USP 510 Sustainable Cities and Regions

Winter 2019, 3 credits

Dr. Megan Horst

Meets Mondays 6:30-9:20pm, ASRC 280

OVERVIEW:

Explores the questions of whether and how cities can be sustainable -- and how they can continue as places that sustain cultures, economics, and nature. Basic technological and theoretical models of human-nature interaction will be considered, along with visionary possibilities for the future of cities and urban regions, globally and in Portland. Particular attention will be given to global-local interactions and to the strategies, programs, policies, and tools that can deliver sustainable and equitable development.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

A student who successfully completes this course will:

- Connect sustainability concepts and technology to real-world urban and regional challenges;
- Articulate specific strategies for real estate development to pursue sustainable development practices;
- Understand the meaning of "critical sustainability and "greenwashing" and be able to critically assess real estate development and urban development projects from those lenses;
- Examine the connections between sustainability and equity, particularly through analyses of regional equity, residential segregation, environmental racism, eco-gentrification, and environmental justice movements led by and benefiting communities of color and other historically oppressed groups, including the "Just Transition" movement;
- Critically reflect upon the role of the real estate development industry in fostering sustainability & justice; and
- Communicate in written and verbal formats about the issues of sustainability and equity as related to metropolitan regions and cities.

Note: This class is a core class for MRED students and is open to students from other programs as well. It is the only core MRED class which prioritizes the learning objective (in your MRED program) of equity. This class also prioritizes the learning objectives of sustainability and communication.

TEACHING APPROACH
This class is graduate seminar style, though our class size is bigger than a typical seminar class. Each week, I aim to have a mix of the following activities: lecture, small group activities, large group discussion, guest speaker, video, and other. To be an effective contributor in class, you must read and come to class prepared to engage with your classmates on the content. Getting through an almost 3 hour session late on a Monday will NOT be easy- please come to class with water, snacks, and mental preparation. We will take several breaks and engage in stimulating activities.

**WEEKLY THEMES**

Each week we will examine a new theme. In the first few weeks, we will explore more of an overview, and in weeks 4-9, we will focus on specific topics or approaches. Week 10 will be a concluding week. Please follow the links to access an overview of each week, including the assigned readings.

- **Week 1:** Introduction: An Agenda for Sustainable Cities and Regions
- **Week 2:** Segregated Cities and Regions, and Who Pays for Sustainability?
- **Week 3:** Sustainability and a Just Transition
- **Week 4:** Land Use & Transportation
- **Week 5:** City, District, and Street Scale Approaches
- **Week 6:** Food
- **Week 7:** Energy
- **Week 8:** Waste
- **Week 9:** Water
- **Week 10:** Resilient Cities, Smart Cities, Just Cities

**TEXTS AND READINGS**

You do not need to buy a textbook for this class. All class readings will be on D2L, in the relevant module under "Readings." Please read BEFORE class each week.

**GRADING**

For each major assignment, I will use a rubric to guide my evaluation. See the rubric associated with the assignment.

Please note that it will not be automatically "easy" to obtain an A in this class. You will need to do substantive, high quality work. Most students will receive B's unless they do very well on all assignments and attend every class.

At the end of the quarter, your grade out of 100% will be converted to a letter grade using the below scale:
ASSIGNMENTS

This is a 3 credit class with lots of reading, active class participation, and two assignments (one more significant than the other in terms of expectations and weight). Your course grade will be based on the following- please visit each of the relevant class dropboxes for further details:

- **20%: Class participation.** You must attend and participate in class to receive these points. Often, you will meet in small groups to work through scenarios or cases. You do NOT need to communicate with me if you will miss a class- you will simply not receive the points. You should still submit your reading reflection to obtain the points for that. You can miss ONE class without it affecting your grade- after that, it is two points deducted per missed class. I will post opportunities about opportunities to make up for missed points as relevant-e.g. attending a related public talk. You must clear this with me before attending something.
- **20%: Weekly reading reflections (for weeks 2-9 only):** See [Weekly Reading Response Week 2](#) for the first one.
- **40%: Critical case study of a real estate development project, reflecting on sustainability and equity**
- **20% other assignment: Details forthcoming**

*** There is NO FINAL EXAM and we will NOT MEET during exam week.***