

**INTDS 301**  
**ENVISIONING ENVIRONMENTAL FUTURES**  
**DOANE HALL OF ART A209**  
**ALLEGHENY COLLEGE**

Instructor: Amara Geffen  
Office: Doane Hall of Art A205  
Office Hours: TBA  
Phone: 332 – 3379; 720-7089  
[ageffen@allegheny.edu](mailto:ageffen@allegheny.edu)  
[ageffen@alltel.net](mailto:ageffen@alltel.net)

*“I believe that all education proceeds by the participation of the individual in the social consciousness of the race.” John Dewey*

**A. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

INTDS 301 serves as the capstone to the Arts & Environment Interdisciplinary Minor, and can also be applied to a variety of other minors and majors that emphasize community engagement.

INTDS 301 is deeply embedded in the pedagogy of experiential learning and community engagement. We will explore this pedagogy, and will also look at best practices in sustainability and community development in an effort to help plan for and build a vibrant Meadville. Along the way we will look at why we should care about Meadville, as well as what makes Meadville ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meadville%2C\\_Pennsylvania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meadville%2C_Pennsylvania)) unique and how that uniqueness can be used to create a sustainable community. We will also explore the potential of art to build community while addressing local, environmental issues.

**B. BOOKS, ELECTRONIC RESERVES AND OTHER READINGS**

The following are required texts and are available at the Bookstore:

Works of Heart: Building Village Through the Arts, editors Lynne Elizabeth, Suzanne Young  
The Rise of the Creative Class, Richard Florida  
Home from Nowhere, James Howard Kunstler

These books will form the basis of your reading for your independent research. While we will not read them in their entirety, ultimately you are expected to have read them in developing your research topic.

## C. COURSE TOPICS

Developing viable strategies for addressing real world problems is truly an interdisciplinary venture. As a result course topics will cover a range of issues and it will be important to make sure that students understand their interrelationship. Ultimately it is important to remember that knowledge is not disconnected. Just as aspects of our environment are interrelated, the various disciplines and modes of critical thinking needed to understand the problems facing small rust-belt communities such as Meadville also are interrelated, which is of course the beauty of studying within the framework of the liberal arts! Everything touches everything else and little can be seen when viewed in isolation. By the end of the semester I hope you will be able to demonstrate this understanding.

- 1) Civic Engagement and Higher Education
- 2) Revitalizing Urban Streams
- 3) Living Democracy and Citizenship
- 4) The City & Sustainable Urban Planning – Why Planning Matters & Best Practices
- 5) Art as a Tool for Community and Economic Development

## D. COURSE STRUCTURE

This class meets for 1 hour and 50 minutes, twice a week for fourteen weeks. Students will use an organizing praxis drawn from readings and discussions to reflect critically on their experience and observations. Class meetings will mostly alternate between discussion of new materials and group planning/discussion of class and individual projects. Students are required to attend all sessions, do the reading and take an active part in discussions.

## E. REQUIRED WORK

Our work will take a variety of forms including:

- 1) **Readings and discussion** around course topics. There will be regular assigned readings, especially through the first 10 weeks of the semester. As much as possible readings will be assigned for the first class meeting each week. Additionally every attempt will be made to ensure that the timing of each reading will be relevant to development of our projects.
- 2) **Independent research and research paper.** You will be required to engage in independent research over the course of the semester that will culminate in a 10-page paper (double spaced; MLA Format please). You will set the topic for this paper, which should focus on how the College can partner with the city of Meadville to create a vibrant and sustainable community. Your paper must include case studies, which should have some relevance to our local situation. Ideally if you would want to look for case studies involving stream restorations and/or use of the arts to build community capital. One interesting example is Vandergrift, PA ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vandergrift,\\_Pennsylvania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vandergrift,_Pennsylvania)). If someone in class has a gator license we might be able to arrange a field trip.

The schedule for developing your paper is as follows:

September 20<sup>th</sup> – 250 word abstract detailing paper topic and thesis, and including bibliography  
October 18<sup>th</sup> - first draft due

November 16<sup>th</sup> – paper due

These dates are highlighted in the class schedule below. The three texts for the class should provide a reasonable foundation for some of your research, but will need to be supplemented by other texts to support the focus of your research.

**3) Class project.** As a group we will focus on developing plans for a Growing Greener grant that will look at stream restoration for Mill Run at Shadybrook Park. Specifically we will focus on concept development for this site, engaging and mobilizing residents adjacent to the site, and other preliminary preparations for the GG grant, which may involve gap analysis of existing environmental data. This work will also involve assessing stakeholder interest in developing a trail from Shadybrook Park downstream towards the East End Elementary School site (will provide link to Jinelle Crosser's senior project – see CEED website under Mill Run work). Most likely we will host a community meeting for residents to assess interest and gather community input for our work (When and where shall we do this? To be decided as a class).

**4) Individual project.** Each student will be responsible for some part of the class project, which will culminate in an outline for the Growing Greener application(s) and a class report, which will be placed on the CEED website.

**5) Reflection papers.** Two papers are required throughout the semester in which you must reflect upon and analyze your experience(s) in this class, particularly with respect to your work on class and individual projects. The idea is for you to take time to consider what you are learning and how your experiences are shaping your growth. Due dates are as follows and are also listed in the schedule below (see Program below).

October 11<sup>th</sup> – first reflection paper

December 6<sup>th</sup> – second reflection paper

## F. GRADING

Final grades will be based on:

- Class participation and reflection papers (40%)
- Individual work on group and personal project (30%)
- Research paper (30%)

## G. PROGRAM

The following is the schedule of class meetings, readings, required co-curricular lectures/events, papers and other assignments.

R 8/30                    **COURSE INTRO AND BACKGROUND INFO**

T 9/4                      **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND HIGHER EDUCATION**

### ***REQUIRED READINGS:***

- David J. Maurrasse, Beyond the Campus: How Colleges and Universities Form Partnerships With Their Communities. Chapter 1: The Mission of Higher Education; and Chapter 2: Have Ivory Tower Will Travel. *Electronic reserve*.

- John Dewey, Democracy & Education. Chapter XI Experience & Thinking; *Electronic reserve*.
- John Dewey, “My Pedagogic Creed” from Dewey on Education, *Electronic reserve*.

**WEBSITES - LINKS TO EXPLORE:**

- <http://www.aacu.org/peerreview/pr-sp03/pr-sp03research.cfm>  
Link to article entitled “How Civic Engagement is Reframing Liberal Education.”
- <http://www.actionforchange.org/getinformed/civic-engagement.html>  
Connected with Campus Compact’s (<http://www.campuscompact.org/>) *Raise Your Voice!* (<http://www.actionforchange.org/aboutus.html>), this site connects, challenges and supports college students working on community engagement, activism, leadership and civic growth.
- <http://imagingamerica.syr.edu/links.html> - Imagining America’s links page that lists all varieties of programs that demonstrate College/University Collaboration for change and community enhancement.

R 9/6

**BACKGROUND ON MILL RUN**

At present CEED is taking the lead in promoting a comprehensive, community-based program for economic revitalization of Meadville. Aimed at stimulating economic, environmental and social sustainability, we have collaborated with a broad based group of community partners in developing plans for *Meadville, PA. Not Your Run of the Mill Community* (put in a link to the pdf’s on CEED site!).

Last year CEED submitted a proposal to the Crawford County Planning Commission, which oversees state funds that are allocated to the County in support of Growing Greener (GG) projects. As a result the County prioritized \$42,500.00 for a CEED-directed project along Mill Run. While funding has been prioritized, the money is technically in reserve for our project, we must still develop a formal application to either the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) or the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) in order to actually receive the prioritized funds. In preparing our application we must be very clear about the grant requirements or we could risk losing the prioritized funds.

As our original proposal (link to County GG application) indicates, our request far exceeded what we received. Consequently, this past summer CEED met with several engineers and local stakeholders to identify the most likely site/project upon which to build our application. As a result of those conversations we have shifted our plans and now intend to develop a project for Mill Run at Shadybrook Part. That project is loosely defined as follows:

*An opportunity exists in Shadybrook Park in the City of Meadville to restore and enhance a section of Mill Run at its headwater. This restoration will balance the ecological needs of the stream with the accessibility needs of the patrons of the park. The project would entail approximately 500 linear feet of Mill Run, starting at the outfall of Rainbow Lake, and ending just downstream of the remnants of a small stone dam. Restoration strategies might include: creation of additional stream length by adding meanders; relocation of outhouses and/or other treatments that will assist in the*

*improvement of water quality; installation of rock cross vanes to aid in the stabilization of the streambanks; creation of floodplain benches; and riparian buffer plantings. These plantings would provide stability to the banks, shading to the stream, cover for wildlife, and will be planted in a way that will not deter from the more manicured appearance of the surrounding park. In addition, the outfall pipe from Rainbow Lake would be developed to evoke a grotto, while simultaneously providing some improvement to water quality. A small intermittent stormwater tributary to Mill Run will be enhanced as another water feature of the park, with opportunities available for planting, landscaping, and other aesthetic considerations that will help make stormwater visible to the public and provide opportunities for water purification. Community involvement will be maximized through CEED's numerous existing partnerships, including those with Ernst Conservation Seeds, Master Gardeners, Rotary, Kiwanis, and other service clubs. The proximity of the proposed site to the Meadville School District's buildings will be essential in using the project as a learning experience for the students, and as such a collaboration with the School District will be established.*

A great deal of our work this semester will involve research and concept development in preparation for writing a formal application for GG funds for a stream improvement project at Shadybrook Park. In part our challenge will be to determine and frame a project that both DCNR and DEP will be interested in, as well as what can we actually 'make' for \$42,500.00?

**READINGS, WEBSITES, AND LINKS TO EXPLORE:**

- Application to the Crawford County Planning Commission – attached.
- <http://ceed.allegheny.edu/sc/> CEED's page for Sustainable Communities Project. Provides a link to pdf's for *Meadville, PA: Not Your Run of the Mill Community*. Please look at and read the pdf's.
- <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/> Look at their guide to funding recreation and conservation projects and their DCNR Action Plan – Shaping a Sustainable Pennsylvania.

- T 9/11     **COLLABORATION** – Are you an Eagle, a Bear, a Mouse or a Buffalo?  
**PLANNING/ORGANIZING** – Preliminary discussions articulating what we need to know, materials needed to complete our work, defining the scope of the project and developing strategies for realizing our work.
- R 9/13     **PLANNING/ORGANIZING** - Class will meet without me. Your goal will be to flesh out our timeline for work and continue honing our planning for the Shadybrook project.
- T 9/18     **REVITALIZING URBAN STREAMS**

**REQUIRED READINGS:**

- Case Studies provided by Chris Brown. Will be Xeroxed or set up as e-reserves.
- Rivertown: Rethinking Urban Streams, by Paul Stanton Kibel. I am awaiting my copy of this brand new book, from which I will establish class readings, so stay tuned.

**WEBSITES AND LINKS TO EXPLORE:**

- <http://www.cwp.org/mission.htm> provides local governments, activists, and watershed organizations around the country with the technical tools for protecting some of the nation's most precious natural resources: our streams, lakes and rivers.
- More to follow....will grow from the work we do together!

R 9/20

**PLANNING/ORGANIZING**

**250 word abstract detailing research paper topic, thesis, and bibliography (separate from the 250 words!). First draft due of paper then due October 18<sup>th</sup>; final paper due November 16<sup>th</sup>. Double spaced; MLA format; paper copies only unless otherwise specified.**

T 9/25

**LIVING DEMOCRACY AND CITIZENSHIP**

***REQUIRED READINGS:***

- Francis Moore Lappe, Democracy's Edge: Choosing to Save Our County by Bringing Democracy to Life. Part One: Living on Democracy's Edge, pages 1 – 47; and, “Two Frames For Democracy”, pages 319 -323.
- <http://www.aacu.org/peerreview/pr-sp03/pr-sp03feature1.cfm> Scroll down to Faces/Phases of Citizenship and look at how AACU describes the phases of citizenship.
- Kwame Anthony Appiah, “Introduction: Making Conversation”, from Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers (will either be on e-reserve or provided as handout)

***WEBSITES AND LINKS TO EXPLORE:***

- [http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_5751.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_5751.cfm) “How to Remake the World: Kate Davies Critiques Paul Hawken's New Book, Blessed Unrest, & Hawken Responds”
- <http://www.wiserearth.org> - WiserEarth is a creation of Paul Hawken's Natural Capital Institute. WiserEarth is a community directory and networking forum that “maps and connects non-governmental organizations and individuals addressing the central issues of our day; climate change, poverty, the environment, peace, water, hunger, social justice, conservation, human rights and more.”
- [www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu](http://www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu), Arts of Citizenship Program, University of Michigan.
- <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/perspectives/sub.asp?key=245&subkey=2433> “Educating for Democracy”, Ann Colby, Senior Scholar at Carnegie Foundation.

R 9/27

**PLANNING/ORGANIZING** – work session with Chris Brown, Landscape Architect with Derck & Edson Associates.

**4:30 – 6:00 Town Hall Community Meeting to launch Core Commitments Program for civic engagement and teaching for personal and social responsibility. Tippie Alumni Center.**

T 10/2

## THE CITY & SUSTAINABLE URBAN PLANNING – WHY PLANNING MATTERS AS WELL AS BEST PRACTICES

things.”

“Planning and chance almost, at times, seem to be the same

*Robert Smithson (earth artist 1960's)*

We will begin this unit with an exploration of the history of the city and what issues face cities today.

### **READINGS ON THE CITY AND PLACE:**

- The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History, Spiro Kostof “Introduction: *The City As Artifact*” – will be given as a Xerox or established as an e-reserve.
- From Home From Nowhere: Remaking Our Everyday World for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, James Howard Kunstler. Chpt. 1: “Who We Are”, Chpt. 9: “A City In the Country.” You have the book!
- From The Rise of the Creative Class...and how it's transforming work, leisure, community, & everyday life, Richard Florida. Chpt. 1: “The Transformation of Everyday Life”; Chpt. 12: “The Power of Place”; Chpt. 16: “Building Creative Community.” You have the book!
- I will place a reading from Lewis Mumford's seminal work on The City in History on electronic reserve shortly. Stay tuned! We will also watch a 1939 documentary narrated by Mumford called, “The City”. Viewing may be scheduled outside of class.

### **WEBSITES, AND LINKS TO EXPLORE:**

- <http://www.angelfire.com/ar/corei/ud.html> - this url links to “Urban Design in the Postmodern Context”, an essay by Koray Velibeyoglu, PhD Candidate at: [Izmir Institute of Technology](http://www.angelfire.com/ar/corei/ud.html), 1999
- <http://www.brook.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb33.htm> - links to Bruce Katz's Policy Brief #33, “Reviving Cities: Think Metropolitan”
- <http://www.planning.org> APA is a nonprofit public interest and research organization committed to urban, suburban, regional, and rural planning. Student memberships are available. I am in the process of becoming a member so we have access to materials from this site.
- [http://www.co.crawford.pa.us/Planning/planning\\_links.htm](http://www.co.crawford.pa.us/Planning/planning_links.htm) - list of links from the Crawford County Planning Commission's website.

R 10/4

## PLANNING/ORGANIZING FOR MILL RUN

**Monday October 8<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m. Lecture by Stephen J. Goldsmith, member of CEED's National Advisory Board and City Planner. Location TBA.**

T 10/9 Stephen Goldsmith will be on Campus October 7<sup>th</sup>– October 10<sup>th</sup>. He will present a public lecture (See box above. Title of talk to follow). While Stephen is here he will also meet with community economic development leaders. You are encouraged to attend any and all of these meetings. A detailed schedule will follow.

R 10/11

## PLANNING/ORGANIZING FOR MILL RUN

**First Reflection Paper Due! Double-spaced, hard copy**

T 10/16  
R 10/18

**FALL BREAK – NO CLASS  
PLANNING/REGROUPING**

**Second draft research paper due. Clear development of ideas should be evident.**

T 10/23

**FILM** – Tom Hylton’s Save Our Land, Save Our Towns. Supplemental materials will be provided to help frame our discussion. This may be done as an evening showing with follow up discussion with Tom.

**Tom Hylton – possible lecture on strengthening small towns and working with local schools.**

R 10/25

**PLANNING/ORGANIZING**

T 10/30

**ART AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

***READINGS:***

From: Works of Heart: Building Village Through the Arts, we will read xxx. Additional Readings will be provided some xeroxed or e-reserve from Groundworks

R 11/1

**Tuesday November 6<sup>th</sup>, Opening of Community-based Art: an exhibit that features works of art done in collaboration with local communities. Art Galleries. Lecture begins at 7:00, opening follows lecture.**

T 11/6  
R 11/8

T 11/13  
R 11/15

**Research Paper Due. Editing and Global revisions must be evident! See Hacker.**

T 11/20  
R 11/22

**THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS**

T 11/27  
R 11/29

T 12/4  
R 12/6

**Second Reflection Paper Due**

T 12/11

**LAST DAY** – Today we hear from everyone about what they have learned from their participation in the course. What have we learned about ourselves as agents of change within local communities? What have we learned about Mill Run and restoration of urban streams? What have we learned about sustainable planning? What have we learned about how we learn and the role of experience in the acquisition of knowledge?