

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS  
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ADMINISTRATION

**PUAD 839: Sustainable Communities**  
Fall 2014

**Instructor:** Rachel Krause, Ph.D.  
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**Office:** Wescoe Hall, 4060P

**Class meetings:** Tuesday, 6:00-8:50  
**Room:** Wescoe, 4035  
**Office hours:** By appointment

### **Course Description**

This class examines the role that communities can play in advancing environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Although sustainability has traditionally been viewed as an international or national issue, the unit of action has recently been shifting downward with cities being characterized as a key “battleground for sustainability.” This is in part because an estimated 50 percent of the global population, including 84 percent of the U.S. population, lives in urban areas and those numbers are projected to increase. Moreover, local governments have authority over many decisions that are directly related to sustainability, including land use, transportation, housing, local food policy, energy efficiency, and the character of local economic development. In this class we will examine these and related issues from a community-level perspective and assesses how social and governmental institutions, priorities, pressures and constraints influence the prospect for urban sustainability. The class has an applied component and will utilize general theory and lessons-learned to examine sustainability issues in the Lawrence and Kansas City region.

### **Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

This course is designed to enhance professional competencies in the following areas:

- Administrative Policy-Making: policy formulation, policy expectations;
- External Awareness: policy trends, working in a political environment, external policy impact;
- Strategic Management: long-term outlook, external awareness;
- Communication: verbal, written.

More specifically, by the end of this class students are expected to be able to:

- Articulate what sustainability looks like and how it can be measured;
- Understand the key sustainability challenges facing US communities and the various ways that the relationship between environmental, economic, and social sustainability manifest in urban environments;
- Identify the basic structures, operations, and priorities of local governments and how they influence the prospects of sustainability;

- Articulate the various types of initiatives that communities are taking to increase their own sustainability and resilience;
- Communicate information about sustainability to audiences comprised of the general public and government officials in a professional and appropriate manner.

## **Readings and Required Textbooks**

Class readings will come from the required course book below as well as from websites and articles posted in the “additional readings” folder on the course blackboard site.

Portney, Kent E. (2012). *Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously: Economic Development, the Environment, and Quality of Life in American Cities*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Cambridge: MIT Press.

(Recommended) Sanderson, Eric W. (2013). *Terra Nova: The New World After Oil Cars and Suburbs*. Abrams, New York: Wildlife Conservation Society.

## **Assignments**

Grades in this class will be based on students’ performance in reading reflections, leadership of class discussions, presentations, papers, and class participation. A brief description of each assignment is provided below. More detailed instructions will be given in class and posted on Blackboard at least a week before the stated due date.

### ***Sustainability Visualization* (5%)**

Students will take pictures of examples of sustainability in their community. Go into this assignment with open eyes and an open mind. What does sustainability look like to you? How do you see it manifest in your community?

Prepare one or a series of powerpoint slides containing between 5 to 7 sustainability pictures and upload it to Blackboard by 5:00 on the date it is due. Come to class prepared to spend approximately 5 minutes informally presenting your visuals.

### ***Reading Reflections* (20%)**

Students will write brief reflections in which they discuss the readings assigned for class that week. These reflections will provide the opportunity for students to think more deeply about the concepts in the readings and the linkages between them. They are also an opportunity for students to highlight relevant themes or questions they would like to discuss further during class. Reflections can be written in the first person and include personal perspectives on the topic, however they must also demonstrate that readings have been completed and digested. Each reading reflection should be approximately two pages long.

The reading reflections must be uploaded to *Blackboard by noon on the day of each class*, so that I have time to review them all *prior* to our class meeting. Late assignments will not be accepted. Over the course of the semester, everybody should complete 10 reflections – which essentially allows for 3 freebies, not including the first and last day of class.

Reflections will be graded on a simple 5 point scale, where a score of 4 reflects a standard “good” reflection. See Blackboard for examples of some particularly well-done reflections (which would likely receive a 5).

***Student Led Class Discussion*** (15%)

Students will be tasked to lead a 60 to 75 minute class discussion on the readings for a particular class meeting. All of the other students in class will have already done the readings, so discussions should not be structured as simple paper by paper summaries of the readings. Focus on pulling out and linking key points and, if possible, connecting them to current or regional issues. Students are encouraged to be creative how they format the discussion to engage their classmates.

***Applied Research Paper and Presentation*** (35%)

*Paper* (25%)

Students will write a report intended to inform the elected council members of a municipality selected by the student about a sustainability issue of local relevance. The information brief will include a description of the state of the local problem and review of the literature summarizing the existing state of knowledge on the selected issue. The report will conclude with one “best practice” case study and an assessment of how well a similar approach might be implemented in the selected local community.

*Presentation* (10%)

Students will give a brief, but professional presentation, as if to their city council, summarizing their applied research report.

***Class Participation*** (25%)

The class participation grade will be based on student’s engagement in-class discussion and activities. Each student is expected to come to class having completed all required reading assignments for each week and be prepared to discuss them. Students are likewise expected to complete any posted online activities or discussion questions by posted deadlines.

A-level participation will be awarded to those students who:

- Complete **all** weekly reading assignments for each class session
- Come prepared to **each class session** with questions to pose for discussion, or topics to explore
- Actively engage in discussion and provide relevant and insightful comments **in each class session**
- Complete all online requirements in a timely manner.

B-level participation will be awarded to those students who:

- Complete **most** weekly reading assignments
- Come prepared to **most class sessions** with questions to for discussion
- Actively engage in class discussion and provide relevant and insightful comments in **most class sessions**
- Complete **most** online requirements in a timely manner.

C-level participation will be awarded to those students who:

- Complete some weekly reading assignments
- Frequently do not come to class prepared to discuss and engage
- Fail to complete most online requirements in a timely manner.

## Grade Distribution

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Date Due</u>
Sustainability visualization	5%	Sept 2
Reading reflections	20%	Weekly
Student led discussion	15%	As assigned
Presentation	10%	December 9
Final paper	25%	December 16
Class participation	25%	Weekly

The following grading scale is used: 100-95=A; 94-90= A-; 89-87=B+; 86-83=B; 82-80=B-; 79-77=C+; 76-73=C; 72-70=C- 69-60=D; 59 and below=F. Final course grades will be determined by the cumulative total of the weighted averages listed above.

## Course Policies

*Late work* - As a matter of equipping for life-skills beyond this course, students are required to meet all deadlines labeled in the class calendar. Twenty points will be deducted from assignments turned in late one day late. No late assignments will be accepted more than 24 hours after the due date.

If an illness or other serious issue arises which may prevent the on-time completion of assignments, please discuss it with me immediately so alternative arrangements can be made. Last minute extensions are rarely granted.

*Students With Disabilities* - The Academic Achievement & Access Center (AAAC) coordinates accommodations and services for all KU students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted the AAAC, please do so as soon as possible. Their office is located in 22 Strong Hall; their phone number is 785-864-4064 (V/TTY). Information about their services can be found at <http://disability.ku.edu>. Please contact me privately in regard to your needs in this course.

*Course Materials/Copyright and Plagiarism Statements; Academic Dishonesty* - As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of the person. Whenever you rely on the words or ideas of other people in your written papers, you must acknowledge the source of the words or ideas. The plagiarist destroys trust among colleagues without which research and work-products cannot be communicated safely. The issue of digital plagiarism has raised concerns about ethics, student writing experiences, and academic integrity. KU subscribes to a digital plagiarism detection program called Turnitin.com, which may be used to check papers submitted in this course. You will be asked to submit your papers in a digital format so that your paper can be checked against web pages and databases of existing papers. Although you may never have engaged in intentional plagiarism, many students

do incorporate sources without citations; this program can alert me to your academic needs. Please consider the use of the program as a learning tool for all of us.

Also, course materials prepared by the professor, together with the content of all lectures and presented by the professor are the intellectual property of the professor. Video and audio recording of lectures without the consent of the professor is prohibited. A helpful site to assist you in avoiding plagiarism is at: <http://www.writing.ku.edu/students/guides.shtml#2>  
Information on University of Kansas sanctions for plagiarism can be found at [http://www.writing.ku.edu/~writing/instructors/docs/ku\\_handbook.shtml](http://www.writing.ku.edu/~writing/instructors/docs/ku_handbook.shtml)

### **Additional Resources to help you succeed:**

Library Assistance: The KU Libraries offers a great collection, much of it available online and reference assistance in person, via phone, via email, and via IM. The Library Liaison for Public Administration is Amalia Monroe-Gulick. She is available through email [almonroe@ku.edu](mailto:almonroe@ku.edu) and in person on the Lawrence Campus. Librarians at the Edwards Campus Library are also available for individual appointments ([http://www.lib.ku.edu/hours/regent\\_hours.shtml](http://www.lib.ku.edu/hours/regent_hours.shtml)).

Writing Center: The KU Writing Center offers a variety of services to assist you in improving your writing. Resources are noted on their web site (<http://www.writing.ku.edu/>). In addition, they offer consultation sessions both in person and online. Please allow 48 hours for a response.

### **Class Schedule**

#### **August 26**

#### **Making Concepts Concrete: Wrapping our heads around Sustainability**

*Read:*

- Portney, Chapter 1
- Hallsmith, Gwendolyn. 2007. *The Key to Sustainable Cities*. – Chapter 1: “How Communities Meet Human Needs”

#### **September 2**

#### **The Rationale for and Measurement of Community-based Sustainability**

*Read:*

- Hempel “Conceptual and Analytical Challenges in Building Sustainable Communities”
- Portney – Chapters 2, 7
- PlanNYC. 2011. City of New York City. \*Read the Introduction and review the Sustainability Indicators.\*

*Review the following websites:*

- MARC Sustainability indicators overview - <http://www.marc.org/Regional-Planning/Creating-Sustainable-Places/Tools/Indicators>
- Interactive indicators webpage: <http://indicators.sustainable-kc.org/> Assignment – pictures of sustainability in their community(s) – essay tying them to the readings

\*\* *Sustainability Visualization assignment / presentations* \*\*

## September 9

### Environmental Sustainability: From regulation to sustainability

#### Reading

- Mazmanian and Kraft – “Three Epochs of Environmental Policy”
- Portney – Chapter 3

Take ecological footprint quiz at the following website: <http://myfootprint.org/en/> Come to class with your number of “earths” and with the number for the group that you were assigned below:

- o A relatively well-off sustainability minded individual living in the US;
- o A relatively well-off conspicuous consumer in the US;
- o A person living at the poverty-line in the US;
- o A “typical” (i.e. relatively poor) person in China;
- o A very poor person in Africa.

## September 16

### Economic Sustainability: Green Jobs and Clean Development

#### Read:

- Portney – Chapter 4
- Fitzgerald, Joan. 2010. *Emerald Cities: Urban Sustainability and Economic Development*. Chapters 1 & 2 (Blackboard)
- “Sizing the Clean Economy.” The Brookings Institute. (read executive summary only)

#### Student lead discussion 1

## September 23

### Social Sustainability: Equity and Justice

- Portney – Chapter 6
- Hallsmith, Gwendolyn. 2007. *The Key to Sustainable Cities*. – Chapter 6: “Envisioning a Beautiful World”
- Review the following website: <http://67.199.24.136/sustainableplaces/socialequity.htm> (Specifically, read the Equity Profile of the Kansas City Region (summary) and the document describing the “equity lens” which will be used review regional projects.)
- Watch: Green Impact Zone: Why People and Place Matter – Kansas City, MO  
[www.youtube.com/watch?list=PL056E3B8552EEAFFE&v=MjQFdrbEOzU#t=120](http://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PL056E3B8552EEAFFE&v=MjQFdrbEOzU#t=120)

#### Student lead discussion 2

## September 30

### The Politics of Sustainability and the Challenge of Communication

- Kahan, D. 2010. Fixing the communications failure. *Nature*, 463(7279), 296-297.
- Jones, Michael D. Jones and Mark K. McBeth. 2010. A Narrative Policy Framework: Clear Enough to be Wrong? *Policy Studies Journal*. 38(2): 329-353.
- Agenda 21, Chapter 1, 2 and 28. 1992. United Nations Summit on Environment and Development
  - o Kansas House Bill No. 2366 and House Resolution No. 6032

#### Listen:

- This American Life, Episode 495, Act 2: “The Right Man for the Job”  
[www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/495/hot-in-my-backyard?act=2](http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/495/hot-in-my-backyard?act=2)

***Student lead discussion 3***

**October 7**

**Cross-cutting topics: Social Capital and Public Participation**

*Readings*

- Portney – Chapter 5
- Hallsmith, Gwendolyn. 2007. *The Key to Sustainable Cities*. – Chapter 3: “Community Capacity and Sustainability”
  - o Chapter 7: “The Challenge of Change”
- Putnam, Robert. 2007. “E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”

***Student lead discussion 4***

**October 14 -- No Class – Fall Break**

**October 21**

**Cross-cutting topics: Energy and Climate Change**

- Wolinsky-Nahmias – “Introduction: Global Climate Politics” (p. 1-22)
- IPCC 5<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report: Summary for Policy Makers (2014)
- Krause. 2014. “Climate Policy Innovation in American Cities.”
- Sanderson, Eric. *Terra Nova*: Chapter 3: “Flexible Power”
  - o Chapter 12: “Invest in the Sun”

***Student lead discussion 5***

**October 28**

***Cross-cutting topics: Transportation***

*Readings*

- Sanderson, Eric. *Terra Nova*: Chapter 5: “Time for Space”
  - Chapter 11: “Roads to Rails”
- Goldman, Todd and Roger Gorham. 2006. “Sustainable Urban Transport: Four Innovative Directions.” *Technology in Society*, 28: 261-273.

*Watch: How to Solve Traffic Jams*

[www.ted.com/talks/jonas\\_eliasson\\_how\\_to\\_solve\\_traffic\\_jams](http://www.ted.com/talks/jonas_eliasson_how_to_solve_traffic_jams)

***Student lead discussion 6***

**November 4**

**Cross-cutting topics: Land use**

- Sanderson, Eric. *Terra Nova*: Chapter 6: “The Great American Expansion”
  - o Chapter 7: “The Crescendo and the Crash”
  - o Chapter 10: “Moving to Town”

- Bengston et al. 2004. "Public Policies for Managing Urban Growth and Protecting Open Space: Policy Instruments and Lessons Learned in the United States." *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 69: 271-286.
- *Watch*: The Walkable City: [www.ted.com/talks/jeff\\_speck\\_the\\_walkable\\_city](http://www.ted.com/talks/jeff_speck_the_walkable_city)

*Student lead discussion 7*

## November 11

### Cross-cutting topics: Sustainable Food Systems

- Lovell, S. T. (2010). Multifunctional urban agriculture for sustainable land use planning in the United States. *Sustainability*, 2(8), 2499-2522.
- USDA, Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and their Consequences. A report to Congress. \*\*read the executive summary, introduction, and chapter 8 on "policy options" \*\*

*Watch/Listen:*

On food injustice: [www.good.is/posts/incredible-spoken-word-video-a-teacher-on-witnessing-the-injustice-of-food-deserts?utm\\_campaign=goodtweet&utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=social](http://www.good.is/posts/incredible-spoken-word-video-a-teacher-on-witnessing-the-injustice-of-food-deserts?utm_campaign=goodtweet&utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social)

- Making food deserts Bloom: [www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2012/05/09/151707985/what-will-make-the-food-desert-bloom](http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2012/05/09/151707985/what-will-make-the-food-desert-bloom)

*Student lead discussion 8*

## November 18

### Cross-cutting topics: Water Sustainability

*Read*

- Campbell et al. 2004. "Prices, Devices, People, or Rules: The Relative Effectiveness of Policy Instruments on Water Conservation." *Review of Policy Research*. 21 (5): 637-662.
- Vision for the Future of Water in Kansas. (2014, Preliminary Discussion Draft). Kansas Water Office.

*Listen*: Kansas Farmers Commit to Take Less Water from the Ground

[www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2013/10/22/230702453/in-kansas-farmers-commit-to-take-less-water-from-the-ground](http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2013/10/22/230702453/in-kansas-farmers-commit-to-take-less-water-from-the-ground)

*Student lead discussion 9*

## November 25

### Cross-cutting topics: Local Resiliency and Adaptation

*Readings*

- Berkes, Fikret. "Understanding uncertainty and reducing vulnerability: lessons from resilience thinking." *Natural Hazards* 41.2 (2007): 283-295.

*Watch:*

- Building Resilient Communities: An Online Training. Rand Corporation. Watch Introductory video:

[www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/tools/TL100/TL109/RAND\\_TL109\\_training/training.htm](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/tools/TL100/TL109/RAND_TL109_training/training.htm)

- New York City's Strategy to Prepare for Climate Change: [www.icleiusa.org/training-events/action-center/learn-from-others/inside-the-city-of-new-yorks-strategy-to-prepare-for-climate-change](http://www.icleiusa.org/training-events/action-center/learn-from-others/inside-the-city-of-new-yorks-strategy-to-prepare-for-climate-change)

***Student lead discussion 10***

***\*\*December 1 – paper draft due to peer reviewer \*\****

**December 2**

**Cross-cutting topics: Consumption and sustainable behaviors**

Jackson, Tim. 2005. "Motivating Sustainable Consumption: A review of evidence on consumer behavior and behavioral change" (read executive summary and sections 1, 2, 11, and 12)

*Watch/Listen:*

How Behavioral Science can Lower your Energy Bill

-[www.ted.com/talks/alex\\_laskey\\_how\\_behavioral\\_science\\_can\\_lower\\_your\\_energy\\_bill.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/alex_laskey_how_behavioral_science_can_lower_your_energy_bill.html)

***Student lead discussion 11***

***\*\*December 5 – peer review due \*\****

**December 9**

**Final Presentations**

**Papers due Tuesday, December 16 at Midnight.**