

ENVS 145: Green Cities
Tues/Thurs 5:20 – 6:55 PM, ISB 221
Fall 2019 Syllabus

Instructor

Prof. Adam Millard-Ball

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Office Hours: Normally Thurs 1.30-3.30pm. Sign up: <https://goo.gl/X7vFOD>

Course Description

Do cities provide the opportunity to address environmental problems, or are they simply an engine of pollution and environmental degradation? Is a truly 'green city' possible, and if so, what would it look like? This course will consider what it means for a city to be green, and how the concepts of urban environment and urban sustainability have evolved over time. We will examine a range of tools to measure urban environmental performance, and discuss innovative urban policies in areas such as energy, transportation, buildings, and waste management. We will also explore how cities are contributing to climate change goals in California and beyond.

Course Goals

After completing this course, you should be able to:

- Identify and analyze the potential of policies that can make cities greener
- Critically evaluate claims of urban environmental sustainability, and the merits of different approaches to quantifying a city's environmental impact
- Understand the opportunities and constraints that affect a city's ability to implement environmental policy

Readings

There is no textbook for the course. All required readings will be posted on Canvas.

Field Visits

Field visits are an integral component of the course. They will help you connect what you observe on the ground with the theories discussed in class, and help inform your own judgments about the theories and readings. You will need to participate in at least one of the following field trips, which are at least partly outside of the regular class time:

1. Green buildings in Santa Cruz (Date TBD)
2. Bicycle planning in Santa Cruz (Date TBD)
3. Urban agriculture and transit-oriented development in San Jose (Fri Oct 8, 12-7.30pm)

Sign up during the first week of class, once the dates are confirmed.

Class Participation

Class sessions will usually include a mixture of lecture and discussion, and your active participation is essential to making this course successful and enjoyable.

To help seed the discussion, all students should post to Piazza 1-2 brief discussion questions and/or comments on the readings for that class. These are due at 3PM the day of class. These posts might include a question that was sparked by one of the readings, a broad comment on or reaction to the readings, or an example that further illustrates a concept from the readings.

Graded Assignments

Detailed instructions and grading criteria for each assignment will be distributed on a separate handout early in the quarter.

Case study (written report)	25%	Due: Tuesday November 26
Case study (oral presentation)	5%	Date varies
City Council reflection	10%	Due: Friday December 6
Plan analysis	10%	Due: Friday November 15
Final exam	35%	Tuesday December 10, 7.30-10.30PM
Class participation	15%	

Case Study

You will develop a case study of green initiatives in a specific city. You should address why this city is an interesting example. If it has a reputation for being green, to what extent is that justified? What are the specific practices, policies or projects that other cities can learn from and emulate? What are the most important lessons learned? You will submit a written report and also present your case study in class – in both cases your target audience is a mayor, city council member or similar policy maker.

You will also give a 3-minute presentation in class (plus some time for questions) with the highlights of your case study.

Choose a case study from the approved list, or suggest your own to the instructor. Sign up during the first week of the class for a case study and presentation slot.

City Council reflection

This is your opportunity to see and reflect on how city environmental policy is made. How do city councils and their advisory bodies deliberate on environmental decisions? Does this method of decision making provide the basis for sound urban environmental policy?

You will attend a City Council, Planning Commission or similar meeting where a major environmental agenda item is to be discussed. Most of these meetings are held in the evenings in downtown Santa Cruz. (You can also go to another city such as Capitola or San Jose.) A list of suggested meetings will be made available on Canvas; you may also substitute your own subject to the approval of the instructor in advance. Submit a 2-page paper reflecting on the decision-making process.

Plan analysis

Cities often package and prioritize their sustainability efforts through a sustainability plan, a sustainability section in their General Plan, and/or in a climate action plan. You will write a review that critiques (i.e. analyzes the strengths and weaknesses) of a city's plan. I recommend that you choose your home city, or another one with which you are familiar. (You can't do Santa Cruz, since we'll go through that in class.)

Class Participation

Your class participation grade will include attendance and active participation in class, and also the quality of your written comments on the readings for each class. Two absences will be allowed with no deduction, but repeated absences will reduce your participation grade.

Final Exam

The final exam questions will have some short-answer questions, but most of the points will be awarded for longer essay-style answers. A list of potential essay questions will be distributed in Week 10, giving you time to prepare.

Course Schedule

The schedule is preliminary and subject to change. See Canvas for the most recent updates. Readings for each class will be posted on Canvas a week in advance.

Class	Topic
Sep 26	Introduction
Oct 1	Early ideas of green cities, and the evolution of urban environmentalism
Oct 3	Cities: environmental sinner or saint?
Oct 8	The sustainable city toolkit: planning, zoning, regulations, funding
Oct 9	Transportation – streets
Oct 11	Transportation – transit
Oct 15	Food and urban agriculture
Oct 17	Green buildings
Oct 22	Urban development: LULUs, YIMBYs and NIMBYs
Oct 24	Land use and regional planning
Oct 29	Deconstructing a plan
Oct 31	Climate change planning in cities
Nov 5 Nov 7	These two classes are open pending scheduling of a field trip and guest speakers (other parts of the schedule will move around accordingly.)
Nov 12	Is Santa Cruz sustainable? Part I: issues
Nov 14	Is Santa Cruz sustainable? Part II: city politics
Nov 19	Equity and justice in the green city
Nov 21	The California Environmental Quality Act: friend or foe?
Nov 26	Taking action: tactical urbanism
Nov 28	No class – Thanksgiving
Dec 3	Measuring performance: ecological footprints and beyond
Dec 5	A race to the top or the bottom? Why are some cities greener than others?

Late Submission of Assignments

Students can make a formal request to the professor for special consideration for an extension to an assignment due date. This request should be received at least 48 hours in advance. Otherwise, **ten percent** will be deducted for every 24-hour period an assignment is late.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the UCSC policy on academic integrity - http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/. All assignments should be written individually and be original works for this class. All academic integrity violations (e.g. plagiarism, cheating, multiple submissions, facilitating dishonesty) will be prosecuted if encountered. Please talk with the instructor IN ADVANCE if you are unsure about citation styles or what may violate the academic integrity policy.

Accessibility and Disabilities

If you have any mobility or other limitation that may affect participation in field visits, please contact Prof. Millard-Ball before the quarter starts, so that we can make sure that all sites and transportation are accessible to all students.

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit an Accommodation Authorization from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to Prof. Millard-Ball **within the first two weeks of the quarter**. You may submit these outside of class (e.g., office hours) to ensure anonymity. Contact DRC at 831-459-2089 (voice), 831-459-4806 (TTY), or <http://drc.ucsc.edu> for more information on the requirements or process.

Program Learning Outcomes

The ENVS major and combined majors have a set of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) that we hope each class will contribute to achieving. Here are those PLOs and this course will specifically strengthen your ability to achieve PLOs 1, 3 and 4.

Students graduating with a B.A. in Environmental Studies should be able to:

1. Identify the societal (social, political, economic, cultural and ethical) agents and structures that contribute to environmental change. (social science competency)
2. Describe the structure and functioning of major physical and ecological components of the earth's systems. (natural science competency)
3. Access and analyze a complex literature addressing specific topics in environmental studies, and evaluate the usefulness and limitations of individual sources of information. (analytic thinking)
4. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills. (communication skills)