequently check the email with which you are registered with UVic. You will also be able to connect with other students through Zoom (for group project meetings, for example). Please log on with your real name when using Zoom.
- You will need reliable access to the internet and a computer (preferably with camera/microphone) to connect with the class for the online lessons (through Zoom).
- The online format can seem strange and awkward at first, but we will do everything possible to make this a comfortable and effective learning environment. Ensure you have a distraction-free space at home (or elsewhere) for the online classes. Keep in mind that we are all new to this format and be forgiving, open-minded and adaptable. We’re all in this together.

- The “live” portion of the course will involve lectures, break-out group sharing, class discussion, and time for questions and answers. Please listen carefully to directions given at the beginning of class around how to ensure we can have effective discussions through this format. When you are not actively contributing, please ensure your “mute” yourself to reduce ambient noise. Students less keen on sharing live will be able to participate through the [CourseSpaces](#) forum. As in class, please be respectful, friendly and professional in all your online interactions. No falling into troll-mode.
- Given the condensed format, regular attendance and keeping up on course work is even more important than in full semester-long courses. An individual class in summer semester is the equivalent of a week during the Fall or Spring terms. Also, keep in mind that time will be condensed for out of class work (i.e. completing readings and assignments). You will need to set aside time outside of class (likely 6-9 hours a week) for preparation, reading, completing assignments, etc. 😊

REQUIRED AND / OR RECOMMENDED TEXT(S)

There are no required texts for this course. Required readings (journal articles, book chapters, and other sources) will be available online (for example through the UVic Library or posted on [CourseSpaces](#)).

IMPORTANT NOTE: Reading thoroughly is essential for success in this course. Keep in mind in a condensed course, keeping up on reading can be a challenge. Make sure you organize your time effectively to read the material. And be mindful that simply reading without engaging with the material is essentially useless in that the material has no chance of moving from short to long term memory. It is critical to mark up, highlight, take notes and critically reflect while reading. Invest time and effort and you will be rewarded.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course presents an opportunity to learn about urban sustainability, but equally importantly an opportunity to develop certain skills and cultivate good habits. Specifically, as a disciplined and focused student, you will leave this course...

1. ...with the ability to ask - and tools to answer - more qualified, capacious, and conditional questions about the socio-ecological state of the (urban) planet and promising pathways towards and insidious barriers in the way of creating ecologically responsible, livable, resilient and socially just cities
2. ...with a deeper understanding of the web of interconnections associated with urban development including the intimate connections between your own life and processes of (un)sustainability.
3. ... with specific knowledge about pressing urban challenges such as responding to resilience challenges posed by our (in)actions on climate change & the pandemic, transportation sustainability, green building and urban agriculture
4. ... with creative mapping, research, outreach and communication skills developed through the mapping assignment and community-engaged project
5. ...motivated to take action in your own community to bring about positive change along with ideas, inspiring stories, knowledge of good practices and connections to help inform such action
6. ... better habits in terms of discipline, focus, intentionality, consistency, organization, confidence, courage, conscientiousness, empathy, and dedication.

EVALUATION

You will be evaluated on the following required elements:

May 18	“Your Life on Lockdown” Map – you will create a perceptual map detailing your world in the time of coronavirus based on this exercise led by CityLab.	15%
Jun 4	Community-Engaged Project & Presentation – you will undertake a research or outreach project supporting a community partner and present outcomes to the class on June 4	30%
Ongoing	Participation – involving positive contribution to class learning environment, online forum and periodic reading comprehension assignments	15%
Jun 8	Final Take-Home Exam - written answer exam to be introduced on Jun 4 and due on Jun 8	40%

GRADING SYSTEM

As per the Academic Calendar:

Grade	GPA	Grade scale	Description
A+ A A-	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a small minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
B+ B B-	6 5 4	77-79% 73-76% 70-72%	Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
C+ C	3 2	65-69% 60-64%	Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
D	1	50-59%	Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
F	0	0-49%	Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.
N	0	0-49%	Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to revision).

Mon, May 11 (Live)	<p>Introduction to the study of sustainable cities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do we mean by sustainability? 2. Why cities? 3. What are sustainable cities? <p>Introductions, ice-breakers, course outline review</p>
Wed, May 13 (Live)	<p>Sustainable Cities Pathways & Barriers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elements: healthy urban metabolism, livability, resilience, social justice 2. Case studies 3. Sustainable Cities: pathways and barriers
Thur, May 14 (Live)	<p>Sustainability Efforts in Victoria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Malcolm Maclean (City of Victoria Community Planning) on “Victoria’s Approach to Sustainability Planning and Public Engagement” 2. Eric Diller (Island Transformation Organization) on “Value-Capture Financing for Transportation Projects and Reviving Commuter Rail on South Vancouver Island” 3. Wendy Littlefield (NetZero Victoria) on “The Conversion of a 1912 Home to NetZero”
Mon, May 18 (Self-directed)	<p>Self-directed reading assignment on Urban Resilience in the time of the Climate Emergency & COVID-19 + <i>Mapping Assignment due</i></p>
Wed, May 20 (Live)	<p>Urban Resilience</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ole Kassow (Cycling Without Age) – “Virtual bike tour of Copenhagen exploring sustainability / resilience efforts” 2. Wendy Brawer (Green Maps) – “Resilience Efforts in New York City”
Thur, May 21 (Live)	<p>Urban Resilience</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class discussion 2. Robyn Webb (City of Victoria Climate Action) “Urban Resilience & Planning for Climate Adaptation & Pandemic Response”
Mon, May 25 (Live)	<p>Social Justice and Sustainability</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do we mean by social sustainability? 2. Decolonizing the sustainable city 3. Environmental (In)justice 4. Eco-gentrification
Wed, May 27 (Live)	<p>Green Building</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class discussion 2. Kristi Owens (3E Eco-Group) on “Measuring Success in Green Building”
Thur, May 28 (Self-directed)	<p>Self-directed reading assignment on Sustainable Transportation</p>
Mon, Jun 1 (Live)	<p>Sustainable Transportation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class discussion 2. Sarah Webb (City of Victoria Planning) on “The Future of Transportation Planning in Victoria”
Wed, Jun 3 (No class)	<p>Final prep day</p>
Thur, Jun 4 (Live)	<p>Final Class</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group Project Presentations 2. Final course reflections 3. Take-Home Exam administered

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

- Geography Department website: uvic.ca/socialsciences/geography/
- Undergraduate Advising: geogadvising@uvic.ca

COURSESPACES

You will access the [CourseSpaces](#) site to access readings and also for important announcements, instructor notes, your grades, and additional information. If you are not familiar with CourseSpaces please come see me.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

UVic Geography prides itself on being one of the top programs in the country. You are expected to take seriously your time as a scholar in our program. Do your part to ensure an engaging classroom. Be punctual, respectful, compassionate, and attentive.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is every student's responsibility to be aware of the university's policies on [academic integrity](#), including policies on **cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of an editor, multiple submission**, and **aiding others to cheat**. If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For more information, see: uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php. This is a useful source for guidance on when to cite something and when something is "common knowledge". <https://www.thoughtco.com/when-to-cite-a-source-1857338>

ACCESSIBILITY

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a documented disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the [Centre for Accessible Learning](#) (CAL) as soon as possible. The RCSD staff is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

POSITIVITY AND SAFETY

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

COURSE EXPERIENCE SURVEY (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE AT UVIC

UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. We encourage students to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting uvic.ca/svp. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Whether or not you have been directly impacted, if you want to take part in the important prevention work taking place on campus, you can also reach out:

Where: Sexualized violence resource office in EQHR; Sedgewick C119

Phone: 250.721.8021

Email: svpcoordinator@uvic.ca

Web: uvic.ca/svp

NOTES ON SELF-CARE:

A note to remind you to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this term by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone.

Counselling Services - Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students. uvic.ca/services/counselling/

Health Services - University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives. uvic.ca/services/health/

Centre for Accessible Learning - The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations uvic.ca/services/cal/. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Elders' Voices - The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/index.php