

UNST 234 Healthy People/Healthy Places

Winter, 2011

MW 3:30 – 4:45 PM

Room: CH 225

Dr. Ellen Shoshkes

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Office hours: by appointment

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The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of infirmity. Health and well-being are not static states, but are influenced by the communities where people live, work, play, and learn, through the interplay of a community's physical, social, and cultural environment. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services describes a healthy community as one that continuously creates and improves both its physical and social environments, helping people to support one another in aspects of daily life and to develop to their fullest potential. Designing and building healthy communities can improve the quality of life for all people who live, work, worship, learn, and play within their borders -- where every person is free to make choices amid a variety of healthy, available, accessible, and affordable options.

The aim of this sophomore inquiry is to provide an understanding of this ecological concept of health as a dynamic process of adaptation to a constantly changing environment. Students will examine the relationship between how we live our lives and the economic, social and physical environments that surround us. A term-long community-based project provides an opportunity for hands-on experience with the subject matter. Students will develop skills to study characteristics of the built environment that may influence health and apply lessons from urban planning and public health research to current and future problems.



COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

This class emphasizes lectures and discussions focused on the assigned readings, as well as project based learning through the term-long assignment. You are required to attend regular and mentor sessions of the class regularly, participate in discussions, presentations and exercises, and earn a passing grade on the assignments and mid-term exam. You must also submit a BRIEF answer to one of Weekly Reading Guide questions. This answer will not be graded, but is required as part of your class participation grade.

READINGS

Required Texts: And old and a new classic

- Dubos, René. (1959, 1987 ed.) *Mirage of Health: Utopias, Progress, and Biological Change*. Rutgers University Press. New Brunswick.

- Louv, Richard. (2008.) *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Algonquin Books. Chapel Hill.

Recommended Text, Graphics and/or Video:

Resources that add another dimension to the text are available via Blackboard and/or the internet. You are responsible for checking the course Blackboard page on a regular basis to keep up with additional resources or study guides, general announcements or changes in the schedule.

OVERVIEW OF FOUR PART ASSIGNMENT

In a four part term-long project student teams will observe and assess conditions of the environment that appear to affect children’s health in nine Portland neighborhoods. Teams of 3-4 students will be formed during the first week. Teams will choose one of nine neighborhoods that have been selected to study. Each team will use quantitative and qualitative methods to assess their neighborhood’s needs, assets and boundaries. Based on their findings each team will recommend changes to the environment (physical and social) to address the needs identified and/or to promote healthier choices for children, Each team member will specialize in one of the following inter-related characteristics of the built environment.

- Safety (Crime, Injury or Environmental Hazards)
- Access to healthy food
- Access to nature
- Infrastructure for walking and biking

Assignment	Date Assigned	Date Due
1. Neighborhood Data	1/3/11	1/19/11
2. Neighborhood Asset Inventory	1/12/11	1/26/11
3. Research Paper	1/26/11	2/16/11
4. Healthy Children Healthy Neighborhood Proposal	2/9/11	3/9/11

Grading Breakdown:

Participation/Attendance	10 %	(includes written answers to questions on weekly readings)	
Assignment 1	5 %		
Assignment 2	15 %		
Assignment 3	20 %		
Assignment 4	25 %		
Mid-Term Exam	25 %	2/2/11	2/7/11

Points	0	48	52	58	63	68	73	78	83	88	93	100
Grade	F	D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

This syllabus may be revised during the term!

Week 1	
Monday 1/3	<p>INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW</p> <p><i>Assignment #1 handed out and discussed in class — Due Wednesday, January 19</i></p> <p><u>IN CLASS Reflection/Writing Exercise</u></p> <p><i>Briefly reflect on how the place where people live affects their health: How has your health been affected by where you live? What are some of the environmental factors—physical, social, cultural, economic— that may influence healthy behavior or lifestyles?</i></p>
Wednesday 1/5	<p>MIRAGE OF HEALTH: UTOPIAS PROGRESS AND BIOLOGICAL CHANGE</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u> BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dubos, Ch. 1: “The Gardens of Eden” (pp. 1-29) <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p> <p>SUBMIT ANSWER TO WEEKLY QUESTION via BLACKBOARD</p>
Mentor Session	Form teams and select a neighborhood to study. Begin individual work on Assignment 1. Discuss overall project. Become familiar with useful websites.
Week 2	
Monday 1/10	<p>HEALTH AS FITNESS</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dubos, Ch. 2: Biological and Social Adaptation (pp. 30-61) ▪ Dubos, Ch. 3: Struggle and Partnership in the Living World (pp. 62-94) <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p> <p>SUBMIT ANSWER TO WEEKLY QUESTION via BLACKBOARD</p>
Wednesday 1/12	<p>Using Data to Assess Neighborhood Needs</p> <p><i>What do we know about the children and families we want to support?</i></p> <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p> <p><i>Assignment #2 handed out and discussed in class — Due Wednesday, January 26</i></p>
Mentor Session	Continue individual work on Assignment 1. Teams print out base maps and plan field work for Assignment 2.

Week 3	
Monday 1/17	<i>Martin Luther King Day</i> NO CLASS
Wednesday 1/19	<p>ECOLOGICAL EQUILIBRIUM Assignment # 1 DUE</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dubos, Ch. 4: Environment and Disease (pp. 95-128) ▪ Dubos, Ch. 5: Hygeia and Asclepius (pp. 129-169) <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p> <p>SUBMIT ANSWER TO WEEKLY QUESTION via BLACKBOARD</p>
Mentor Session	Teams work on Assignment 2.
Week 4	
Monday 1/24	<p>SOCIETY, CULTURE, HEALTH AND DISEASE</p> <p><u>Required Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dubos, Ch. 6: Social Patterns of Health and Disease (pp. 170-219) ▪ Dubos, Ch. 7: Effects of Disease on Populations and on Civilization (pp. 220-257) <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p> <p>SUBMIT ANSWER TO WEEKLY QUESTION via BLACKBOARD</p>
Wednesday 1/26	<p>IN CLASS: Team Presentations of Assignment 2: Neighborhood Asset Inventory</p> <p><i>Assignment #3: handed out and discussed in class — Due Wednesday, February 16</i></p>
Mentor Session	Teams work on Assignment 3 – Investigate resources on Blackboard and the internet
Week 5	
Monday 1/31	<p>HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND PROGRESS</p> <p><u>Required Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dubos, Ch. 8: Utopias and Human Goals (pp. 258-282) <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p>
Wednesday 2/2	<p><i>DUE: Assignment #2: Neighborhood Inventory</i> Be prepared to discuss in class.</p> <p>TAKE HOME QUIZ HANDED OUT IN CLASS — Due in class, February 7</p>
Mentor Session	Work on quiz or Assignment 3

Week 6	
Monday 2/7	<p>TAKE HOME MID-TERM QUIZ DUE TODAY IN CLASS</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Meg Merrick (invited), Coordinator, Community Geography Project Institute of Portland Metropolitan Studies, College of Urban & Public Affairs, PSU and Consultant to the Coalition for a Livable Future.</p>
Wednesday 2/9	<p>LAST CHID IN THE WOODS</p> <p><u>Required Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Louv, Part I: The New Relationship Between Children and Nature (pp. 7-36) ▪ Louv, Part II-A: Why The Young (and the Rest of Us) Need Nature (pp. 39-70) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Climbing the Tree of Health ○ A Life of the Senses: Nature vs. the Know-It-All State of Mind <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p> <p>SUBMIT ANSWER TO WEEKLY QUESTION via BLACKBOARD</p> <p><i>Assignment #4: handed out and discussed in class — Due March 10</i></p>
Mentor Session	Work on Assignment 3 research papers.
Week 7	
Monday 2/14	<p>THE END OF NATURE</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Louv, Part II-B: Why The Young (and the Rest of Us) Need Nature (pp. 71-112) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The “Eighth Intelligence” ○ The Genius of Childhood: How Nature Nurtures Creativity ○ Nature-Deficit Disorder and the Restorative Environment ▪ Louv, Part III: The Best of Intentions: Why Johnnie and Jeannie Don’t Play Outside Anymore (pp. 115-159) <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p> <p>SUBMIT ANSWER TO WEEKLY QUESTION via BLACKBOARD</p>
Wednesday 2/16	<i>DUE: Assignment 3: Research Paper</i> Be prepared to present in class.
Mentor Session	Teams work on findings and recommendations (Assignment 4)

Week 8	
Monday 2/21	<p>RETURN TO NATURE</p> <p><u>Required Reading:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Louv, Part IV: The Nature Child Reunion (pp. 163-200) ▪ Louv, Part V: The Jungle Blackboard (pp. 203-234) <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p> <p>SUBMIT ANSWER TO WEEKLY QUESTION via BLACKBOARD</p>
Wednesday 2/23	Small Group Discussion and In-Class Exercise
Mentor Session	Teams work on findings and recommendations report (Assignment 4) and powerpoint presentations.
Week 9	
Monday 2/28	<p>RE-INVENTING NATURE: THE FOURTH FRONTIER</p> <p><u>Required Readings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Louv, Part VI: Wonder Land: Opening The Fourth Frontier (pp. 237-287) ▪ Louv, Part VII: To Be Amazed (pp. 291-316) <p><u>Recommended Readings:</u> TO BE DETERMINED CHECK BLACKBOARD</p> <p>SUBMIT ANSWER TO WEEKLY QUESTION via BLACKBOARD</p>
Wednesday 3/2	Small Group Discussion and In-Class Exercise
Mentor Session	Work on findings and recommendations report (Assignment 4) and powerpoint presentations.
Week 10:	
Monday 3/7	<p>TEAM PRESENTATIONS</p> <p><i>Team powerpoint presentations</i></p>
Wednesday 3/9	<p><i>Team powerpoint presentations</i></p> <p><i>DUE: Assignment 4 Healthy Children Healthy Neighborhood Proposal</i></p>
Mentor Session	Student self assessments and reflection on class.