ENVST-UA
Urban Greening Lab: New York
Fall 2015
Time and Location

Instructor: Anne Rademacher
Office: 285 Mercer Street 905
Office Hours: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This reading and field intensive course explores the theory and practice of urban “greening” as it has been planned, debated, and implemented in New York City. Drawing on analytical tools from the social and biophysical sciences, we will consider how New York's historical and contemporary context shape the meaning, implementation, and social experience of environmental improvement. We will ask, “What does it mean to green New York? What does it mean to green a city?” Rather than accepting the meaning of this term as self-evident, we will give it clear analytical contours and apply our research questions accordingly.

Our analytical approach integrates ecosystem ecology concepts, urban design principles, and social scientific sensibilities.

REQUIREMENTS

This course covers a wide range of topics and case studies, and it draws from multiple disciplinary perspectives. To do well, it is essential that you attend all class sessions, and complete all the required readings before coming to class. In my class lectures, I will assume that you have read the readings thoroughly, and I will often introduce additional material that does not appear in the readings.

Due to the structure and content of the course, attendance for all class sessions is mandatory. Attendance will be taken before every class, and grading penalties will accrue with class absences.

A mid-term exam will be given in Week 6; students will then complete an independent field project as the final exam. In addition, students will prepare two 2-page analytical commentaries that examine selected field trip portions of the course. Field trips will be timed so that students are able to attend them within the allotted course period; if this is not possible, alternative arrangements can be made with the professor.

Course grades will be computed based on the following distribution:

- Attendance (10%) and Participation (15%) in all aspects of the class*
- Mid term exam 20%
- Two analytical essays 30%
- Final exam 25%

*Attendance is mandatory; participation will be assessed based on a students’ active verbal and written engagement in class sessions. We will discuss this at our first class session.

READINGS

Required Books


LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE

**Sept 3: Course Introduction: “Urban Ecologies” and Urban Greening**

**Sept 8 & 10: Ecology in the City vs. Ecology of the City and Science, Society, and Design: Urban Ecology and the Challenge of Integration**


**Sept 15 & 17: Spatial Heterogeneity and the Concept of Resilience**

*In: Resilience in Ecology and Urban Design: Linking Theory and Practice for Sustainable Cities:*


**Sept 22: The Context for Greening in New York**

*In: Resilience in Ecology and Urban Design: Linking Theory and Practice for Sustainable Cities:*


*Articles:*


*Watch:*


**Sept 24, 29 and Oct 1: Greening New York through PlaNYC**

Students will be assigned to read and present specific sections of PlaNYC.

*Articles:*

Oct 6: Greening through Repurposing Urban Infrastructure

TBA Readings on the High Line
Field visit to the High Line

Oct 8: Mid-term Exam

Oct 15 & 20: Greening by Creating Public Park Space

TBA Readings on Plaza Parks in NYC
March 12 Field visit: Comparing Urban Public Space through a Study of Plaza Parks

Oct 22: The Urban Forest 1

Articles:


Oct 27: The Urban Forest II

Guest Lecture: Dr. Richard Karty

Articles:


Web resources to review:

Million Trees NYC Campaign:

NYC Cool Roofs:
Oct 29: Greening by Creating Urban Forest

Field Visit to The New School Green Roof, led by Dr. Richard Karty

Nov 3: Resilience in NYC: Sandy and Beyond

Guest Lecture: Kirsten Keller, formerly with Build it Back


In Crisis Cities: Disaster and Redevelopment in New York and New Orleans: Greenberg, Miriam and Kevin Fox Gotham. “Conclusion: Lessons in the Wake of Crisis,” Chapter 7 pgs. 223-242

In New York City CDBG-DR Action Plan:
Examine maps on pgs. 20-24
Read sections on funding justification and housing, pgs 31-32
Skim overview of Build It Back, pgs. 60-67

From NYC Recovery:
“NYC Build It Back Information Update”

Build It Back:

Nov 5: Ecosystem Services and Land Use

Articles:


Nov 10: Urban Resilience II

In: Resilience in Ecology and Urban Design: Linking Theory and Practice for Sustainable Cities:

Articles:


Web resources to review:

Rebuild by Design:  
http://www.rebuildbydesign.org

**Nov 12: Greening through Resilience and Recovery**

Field Visit, post-Sandy recovery site with Kirsten

**Nov 17: Greening the Built Infrastructure**  
**First Essay Due**

Review the current initiatives for Urban Green, the NYC chapter of the US Green Building Council:  
http://urbangreencouncil.org/initiatives

Read: Improving Building Envelopes, Making Buildings Resilient, Creating Low-Carbon Cities, Reaching All Industries, and Greening Codes, including the specific projects for each category (30pp)

Review the implementation monitoring strategy (5pp):  
http://urbangreencouncil.org/greencodestracker

**Nov 19: Greening through Building Design**

Guest lecture and field visit to Bushwick Inlet Park with Greg Kiss, Principle Architect, Kiss + Cathcart

**Nov 24 & Dec 1: Student Project Presentations**

**Dec 3: Field Visits TBA**  
**Second Essay Due**

Final Exam- TBA