

JUSTICE & SUSTAINABILITY CHANGE STRATEGIES, PERSONAL & SYSTEMIC

ENVS 20200 4 CREDITS CRN 41266

INSTRUCTORS: Elan Shapiro, 607-592-8402 Admin Annex 106, and Community presenters & Project Guides
Mon & Wed 1:00 PM - 3:50 PM CNS 1A (formerly CNS 119) Office:

OFFICE HOURS : Admin Annex 106 Mon 4:00-5:30 Wed 10:45-12:45 (arrange in advance), other times by arrangement.

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OVERVIEW: In this course we study and practice strategies for creating *systems change*, towards a fair and life-enhancing economy and community. These approaches also require personal transformation. Key skills we develop are: systems thinking and ecological redesign; undoing oppressive “isms” and reshaping our social narratives; cultivating inclusive and sustainable behaviors; facilitating cooperative initiatives and enterprises; and building social movements. This course requires and engenders reflection, courage, openness, and leadership, and is best suited for people who want to stretch their boundaries and develop positive connections and collaborations with our local community.

We’ll study a small number of texts and other instructional materials in depth and create a classroom learning community that draws on the course resources, and the experiences and interests of students, as well as local change agents in a variety of justice and sustainability initiatives. **On Mondays** we focus on presentations by instructor, community leaders, and students; group learning through discussions and experiential exercises; skills trainings and practice; project team presentations and feedback; local food tastings; and field trips. **On Wednesdays** we apply and integrate the learning through team projects *in our community* focused on social or ecological justice and renewal. In addition to the project session in the community, you may do up to an hour a week more of related research or other follow-up, usually not requiring transportation, at times that work with your schedule and with the project’s needs.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) Understand the relationship of social justice and sustainability change work to creating systemic wellbeing in our personal and community lives.
- 2) Engage with strong, practical visions of systemic wellbeing that show how economies and communities can work for *all* residents, human and nonhuman

- 3) Practice mindfulness, communication, facilitation and other self-care and community skills as a foundation for applying and integrating classroom knowledge and community contribution
- 4) Deepen race and class awareness, on a personal and systems level, and develop inclusive and multicultural habits and skills
- 5) Learn systems thinking and action strategies and apply to effective personal sustainability and collective change work.
- 6) Learn and become more empowered as change agents by collaborating with local community members to help build a positive future
- 7) Develop an emotional connection to this community's strengths and struggles and recognition of it as a rich source of learning.
- 8) Become a learning community with classmates and learn about community systems in the process
- 9) Explore 5 key areas of personal and systemic change: systems thinking and ecological redesign; undoing oppressive "isms" and reshaping our social narratives; cultivating inclusive and sustainable behaviors; facilitating cooperative initiatives and enterprises; and building social movements

REQUIREMENTS

While this class has less reading than most courses and no exams and long papers, the weekly assignments and project work require as much time, energy, and commitment as any challenging 4-credit course. High-level participation and engagement is most required in this class, and when we all commit that, amazing things happen!

1) Attendance and Engagement

a) Attendance - Aside from project work, we meet only 15 times, including field trips, so every session counts! **If you need to come to class or project late or will miss a class, field trip, or project session, notify me (text or call 592-8402 and/or email) or your project guide and your team in advance, explain what is happening, and ask how you can make it up.**

b) Preparedness - Doing your assignments **on time** is essential for contributing to group learning in class. If you're not doing so, you're lowering your grade on two counts!

c) Engagement - Here's what I'm asking for: Be a consistent and attentive presence; be authentic and take risks; initiate and contribute, by offering your perspectives, questioning, volunteering to lead sections, making suggestions and requests; and develop your community skills.

As each of us gets engaged this way, amazing and wonderful educational experiences happen, so don't hold back!

2) Writing and Change Journal

One week, assignments are based on a light amount of reading and/or videos that I expect you to study carefully and reflect upon.

On the alternate week, when you have an even shorter reading assignment, if any, you apply and integrate the classroom and assignment material in your personal and community life, and record your observations and discoveries *electronically* in your **Change Journal**. You will integrate the threads of the journal process through a Synthesis Journal at semester's end.

3) Community-based Team Projects (teams of 2-4) with community guides, including final report and presentations. The project includes working *in the community* with the community service and organizational development needs of your agency or initiative, for up to 2.5 - 3.0 hours per week, plus

transportation time, and up to 1 hour a week of follow up work that does not require transportation. Your work tasks and outcomes are specific to each project, but will include a final team presentation and report designed to be of value to your organization or initiative.

FOR MORE SPECIFICS SEE SEPARATE STUDENT PROJECT HANDBOOK

- 4) **Meeting with instructor** between 2nd and 6th week of class
- 5) **Bring Resource Binder or folder to each class** with readily accessible class resource sheets

GRADING & FEEDBACK

My priority is learning together how to be empowered, inclusive, and make a fundamental difference in the world. My feedback to you (included in my responses to your assignments and at mid-semester) - and yours to me- about how we are doing with this process is more important than grades.

The grades I'm required to give mirror the feedback you get. If your commitment and effort is passive and limited, and expect below a B. If your engagement is substantial, thoughtful, consistent and enthusiastic, you're in the upper range. *In other words, even though there are no exams or big papers, I am not an easy/high grader.* Here are the specifics that form the basis of your grade and your written evaluation-feedback:

- 1) ***Attendance and engagement 25%**
- 2) **** Assignments- Reflective writing** linked to readings & activities, and **Change Journal -25%**
- 3) *****Project work- 50%**

1)*Attendance and engagement- 25%

To get the full credit: Come to class and to your project session on time. Come to every class, unless there's an urgent reason that you notify me about in advance. Come prepared, alert, and having done the assignment. Be an attentive presence and an active, engaged contributor. If you are late, absent, unprepared, and/or unengaged, you are losing points.

2) **Assignment and Journal

Your assignments (graded from 1 to 7) are due in Sakai by midnight Sunday. I appreciate your getting them into me earlier, if possible, because that gives me more time to review them in preparing to facilitate related class work on Monday.

Late assignments get you lower grades (10% less on first late day, another 5% each day thereafter) I expect you to finish all assignments, even if they are 2 weeks late, and you will get a grade for them. I strongly encourage you to **resubmit assignments** that need significantly more work, which will also raise your grade.

3) *Project work**

Your project guide evaluates your work before mid-semester and at the end of the semester, using the following criteria:

- 1) **Reliability** including accountability, consistency, and completeness
- 2) **Quality & Output** including clarity, depth, creativity, and productivity
- 3) **Initiative** including leadership, self-motivation, and "taking charge"
- 4) **Teamwork** including collaboration and effective communication
- 5) **Cultural Competency** including inclusive perspective, cultural understanding, and openness to and valuing of differences

I evaluate your project work based on your classroom discussions, presentations and final report and the input from your project guide.

LEARNING COMMUNITY:

We will use “democracy skills” to create a “learning community” together. You will have opportunities to:

- 1) Build community based on shared “working agreements” and many opportunities to work closely in pairs and small groups
- 2) Lead or co-lead sections of many classes
- 3) Give feedback that adapts the curriculum to the emerging needs of the community;
- 4) Practice shared leadership and facilitation and constructive feedback in your team projects and in small group discussions tasks;
- 5) Use a justice (fairness, inclusion, equal opportunity) perspective and an ecological (systems, place-based, long-term) perspective to optimize our interactions and impact; and
- 6) Connect informally as a group (e.g. making a local food dinner together at Ecovillage , have an appreciation party for our community presenters and project guides

Besides having more fun learning this way, you will probably find you are learning as much from each other as from the other course resources.

INTRODUCTORY MEETING WITH INSTRUCTOR:

I ask that you meet at least once with me for about 30 minutes by Wednesday February 13, in Admin Annex Room 106, for getting acquainted, reflecting on how the course is going for you, asking questions, giving feedback, etc. This is *your time* to use as you like to ensure that you’re making the most of the course. I will pass around **a sign-up sheet on the second day of class to schedule meeting times.** I encourage you to ask for other meeting times, and since I am very part-time on campus, you just need to arrange that in advance. Mondays(4:00 to 5:30) and Wednesdays 10:45-12:45 are best for me, but I can arrange other times with a little bit of advance notice

Prior to our meeting here are some questions we could consider that I’m interested in. We will focus on the areas that are most important to you. Any other topics or concerns you wish to raise are certainly welcome.

1. What are your major academic and non-academic interests at IC?
2. What do you feel most passionate and engaged about in your life?
3. Why are you taking this course? What do you most want to get out of it?
4. How does the course fit with your life goals (academic, career, personal, social, activist, etc.)
5. What do you most want to give to it? (Goals, strengths, skills, etc.)
6. What is your learning style and preferences? What are your strengths and challenges as a learner?
7. What questions do you have about the course?
8. What’s working and not working so far in the class and the projects (if relevant, time-wise)?

ASSIGNMENTS

Your weekly study assignments will include *a modest amount of readings, videos, training manuals, and websites*, available through links within the assignment itself , the Resources section of Sakai, or class handouts.

We have three short, inspiring, and empowering books, that will be available through the bookstore, library reserve, and are easy to buy used, in paperback, online. Re:Imagining Change is also free

online. You will not have to read the whole books, as I focus on careful reading and integration of readings, not on high volume. I highly recommend that you read the first two books cover to cover.

Getting a Grip 2 Francis Moore Lappe Small Planet Media 2010 224 pp

Speak Peace in a World of Conflict Marshall Rosenberg Puddle Dancer Press 2005 173 pp

Re:Imagining Change Patrick Reinsborough & Doyle Canning PM Press 2010 110p

Most assignments will include opportunities to practice skills related to the study materials – on your own, with friends, in your residence hall or apartment, in other classes, clubs, or your downtown settings, and then to reflect upon. These “experiments” may require building up your courage and self-confidence muscles, which is an integral part of the course objectives

Change journal

COURSE GUIDELINES & LOGISTICS:

KEEPING UP

Please read the syllabus carefully, refer back to it, and ask if something is unclear. Please check Sakai regularly (specifically: Assignments, Announcements, and Resources). This is a rich and complex course, and I will **I will provide occasional reminders to check updates to the announcement and resource section of Sakai.** So keep alert, avoid making excuses, and we will have a great learning journey together.

TRANSPORTATION: Getting to projects and field trips in as reliable, timely, and low-impact a way as possible is an integral and fun part of the curriculum. Clear communication and accountability will be essential to the success of the various methods we employ. You must notify team and guides by email and/or cell phone, as needed, of any delay or absence. **We will establish early on who has use of a car and how to make cars available when they are appropriate for each team.**

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY: In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, reasonable accommodation will be provided to students with documented disabilities on a case-by-case basis. Students must register with the Office of Academic Support Services and provide appropriate documentation to the College before any academic adjustment will be provided.

PLAGIARISM POLICY: Please review the College’s definition of plagiarism as it appears in the Student Handbook. I routinely search the web for material I believe to be plagiarized, and report offenders to Judicial Affairs. In a collaborative project, all students in a group may be held responsible for academic misconduct if they engage in plagiarism or are aware of plagiarism by others in their group and fail to report it.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES: Diminished mental health, including significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with optimal academic performance. The source of symptoms might be directly related to your course work; if so, please speak with me. However, problems with relationships, family worries, loss, or a personal struggle or crisis can also contribute to decreased academic performance. Ithaca College provides a Counseling Center to support the academic success of students. It provides cost-free services to help you manage personal challenges that threaten your well-being.

In the event I suspect you need additional support, I will express my concerns and the reasons for them, and remind you of resources (e.g., Counseling Center, Health Center, chaplains, etc.) that might be helpful to you. It is not my intention to know the details of what might be bothering you, but simply to let you know I am concerned and that help, if needed, is available. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do -- for yourself and for your loved ones

CLASS SCHEDULE

<i>Wed 1/23</i>	Class #1: Introduction to group; Go over Syllabus and Assignments; Social Justice, Sustainability and the Global Crisis
<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Assignment #1 : due Sunday, Jan. 27th at midnight</i>
<i>Mon 1/28</i>	Class #2 Mindfulness and NonViolent Communication.
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Assignment #2 : due Sunday Feb 3rd midnight</i>
<i>Wed 1/30</i>	Class #3 Power of Narrative . Project presentations
<i>Mon 2/4</i>	Class #4 Systems Thinking & Ecological Design I
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Journal #1: due Sunday Feb 10 midnight</i>
<i>Wed 2/6</i>	Project Session #1 off campus
<i>Mon 2/11</i>	Class #5 Systems Thinking & Ecological Design II
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Assignment #3 Due Sun Feb 17</i>
<i>Wed 2/13</i>	Project Session #2
<i>Mon 2/18</i>	Class #6 Racial Justice and Changing the Narrative
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Journal #2 Due Sun Feb 24</i>
<i>Wed 2/20</i>	Project Session #3
<i>Mon 2/25</i>	Fieldtrip #1 Downtown Ithaca Community
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Assignment #4: due Sunday March 2nd midnight</i>
<i>Wed 2/27</i>	Project Session #4
<i>Mon 3/03</i>	Class #7 Economic Justice and Changing the Narrative
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Journal #3 due Sunday March 16</i>
<i>Wed 3/6</i>	Project Session #5
<i>March 9-17th</i>	<i>SPRING BREAK</i>
<i>Mon 3/18</i>	Class #8 Cultivating Sustainable Behaviors
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Assignment #5 : due Sunday March 24th midnight</i>

<i>Wed 3/20</i>	Project Session #6
<i>Mon 3/25</i>	Class #9 Cultivating Inclusive Behaviors
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Journal #4 Sunday March 31 midnight</i>
<i>Wed 3/27</i>	Project Session #7
<i>Mon 4/1</i>	Field Trip #2 Just and Robust Local Economy
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Assignment #6: due Sunday April 7th midnight</i>
<i>Wed 4/3</i>	Project Session #8
<i>Mon 4/8</i>	Class #10 Facilitating Cooperative Initiatives I
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Journal #5 due Sunday April 14th midnight</i>
<i>Wed 4/10</i>	Project Session #9
<i>Mon 4/15</i>	Class #11 Facilitating Cooperative Initiatives II
<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Assignment # 7 due Sunday April 21st midnight</i>
<i>Wed 4/17</i>	Project Session #10
<i>Mon 4/22</i>	Class #12 Building Social Movements
<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Draft final project report and "deliverables" due Fri 4/26 midnight Assignment #8/Journal #6 combined into Synthesis Journal due Sun4/28</i>
<i>Wed 4/24</i>	<i>Project Session #12</i>
<i>Mon 4/29</i>	Class #13 Completing earlier themes/ Integration
<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Receive project report feedback from Elan and guides by Wed 5/1 5pm finish and submit final project report, deliverables, and any unfinished assignments by Sunday May 6 midnight. Prepare project presentations</i>
<i>Wed 5/1</i>	<i>Final Project Presentations I</i>
<i>Mon 5/6 5/7-5/11</i>	<i>Last class Final Project Presentations II Closing Class Session (required) during class exam time</i>
<i>Wed May 15</i>	<i>Final grades Due (online) BY 10:00 P.M.</i>

