Spring 2014

City Wild Seminar: Abandonment Invasives and Losing Control Syllabus, Spring 2014

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In the shrinking city, this is a moment of increasing wildness, at the intersection of increasing invasive species, abandonment and vacancy, and an apparent loosening of control over public and private green space. Phenomena and trends from economics, politics, demographics, and the natural sciences converge at this effect: increasing disorder and decay, with a resurgence of nature and unkempt spaces. As humans, we have a long cultural and evolutionary history with wilderness and nature, narratives that continue to develop today, impacting how we react to, perceive and ultimately live within the wilder city.

In this course, we explore and create the construct of “wildness” by investigating material concerning the range of issues above and beyond. This interdisciplinary approach welcomes students from a variety of backgrounds and programs, and encourages synthesis across boundaries. Coursework incorporates the pragmatic and inclusive viewpoint of landscape architecture while welcoming those from non-design backgrounds.

Course Objectives

- To learn to build expertise about a topic
- To communicate across disciplinary boundaries and learn from those with viewpoints that differ from one’s own
- To structure, organize, approach, and conduct a literature review as a foundation for scholarly research or practice
- To develop critical thinking skills
- To develop critical reading skills

Assignments and Grading:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation and discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead one discussion</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wild site evaluation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Proposal for final paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper or project</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Grading scale: Final grades will be determined using the standard scale (ie 90%+ = A, 80-89% = B, 70-79% = C [Undergrads only: 60-69% = D]). I reserve the right to curve these percentages downward, meaning the scale may be more lenient but not more severe.
Readings:
City Wild is organized around group discussion. It is therefore essential that you complete the readings before coming to class; if no one does the readings, we will have nothing to talk about. In keeping with the course objectives, the readings below are coded as Background/Main/Extra, to help you manage your reading time:

- **Background:** More basic information for those unfamiliar with the day’s topic. Students already familiar with the topic can probably skip “background” readings.
- **Main:** The primary readings for the course, which you will be expected to have read for each meeting.
- **Extra:** Optional readings for those looking for more information. Some “extra” readings are more difficult or specialized, while others are more fun resources to enrich your experience.

Course readings will be provided in .pdf format via a Google drive folder accessible to students registered for the class (email me for the link). Additional readings are drawn from publicly available web resources; these may be found by following the links on this syllabus (below and on the course website). This course uses no required text.

Discussion questions:
To facilitate discussion, please prepare three (3) original discussion questions about the topic or the readings for each day’s class meeting. Please email these to me at sdieterl@esf.edu by 9:00 a.m. the morning of class. If a student is leading discussion that day, please copy him/her on the email. I encourage you to discuss the readings with each other outside of class, but each person should submit three unique discussion questions.

Lead one discussion:
Each student will sign up in advance to lead discussion in one upcoming class meeting. S/he will receive the day’s discussion questions and may choose to use those as a starting point for leading the class (as I do). Alternatively, s/he may choose to prepare a class activity or presentation, or some combination of discussion with these.

Final paper/project
A major product of this semester will be an individual final paper or project. Each student will propose his/her own topic in a separate topic proposal. I welcome both traditional research papers, including the investigation of relevant potential thesis or capstone topics, and more applied planning, design, or artistic projects. All options will require roughly equivalent amounts of work, including a final hand-in of a digital report and/or drawings. Additional details regarding paper/project requirements will be forthcoming.

Course policies

**Late work:** Turn your work in on time. Late work will be penalized 10% for each 24-hour day that it is overdue. If extraordinary circumstances arise, I may be able to grant extensions, but do not ask for such an extension within 24 hours of the deadline.

**Attendance:**
Attendance at class meetings is not explicitly required; HOWEVER it is impossible to participate in class if you are not there, so excessive absences will impact your final grade indirectly. I may be able to make alternative arrangements for missed work, etc. if there is an excellent reason and if you tell me about it. Please note that “excellent reasons” do not include things such as leaving for Spring Break early, and recreational or social activities.
Please endeavor to arrive on time. Excessive tardiness will also impact your final grade.

**Plagiarism:**
The use of the work of others without proper citation or credit will not be tolerated in this class. Writing that has been simply cut and pasted in from another source, even if it is just a few paragraphs, will lower your grade by at least a letter grade and could result in a failing grade for the course. Repeated instances of plagiarism may result in expulsion from ESF.

Plagiarism is defined in this class as presenting work by others as your own, by omitting:
1) quote marks enclosing the words you did not write, eg: “Now is the winter of our discontent.” Long quotes over 2 sentences may be set off as a block of text with larger margins; ask me if you aren’t familiar with this practice.
AND/OR
2) citation providing the name of the person or entity who wrote these words, eg: William Shakespeare.

You need both quotes and citation to use words written by someone else without plagiarizing. Please ask if this is not clear. Other resources for answering citation and plagiarism questions include the staff at Moon Library and their online guides here: [http://researchguides.library.syr.edu/content.php?pid=28194&sid=205457](http://researchguides.library.syr.edu/content.php?pid=28194&sid=205457)

**Use of assignments:** I keep hardcopy or digital copies of all assignments students complete for this class. I may use these assignments in future presentations or portfolios, and will credit the creator or author except where anonymity is required or desirable.

**Students with learning and physical disabilities**
Students may contact the ESF Office of Student Affairs, 110 Bray Hall, 315-470-6660 for assistance. SUNY-ESF works with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at Syracuse University, who is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations. Students can contact ODS at 804 University Avenue- Room 309, 315-443-4498 to schedule an appointment and discuss their needs and the process for requesting accommodations. To learn more about ODS, visit [http://disabilityservices.syr.edu](http://disabilityservices.syr.edu) Authorized accommodation forms must be in the instructor's possession one week prior to any anticipated accommodation. Since accommodations may require early planning and are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

**Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty is a breach of trust between a student, one’s fellow students, or the instructor(s). By registering for courses at ESF you acknowledge your awareness of the ESF Code of Student Conduct ([http://www.esf.edu/students/handbook/StudentHB.05.pdf](http://www.esf.edu/students/handbook/StudentHB.05.pdf)), in particular academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to plagiarism and cheating, and other forms of academic misconduct. The Academic Integrity Handbook contains further information and guidance ([http://www.esf.edu/students/integrity/](http://www.esf.edu/students/integrity/)). Infractions of the academic integrity code may lead to academic penalties as per the ESF Grading Policy ([http://www.esf.edu/provost/policies/documents/GradingPolicy.11.12.2013.pdf](http://www.esf.edu/provost/policies/documents/GradingPolicy.11.12.2013.pdf)).
Topics and Schedule

Week 1:
- **M 1.13:** Introduction

- **W 1.15:** Wildness in the landscape
  - Readings:

- **F 1.17:** Shrinking cities

Week 2:
- **M 1.20:** MLK Day – **No class meeting**

- **W 1.22:** Shrinking cities

- **F 1.24:** Shrinking cities: Detroit (Dieterlen lecture)
  - **Assignment:** Sign up to lead discussion

Week 3:
- **M 1.27:** Shrinking cities: Detroit


- **W 1.29: Shrinking cities: Syracuse**

- **F 1.31: Park use and demographics**
  - Main: Your choice of any ONE of the following. Reading or skimming any beyond your first choice is extra:

**Week 4**

- **M 2.3: Place: Abandonment and attachment**

- **W 2.5: Property values and preference**

- **F 2.7: What makes a place dangerous or safe?**
Week 5

- M 2.10: Perceptions of danger or risk

- W 2.12: Scary Syracuse
  - Extra: (Review) Syracuse Police Stats:
    http://www.syracusepolice.org/statistics.asp
    http://www.syracusepolice.org/crimemaps.asp

- F 2.14: Social control

Week 6

- M 2.17: Space no one owns

- W 2.19: Informality

- **F 2.21: Art = vandalism = protest**

**Week 7**

- **M 2.24: Art = vandalism = protest**
  - Main: Browse through graffiti examples: [http://www.graffiti.org/](http://www.graffiti.org/)

- **W 2.26: Climate change**
  - Background: “Climate Change Facts: Answers to Common Questions,” US Environmental Protection Agency website: [http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/facts.html](http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/facts.html) (also other pages on EPA’s website depending on personal interest)

- **F 2.27: Climate change and the city**
Week 8

- M 3.3: Resilience

- W 3.5: Resilience: New Orleans

- F 3.7: Resilience: Sandy
  - Assignment: Final paper/project one-page proposals due

Week 9 – SPRING BREAK (NO CLASS)

Week 10

- M 3.17: Invasive plants (Dieterlen lecture)
- **W 3.19: Invasive/wild/feral species**

- **F 3.21: Urban deer (Guest lecture by Dr. Brian Underwood, ESF EFB)**

**Week 11**

- **M 3.24: Ecosystem Services**
  - Assignment: Assign Wild Site Evaluation

- **W 3.26: No class meeting** (Susan presenting at CELA). Do this reading to help you with the Wild Site Evaluation:

- **F 3.28: No class meeting** (Susan presenting at CELA)

**Week 12**

- **M 3.31: Discuss Wild Site Evaluations**
  - Assignment: Wild Site Evaluation due

- **W 4.2: Wildness as restorative**
• F 4.4: Wildness and disease (Guest lecture by Dr. Sadie Ryan, ESF EFB)

Week 13
• M 4.7: Human health and nature

• W 4.9: Is the wilder city healthier?

• F 4.11: The picturesque and sublime
  o Main: review Alexander Gronsky’s “Pastoral” photo series at http://www.alexandergronsky.com/

Week 14
• M 4.14: Ruins
  o Extra: Many possibilities on City Wild Blog for those who are interested!

• W 4.16: Wildness in design: built works


- F 4.18: Wildness in design: Calumet
  - Main: Sellers, Rod. 2006. Chicago’s Southeast Side Industrial History. Chicago, IL: Southeast Historical Society. (skim through pps 1-27; look at the photos throughout)
  - Main: City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development. Calumet Land Use Plan. Chicago, IL: City of Chicago. (browse through this)

Week 15
- M 4.21: Emscher Park and Duisberg Nord (Guest lecture by Prof. Timothy Toland, ESF LA)

- W 4.23: The High Line and I-81

- F 4.26: Using wildness in management and planning
  - Main (review; don’t read closely): Re-imagining a more sustainable Cleveland: Citywide strategies for reuse of vacant land. (2008). Cleveland Land Lab at the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative.

Week 16
- M 4.28: Last day of class

Assignment: Final paper/projects due by NOON, Friday, May 2, 2012. (pdf is required; turn a hardcopy in to my office (322 Marshall) if you want feedback from me beyond a grade)