



COURSE OUTLINE SUSTAINABLE CITIES

Office Hours: On Zoom *by appointment*. I'm available pretty much any day but Thursdays.

Office Location: The Wilds of Zoom

Contact: Email: lmacker@uvic.ca

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.

KEY THEMES: sustainability, community, urban development, (urban) political ecology, mixed-use, green building, active transportation, urban ecology, climate resilience, local food, sustainability indicators, sustainability education, governance

COURSE FORMAT

Given the current COVID-19 situation and need for physical distancing, this course will be delivered remotely online and will involve a mixture of self-directed activities and online live video lecture and discussion sessions. We will try to meet in person for two physically-distanced field trips toward the end of the semester. (Off campus students will still be able to participate remotely.)

Because of the online delivery there might be some additional challenges for you as a student.

Please read the following carefully and keep it in mind during the course:

- Useful information on online learning can be found at the [UVic Learn Anywhere](#) portal.
- Much of this course will be delivered “live” on Thursdays from 2:30-5:20 (Pacific Daylight Time) through the **Zoom** (video-conferencing) platform. Some self-directed study lessons and two physically-distanced field trips are also planned. All UVic students are automatically provisioned with access to Zoom. Log in with your regular Netlink ID and password and an access code for the class sessions. To ensure the best possible ZOOM experience, some suggestions for optimizing your connection can be found [here](#).
- **Attending the live class time** at the designated time is mandatory. Real-time interaction with the instructor and classmates as well as the structure provided by having set times greatly enhances the learning experience. **Brightspace** is the main course hub where you will access materials (e.g. the course outline, readings, links), complete quizzes and exams, submit assignments, check your grades, and engage in discussions.
- **Technology requirements:** You will need reliable access to the internet and a computer (preferably with webcam/microphone), tablet or a smartphone to connect with the class for the online lessons (through Zoom). You should be comfortable using a word processor such

as MS Word (Office 365) and will be required to submit some assignments in .doc or .pdf formats. [Microsoft Word 365](#) is available free for UVic students.

- The online format can seem strange and awkward at first, but I will do everything possible to make this a **comfortable and effective learning environment**. Keep in mind that we are all new to this format and we all need to be forgiving, open-minded and adaptable. We're in this together.
- Ensure you have a **distraction-free** space at home (or elsewhere) for the online classes.
- To help **build community**, you are strongly encouraged to turn your video on during sessions. I understand there are circumstances in which you may be unable to do so. Remember when joining with video, your classmates will be able to see your background... so hide embarrassing things or use an [automatic background generator](#). 😊
- 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 asking questions and effective dialogue through this format. When you are not actively contributing, please ensure you “mute” yourself to reduce ambient noise.
- Students less keen on sharing live will be able to participate through the [Brightspace forum](#). Both in live class discussions and in the online forum, please be respectful, constructive, and professional in all your online interactions. Let's support one another in this learning journey.

COMMUNICATION & CONTACTS

Office hours – by appointment (Zoom link will be provided)

- Office hours will include the ability to meet with me in one on one meetings. Drop into the Zoom link and we can meet in a “breakout room” that is separate from other students.
- I have also set up a “Course Info” discussion forum (on Brightspace) where you can ask questions about the course asynchronously, and others can benefit from the answers. Before reaching out, please review the course outline, as much valuable information is included here.
- You can email me with questions of a more private/ personal nature. Please note, I receive a high volume of messages and am not able to respond immediately. I will aim to reply within 24 hours (not including weekends). Please do not leave important matters to the last minute.
- Email me at: lmacker@uvic.ca. Please put <**Geog 406 CM: your name: brief subject**> in the heading. This allows me to sort at the end of each day to check for emails and not miss anything.
- Your team: you must have an agreed upon method of effective communication with your project team members and you must all commit to check for messages via the agreed upon method on a regular basis.

REQUIRED READINGS(S)

There are no required textbooks for this course Required readings (journal articles, book chapters, and other sources) will be posted on Brightspace ahead of class each week as the course proceeds.

Important note: Reading effectively is absolutely essential for success in this course. Along with lecture material, assigned readings will be tested on the final. 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

1. 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 the 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 Covid-19 pandemic, transportation sustainability, green building and urban agriculture
 4. ... with creative mapping, research and communication skills developed through the mapping assignment and sustainability 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.

COURSE COMPONENTS

You will be evaluated on the following required elements:

February 11	“Media Scan & Your Life on Lockdown” Map – you will: a) complete a media scan to help you think about current issues in urbanism and, b) create a perceptual map detailing your world in the time of coronavirus based on this exercise led by CityLab.	15%
April 8 (proposal due Feb 25)	Sustainable Cities Project & Festival – in groups, you will undertake a written and creative project that furthers the pathways to sustainability, and present it in the final class. (5% of this mark will be for the project proposal)	30%
Ongoing	Participation – involving positive contribution to class learning environment, online forums and within your group.	15%
April 8 - April 12	Final Exam – a cumulative take-home final comprised of short and long essays, which will be based on the readings, guest speakers and lectures.	40%

The course is designed to achieve the learning goals and outcomes stated above. All aspects of the course may be assessed on exams. The requirements for each component will be further discussed in class.

Class Meetings and Participation—We will meet together almost once a week (Thursdays 2:30 PM-5:20 PM). Some weeks will have self-guided study, and we will not meet. Classes may include lectures, guest speakers, activities, discussions, brainstorming and problem solving, field trips, and community engaged work, as well as team work on community-based mapping projects.

Your participation grade—will reflect your willingness to engage in both your own questions and reflections **in class**, as well as those of your colleagues. It will also reflect your active engagement in, and contributions to the **discussion forums** on Brightspace, and **your work with your team for the final project**. Each team member must contribute significantly in their own way to the successful project outcome and must communicate effectively at all times with team members just as you would in any active community.

Exams—There will be a take home final exam in this course. The purpose of this is to check your understanding of the readings on sustainability, class lectures and discussions, guest speakers and your own research.

Sustainable Cities Project—You will be part of a small team of class colleagues, comprising members with diverse skills, backgrounds and experiences. Together you will focus on one project that contributes to a pathway toward sustainability. There will be individual as well as team components to the grade for this project.

Community celebration—The course will end with a presentation of your team’s project outcomes. Everyone will attend and participate, and we will invite other interested parties to join us.

GRADING SYSTEM

As per the Academic Calendar:

Grade	Grade point value	Grade scale	Description
A+ A A-	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a 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.

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

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

COURSESPACES

Please use Brightspace for weekly schedule and readings.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

In order to be fair to students who meet the deadlines, if you submit an assignment/course component late you will lose marks in the following way. The late penalty is 10% per day. All assignments must be submitted but after one week you will receive no grade. Again, to be fair to everyone, exceptions will only be granted for medical reasons. Late assignment will normally receive no comments.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is every student's responsibility to be aware of the university's policies on academic integrity. This is particularly important while we are working from home this semester. Students must abide by UVic academic regulations and observe standards of 'scholarly integrity,' (no plagiarism or cheating).

I will ask you to sign a pledge of honesty as part of the midterm and final exams stating that your work is your own. It will ask you to pledge that your work is being done individually and not with a friend, classmate, or group. You are also prohibited from sharing any information about the exam with others. It is really, really easy to tell when students are sharing information. Please make both our lives easier and just don't do it.

Policy on Academic Integrity: web.uvic.ca/calendar2019-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html

If you have any questions or doubts, talk to me, your course instructor. For more information, see uvic.ca/learningandteaching/cac/index.php.

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 <https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/>). The CAL 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.

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

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.

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Please see Brightspace for a weekly calendar and important dates.

DISCLAIMER

The above schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change.

NOTE:

A note to remind you to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester 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