

Tufts University  
Department of Urban + Environmental Policy + Planning

## **Developing Sustainable Communities UEP 284 (Spring 2015)**

*Thursdays: 1.30pm –4.00pm in Brown House, 97 Talbot Ave*

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My Blog, lots of ideas and links to other Blogs:

<http://julianagyeman.com/blog/>

My Twitter site: <http://twitter.com/#!/julianagyeman>

Office hours: Wednesday 10:00 am–5.00pm by appointment

### **Course Description**

This course explores the many challenges of achieving ‘*just sustainabilities*’ through a critical, coherent and thought provoking overview of moves towards developing sustainable communities.

The course focuses on: improving our quality of life and wellbeing; meeting the needs of both present and future generations (intra-generational and intergenerational equity); justice and equity in terms of recognition, process, procedure, and outcome; living within ecosystem limits (also called ‘one planet living’).

It investigates the theories of sustainable development and the tools and techniques and in what contexts we can move towards the ecological integrity, economic security, empowerment, responsibility and social well-being characteristic of sustainable communities. Case studies are drawn from around the world.

### **Course Objectives**

- To begin to understand the content, processes, and implications of the just sustainabilities agenda
- To begin to understand the principles, tools, and techniques available for developing sustainable communities

### **Course Book and Readings**

The course book is:

Agyeman, J (2013) *Introducing just sustainabilities: Policy, planning and practice* (Zed Books). It is available from the campus bookstore.

The *Required Readings* in this syllabus are *either* in the Course Book, or are available as PDFs in the relevant class “Resources” folder on Trunk, in boxes that fit each class 2-13. Where the relevant reading/video is a web-based resource, simply click on the URL in the syllabus.

Clearly, to cover the ground of this syllabus will require that students complete all the Required Readings before each class and come to class ready to discuss these readings. I have also added Additional Readings for some classes.

The course is *reading-intensive, discussion-driven and hands-on*.

## **Assessment**

### *Class Participation 10%*

Active class participation is a crucial part of this seminar and makes 10% of your final grade. Think of it as an *intellectual potluck*: the more that is brought to the table by students, the more we all learn. To achieve full marks in class participation, you will need to make useful and insightful comments *in each class*. Remember however that we respect all opinions and positions and that we treat every class member and his/her opinions with grace and dignity.

### *Assignment 1 Weekly Forum contribution 20%*

Beginning after Class 1 (January 15) I'd like you to submit to our Trunk Forum *by Sunday at 5.00pm each week*, a 500-750 word 'thought piece' on your reflections on the week's readings/speakers

including your own thoughts (challenges, conflicts, agreements, disagreements) about how you as an intending policy/planning professional relate to the readings and class discussion. If you wish, your contribution can be a comment on someone else's thoughts.

### *Assignment 2 The 'aha' reading (10%)*

For any chapter in the course book, resource or URL based reading write a 2 page, single space 'aha' piece on a) why the reading has excited you and b) how it might inform your professional practice (I know you don't know what job you may be doing!). *Due Class 12 April 16*

### *Assignment 3 Semester long case study project (60%)*

All of the work you do will be presented on a Tufts Wordpress web site (see below for Tutorial). An excellent example might be this from last semester's Cities in Space, Place and Time (UEP 252) class in which Betsy Byrum chose to look at [Climate Change in New York City](#). Note how she uses drop down menus, icons for navigational ease, graphics, embedded video, maps, policy documents, infographics, and references to both academic and other work.

So, first, choose a place (city/town/village/smaller community) in the US or anywhere that is doing interesting work in your policy/planning interest area. Policy/planning area examples – You might choose to explore the sustainable communities implications of, for example: *housing, education, communication, interculturalism, equity/justice, transportation, food systems, public health, water, open space, infrastructure, energy, land use planning, sustainability, environmental protection/conservation, climate change etc*

In all cases, your website will need to consider and think through the implications of your policy/planning interest area on these key areas but feel free to include others:

- *improving people's quality of life and wellbeing;*
- *meeting the needs of both present and future generations (intra-generational and intergenerational equity)*
- *justice and equity in terms of recognition, process, procedure, and outcome;*
- *living within ecosystem limits (also called 'one planet living')*

Key dates:

- Finalize place and policy/planning area of interest, email to me by Feb. 5
- Deliverable 1 - basic 2 page paper outline/draft – due Feb 26 - 15 points
- Deliverable 2 - skeleton website – due March 26 – 15 points
- Deliverable 3 - final website April 30 – 30 points

I will provide a grading rubric before Deliverable 1 is due.

[WordPress Basics Tutorial](#) from Tufts Educational Technology group, authored by David Grogan

The tutorial above should answer your basic questions. After you have gone through that, and assuming you need more help, you can contact Tufts Educational Technology services - David Grogan is the main person heading up the WordPress services but he has a number of assistants who can help. Tufts Educational Technology E-mail: [edtech@tufts.edu](mailto:edtech@tufts.edu) Phone: 617-627-2859

## ***Part 1: What is Sustainability?***

**Class 1 January 15  
Introduction to the class**

In the first part of class, I'll outline the aims and scope of each class,

assessment, and my expectations of you.

In the second half, there will be a presentation/discussion around a critically important topic:

**PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU READ THIS BEFORE CLASS!!**

Tellus Institute, Boston (2010) *Global Scenarios for the Century Ahead: Searching for Sustainability*

[http://www.gtinitiative.org/documents/IssuePerspectives/Global\\_Scenarios\\_for\\_the\\_Century\\_Ahead%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.gtinitiative.org/documents/IssuePerspectives/Global_Scenarios_for_the_Century_Ahead%5B1%5D.pdf)

**Class 2 January 22  
Introducing just sustainabilities I**

Does 'green' = 'sustainability'? In this class I'll argue for what I call *just sustainabilities*: "Sustainability cannot be simply a 'green', or 'environmental' concern, important though 'environmental' aspects of sustainability are. A truly sustainable society is one where wider questions of social needs and welfare, and economic opportunity are integrally related to environmental limits imposed by supporting ecosystems" (Agyeman et al. 2002, 78). The class will focus on the first two conditions of the move towards *just sustainabilities*:

-improving our quality of life and wellbeing;

-meeting the needs of both present and future generations (intra-generational and intergenerational equity);

**Required Readings**

Agyeman, J (2013) *Introducing just sustainabilities: Policy, planning and practice* (Zed Books) pp4-37.

Marks, N (2012) *Happy Planet Index*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZPYI8BfnBs>

Marks, N et al (2012) *The Happy Planet Index: 2012 Report: A global index of sustainable wellbeing*. (PDF)

UN Working Group (2014) *Proposal for Sustainable Development Goals* (PDF)

Sample, I (2014) *Anthropocene: is this the new epoch of humans?*  
<http://www.theguardian.com/science/2014/oct/16/-sp-scientists-gather-talks-rename-human-age-anthropocene-holocene>

### **Additional Readings**

Cobb, C., T. Halstead, and J. Rowe. (1995. If GDP is Up, Why is America Down? *Atlantic Monthly*. October 276. (PDF)

### **Class 3 January 29 Introducing just sustainabilities II**

In this class we'll continue our exploration of *just sustainabilities* by looking at two other requisite conditions:

*-justice and equity in terms of recognition, process, procedure, and outcome;*

*-living within ecosystem limits (also called 'one planet living')*

### **Required Readings**

Agyeman, J (2013) *Introducing just sustainabilities: Policy, planning and practice* (Zed Books) pp38-58.

Rockström, J et al (2009) A safe operating space for humanity *Nature* 461, 472-475 (24 September) (PDF)

Raworth, K (2012) *Introducing 'The Doughnut' of social and planetary boundaries for development*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCAx3TG8LkI>

Oxfam (2012) *A safe and just space for humanity: Can we live within the doughnut?* (PDF)

### **Additional Readings**

Sen, A (1999) Excerpt from *Development as Freedom*  
<https://www.nytimes.com/books/first/s/sen-development.html>

## **Class 4 February 5**

### **What are sustainable communities?**

There is a broad, general agreement on the principles or characteristics of sustainable communities, although to date, no community has all of them. This class will investigate these key principles and look critically at how we might move towards principles which are more reflective of *just sustainabilities*

#### **Required Readings:**

Hempel, L. (1999) Conceptual and analytical challenges in building sustainable communities. In D Mazmanian and M Kraft (eds) '*Toward Sustainable Communities*'. Cambridge. MIT Press, pp43-74. (PDF)

Curitiba: How a Brazilian City Has Revolutionized Urban Planning  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRD3l3rIMpo>

*Melbourne Principles on Sustainable Cities* (2007):  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melbourne\\_Principles](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melbourne_Principles)

LISC Washington DC (undated) *Characteristics of Sustainable Communities*  
[http://www.lisc.org/washington\\_dc/images/media\\_center/asset\\_upload\\_file\\_836\\_14215.pdf](http://www.lisc.org/washington_dc/images/media_center/asset_upload_file_836_14215.pdf)

Partnership for Sustainable Communities (HUD/DOT/EPA)  
<http://www.sustainablecommunities.gov/mission/livability-principles>

Institute for Sustainable Communities <http://www.iscvt.org/impact/definition-sustainable-community/>

Borough of Stafford (UK) (2014) *Characteristics of a Sustainable Community* <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/characteristics-of-a-sustainable->

[community](#)

## **Additional Readings**

Griffiths, J., (2009) The Transition Initiative: The Head, Heart, & Hands of Energy Descent, *Orion Magazine*

<http://www.commondreams.org/view/2009/07/25-5>

The Ahwahnee Principles for Resource Efficient Communities:

<http://www.lgc.org/ahwahnee/principles.html>

## **Class Exercise**

While encouraging, none of our examples or principles of a sustainable community from Australia, the US or the UK quite approach our understanding of just sustainabilities. Does the Curitiba (Brazil) example come closer? What would be the 10 key principles of a sustainable community from this perspective?

## ***Part 2: How do we get there?***

**Class 5 February 12**

**Towards sustainable communities: tools and techniques I:  
*Overview***

This class will attempt to give a broad overview of the various tools and techniques (community, planning and economic), strategies and innovations required to develop sustainable communities.

## **Required Readings:**

Roseland, M (2012). 'Making Community Policy' pp 33-48, and 'Tools for Community Sustainability' pp 275-288. In Mark Roseland '*Toward Sustainable Communities*'. Gabriola Island. New Society Publishers (PDF)

Levett, R (1997) Tools, Techniques and Processes for Municipal Environmental Management *Local Environment*. Vol 2 No 2 p189-202 (PDF)

Camponeschi, C (2010) *The Enabling City: Place-Based Creative Problem-Solving and the Power of the Everyday* (PDF)

## **Class 6 February 26**

### **Tools and techniques II: *Communication tools and Sustainability Indicators***

We're convinced about sustainability and sustainable communities, right? But how do we get people to 'buy into' sustainability (if you'll excuse a consumerist phrase!). Just giving people lots of information has been shown not to work for people other than those already converted, so how do we reach the undecideds and the others who haven't even heard of sustainability?

In the second half of the class we'll look at sustainability indicators which range from welfare-based, to environmental, from economic to social, because, in order to know where you're going (sustainable communities), you've got to know where you are now (unsustainable communities)..

#### **Required Readings:**

Kollmuss, A and Agyeman, J (2002) Mind the Gap: Why do people act environmentally and what are the barriers to pro-environmental behavior? *Environmental Education Research* Vol 8 pp239-260

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13504620220145401>

Dolan, P, Hallsworth, M., Halpern, D., King, D., Vlaev, I (2010). *Mindspace: Influencing behaviour through public policy*. Institute for Government, London, UK. (PDF)

Thaler, R (2008) *Nudge: improving decisions about wealth, health and happiness*

<http://www.thersa.org/events/vision/vision-videos/richard-thaler>

Brugmann, J (1997) Is there method in our measurement? The use of indicators in local sustainable development planning *Local Environment* Vol 2 No 1 p59-72. (PDF)

Gahin, R, Veleva, V and Hart, M (2003) Do Indicators help create

sustainable communities? *Local Environment* Vol 8 No 6 pp661-666 (PDF)

*The Boston Indicators Project* (familiarize yourself with the 10 categories and 'crosscut' topics) <http://www.bostonindicators.org/indicators>

### **Additional Readings**

Sustainable Measures <http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/>

## **Class 7 March 5 Sustainable Development in Planning and Policymaking**

Guest Speaker: TBC

Many planning authorities are not yet using policies for sustainability in planning, despite the Guidance available. In this class, we will look at the opportunities to bring sustainability to places in the Boston Metro area.

### **Required readings:**

American Planning Association (2000) *'Policy Guide on Planning for Sustainability'*  
<http://www.planning.org/policy/guides/adopted/sustainability.htm>

Gunder, M (2006) Sustainability: Planning's Saving Grace or Road to Perdition? *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 26 pp208-221 (PDF)

## ***Part 3: Shifting the paradigm***

### **Class 8 March 12 Food and sustainable communities.**

What role does (or could?) food and urban agriculture play in developing sustainable communities? In this class we critically analyze concepts like who gets to define 'the local' on local produce, planners 'imposing' urban agriculture on communities; immigrants and 'new agricultures' in the US, the city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil's revolutionary food policies, food policy councils city food plans/strategies and an emerging local food economy in

Boston.

**Required readings:**

Agyeman, J (2013) *Introducing just sustainabilities: Policy, planning and practice* (Zed Books) pp59-95 'Food'.

Video - [Groundbreaking food policy: Belo Horizonte!](#)

Agyeman J, and Alkon A (2014) "*Silence is Not Consent*": *Plantation, Poison and the Politics of Planning for Urban Agriculture in Boston*.  
<http://julianagyeman.com/2014/12/silence-not-consent-pesticides-poison-politics-planning-boston/>

Loh, P (2014) *Land, Co-ops, Compost: A Local Food Economy Emerges in Boston's Poorest Neighborhoods*  
<http://www.yesmagazine.org/commonomics/boston-s-emerging-food-economy>

Toronto Food Policy Council (2012) "*Grow Toronto Action Plan*" (PDF)

City of Seattle (2012) "*Food Action Plan*" (PDF)

**Class Exercise**

We will undertake a SWOT Analysis of Seattle and Toronto Food Action Plans in terms of their contributions toward creating sustainable communities

**Class 9 March 26  
Place-making and sustainable communities.**

A dominant narrative in urban planning and sustainable communities is *place-making* whereby, so the theory goes, local communities help shape the spaces and places they inhabit be they streets, parks and open spaces, or as we saw last class, spaces for growing food. Do all people have equal access to space and place? Who gets to define 'place'? Are 'Complete Streets' always complete? This class will look at the possibilities and contradictions inherent in place-making.

**Required Readings:**

Agyeman, J (2013) *Introducing just sustainabilities: Policy, planning and practice* (Zed Books) pp96-135 'Space and Place'.

Kent, F. (2008) Place making around the world. *Urban Land*, August: 58–65. (PDF)

Project for Public Spaces *What is Placemaking?*  
[http://www.pps.org/reference/what\\_is\\_placemaking/](http://www.pps.org/reference/what_is_placemaking/)

## **Class 10 April 2 Culture, Space, Place and Sustainability.**

As our US and other 'western' cities become more diverse, more different and more heterogenous, how do we think about and act upon this in terms of planning for sustainability and the development of sustainable communities? We need to move towards 'intercultural' communities and societies where difference and diversity are seen as advantages, not problems.

### **Class Video**

Attili and Sandercock (2006) *Where strangers become neighbors*. Watch the trailers at <http://www.cnh.bc.ca/neighbourhood-stuff-to-do/trailers/>

### **Required Readings:**

Agyeman, J (2013) *Introducing just sustainabilities: Policy, planning and practice* (Zed Books) pp136-158 'Culture'

Lanfer, A and Taylor, M (2004) *Immigrant Engagement in Public Open Space: Strategies for the New Boston*. The Barr Foundation. Boston. (PDF)

Saitta, D (2014) *Manifesto for an Intercultural Urbanism*  
<http://www.planetizen.com/node/70311>

Agyeman, J., and Erickson, J. (2012) 'Culture, recognition and the negotiation of difference: some thoughts on cultural competency in

planning education'. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 32(3): 358–66. (PDF)

### **Additional Readings**

Shinew, K. J., Glover, T. D., and Parry, D. C. (2004) 'Leisure spaces as potential sites for interracial interaction: community gardens in urban areas'. *Journal of Leisure Research* 36(3): 336–55 (PDF)

Sofoulis, Z., Armstrong, H., Bounds, M., Lopes, A., and Andrews, T. (2008) *Out and About in Penrith: Universal Design and cultural context: Accessibility, diversity and recreational space in Penrith*. Sydney: University of Western Sydney, Centre for Cultural Research. (PDF)

### **Class 11 April 9 From the Sharing Economy to the Sharing City?**

A reinvention and revival of sharing in our cities could enhance equity, rebuild community and dramatically cut resource use. With modern technologies the intersection of urban space and cyber-space provides an unsurpassed platform for a more inclusive and environmentally efficient sharing economy and ultimately, more sustainable communities

### **Required Readings:**

Please watch two short videos *before class*: [Amsterdam: Exploring the Sharing City](#) and Rachel Botsman: [The case for collaborative consumption](#)

Agyeman, J, McLaren, D and Schaeffer-Borrego, A (2013) *Sharing Cities*. Friends of the Earth UK.

Latitude, (2013) *The new Sharing Economy: a study by Latitude in collaboration with Shareable magazine*. (PDF)

Orsi, J, Y Eskandari-Qajar, E Weissman, M Hall, A Mann, and M Luna, 2013. *Policies for Shareable Cities: A sharing economy policy primer for urban leaders*. Shareable and the Sustainable Economies Law Center (PDF)

### **Class 12 April 16**

## **Sustainable community futures? Copenhagen and Vancouver.**

Two cities above all others, Copenhagen and Vancouver, have developed visions of sustainable community futures. They have ambitious targets, goals and beautiful looking brochures. Are they moving in a direction we would recognize as being toward *just sustainabilities*, or are they simply becoming *greener*?

Please watch two short videos *before class*: [Copenhagen's Climate-Friendly, Bike-Friendly Streets](#) and [Vancouver's Velo Vision: Safe Biking for All Ages](#)

### **Class Readings**

City of Copenhagen (2012) *Copenhagen: Solutions For Sustainable Cities* (PDF)

City of Vancouver (2012) *Greenest City: 2020 Action Plan* (PDF)

### **Additional Readings**

Sustainia: A Guide to Copenhagen 2025

### **Class Exercise**

We will undertake a SWOT Analysis of *Copenhagen: Solutions For Sustainable Cities* and Vancouver's *Greenest City: 2020 Action Plan* in terms of their contributions toward creating sustainable communities

**April 23 NO CLASS:**

***Julian at Association of American Geographers (AAG) Conference in Chicago.***

**Class 13 April 30**

**Developing sustainable communities: What have we learned?**

In this our final class we will look back over the past 13 weeks and agree on some of the key lessons learned in our exploration of *just sustainabilities* and sustainable communities.

