

## **Application for Human Relations Requirement status**

Course number/title: PS 297/Environmental Politics

Catalog course description: This course focuses on current environmental problems, alternative frameworks for understanding these problems, and appropriate political responses. Among the problems covered are overpopulation, economic globalization, ozone depletion, climate change, bio-colonization, and the depletion of renewable and non-renewable resources. Alternative frameworks considered include the philosophical visions of Deep Ecology, Ecofeminism, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and Gaia. These frameworks are used to investigate possible ways to create sustainable economic, political and social systems. Finally, the course focuses on grass roots politics, including groups and social movements actively seeking to promote environmental and social justice.

### **Courses meeting the Human Relations requirement shall:**

- Be a minimum of 3 credits
- Be regularly numbered offerings (not 199 or 299 temporary or 298 independent study)

### **Additionally, qualifying courses shall:**

1. Incorporate interactive learning activities

How course meets criteria

The class is taught as a seminar.

Various forms of interactive communication are utilized ranging from talking circles, to non-violent communication skills, to games that illustrate concepts, to joint projects in and out of class.

2. Be well founded in theory

Theory is used to present frameworks for understanding Environmental Politics. Specifically, students study Deep Ecology, Eco-feminism, Traditional (Indigenous) Ecological Knowledge, and GAIA Theory as frameworks for understanding the materials studied.

3. Connect course skills to practical application

The class introduces students to way of interacting in the world that create alternatives to address environmental issues/crisis facing the world. These include permaculture, seed saving, local food production, alternative currency, bioregional mapping and more.

4. Require significant out-of-class practice of skills

Assignments are organized so that students must utilize particular skills outside the classroom to complete the assignment (e.g. bioregional mapping skills).

**Please attach the approved course outline.**

## **Application for Human Relations Requirement status**

**Courses that qualify for AAS Human Relations status will require students to demonstrate competency in at least three of the following outcomes.**

Students successfully completing this course will:

1. Describe and utilize appropriate communication skills including non-verbal communication and active listening.
2. Describe the characteristics of an effective work team, the typical stages of team development, and how to be a capable team member.
3. Understand the issues involved in working with people from different cultural backgrounds and how to work effectively in a diverse workplace.
4. Describe and demonstrate the rules of "principled negotiation" and conflict resolution.

Related course learning outcome

- Using critical thinking skills to place communication within the context of critical analysis instead of personal ideology.
- Understanding that listening in a manner that you actually hear what classmates intend is a key aspect of respectful communication. (e.g. use indigenous talking stick circles)

Diversity is a basic principle in ecology. This includes both environmental and cultural diversity. Therefore it is important to understand that current economic and political processes have violence built into the processes themselves because they seek to homogenize all life (e.g. Economic Globalization Systems like the World Trade Organization privilege the financial economy and modern industrialism over traditional indigenous ways of life). Working with people of different cultural backgrounds requires seeing privilege and acknowledging oppression. The validity of other cultures, histories, and ways of life must be recognized as legitimate alternatives that should be encouraged instead of repressed.

**Please attach the approved course outline.**

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| <p>5. Understand what sexual harassment is, how to prevent it, and how to deal with it if it occurs.</p> <p>6. Identify character traits associated with being an ethical person and use a systematic method for making ethical decisions and behaving ethically.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand that everything in the world is interconnected and therefore the quality of one's life depends on the quality of the relationships you have with people and with the earth (e.g. assignment that has students map their interrelationships – including with their friends family, work, government and politics, food, and clothing).</li><li>• Understanding that conscience (Henry David Thoreau), meditative awareness (Thich Nhat Hanh), ecosophy (Naess) provide the grounding to effectively engage and act to create a better world.</li></ul> |
| <p>7. Describe and give examples of how to effectively manage workplace stress and anger.</p> <p>8. Identify their individual work style (i.e., where they like to focus their attention, the way they like to take in information and the way they like to make decisions), and the strengths and weaknesses of that style.</p> |  |

Stan Taylor, December 3, 2012

Instructor

Date

Ken Mundell 12/5/12

Academic Dean

Date

Please attach the approved course outline.